

AMH 2020: American History from 1877 to Present
University of Florida
Department of History
Spring 2019

Instructor: Kaitlyn Muchnok

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Office Hours: Monday & Wednesdays, 2:00 p.m – 4:00 p.m., Keene-Flint Room 222

Class Meeting Times: Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays, 12:50 – 1:40 p.m. (6th Period)

Section Number: 21697

Room: CSE E220

Course Description: This survey course covers American history from Reconstruction's end to the present day with an emphasis on the political, intellectual, social, and cultural realms. Many people believe the study of history includes memorizing facts and dates. This information is very important, but it is not the discipline's primary goal. The purpose of studying history is to learn about the past, develop skills in critical thinking, analysis, interpretation of evidence, and academic writing. In general, historians ask specific questions about the past including: What happened? Why did it happen? Does it matter? How does our own personal bias shape our answers to these questions? Learning how to pursue the question-answer part of history will be a central goal of this course.

More specifically, this class will examine how the United States rapidly grew throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, fought two world wars, expanded voting and citizenship rights, fought contentious racial, class, and gender battles, emerged as a world power, and exploded economically. We will pay special attention to the historical themes and issues that remain relevant to today's world. These themes and issues include the meaning of equality, liberty, and freedom, the diversity of the American experience, the meaning of American citizenship, economic, social, and political power, how major conflicts arise, and the roles of race, class, gender, and ethnicity throughout the period. To answer these questions, students will analyze primary source evidence, engage critically with secondary sources written by historians, and work on developing their communication skills via class discussions and written assignments. My goal is to provide you with both a better understanding of America's past and present in a lively, interactive, and thought-provoking way.

Questions we will explore include: What is the proper role of government in economic and social life? To what extent should the government legislate morality regarding religion, sexual practices, drinking, and mass culture? What are the governments duties and responsibilities to citizens? What are citizens duties and responsibilities to one another? Who is a citizen? What does American citizenship mean? How did various generations respond to cultural and political conflicts that arose from the conditions of diversity? How does one's gender, race, ethnicity, religious background, and/or economic status affect their access to liberty, equality, power, and opportunity? What role does violence play in American society? What is the meaning of American freedom, equality, and patriotism?

Required Readings: The following textbooks are required for this course. I encourage you to buy used when possible. Amazon is a great resource for ordering much more affordable copies.

- *American Yawp*, A free online textbook found at: <http://www.americanyawp.com/>
- McGuire, Danielle, *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance--- A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power*, Vintage Press, 2011.
- Wakatsuki, Jeanne Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*, Young Readers Paperback, 2017.
- Maier-Sarti, *Annual Editions: United States History, Vol. 2: Reconstruction through the Present*, **23rd edition**, McGraw Hill Publishers.
 - *Very important that your purchase the correct edition! ☺
- Other assigned works will be available via the course E-learning page*

Course Assignments: Each of the assignments below

- **Participation** (250 points total, 125 points before the midterm/125 points after the midterm)
 - Students are expected to arrive to class on time, silence cell phones, and engage proactively with the course lectures and discussions. To get a high participation grade, students should comment, ask questions, or respond to fellow classmates during Friday's discussion sections. While we will not have weekly quizzes, it is expected that students demonstrate they've done the required weekly readings through their engagement in discussion.
- **5 Discussion Posts** (250 points total/50 points each)
 - Throughout the semester, students will be expected to respond to five questions posted on the course's E-Learning page. The due dates for each of these assignments can be found below in the course schedule section. For each post, students will be asked to engage critically with the course material to explain their perspective. Students should assess the question, form an educated argument, and use evidence from both the primary sources and the secondary literature listed below. These posts should be thoughtful, well-articulated, and organized effectively. Finally, each student is expected to respond to one or two of their classmate's posts within 48 hours of the original post's due date. These responses should be respectful and can build upon your classmates' ideas or challenge their perspective. These should be 1-2 paragraphs in length.
- **Midterm Exam** (100 points total)
 - The midterm will take place on Friday February 22. You will need to bring a bluebook to class the day of the exam. The midterm will require you to identify a number of key terms discussed throughout the course.
- **Analytical Essay** (200 points total)
 - A 4-5 page analytical essay will be due on Monday April 1st before 12:50 pm. The essay will be on the civil rights movement and Danielle McGuire's *At the Dark End of the Street*. Students should follow the assignment's guidelines for completing their paper. These guidelines will be posted on the course's E-Learning sight at least 2 weeks before the essay's due date. All papers should contain a work's cited page, follow MLA citation formatting, be doubled spaced, include page numbers, use 12 pt. Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins.

