COURSE OVERVIEW

This course surveys U.S. history from the end of Reconstruction through the present day. We will focus on three main aspects of 19th, 20th, and early 21st century U.S. history: first, the rise (and relative decline) of the United States as a global superpower—politically, economically, and militarily—and the relationship between U.S. foreign and domestic policy; second, the evolution of liberalism and rise of conservatism; and third, the importance of individuals in making and changing history.

At this point, you’re probably thinking, “How is this course going to help me get a job in <fill in your major here>?” True enough, things that happened in 1885 or 1923 may not be relevant to your career pursuits. So why study history? Well, beyond the utilitarian fact that it satisfies a GE and/or major requirement, you will discover that history is much more than what happened in some vague past. History 221 will teach you how to think, read, and watch media critically; your writing will improve—an invaluable skill in any career; you will learn how and why the contemporary United States got to where it is today; and you will come away from the course with a better understanding and appreciation of the U.S. past and insights on its present and future.

EXPECTATIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES, & COURSE POLICIES

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES: The lectures in this course will be designed to highlight specific issues and complement the material in the assigned readings. Thus, it is in your best interest to attend each lecture and take notes (please be aware that, as a policy, I do not circulate my PowerPoint slides). Please be on time and do not leave lecture early without notifying me in advance. Refrain from reading newspapers, using social media, or being disruptive during class (this includes turning cell phones and pagers to off or vibrate). You are expected to attend each lecture, do ALL of the reading for the course, and participate in class discussions (failure to do so will have a detrimental effect on your grade); you will be accountable for the readings and everything presented in lecture on the exams. Ultimately, you will get out of this course what you put into it (a cliché to be sure, but an appropriate one). You may be tempted to ignore this advice, but as Professor Dave Jennings said to the students at Faber College, “that doesn’t relieve you of your responsibility for this material....Listen, I’m not joking. This is my job!”

COURSE COMMUNICATION: This course will not be on Blackboard or the BYU Learning Suite, so please be sure to check your e-mail regularly for updates and announcements from me relating to the course. If you do not have an e-mail account, please obtain one (either through the university or one of the many free e-mail services) and update your preferred e-mail contact information on Route Y as soon as possible so that I can contact you if necessary. This is also the best way to contact me outside of lecture or posted office hours.

COURSE CONTENT: As we explore U.S. history since 1877, we will read, listen to, watch, and discuss material that could potentially be shocking or even offensive (morally or politically) to some of you. The course material has not been selected for your entertainment, but rather for your education. It aims to expand your understanding beyond your own experience. Parts may be startling or challenge your assumptions and/or beliefs, but at the same time will be descriptive of the human condition and relevant to the events and themes central to the course. If you have questions or concerns about the course content, please discuss them with me as soon as possible.
ACADEMIC CIVILITY: Feel free to express opinions that are contrary to what I say, what other students say, or what the readings say. Often, it is through debates over interpretation of historical material that clarity (if not consensus) about the past emerges. Remember, however, that this is an academic environment. A whole spectrum of opinions exists on any given subject and it is vital to respect the opinions of others even if you are convinced that their view is totally, completely, and unconditionally wrong. Personal attacks or criticisms based on gender, ethnicity, political or religious beliefs, etc. will not be tolerated.

LATE PENALTIES: Failure to submit any of the writing assignments on time will result in a grade penalty. Each 24-hour period after the stated due date will incur a penalty of two letter grades (e.g. B to D), NO EXCEPTIONS. Excuses such as getting engaged, broken-hearted roommates, computer catastrophes, “my plane/bus/train was late,” and the timeless “my dog ate my homework” will not cut it. Curiously, tragic tales of death, woe, and misery occur with unbelievable, X-Filian regularity around due dates. Plan ahead to ensure that these cosmic misfortunes won’t affect you. This is, after all, college and you are an adult; you are responsible for your own success or failure.

