

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: U.S. History, Part I (History 105), Section 07C

Instructor: Dr. Ben Gates

Time: Tuesdays, 6:00-8:45 p.m.

Location: Dekalb Senior High School, Auburn

Semester: Spring, 2005

This course covers the history of the United States from its pre-colonial roots during the 16th century through the Reconstruction period following the Civil War. I have two goals in teaching this material: 1) that my students will understand a general, conceptual framework of ideas that will serve to organize their thinking about this historical era; and 2) that they will learn to think critically about the material to which they are exposed in lecture and their reading. My orientation toward teaching this course reflects these goals. I will de-emphasize specific names, dates, and places (although a certain body of these facts will be essential to our study) while emphasizing concepts and ideas. I will also examine your comprehension of the material in a way that will allow you to demonstrate your analysis of the concepts we discuss. Finally, I will encourage you to ask questions and to integrate your own thinking into our study throughout the semester.

It is inevitable in a history survey course that most people will not be history majors. In fact, at the outset, most of my students usually feel either indifferent or even hostile toward the study of history. I hope to change the latter two views. Invariably, bad experiences with past history courses spoil our appreciation of this subject matter. I truly find the study of history very interesting, even stimulating. I hope that I can communicate this enthusiasm to you in a contagious fashion. At the same time, I realize that there are simply certain classes that do not appeal to each of us; I am bored at the thought of physics or chemistry. So, I will do my best to make this class a tolerable, if not rewarding, experience for you to endure. I also guarantee that your enthusiasm for the subject of history in general will not influence my attitude toward you as a student. I am excited about having you in my class.

My practical goal for this session is to help each student who “tries” make it through this course with a passing grade. My definition of “trying” includes: 1) reading the textbook assignments and the outside reading assigned; and 2) coming to class consistently and taking notes attentively. If you do not want to fulfill either of these conditions, it would be good for you to take another U.S. History course from a different instructor. On the other hand, if you are willing to try to do your best, I will help you in any way I can to succeed to the best of your ability. I will make myself as available as necessary to help you understand the material. Past students have indicated on course evaluations that my availability to assist them has been a great aid to their learning experience.

For better or worse, you are an amateur historian this summer. History is actually a fairly simple social science in that those who study this discipline ask only a few general questions about the past. **What has changed over time? What has stayed the same over time?** (questions of context) If change has occurred, **why did the change take place when it took place? Why not before or why not after?** (questions of interconnectedness) Along with these basic questions, it is always important to remember that what influences the attitudes and actions of people is **NOT** what happens to them, but what they **THINK** about what happens to them. We want to apply these questions and this principle to the study of American life until about 1865. We must never make the mistake of assuming that people from the past are just like us. They are not. At the same time, it is always instructive to present generations to understand how those of the past coped with change.

Remember that history is a “living” and “subjective” discipline. Historians do not simply report

events, as the police would ask you to do if you were a witness to a robbery. Rather, all historians **shape interpretations** of the past based on the interpretations of other historians, the availability of source material, and the questions being asked by their contemporary generation. I have a particular viewpoint on the past, as do the authors of your textbook. We sometimes agree and we sometimes disagree. Hopefully you will finish this course with a sound, well-developed interpretation of the early history of the United States that you can call your own.

REQUIRED READING

Boyer, Paul S., et al. The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People, Volume I: To 1877, Fifth Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004.

Wheeler, William Bruce and Becker, Susan. Discovering the American Past: A Look at the Evidence, Volume I: To 1877, Fifth Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002.

