

AMH 2020 Section 08HF

American History from 1877 to Present – Fall 2016

Class Meeting Times:

Tuesdays Period 7 (1:55-2:45 P.M.)

Thursdays Periods 7-8 (1:55-3:50 P.M.)

Instructor: **Brian C. Bredehoeft**

Office: Keene-Flint 112 (Graduate Student Lounge)

Office Hours: By Appointment and Tuesdays Period 8

****PLEASE NOTE** ALL STUDENTS** are required to come to office hours **AT LEAST TWICE** this semester (once before the midterm and once after).

Email: I have two email addresses available depending on the importance of the message:

brianb1@ufl.edu for ordinary, non-urgent communications (response < 48 hours);

bbredehoeft@gmail.com for URGENT matters only (Use this for Last Minute notification about missing classes, or other **urgent matters**). This email comes to my phone and is checked no less than once/2 hours. ****PLEASE NOTE**** Non-urgent messages sent to this address will not receive responses! This is your “emergency” contact email only!

This American History course will explore prominent themes and events in American history after the Civil War. The course title suggests that we will finish the course with the history of 2016 by semester’s end, but we will probably finish somewhere between the 1980s and 9/11. Throughout this semester, you are encouraged to ask questions, challenge/question existing historical theories and try to discover ways that American history is relevant to the American present and future. While the bulk of our time in the classroom is dedicated to lectures, it is also a place for relevant discussions. It is important for you to learn from one another and the unique and diverse perspectives that you bring into the classroom, thus, relevant discussions are encouraged (and hopefully cultivated). To have success in this course, **it is imperative that you keep up with the assigned readings**. The primary text serves as the base for all of our lectures and discussions, and it covers important material not covered in class lectures. In addition to the primary text, you have a supplemental reader and two monographs. ****PLEASE NOTE**** You will not be reading any “novels” in this class (novel = fiction). Your grade this semester will be based on a midterm exam, a cumulative final exam, an analytical (4-6 page) paper, one syllabus quiz, nine (9) readings quizzes (5 in-class “POP” quizzes and 4 scheduled, open book quizzes on CANVAS), Attendance and Class participation and two office hours visits. Your grade for this course will be determined as follows:

Midterm -	20%
Final Exam -	25%
Analytical Paper:	20%
Quizzes -	
Syllabus Quiz:	2%
Readings Quizzes	16%
Attendance	5%
Class Participation/Discussion	10%
Office Hours Visits	2%

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale. Be aware of minus grades!

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				

There is an emphasis on reading and writing in this class. Therefore, be prepared to engage the books critically and spend time crafting well-thought out papers and responses.

Social and Behavioral Sciences and Diversity Credit

General Education: Objectives for Social and Behavioral Sciences and Diversity

This course satisfies the Social and Behavioral Science Gen-Ed Credit at the University of Florida. Social and behavioral science courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures and processes. This course emphasizes the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes and human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

This course also satisfies the Diversity Gen-Ed Credit at the University of Florida. Diversity courses provide instruction in the values, attitudes and norms that create cultural differences within the United States. This course will encourage you to recognize how social roles and status affect different groups and impact U.S. society. This course will guide you to analyze and to evaluate your own cultural norms and values in relation to those of other cultures, and to distinguish opportunities and constraints faced by other persons and groups.

General Education: Student Learning Outcomes for Social and Behavioral Sciences and Diversity

Category

Definition

Course SLO

CONTENT	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, terminology and methodologies used within the historical discipline.	Students will demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used within the historical discipline. Students will also know the roles of social structure and status of different groups within the United States.
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COMMUNICATION	Communication is the development and expression of ideas in written and oral forms.	Students will communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written or oral forms appropriate to the historical discipline.
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CRITICAL THINKING	Critical thinking is characterized by the comprehensive analysis of issues, ideas, and evidence before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.	Students will analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using historical methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems. Students will also analyze and evaluate their own cultural norms and values in relation to those of other cultures. Students will identify, evaluate and compare their own social status, opportunities and constraints with those of other persons and groups.
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I encourage questions and class discussion. Please do not hesitate to ask both factual and interpretative questions. If you have specific questions on the subject matter or grading, please come see me during office hours. I also encourage you to contact me by e-mail as I respond promptly to questions, concerns, or comments.

Syllabus & Course Instructions

Due to the increasingly technological nature of our society, I find it necessary to address the issues of cell phones in class. Please turn off all of these electronic devices before coming to class, as they are disruptive to the learning environment and distracting to other students. Thanks

I also need to address tardiness to class in a more formalized manner. Lateness is also disruptive and distracting to a positive learning experience. Constant carping on this issue both

demeans the class and takes away from learning time. Therefore, I urge you, as responsible adults, to arrive to class on time ready to learn. To encourage on-time behavior, one point will be deducted from each quiz that you are tardy. This policy will start with the first quiz. Again, your cooperation is appreciated. Thank You.