GRADE APPEALS PROCEDURE: If you have a question about a grade you received, you must wait 24 hours after receiving the paper or exam back before making an appeal. Further, I will not discuss a grade with you until you have submitted a detailed written appeal discussing your specific concerns. I reserve the right to raise or lower the grade upon further review. There is an iron-clad, one-week time limit on any discussion of a grade.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: As a student at Brigham Young University, you have agreed to abide by the University’s honor code (www.byu.edu/honorcode/honor_code.htm). In this course, the most relevant aspects of that commitment relate to academic honesty: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and so forth. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to) borrowing a friend’s paper, lifting text from digital sources (including “open access” material and the internet), using “paper mills,” and reproducing the ideas and phrases of other authors without credit. The short version is that all work for this course must be your own. A comprehensive definition from the American Historical Association is available at www.historians.org/governance/pd/curriculum/plagiarism_defining.htm. In addition, you cannot “self-plagiarize;” that is, you cannot use a paper from another course (past, present, or future) for this course, and vice versa. All course work must be created exclusively and originally for this course. I take these issues very seriously and will prosecute ALL violations vigorously.

LEGAL INFORMATION: If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this course, contact the University Accessibility Center (1520 WSC), which can evaluate your disability, assist in arranging for reasonable accommodations, and provide me with the appropriate documentation. Sexual discrimination or harassment (including student-to-student harassment) is prohibited both by law and by Brigham Young University policy. If you believe you are being subjected to such behavior, please bring your concerns to me as soon as possible. Alternatively, you may lodge a complaint with either the Equal Employment Office (D-240C ASB) or the Honor Code Office (4440 WSC).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES: An overview of the learning objectives and outcomes for this course can be found at history.byu.edu/Pages/221outcomes.aspx.
ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

You will receive a grade for your efforts in this course, determined by my evaluation of your performance in the following areas. Please note: your perception of your effort is not enough to justify a distinguished grade.

1. **DISCUSSION, QUIZZES, & ATTENDANCE (30%)**: Participation in class (attendance, which is required; asking and answering questions; contributing to discussions; etc.), quizzes, and unannounced in-class writing assignments will factor into this portion of your grade.

2. **MIDTERM EXAM (20%)**: The midterm will cover the material from the first half of the course and will be available to take in the Testing Center (HGB) during its regular operating hours from **Monday, October 3 and Friday, October 7**; be sure to consult the Testing Center’s schedule for its operating hours on those days and leave yourself sufficient time (no less than two hours) to complete the exam. **NO LATE EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN FOR ANY REASON**; if you miss the midterm due to illness, lack of preparation, or faulty memory, your final will be worth 50% of your overall course grade.

3. **RESEARCH PAPER (20%)**: You will receive a separate handout with more details on this assignment. The paper is due **BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF LECTURE** on **Wednesday, November 30**. Please be aware that each 24-hour period thereafter will incur a penalty of two letter grades (e.g. B to D), **NO EXCEPTIONS**. Absolutely no papers will be accepted after Friday, December 2 at 5:00pm. You must submit and pass the essay in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

4. **FINAL EXAM (30%)**: The final exam will be comprehensive but weighted significantly toward the second half of the course. The exam will be available to take in the Testing Center during finals week from **Monday, December 12 to Friday, December 16**. Absolutely no early or late exams will be given to accommodate travel schedules.

REQUIRED READINGS FOR HISTORY 221


**N.B. I:** The required books will be available at the BYU Bookstore. To subvert the monopoly system (and potentially save yourself some money) you might consider buying books from an alternate source such as bookfinder.com, abebooks.com, or amazon.com. If you choose to purchase the books from another vendor, be sure that you get the correct edition of each title.

**N.B. II:** History courses require a great deal of reading. Many students who enroll in this course come from other academic programs (e.g. Political Science, Secondary Education, American Studies, Engineering) and thus may not be accustomed to the reading workload. Please be aware of this aspect of the course and do your best to keep up with the assigned readings each week.
Occasionally throughout the semester, we will devote class time to a discussion of current events. To participate in and understand these discussions, you will need to get into the habit of reading a newspaper regularly—a good habit to acquire in any event. Fortunately, you can pick up a free copy of the New York Times at the Kennedy Center each weekday, and most major national newspapers (including the NYT, Los Angeles Times, and Washington Post) have free on-line editions of which you can take advantage. The Daily Universe is NOT considered to be major, or national, or (frequently) a newspaper...broaden your horizons.