- **Final Exam** (200 points total)
 - The final exam will take place on Wednesday April 29th from 10:00am -12:00pm. You will need to bring a bluebook to class the day of the exam. The final will have a short answer and essay section. Students will choose which questions to respond to in each section.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is essential to your learning experience. Attendance will be taken every class meeting day. You are permitted **three** unexcused absences without penalty. As discussed above, Fridays are much more discussion based and require active student engagement and participation in class conversations and debates. Missing more than **two** Friday discussions will result in a serious deduction from your participation grade. The fourth unexcused absence will result in a drop of your overall grade by half a letter grade (for example, instead of receiving a B+ you would receive a B). Each additional absence will result in an additional half letter decrease in your grade. Please note that if you plan on using an unexcused absence, you do not need to email me to let me know. However, if your absence fits with in the university's established acceptable excuses, please communicate with me via email to let me know you will miss class.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will receive a reduced grade. An assignment is considered late as soon as the designated time has passed. For example, if the paper is due at 12pm, the paper is considered late at 12:01 pm. The University policy on make up assignments, lateness, and attendance issues can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

Technology Policy: Please put your phone away at the beginning of each class period. You are permitted to use your laptop during Monday & Wednesday's class meetings to take notes. During these days, please temporarily disable your WiFi for the entirety of the course period. Getting on non-course related websites is not only a disservice to your own learning experience, but also a distraction to students around you and **especially** the instructor. On Fridays, no laptops or phones are permitted on desks. If you need to take notes on the material, please print them out or hand write them for these days. You are also encouraged to bring your own copies of the required reading to class for that week on Fridays. Feel free to take notes in the books or highlight relevant material to help trigger your memory for classroom discussion.

Communication Policy: Students should communicate with the instructor primarily through email, office hour visits, or appointments made by student requests. Please use kaitlynmchnok@ufl.edu to contact me during regular business hours. I generally stop checking emails after 7:00pm so please make an effort to reach out to me earlier in the day with urgent questions and issues. Additionally, students must regularly check the course's E-Learning page for assignment updates, links to required readings, and course announcements.

Additionally, throughout the course, discussion sections and lectures can include sensitive and controversial topics. It is expected that students come to class with an open mind, prepared to engage with complicated issues and questions and listen to classmates' perspectives that may differ from their own. Thoughtful, honest, and evidence-based points of view are crucial for

productive conversations and learning. To ensure that everyone feels respected, please refrain from personal attacks and offensive remarks. A goal of this class is to emphasize empathy in historical studies, or the ability to understand the feelings or perspective of others, without necessarily sharing their point of view.

UF Grading Scale: Grades will be assigned according to the follow university grading scale.

A	93-100		A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	68-69	D	66-67	D-	64-65
F	<64				

Academic Honesty: UF policy requires you to access and use your gatorlink account. Excuses regarding not reading emails will not be accepted. Additionally, academic dishonesty, such as cheating, plagiarism, or submitting someone else’s work without citing them will not be tolerated. UF’s honor code can be found here: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>.

Disability Information: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting the accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Student Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students as <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Lecture, Discussion, & Assignment Schedule:

Week One: Introduction to Academic History & Reconstruction’s End

January 7: Course Introduction & Syllabus Overview

January 9-11: **READ:** “Why Reconstruction Matters:”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/29/opinion/sunday/why-reconstruction-matters.html>

Week Two: America’s Gilded Age

January 14-18: **READ:** American Yawp CH. 16 & 17, “Capital & Labor” & “Conquering the West & Annual Editions pg. 7-14.

