

History 102
The History of the United States since the Civil War
(4 credits for all students)

Professor Jeremi Suri
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Office: 5119 Humanities
suri@wisc.edu
(608) 263-1852
Office hours:
Tuesdays, 10:AM to Noon,
or by appointment

Spring 2010
Lectures: T TH 8:00 -9:15 AM
3650 Humanities
Teaching Assistants:
Ashley Cundiff
David Fields
Brittany Tevis

Course Aims

This course is designed to provide students with a grounding in some of the most controversial, enduring, and relevant topics in the history of the United States, broadly defined. Students will read a wide range of monographs and primary source materials. Lectures and weekly small-group discussions will encourage students to compare and contrast various points of view, and interrogate broad historical transformations since the Civil War. The course will emphasize intensive reading, analytical writing, and critical thinking. The instructor and teaching assistants will, at all times, encourage students to articulate different points of view. Our central purpose is to stimulate informed, thoughtful, and intelligent perspectives on the American experience. This includes close attention to politics, society, culture, economy, diplomacy, and military affairs. It also includes an international and transnational understanding of how Americans have interacted historically with those defined as non-Americans. Instead of comprehensiveness and textbook detail, this will be a course about big ideas, big transformations, and big debates – that continue into the twenty-first century. We will not strive for consensus or agreement in this course; we will nurture learned discussion and collective engagement with the complexities of our society's history.

Lecture Attendance

The course will meet two times per week for lectures by the professor. These lectures will complement the readings, but they will also present empirical material and interpretive perspectives not available elsewhere. **Students are required to attend all lectures.** The professor will monitor each student's attendance. Unexcused absence from lecture will adversely affect the student's grade.

Weekly Discussion Sections

All students are required to attend weekly discussion sections. Students must complete the assigned readings through the meeting date, **before discussion begins**. The teaching assistants will lead the discussions. The professor will also participate in sections on occasion. We expect all students to attend the weekly sections prepared for a serious and wide-ranging conversation about the issues raised in the assigned readings and the class lectures. Students are encouraged to think creatively and voice individual opinions. We will not look for “right” answers, as much as thoughtful comments. Informed and active participation in discussions should allow each student to receive full credit for this 20% of the course grade.

Document Analysis

All students will write a 3-page analysis of a document from the primary materials collected in Eric Foner’s anthology, *Voices of Freedom*. Students should choose a document assigned for the required course readings before February 23. Students will write an analytical essay that follows this format:

Page 1: Describe the argument of the document and the purpose of its writer(s). Quote the most compelling phrases in the document, and explain their importance.

Page 2: Contextualize the document. Explain what the document tells about the time during which it was written. What do we learn about American society, politics, and culture from the chosen document? What do we learn about the hopes, fears, visions, and frustrations of the era during which the document appeared?

Page 3: Critique the document. Describe inaccuracies, prejudices, exaggerations, and misleading statements in the document. Analyze how the document could have offered a more compelling account of the historical period. How could it tell us more about society, politics, and culture in the United States at that time?

Document analysis essays are due at the start of lecture (8:00am) on **Tuesday, February 23**.

The document analysis essay will account for 20% of the student grade.

Mid-term Examination

On March 23 the professor will distribute one mid-term essay question at the end of class. Students should write a 1200 word (4-5 double-spaced pages, 12-point font) answer to this question. The essay should make use of material from assigned readings, class lectures, and weekly discussions. Students may consult books and discuss their answers with one another. Each essay, however, should reflect **the original writing of each student**. Students should proofread their essays for clarity, substance, and style (grammatical mistakes, passive voice, and sloppy writing will incur grade deductions.) **The mid-term examination essay is due at the start of lecture (8:00am) on Thursday, March 25. Students should print their essays and bring them to class. We will not accept late submissions.** The mid-term essay will account for 25% of the student grade.

Final Examination

The course will conclude with a take-home final examination. It will cover material from the entire semester. The professor will distribute two final examination questions at the end of class on May 6. Students should write a 1000 word (4 double-spaced pages, 12-point font) answer to each of the two questions. The essay should make use of material from assigned readings, class lectures, and weekly discussions. Students may consult books and discuss their answers with one another. Each essay, however, should reflect the **original writing of each student**. Students should proofread their essays for clarity, substance, and style (grammatical mistakes, passive voice, and sloppy writing will incur grade deductions.) **Students must print and submit their final examination answers by Noon on Tuesday, May 11 in 5119 Humanities Building.** We will not accept late submissions. The final examination will account for 35% of each student's grade.