Class attendance is an important component of your learning experience, especially in an introductory course. Since students are adults, a mandatory attendance policy will not be in effect for this course, however, attendance will comprise 5% of your final grade. Beginning from week 2, there are 27 classes this semester (not counting the day of the midterm). You will be allowed 2 unexcused absences without any point reduction, making each class worth 0.2% of your final grade, so, feel free to calculate how often you think you should attend. Please be aware that make-ups for quizzes will not be available, except for excused medical absences (signed by authorized medical personnel) or attendance at official university functions, and that class participation is worth an additional 10% of your final grade (and it is very difficult to participate if you are not present).

Students requesting classroom accommodations for disability issues must first register with the Office of the Dean of Students. This office will provide documentation to the student who then must provide this documentation to me. I am more than willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure an optimum learning environment for all students.

Be aware of the University's policy on plagiarism. The internet has made plagiarism more problematic, but it has also made plagiarism **much easier to identify**. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please do not hesitate to ask. I **STRONGLY** recommend that you take a look at the following resource on plagiarism: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/1/>. There is a zero-tolerance plagiarism policy in this class and have no misapprehensions, **plagiarists will be caught. It is expected that all students will be responsible for their own work. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated.** Please see me if you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism and review the UF Student Code of Conduct here: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/> **ALL plagiarism offenses will be reported on a Faculty Adjudication Form and forwarded to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. You may get more information on UF's Judicial Affairs process at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php>.** Let me also note here that plagiarism can follow you after graduation, most students do not seem to know this, but serious honor code violations (like plagiarism) can result in the revocation of your degree from the University long after graduation. Plagiarism is lazy and it is foolish, just don't do it!

You will have 10 quizzes this semester. The first is a multiple choice syllabus quiz, available on CANVAS from 8/25-8/30 (11:59 P.M.). This quiz is mandatory and will serve to acknowledge that you have read the entire syllabus. It is worth 2% of your final grade. The remaining 9 quizzes are broken down into two formats: 5 in class POP Quizzes and 4 scheduled quizzes on CANVAS. The 5 pop quizzes will be unannounced (hence "POP" quiz) and will

consist of 5 broad multiple choice questions derived from your readings and lectures (for the current week and up to 1 week prior). You will have exactly 8 minutes at the beginning of class to complete these. The additional 4 quizzes will be scheduled and available for a full business week (Monday@ 12:00 A.M.-Friday@ 11:59 P.M.) on CANVAS. These will consist of 15 detailed questions derived from your readings and lectures for the current and prior week. These four quizzes will be timed at 60 minutes. This will give you ample time to answer if you have completed the readings, but will prove challenging if you are simply trying to find the answers in the books! I will drop the lowest quiz grade (of the 9, the syllabus quiz grade will not drop), giving you a total of 8 quizzes counted towards your total quiz grade of 16% (with each quiz worth 2% of your final grade). Between office visit points and quiz points, 20% of your final grade is essentially given to you for doing the everyday coursework and following directions! Historically, I have found that the quizzes are often the grades separating As from Bs and Bs from Cs, so, again, I just want to encourage all of you to keep up with the readings.

There is a 4-6 page paper on the monograph reading for this class- *Blood Done Sign My Name*. It will be due on the Tuesday of the 14th week of classes (November 22), just before Thanksgiving Break. You will receive the details for this assignment on the first class after drop/add ends. If you have questions or problems with this assignment, please come & see me early.

Reading/Writing Expectations: You are expected to read and write at a college level. Your ability to do so is critical for your success in this course. I highly recommend that you visit the University of Florida Writing Studio (<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>) located at 302 Tigert Hall. Appointments are strongly recommended, but they do accept walk-ins when time permits. Students who work on their papers with the tutors at the Writing Center consistently score higher than they otherwise would have on their papers. In addition, the Writing Studio will help you develop better study habits and skills that will positively affect your college success. Please utilize this resource—you're already paying for it!

The four books listed below for this course will be available for purchase at bookstores around campus. They will also be available for purchase on-line. If you experience any problems in buying the books, please let me know as soon as possible. ****PLEASE NOTE**** Online purchases are fine, but you **MUST** have the correct edition of the books listed. Additionally, you need to pay close attention to **WHEN** your online orders will arrive. Not having the books **IS NOT** a valid excuse after September 1.