Week Three: Life in Industrial America

January 21: MLK JR DAY, NO CLASS
January 23-25: READ: American Yawp, Ch. 18, "Life in Industrial America" & Annual Editions pg. 15-26 & 29-34 & TBD.
DISCUSSION BOARD POST DUE by Wednesday January 23rd at 12:50 pm

Week Four: Freedom's Boundaries, At Home & Abroad

January 28-Feb 1: READ: American Yawp, Ch. 19, "American Empire" & Annual Editions pg. 36-41 & TBD

Week Five: The Progressive Era

February 4-8: READ: American Yawp, Ch. 20, "The Progressive Era" & Annual Editions pg. 44-53 & 58-59; & TBD.
DISCUSSION BOARD POST DUE on February 6th by 12:50 pm

Week Six: Safe for Democracy, The United States & World War I

February 11-15: READ: American Yawp, Ch. 21, "World War I & Its Aftermath"; & Annual Editions pg. 60-65.

Week Seven: From Business Culture to Great Depression

February 18-22: Read: American Yawp, Ch. 22, "The New Era"
IN CLASS MIDTERM Friday, February 22

Week Eight: The New Deal

February 25-Mar 1: READ: American Yawp, Ch. 23, "The Great Depression."; Annual Editions pg. 83-105. & Start reading *Farewell to Manzanar*

Week Nine: Spring Break

March 4 - 8: RECOMMENDED: BE SAFE & HAVE FUN!
RECOMMENDED: Read *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston

Week Ten: Fighting for the Four Freedoms, World War II

March 11-15: READ: American Yawp, Ch. 24, "World War II," Finish reading *Farewell Manzanar* by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, & WATCH: *Band of Brothers*, episode 9, "Why We Fight," available on HBO GO, YouTube, or AmazonPrime.
DISCUSSION BOARD POST DUE WEDNESDAY MARCH 13th by 12:50pm

Week Eleven: The Affluent Society

March 18-22: READ: American Yawp Ch. 25, “The Cold War” & Ch. 26, “The Affluent Society”
WATCH: “I Love Lucy,” Lucy Wants New Furniture (season 2, episode 28) on Hulu or here: <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6gau4q> ;
READ: “Why I Love Lucy is More Revolutionary than You Think” by Lily Karlin & “I Hate I Love Lucy” by Lili Loofbourow, here: https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/26/lucille-ball-revolutionary_n_7138476.html
<https://theweek.com/articles/745681/hate-love-lucy>
DISCUSSION BOARD POST DUE by WEDNESDAY MARCH 20 @ 12:50 pm

Week Twelve: The Civil Rights Movement

March 25-30: READ: *At the Dark End of the Street* by Danielle McGuire.

Week Thirteen: The Sixties

April 1-5: READ: American Yawp, Ch. 27, “The Sixties.”; Annual Editions, pg. 116-129 & Phyllis Schlafly’s “What’s Wrong with ‘Equal Rights’ for Women?” here: <https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2016/02/02/whats-wrong-with-equal-rights-for-women-1972/> & Gloria Steinman’s “Living the Revolution” speech here: <http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/steinem-living-the-revolution-speech-text/>
ANALYTICAL ESSAY DUE WEDNESDAY APRIL 3rd by 12:50 pm.

Week Fourteen: The Triumph of Conservatism

April 8-12: READ: American Yawp, Ch. 28, “The Unraveling,” & Ch. 29, “The Triumph of the Right.”; Annual Editions, pgs. 130-143 & TBD.

Week Fifteen: From Triumph to Tragedy

April 15-19: READ: American Yawp, Ch. 30, “The Recent Past.”; Annual Editions, pg. 145-151 & WATCH: *13th*, Directed by Ava DuVernay, available on Netflix.
DISCUSSION BOARD POST DUE on WEDNESDAY April 17th by 12:50 pm

Week Sixteen: A New Century & a New Crisis

April 22-24: READ: Annual Editions, pg. 152-155, 159-162 & pg. 172-184 & TBD

LAST DAY OF CLASS!

Final Exam: April 29th 10 am- 12 pm in our regular classroom!

