

**HIST 2112: United States History 1865-present**  
**Fall 2017 (Sec. 4)**  
**University of West Georgia**  
**MW 5:30-6:45**  
**TLC 1305**

Instructor: Richard Primuth

Office: TLC 3103

Office Hours: MW 2:30-3:30; 4:45-5:30; TR 1:45-2:30; by appt.

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**Course Description:** This course is a broad survey of the growth and change within the United States from the end of the Civil War to the present. Through lectures, readings, discussions and other activities we will examine political, cultural, and social themes in this nation's recent history. We will study not only such events as wars and presidential assassinations, but social issues such as immigration and women's rights, as well. We begin with emancipation and Reconstruction, move through Progressivism, two world wars, the Civil Rights Movement, the nation's shift to the right, and end with the administration of America's first African-American president. The course is fairly light in reading, but emphasizes development of writing skills. Critical thinking and good analytical skills are essential in today's workplace, and sharpening those skills will be a centerpiece of this course.

**Course Objectives:** In addition to gaining a basic understanding of themes, issues and events in American history since 1865, students will develop critical reading, writing, and thinking skills. Students will come out of the course with a broader understanding of the United States' place within a global context, the nations' diversity and the significance to their own lives.

**Required Texts:**

Online; no cost: [www.americanyawp.com](http://www.americanyawp.com) (this is the course's main textbook)

"The Triangle Fire: A Brief History with Documents," By Jo Ann Argersinger (available at school bookstore) OR "Freedom Summer: A Brief History with Documents," By John Dittmer, Jeff Kolnick, and Leslie-Burl McLemore (only available by ordering online). Buy only one of these short readers, according to your own interests.

**Course Requirements:**

**Movie Review:** You will need to write a 1 and ½ to 2 page review of a movie dealing with any topic in American history since 1865. After a short introduction (3 sentences or less) and summary of the movie, the paper should concentrate on the film's strengths or weaknesses. Was it accurate? Why or why not? The paper needs an introduction, argument with supporting evidence and a conclusion. Movie suggestions include (but are certainly not limited to): *Fruitvale Station*, *Birth of a Nation*, *The Miracle Worker*, *Argo*, *Detroit*, *Zero Dark Thirty*,

*Inherit the Wind, Boogie Nights, Longtime Companion, The Butler, 54, Kill Your Darlings, The Monuments Men, Matewan, Tora!Tora!Tora!, Malcolm X, Ghosts of Mississippi, Silkwood, The People vs. Larry Flynt, Friday Night Lights, Sid & Nancy, Sweet Dreams, Moneyball, Fruitvale Station, Stonewall, Norma Rae, All the President's Men, Wonderland, Milk, Apollo 13, Taking Woodstock, Dallas Buyers Club, CBGB, or W.* Movies off-limits: *Pearl Harbor, Titanic, Finding Private Ryan.* You do not need to do any outside research besides the film you pick. (Due August 30, in class)

**Book Essay:** A short 2-3 page paper will be due at end of semester that will focus on whichever short documents reader (Triangle Fire or Freedom Summer) that you chose. More details to follow. (Due November 15).

**Exams:** There will be three non-cumulative exams given in the course. These exams will be a mix of short identifications and essay questions. **You will need to bring your own blue books** which can be purchased throughout campus. Write exam in PEN ONLY. (Exams scheduled for Sept. 20, October 25, with the final at 5:00pm on December 4).

**Class Participation and Attendance:** This will determine a substantial portion of your grade and includes both attendance and participation in class discussions.

**Extra Credit:** You may write a short (1 ½-2 pages) review of a visit during the semester to a history museum, exhibit or site for extra credit. This needs to be a critical essay. Did the site or exhibit seem to have an overall theme or message? Were there historical inaccuracies? What was done well and what was done poorly? Suggested sites include the Atlanta History Center, Historic Banning Mills (in Whitesburg, Ga.), Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum, Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, Margaret Mitchell House and Museum, Pickett's Mill, Douglas County Museum of History and Art and Roosevelt's Little White House Historic Site, Thomas Murphy Exhibit (bottom floor of our school's library). Due anytime through end of semester.

**Grading:**

Movie Review: 15%

Second Essay: 25%

Exam 1: 15%

Exam 2: 15%

Final Exam 20%

Participation: 10%

Extra Credit: up to 5%

**Grading Scale:**

90% + A

80% + B

70% + C

60% + D

59% - F

**Writing Assistance:** This course has several writing assignments constituting 40% of your possible grade. If you are struggling (writing does not come easily to most people) seek help sooner rather than later. Suggestions include:

- The UWG Library website ( includes citation and style guides, as well as important history databases such as America: History & Life)
- The Writing Center (TLC 1201)
- Peers (having another pair of eyes proof your work is always a good idea)
- Class Instructor ( I am happy to give any help that I can)

**Class Rules:**

- Turn cell phones off during class; this is common courtesy
- No food in class, beverages are fine
- Attendance is expected, and please be on time
- This is an academic environment, show respect for others
- Academic honesty is expected. Do not submit the work of others as your own. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and is not tolerated at this university. For details see the Student Handbook, appendix A and the history department statement on plagiarism: <http://www.westga.edu/~history/statementonplagiarism.pdf>

**Tentative Course Outline:**

Week 1 (Aug. 9): Course Introduction

Week 2 (Aug. 14/16): Reconstruction

Read: chapter 15

Week 3 (Aug. 21/23): The West

Read: chapter 17

Week 4 (Aug. 28/30): Industrialization

Read: chapter 16

(1st paper due Aug. 30; in class)

Week 5 (Sept. 6; no class on 4<sup>th</sup>): Urbanization/ Gilded Age

Read: chapter 18

Week 6 (Sept. 11/13): Progressivism

Read: chapter 20; two documents on CourseDen (Washington & DuBois)

Week 7 (Sept. 18/20): American Empire/WWI

Read: chapters 19, 21

Exam 1 Sept. 20

Week 8 (Sept. 25/27): Modernization & the Great Depression

Read: chapter 22

Week 9 (Oct. 2/4): Roosevelt and the New Deal

Read: chapter 23

Listen: "Strange Fruit," by Billie Holliday

Week 10 (Oct. 9/11): World War Two

Read: chapter 24

Week 11 (Oct. 16/18): World War Two/ Cold War

Read: chapter 25; Online document "Executive Order 9066."

Week 12 (Oct 23/25): Cold War/ American Affluence

Read: chapter 26

Exam 2 Oct. 25

Week 13 (Oct. 30/Nov. 1): The Sixties/Civil Rights

Read: chapter 27

Listen: “What’s Going On,” by Marvin Gaye and “Give Peace a Chance,” by John Lennon and the Plastic Ono Band

Week 14 (Nov. 6/8) Civil Rights

Read: chapter 28; Documents posted on CourseDen

Week 15 (Nov. 13/15): The 1970s and Rise of the Right

Read: chapter 29 (Sections I-V only)

(2<sup>nd</sup> paper due, Nov. 15 in class)

Week 16: No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

Week 17 (Nov 27/29): From Reagan to Obama

Read: chapters 29 (Only sections VI-X), 30

Final Exam: Monday Dec. 4 from 5:00- 7:00 pm

Additional information on:

Americans with Disabilities Act

UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia Honor Code

Credit Hour Policy

[http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common\\_Language\\_for\\_Course\\_Syllabi.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf)