

Instructor: Maggie Flamingo
Office: 5269
E-mail: mflamingo@wisc.edu
Office Hours: M, 8:30-10:30
& by appointment

TA: Erin Faigin
Office: 4274
E-mail: faigin@wisc.edu
Office Hours: W 9:45-10:45,
Th 2:15-3:15,
& by appointment

History 102 American History, Civil War Era to the Present

MWF, 11:11:50am
Education L196

The history of the United States after the Civil War is not a history that can be told, much less understood, in fourteen weeks. Crafting a course like this involves questions of whose story to tell, what perspectives to highlight, what—of thousands of documents—should be read and discussed, and, importantly, what to leave out. In truth, we will only claw at the surface of the history of the United States, but even through that we will gather extraordinary accounts of progress and regression, conflict and unity, strength and failure. More specifically, we will look at how the Civil War cast Americans into a state of psychological and social despair (ever wonder what free love looked like in the 1870s?); how technology has influenced the culture wars and our concepts of family and sexuality (and how the pill changed everything); the egregious policies enacted against the mentally ill and those deemed “unfit”; the role party politics has played in foreign policy; and the choices that American leaders made driving the United States into a position of global power, as well as how power was structured within the nation as well. We will look at the stories of individuals who exemplify these trends as well as those that lived outside them, challenging our perspective and preconceptions. We will not be memorizing history but interrogating it.

This course does not ask you to glorify the United States nor vilify her, but you will be required to take a hard, long look at the way in which the country’s history has been written and re-written. It is not always a pretty picture; in fact, it is often harsh, violent, and unsettling (for example, we will discuss the shocking longevity of lynching, the deep roots of xenophobia, and the laws that codified levels of acceptable abuse in marriage). Yet, despite the horrors of the past, we will look at the progress and change. As engaged learners, we can look to the past with an eye toward both understanding and critique. That is our goal for this class.

Learning Objectives

A successful student in this course will have demonstrated their mastery of the following objectives:

1. Learn how to identify and formulate historical questions;
2. Understand and distinguish the role of political power in relation to cultural groups, military action, and diplomacy;
3. Trace the shifting concepts of family, gender, and sexuality throughout the period and identify the ways in which these shifts have intersected with politics and culture;
4. Recognize the influence subcultures—particularly ethnic and religious ones—have had on political and cultural trends, and
5. Understand the impact changing technologies have had on the economy and culture of the United States.

Course Credit Information (4 credits)

This 4-credit course meets as a group for 4 hours per week (according to UW-Madison's credit hour policy, each 50-minute class counts as one hour). The course also carries the expectation that you will spend an average of at least 2 hours outside of class for every hour in the classroom. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of at least 8 hours per week for reading, writing, preparing for discussions, and/or studying for quizzes and exams for this course.

Required Reading Materials

Textbook:

We will be using a free, online, collaborative textbook called *The American Yamp* (linked on our course Canvas page). This textbook was compiled by professional historians (myself included) and is under continual revision and improvement. It provides the backbone for our course material and you will be required to read from it weekly. Take care to look at the arguments being made, the themes running throughout the chapters, and the people who are behind the historical movements.

Additional Books:

In addition to the textbook, we will be using three small document collections in this class. Each begins with an introduction written by a historian, offering you an example of the work that historians do, while also providing ample primary source material to dig into on your own, thus giving you the chance to do the heavy-lifting on some historical analysis yourself.

- Timothy Gilfoyle, editor, *The Urban Underworld in Late Nineteenth-Century New York: The Autobiography of George Appo*.
- David Howard-Pitney, editor, *Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and the Civil Rights Struggle of the 1950s and 1960s*.
- Nancy MacLean, editor, *American Women's Movement: 1945-2000*.

Additional Readings:

We will frequently engage with other primary sources throughout the class. These readings can be found on the course's Canvas page. The best practice is to read these documents before coming to lecture, as they are related to the content being presented. You must finish these readings before each week's discussion section.

Pay attention to the weekly reading calendar to ensure that you are looking in the right place for your reading materials.

Grade Breakdown and Grading Scale

Participation	10%	A	93-100%
Projects	20%	AB	87-92.9%
Midterm	20%	B	82-86.9%
Quizzes	20%	BC	77-81.9%
Final	30%	C	72-76.9%
		D	67-71.9%
		F	0-67.9%

Assignments

Pre-Class Reading Quizzes

History is a discipline rooted in reading and writing. You must read the assignments and apply your hard-won critical thinking skills to understand them thoroughly in order to succeed as a student of history. In order to encourage you to do this, and reward you for that effort, you will take a weekly reading quiz. These quizzes must be completed (on Canvas) *before* your discussion section each week. At the end of the semester, your lowest quiz score will be dropped, meaning each quiz is worth 2% of your overall grade (there is no quiz the week of the midterm or the final week of class). Collectively, your quizzes account for the same grade percentage as your midterm exam.