The course books are:

The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America:
By Erik Larson. Paperback – 2003 ISBN: 978-0375725609

After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection: By: Davidson & Lytle - Volume Two- 6th
Edition- 2010 (Listed in syllabus as **ATF**) ISBN: 978-0077292690

Blood Done Sign My Name: A True Story: Timothy B. Tyson. Paperback – 2004.
ISBN: 978-1400083114

The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People. 8th Edition. Alan Brinkley.
McGraw Hill - 2016. (Listed in syllabus as **Text**) ISBN: 978-1259284755

****A Quick Note on Textbook Costs**** I understand that many students get stressed/frustrated by the high cost of textbooks. 3 of the four texts here can be purchased or rented for around \$20 or less. The Brinkley text is certainly a bit pricey, but it will have resale value at the end of the semester—currently, you can trade it in for an Amazon gift card worth about \$50. Often times, older editions are less expensive up front, but they have no resale value, making them more expensive in the end. So, consider the benefit of having access to the most recent accepted scholarship and the ability to recoup some of the cost, the text *The Unfinished Nation* (currently \$85.75 on Amazon) ultimately costs about \$36 for the semester, which is about \$2.25 per week—less than a single latte per week. I hope that this perspective helps ease the pain a bit!**

COURSE GOALS:

During this semester, we will do our best to grapple with history's complications. It is my hope that by semester's end, you will be able to view American History (and history in general) as a web of complex interactions and that you will evaluate history and historical events with a critical eye. Very rarely does historical reality present itself in stark terms (i.e. good vs. evil), so it is critical that you question the motives/biases of historical actors as well as those of the historian-authors of your books. In doing so, try to understand how different perspectives tend to create different histories. People frequently define history as the “facts of the past.” But this is a seriously flawed (and naïve) definition. “Facts” are quite often colored by the biases of the person recording them. Understand also that this is true of most intellectual pursuits (remember, it was not all that long ago that science “proved” that women were intellectually inferior to men, Northern and Western Europeans were intellectually superior to all other races, that the earth was the center of the universe and that the sun revolved around it, and other similar scientific “truths”). The point here is that, while there are historical “facts,” history (as a discipline) is about **interpreting** the significance of events, attempting to reconstruct events from a variety of perspectives in order to understand the importance of the past and how it shapes/shaped our present.

Finally, this is your course, and you should always feel comfortable working with your instructors. I check my email daily and will respond to your queries or concerns promptly (within 48 hours minimum).

Weekly Syllabus & Readings-

It is important that you keep up on the readings, as they will provide the base knowledge for class lectures and discussions.

Week One- August 22-26

Text- Chapter 15- “Reconstruction and the New South”

Week Two- August 29- September 2

Text- Chapter 16- ”The Conquest of the Far West”

ATF- Chapter 8- “The View from the Bottom Rail.”

Begin Reading *The Devil in the White City*

Week Three- September 5-9

Text- Chapter 17- “Industrial Supremacy”

Week Four- September 12-16

Text- Chapter 18 “The Age of the City”

ATF- Chapter 9- “The Mirror with a Memory.”

Complete *The Devil in the White City*

Week Five- September 19-23

Text- Chapter 19- “From Crisis to Empire”

Week Six- September 26-30

Text- Chapter 20- “The Progressives”

AFT- Chapter 10- “USDA Government Inspected.”

Week Seven- October 3-7

Text- Chapter 21 “America and the Great War”

Week Eight- October 10-14

Midterm Exam- Tuesday, October 11th - class period

Text -Chapter 22 “The New Era”

ATF- Chapter 11- “Sacco & Vanzetti.”

Begin Reading *Blood Done Sign My Name*

Week Nine- October 17-21

Text- Chapters 23 & 24 “The Great Depression” “The New Deal”

ATF- Chapter 11- “Dust Bowl Odyssey

Week Ten- October 24-28

Text- Chapter 25- “The Global Crisis”

Week Eleven- October 31-November 4

Text- Chapter 26- “America in a World at War”

ATF- Chapter 13- “The Decision to Drop the Bomb.”

Week Twelve- November 7-11

Text- Chapters 27 & 28 - “The Cold War” & “The Affluent Society.”

ATF – Chapter 14 – “From Rosie to Lucy

Week Thirteen- November 14-18

Text- Chapter 29 - “The Turbulent Sixties”

ATF – Chapter 14 “Sitting In”

Week Fourteen- November 22

Text- Chapter 30 - “The Crisis of Authority”

ATF- Chapter 15 “Breaking into Watergate” & Chapter 16 “Where Trouble Comes.”

Paper Due at the BEGINNING of class.

Week Fifteen- November 28-December 2

Text – Chapter 31 – “From ‘The Age of Limits’ to the Age of Reagan

Week Sixteen- December 6

Last Day of Class- Tuesday- December 6th- There will be no class on Thursday, December 8th as classes end on Wednesday December 7th.

Final Exam- Friday, December 16th from 12:30 – 2:30 P.M. in our classroom