You are responsible for everything on this syllabus and all other handouts I distribute, as well as all e-mail communication that occurs during the semester. In the immortal words of Brad Hamilton, “Learn it, know it, live it.” Ignorance is not a valid defense.
# EXTREMELY TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

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**Week #1:** A NEW AMERICAN PARADIGM  
August 31  
Introduction to the course  
Politics of Industrialization  

Reading:  
Henretta, et. al., ch. 16-17  
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 2  
Weisner & Hartford, eds., part I intro & Susan LaFlesche Picotte  

**Week #2:** INDUSTRIAL AMERICA AND ITS CRITICS  
September 7  
Rise of Corporate America and the Populist Response to Big Business  

Reading:  
Henretta, et. al., ch. 18-20  
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 3  
Weisner & Hartford, eds., Mary Lease, Henry McNeal Turner, and John D. Rockefeller  

**Week #3:** IMPERIAL DEMOCRACY  
September 14  
Post-Civil War U.S. foreign policy  
**PAPER TOPIC E-MAIL DUE BY 12:00PM**  

Reading:  
Henretta, et. al., ch. 21  
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 4  

**Week #4:** PROGRESSIVISM  
September 21  
The Search for Order at Home and Abroad  

Reading:  
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 5  
Weisner & Hartford, eds., part II intro & Theodore Roosevelt, Eugene Debs, W.E.B. DuBois, and Margaret Sanger  

**Week #5:** THE WAR TO END ALL WARS  
September 28  
World War I: “Over There” and the Home Front  

Reading:  
Henretta, et. al., ch. 22  
Hoffman & Gjerde, eds., ch. 6
Week #6: MIDTERM

October 5  NO CLASS: TAKE MIDTERM AT TESTING CENTER
Reading: Review for midterm; catch up on readings

Week #7: THE 1920S AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

October 12 Returning to “Normalcy,” the Crisis, and the New Deal
Reading: Henretta, et. al., ch. 23
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 7
Weisner & Hartford, eds., Huey Long

Week #8: THE ROAD TO WAR...AGAIN

October 19 From Neutrality to War
Reading: Henretta, et. al., ch. 24
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 8
Weisner & Hartford, eds., Eleanor Roosevelt

Week #9: ALLIES AND ADVERSARIES

October 26 Winning the “Good War” at Home and Abroad & the Origins of the Cold War
Reading: Henretta, et. al., ch. 25
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 9-10
Weisner & Hartford, eds., George Patton

Week #10: ON EVERY FRONT

November 2 Global Cold War at Home and Abroad
Reading: Henretta, et. al., ch. 26
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 11
Weisner & Hartford, eds., part III intro & Joseph McCarthy

Week #11: CIVIL RIGHTS

November 9 Civil Rights & Civil Liberties
Reading: Henretta, et. al., ch. 27
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 12
Weisner & Hartford, eds., Martin Luther King, Jr.
Week #12: AMERICA’S UNCIVIL WARS

November 16  The United States in the 1960s

Reading:  Henretta, et. al., ch. 28
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 13
Weisner & Hartford, eds., Betty Freidan and Cesar Chavez

Week #13: MENTAL HEALTH BREAK

November 23  NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Reading:  Catch up on readings; travel safely

Week #14: THE 1970s & 1980s

November 30  From Vietnam and Watergate to “Morning in America”
RESEARCH PAPER DUE AT BEGINNING OF LECTURE

Reading:  Henretta, et. al., ch. 29-30
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 14-15
Weisner & Hartford, eds., Ronald Reagan

Week #15: NOVUS ORDO SECULORUM?

December 7  Bush 41, Clinton, and the Second American Century

Reading:  Henretta, et. al., ch. 31
Hoffman, Blum, & Gjerde, eds., ch. 16
Weisner & Hartford, eds., Bill Gates

Final Exam: AVAILABLE AT TESTING CENTER (HGB)
MONDAY, DECEMBER 12 TO FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16