Grades

Document Analysis	20%
Mid-term Examination:	25%
Final Examination:	35%
Participation in Weekly Discussions:	20%

Assigned Books

Available in new and used editions at the **University Bookstore**
711 State Street
Tel. (608) 257-3784

The assigned books are also on reserve at the **College Library**
Reserve Books Section, 1st Floor

- Dawley, Alan. *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).
- Foner, Eric. *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History, Volume 2, Second Edition* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008).
- Hahn, Steven. *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005).
- Lassiter, Matthew D. *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).
- Leffler, Melvyn P. *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994).
- McPherson, James M. *Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).
- Suri, Jeremi. *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003).

Week 1:

1/19 Introduction

1/21 The Civil War and the Second American Revolution

McPherson, 3-64;

Hahn, 62-115.

Week 2:

1/26 Reconstruction and its Achievements

McPherson, 131-52;

Hahn, 163-215.

1/28 Politics and Society in the Shadow of Reconstruction

Hahn, 265-313;

Primary documents in Foner, 1-29.

Week 3:

2/2 The New South

Hahn, 317-411.

2/4 Gilded Age Society and Global Capitalism

Primary documents in Foner, 30-51.

Week 4:

2/9 Populism

Hahn, 412-64;

Primary documents in Foner, 52-72.

2/11 Imperialism

Primary documents in Foner, 72-81.

Week 5:

2/16 The New Internationalism

Hahn, 465-76;

Dawley, 1-39.

2/18 The Progressives

Dawley, 41-104;

Primary documents in Foner, 82-105.

Week 6:

- 2/23 Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and the Progressives
Dawley, 107-79;
Primary documents in Foner, 105-116.
Document analysis essay due at the start of lecture (8:00am).
- 2/25 The Great War and the Progressives
Dawley, 181-294;
Primary documents in Foner, 117-46.

Week 7:

- 3/2 Herbert Hoover and the Associative State
Leffler, 3-32;
Primary documents in Foner, 147-75.
- 3/4 The Great Depression
Dawley, 297-358;
Primary documents in Foner, 177-85.

Week 8:

- 3/9 Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal
Primary documents in Foner, 186-205.
- 3/11 The New Deal and the Coming of World War II
Leffler, 33-63.

Week 9:

- 3/16 Fighting World War II
Primary documents in Foner, 207-227.
- 3/18 The United States in 1945
Leffler, 64-96.

Week 10:

- 3/23 The Origins of the Cold War
Leffler, 97-130;
Primary documents in Foner, 228-55.
Mid-term examination question distributed at the end of lecture.
- 3/25 Cold War Society and Culture
Suri, 7-43.
Primary documents in Foner, 256-81.
Mid-term examination essay due at the start of lecture (8:00am).

Week 11:

3/30 SPRING BREAK

4/1 SPRING BREAK

Week 12:

4/6 Nuclear Stalemate and the American Economic Miracle
Suri, 88-130;
Primary documents in Foner, 282-311.

4/8 The Second Reconstruction
Lassiter, 23-118.

Week 13:

4/13 The Vietnam War
Suri, 131-63.

4/15 The Global Disruption of 1968
Suri, 164-212.

Week 14:

4/20 The New Conservatism and Détente
Suri, 213-59;
Primary documents in Foner, 312-332.

4/22 The New South – Again
Lassiter, 121-222.

Week 15:

4/27 The Reagan Revolution and the End of the Cold War
Lassiter, 225-300;
Primary document in Foner, 332-35.

4/29 The Peace Dividend and its Discontents
Lassiter, 301-330;
Primary documents in Foner, 336-54.

Week 16

5/4 A Third American Revolution?
Suri, 260-65;
Primary documents in Foner, 356-73.

5/6 Review Lecture
Final examination questions distributed at the end of lecture.

**Take-home final examinations are due by Noon on Tuesday, May 11.
Submit them in Professor Suri's Office – 5119 Humanities.
We will not accept late exams, no exceptions!**