ATTENDANCE, OFFICE HOURS, AND HELP OUTSIDE OF CLASS

Due to the brevity of this course and the amount of material we have to cover, you will be expected to attend each class session. Excessive tardiness and/or absences will be penalized at the discretion of the instructor. My office hours will be Mondays from 10:00 a.m.-10:50 a.m. and Wednesdays from 2:00-3:00 p.m. I am also the campus minister here at IPFW so I have an office located on the second floor of Walb Union, room 231/235. My phone number there is 481-6992. If you want help outside of class with the material, please do not hesitate to ask for it the moment that it becomes apparent you need it. If you cannot see me during office hours, we will make an appointment for another time that is convenient. Do not hesitate to call me at my office or my home (before 10 p.m.) if you have any questions about the course or course material. My home phone number is 432-2551. If I am not at home, just leave a message on the answering machine and I will call you back. My email address is gatesb@ipfw.edu. You may tape record class lectures if you think doing so will help you learn the material. If you have a disabling condition that will require an accommodation in tests or class structure, please advise the instructor.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your final grade will be determined on the following basis:

EXAMINATION ONE	20%
EXAMINATION TWO	20%
EXAMINATION THREE	20%
READING QUIZZES	20%
PAPER ASSIGNMENT	20%

I use a standard grading system: 90-100%="A", 80-89%="B", 70-79%="C", and so on. You must complete all course assignments to pass this course. Plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the assignment in question.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be better able to:

1. Have a coherent general understanding of major events and developments in U.S. history through the Civil War era.
2. Grasp the relationship between events (cause and effect, etc.)
3. Synthesize information into a coherent overview.
4. Appreciate and respect the diversity of American experiences.
5. Develop a historical consciousness, including awareness of the different ways of life and value systems of people in the past.
6. Improve skills such as reading for content and for thesis, effective listening and note taking, and clear writing, which are important for future learning and are broadly applicable to a wide variety of disciplines and careers.
7. Distinguish between fact, interpretation based on fact, and opinion.
8. Develop a basic appreciation of historical method.

Assessment of these outcomes will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of completed course requirements.

History 105 counts toward fulfillment of General Education Area III: The Individual, Culture and Society. Students must understand the nature and diversity of individuals, cultures and societies around the world. An exploration of behavioral, societal and cultural processes forms the basis for that understanding. This understanding of diverse systems assists the student in overcoming provincialism; in developing the willingness, confidence, and the sense of responsibility for making informed decisions; and in acquiring the ability to assess personal behavior and that of others. Such learning requires an historical consciousness; familiarity with components of social structure and social institutions; knowledge of basic behavioral processes; comprehension of the interplay among ideas, technology, and social organization; and appreciation of the complex dimensions of personal and institutional rules.

EXAMINATIONS

Three examinations will be given in this course on the dates listed on your reading schedule. All examinations will be essay in format. At the time of each exam, I will give you further information about the specifics for that examination. If for any reason you miss an examination due to emergency circumstances, you must call me the day of the exam and indicate the reasons for your absence. If I am not at home, just leave a message on my answering machine. You must also bring me some sort of written verification of these emergency circumstances. I reserve the right to determine acceptable reasons for missing examinations. You may not miss an examination simply because you do not feel prepared for it. If you follow these guidelines, a make-up exam will be scheduled for you. If you do not, you will be given a "0" for that particular examination. None of the examinations are cumulative; they cover only material since the last examination. Review the handout **A Comparison of Essay Responses to a Sample Test Question** for tips on what I am looking for in the way of effective essay answers to test questions.

READING QUIZZES

It is important to me that you attend class and that you read the material in your textbooks to help you to understand what we discuss in lecture sessions. In order to guarantee both of these priorities, you will be given quizzes from time to time over the reading assigned for that day. I will not tell you when we are having these quizzes, nor the number of quizzes that will be given. You will have fifteen minutes to answer in essay form one of two questions asked on that quiz. You may only be quizzed over the reading assignment for that week. Most times the quiz will be given at the start of class, but sometimes it may occur later in the class period. You may not leave class after a quiz is given unless your absence has been pre-arranged with me. If you leave, you will be given a "0" for that quiz. No make-ups will be given on quizzes missed on the days you happen to be absent. Missed quizzes will be excused for acceptable reasons, determined by the instructor. I will throw out your lowest quiz score at the end of the semester and average the rest of the scores to determine 20% of your final grade.

