

HISTORY 12

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1865

FALL 1998

INSTRUCTOR: Randy Genera

Office: HUM-51 (Humanities Building)
Office Hours: MWF, 11:00 - 11:50 a.m.
TTh, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

REQUIRED TEXT: *American History, A Survey*, Vol. II, Ninth Edition, by Alan Brinkley

ALSO REQUIRED: Set of textbook homework assignments prepared by the instructor. These are available for purchase in the Reedley College Book Store.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course traces the evolution of the United States from the aftermath of the Civil War in 1865 up to the present. Topics covered include the Reconstruction Era following the Civil War, the settlement of the West, the Indian Wars, immigration, the First World War, and the Great Depression. We will also study America's involvement in World War II, the postwar economic boom, the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, and the various historical developments of the last 20 years.

The objective of this course is **NOT** to memorize (and then promptly forget) a bunch of trivial facts about the past. Our goal is to gain an understanding of the broad forces that have shaped the politics, economy, and rich, multicultural society of the United States. **THE THEMES COVERED IN THIS CLASS DO RELATE DIRECTLY TO AMERICA (AND YOUR LIVES) TODAY!** Wars, crime, political conflict, social problems, all these aspects of contemporary life represent continuing trends in American history. Studying the past **CAN** help us understand the present, and that is the primary purpose of this class.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Seating for this course will be assigned by the instructor. A seating chart, based essentially on alphabetical order, will be established by the end of the second week. Students who want or need to sit close to the front of the classroom will be accommodated.

The overall course grade depends on the components outlined below. A point system will be used to calculate each student's grade for the semester.

- **Examinations.** There will be five examinations covering assigned readings and course lectures. Each examination is worth 100 points, and all five count toward the overall course grade. **NO EXAM SCORE WILL BE DROPPED.**
- **Term Paper.** Each student will complete a brief (three- to five- page) term paper concerning a historical topic assigned by the instructor. The paper counts for 100 points.
- **Additional Assignments.** There will be a variety of additional assignments consisting of quizzes, homework, or turning in class lecture notes for credit. These assignments will count for a maximum of 75 points.
- **History Notebook.** For this class, students should purchase a notebook or binder in which they will keep the materials required for History 12. This HISTORY NOTEBOOK counts for 25 points and consists of the following items:
 - Class lecture notes. **STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE NOTES ON LECTURES IN THIS COURSE.** Thorough notes are a critical aid to successful performance on course examinations.
 - Homework assignments for the textbook. (**PURCHASE THE HOMEWORK PACKAGE AT THE REEDLEY COLLEGE BOOKSTORE.**) The instructor has developed a set of homework questions for each chapter of the textbook; these are designed to help students comprehend the reading material and prepare for the exams. Students should read the appropriate chapter and complete the accompanying homework questions as they are assigned by the instructor.

Students should bring their History Notebooks, including the two items identified above, to every class session. The instructor will collect and grade the notebooks during the last four weeks of the semester. Thorough lecture notes and completion of homework assignments will result in a score of 25 points. **EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD NOTEBOOKS WILL RECEIVE BONUS POINTS.**

- Demonstrating satisfactory progress. A basic expectation of this class is that students will do the required reading, come to class prepared for discussion, and show an adequate knowledge of the course material on quizzes and exams. Students who receive extremely low grades on tests and assignments during the first nine weeks of the semester (that is, low F's—scores below 50%) are not making a satisfactory effort in class and are subject to being dropped.

HOW YOUR OVERALL COURSES GRADE IS CALCULATED

Total points: 500 (five examinations) + 100 (term paper) + 75 (additional assignments such as quizzes or homework) + 25 (history notebook) = 700 points for the semester.

Based on 700 points as the maximum for the class, students who earn 90% or more of the possible points will receive an A; 89 to 80% equals a B; 79 to 70% represents a C; 69 to 60% amounts to a D; 50% or lower translates into a failing grade. **BE AWARE OF THE DROP DEADLINE DATE!!!** Students may withdraw from this course without a letter grade until the **NINTH WEEK OF THE SEMESTER.** After *Friday, October 16, 1998*, every student enrolled in the class **WILL RECEIVE A LETTER GRADE.**

ATTENDANCE POLICY (Read this carefully!)

Regular and prompt attendance is expected. **STUDENTS ARE LIMITED TO FOUR ABSENCES FOR THE SEMESTER.** Absences for authorized reasons (verified illness, bereavement, or because of some required school activity) may be made up with the instructor's permission. To make up an absence, a student must complete a specific assignment identified by the instructor within one week of the absence. **NOTE!** There is a penalty for excessive absences. Students who have accumulated more than four absences before **October 16, 1998** may be dropped from the class. After that date, a student will lose five points for every absence beyond the limit of four. **IN SHORT, COME TO CLASS AND BE ON TIME, PLEASE!**

KEYS TO SUCCESS

You don't have to be a rocket scientist or a history major to succeed in this class. You simply need to work steadily, consistently, and show some interest in the issues we cover. Take good notes on lectures, read the textbook carefully, complete the homework assignments, and come to class ready to participate. If you do these things, you're bound to be successful.

FINAL COMMENTS

If you decide to stay with this class, welcome. I promise you my best effort to make this course stimulating, relevant, and challenging. In return, I expect you to show some intellectual curiosity and to put forth your best effort. Making this class a success will require a joint commitment from students and instructor. Let's do it! Good luck!

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POLICY REGARDING TEST MAKE-UPS

Tests represent the primary basis for your grade in this course. The instructor will notify you well in advance as to the date of an upcoming test. It is your responsibility to be prepared and present in class on the day of a scheduled exam. **THIS IS AN ABSOLUTE PRIORITY FOR THIS COURSE.** Nothing should prevent you from taking an exam on the scheduled day except the most urgent kind of personal emergency.

EXCEPTION:

In some cases, you may have a school activity or personal appointment which conflicts with the scheduled date for a test. Typically, you will know about the time conflict beforehand. In this case, contact the instructor several days **IN ADVANCE** and arrange to take the test at another time.

IF YOU MISS AN EXAM:

- (1) The exam must be made up **IMMEDIATELY.** No test scores are dropped in this class. Contact the instructor right away and set a time to take the make-up test.
- (2) The make-up exam will be different from the one taken by the rest of the class on the regularly scheduled test date. It will cover the same chapters, but it will consist mainly of essay and fill-in questions. In other words, this is not an easy alternative; you are strongly advised to clear your calendar, give the test the priority it deserves, and be in class on the day scheduled for the exam.