You may make up poor quiz grades (a score of less than 70%) by submitting the reading guide in discussion section. The reading guide is always optional, but if you complete it in a way that demonstrates a thorough investigation of the readings and turn it in at the beginning of discussion, it may be used in lieu of the quiz score. This cannot be done as a make-up assignment after the fact.

Historical Projects

Throughout the semester, you have three opportunities to submit a historical “project.” This consists of a 3-4 page formal paper, in which you provide an argument based on your analysis of the source(s). You are encouraged to choose a topic directly related to your interests. You may write on any of the following:

- *Document Interrogation*: Pick one or two of the documents from our Bedford readings (that is not an already assigned reading) and make an *argument* for why it matters to American History. What context must be understood to properly interpret the document? In what ways (if any) has it been misunderstood or improperly used? What does it reveal about the American past?
- *Biography Investigation*: Find three different accounts of your subject's life (at least one must be in print, the others may be online) that vary in substance and tone. Make an argument for why this person is remembered differently, keeping in mind the biases behind those writing the biographies and what events they chose to remember. Reflect on why history remembers this person in various ways and what misunderstandings or manipulations influence his or her legacy. **You must get approval from your instructor for your subject at least one week before the due date of the project.****
- *Movie/Media review*: Find a film (or performance of a similar type) that claims to represent a historical moment covered in this class. After watching it, write a critical review in which you compare it with the historical context. Discuss the role of artistic choice and representation in the film and make an argument for whether the film is accurate and/or important to understanding history. **You must get approval from your instructor for your chosen film at least one week before the due date of the project.****

You must submit **two** of these projects, and they may not be of the same kind (i.e. you cannot submit two biography investigations). The purpose of these assignments is to help you branch out beyond the material from the class and cater, within limits, to your own personal interests. As you consider what content to cover, make sure you consider the time frame of your choice. Your project must reflect the content discussed in class *before* the due date of the project (and *after* the due date for the last project). For example, a movie review for *Inherit the Wind*, which is about the 1920s, would be due on March 25, as that falls under the content covered in that section of the course. You could not submit a movie review for *Inherit the Wind* for either the first or third project.

**Failure to consult with your instructor on your subject will result in an automatic 10% deduction of your grade.

Midterm

This exam has two components: in-class and take-home. You will be given several short answer and multiple choice questions in-class during our normal class period. In addition, you will turn in two essays to your TA before the exam period.

Final

The final exam will take place in class during the final exam period. It will include both essay and short-answer sections. More details will be given out after Spring Break.

Extra Credit

There will be one (and only one) opportunity to earn extra credit. Details will be posted on Canvas after the first midterm.

Policies

Participation

In order to get your full participation points, you need to actually discuss history in your discussion sections (shocking, we know). I realize that everyone has a different level of comfort with speaking in class, but verbal communication skills are just as important as written ones, and a well-rounded university education provides instruction in both.

With that said, it's not your TA's job to police your participation; she only keeps track of it. If you would like some tips on how to get more involved in discussion, I would be happy to discuss it with you, as would your TA. However, if you choose to remain quiet in class, that is your right, but your grade will reflect that choice.

Attendance

I operate under the assumption that you are all adults and have the choice to act like it or not. Attendance is not something that will accumulate points toward your grade; it is an expected part of being in this course. You are, however, allowed three absences no questions asked. Use them wisely. After that, your final grade will be reduced by 2% for every subsequent absence.

Likewise, attendance to discussion sections is mandatory and any more than one unexcused absence will result in a half-step grade penalty to your participation grade (i.e. an A will become an AB), with each subsequent absence having the same penalty. Make-up assignments for discussion section may be given at the discretion of your TA.

Late Assignments

Any late work will be reduced a half-step in the grade. In addition, for each subsequent day it is late, another half-step penalty will be applied (i.e. a B paper turned in two hours late will become a BC paper; a B paper turned in 26 hours late will become a C paper). The clock stops ticking when your TA receives the assignment, not when you place it in her mailbox or under her office door (which is never a good idea, by the way). Hard copies must be turned in, so please do not e-mail the assignments without previous permission to do so (which will only be granted in special circumstances). In sum, just turn it in on time.