PAPER ASSIGNMENTS

Students must complete one typed, double-spaced, 5-6 page paper during the course of the session; use no font size smaller than 10 or larger than 12 to produce this paper. The content of this paper must be an essay answer to the central question(s) posed in one of the chapters of the Wheeler/Becker book, Discovering the American Past. The paper will be due on the day the chapter selected by the student is assigned. Weigh all of the evidence presented in the chapter you select, consider all of the questions posed by Wheeler and Becker in this chapter, and then, in your essay, answer the central question(s) of the chapter. The central question(s) of each chapter are normally found at the end of the "Problem" section of the chapter. If you have trouble determining the central question (s) for the chapter you choose, ask the instructor for assistance. **NOTE: The central question(s) of the chapter are NOT normally found in the "Questions to Consider" section of the chapter. Any paper that only answers these "questions to consider" does not meet the requirements of the assignment. Please follow the guidelines for a successful paper listed on the separate handout distributed by the instructor.**

Whether you are honing an honors essay or struggling with the fundamentals of writing, The Writing Center can help you write more effective papers and gain confidence in your writing. Bring your written assignment, due dates, questions, ideas, and draft (if you have one). Writing Center consultants help you discover strategies for: analyzing your purpose and audience; generating, organizing, and developing ideas; writing more effective sentences and strengthening word choice; researching and documenting sources; and editing and proofreading your own work. Sign up for appointments on the bulletin board outside Kettler G19 or register for online consultations at www.ipfw.edu/engl/wchome.htm. Closed Saturdays.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

I will use a Powerpoint presentation to organize our classroom discussion materials. You may access each Powerpoint presentation at <http://users.ipfw.edu/gatesb>.

January 11

Lecture: Introduction and Patterns of Discovery

Reading Assignment: Boyer, Chapters 1-2; Wheeler/Becker, Chap. 1

January 18

Lecture: The Spectrum of Settlement

Reading Assignment: Boyer, pages 53-82; Wheeler/Becker, Chapter 2

January 25

Lecture: The “Great Equalizer” in Seventeenth Century British North America

Reading Assignment: Boyer, pages 82-93

February 1

Lecture: The “Veneer of Being English”: Eighteenth Century British North America

Reading Assignment: Boyer, pages 94-128; W/B, Chapter 3

February 8

Lecture: A Rebellion of Symbols and The Republican Experiment

Reading Assignment: Boyer, pages 128-192; W/B, Chapter 4

February 15**FIRST EXAMINATION**February 22

Lecture: “We are All Republicans”: The Crisis of Party Politics

Reading Assignment: Boyer, Chapter 7; W/B, Chapter 5

March 1

Lecture: The Republican Betrayal

Reading Assignment: Boyer, pages 227-247

March 8**NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK VACATION**March 15

Lecture: A Nation Emerges

Reading Assignment: Boyer, pages 247-274; W/B, Chapter 7

March 22

Lecture: The Triumph of Democracy and The Pursuit of Perfection

Reading Assignment: Boyer, pages 274-283, 285-315, and 326-343; W/B, Chapter 6

March 29**SECOND EXAMINATION**April 5

Lecture: “The Old South”: An Illusion of Unity

Reading Assignment: Boyer, Chapter 12; W/B, Chapter 8

April 12

Lecture: A People on the Move

Reading Assignment: Boyer, Pages 317-326 and Chapter 13

April 19

Lecture: The Turbulent 1850's

Reading Assignment: Boyer, Chapters 14; W/B, Chapter 9

April 26

Lecture: The Civil War and Radical Reconstruction

Reading Assignment: Boyer, Chapters 15-16; W/B, Chapters 10-11

May 3**THIRD EXAMINATION**

While this is a lecture course in format, I am hoping that you will feel free to ask questions in class, and I will do the best I can to answer them. Please do not hesitate at any time to ask me for help or for information that will increase the value of this course for you.