Laptops

Laptops and other electronic devices (cell phones, etc.) are not allowed in the lecture hall. I realize this is an inconvenience for many students who use their laptops as educational tools, but research demonstrates that taking notes by hand is the best method. In addition, the continued, widespread abuse of laptops and the Internet in the classroom has hardened my heart against any pleas for leniency.

Classroom Etiquette

I expect you to arrive to lecture and discussion sections on time and with the intent to learn. Texting, talking, or any other generally disruptive behavior in the classroom is simply not acceptable and you may be asked to leave.

E-mail

E-mail is the preferred way to contact me. I answer emails between 8am-5pm. I will attempt to return your e-mails within 24 hours (during the week, that is; Saturday and Sunday enter a black hole of communication, so if you send me an e-mail at 5pm on Friday, expect a reply by 5pm Monday). Please allow me that long to respond. In other words, do not e-mail me 3 hours before an exam to ask a question about it; I cannot guarantee I will get back to you.

Office Hours

While I welcome drop-in visitors during my office hours, scheduled appointments are always appreciated (and guarantee us time to talk). Feel free to come talk to me about questions from lecture or the readings or just to get my perspective and advice on your assignments. If you are unable to meet me during my office hours, we can arrange another meeting time.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this classroom. If you are having difficulty with an assignment, please turn to your TA or myself for assistance rather than stealing the work of others. If you are caught plagiarizing material, you will automatically fail the assignment, regardless of the impact on your final grade.

Students with Disabilities

Please contact me early in the semester if you have a documented requirement for accommodation to obtain equal access to this class or to any assignment I may give. If you have any questions about this, please feel free to contact me. In addition, the McBurney Disability Resource Center (608-263-2741) provides resources for students with disabilities and can also help.

General Course Calendar

Wednesday, January 22	The State of the Union, 1865
Friday, January 24	The [Doomed?] Attempt to Reconstruct a Broken Nation
Monday, January 27	* The American West after the Civil War
Wednesday, January 29	Failed American Utopias: Religious Thought and Religious Doubt after the Civil War
Friday, January 31	Economic Growth and Unrest: Industry and Labor in the Second Half of the 19th Century
Monday, February 3	American Factories and American Homes: Technology and a Rapidly Changing Culture
Wednesday, February 5	The Myth of the West
Friday, February 7	How the “Victorians” Changed America
Monday, February 10	*A New Century: The United States in the World
Wednesday, February 12	A New Century: A Changing Landscape
Friday, February 15	The Urban World: Progressive Reform and City Politics
Monday, February 17	*When the World Went to War
Wednesday, February 19	The War at Home **FIRST HISTORICAL PROJECT DUE**
Friday, February 21	U.S. Politics and Culture after WWI
Monday, February 24	Culture Wars I: Science in the Schools
Wednesday, February 26	Culture Wars II: Sex as a Battlefield
Friday, February 28	The Great Migration: A Beginning
Monday, March 2	Economic and Environmental Disasters: The 1930s
Wednesday, March 4	The New Deals
Friday, March 6	The World at War
Monday, March 9	The Home Front: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Wednesday, March 11	The State of the Union, 1945
Friday, March 13	<i>MIDTERM EXAM</i>
MWF, March 17-21	<i>Spring Break: No Class</i>
Monday, March 23	The United States Goes Super: The Origins of the Cold War
Wednesday, March 25	The Nuclear Family and the Technology that Sustained It **SECOND HISTORICAL PROJECT DUE**
Friday, March 27	The Cold War Heats Up at Home and Abroad
Monday, March 30	The Great Migration Continues
Wednesday, April 1	The American Political Scene
Friday, April 3	The Vietnam War and its Legacy in the United States
Monday, April 6	The Fight for Civil Rights
Wednesday, April 8	The People of America: A Survey of Diversity after 1968
Friday, April 10	Making Sense of (Popular, Youth, Counter-) Culture
Monday, April 13	Energy and the 1970s: Understanding the Crisis
Wednesday, April 15	The Culture Wars: Scripture, Sex, and Women's Liberation
Friday, April 17	The Rise of the Right (Religious and Otherwise)
Monday, April 20	The Life and Legacy of the Reagan Presidency
Wednesday, April 22	The U.S. Military Presence after the Cold War
Friday, April 24	9/11: Before and After **THIRD HISTORICAL PROJECT DUE**
Monday, April 27	The Bush-Clinton-Bush Years
Wednesday, April 29	The Culture Wars Enter a New Century
Friday, May 1	Lecture in which I argue taking this course was worth your time.

****Final Exam: May 8, 2:45-4:45pm ****