

THE UNITED STATES, 1877-1914
AMH 3201 - Fall 2011
Syllabus

Mondays and Wednesdays, 2-3:45 p.m.

Professor June Melby Benowitz

Office: C251

Office hours: Mon. 5:00-6:00 p.m.; Wed. 1:00-2:00 p.m. and by appointment

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Much like the computer age of the late 20th century, the industrial age of the late 19th century brought about considerable changes to American culture and society. The era beginning in 1877 and continuing through 1914 was a time of excitement for many, great wealth for a few, and constant change for most. Within this short time span technology in America grew from its infant stage to great heights; corporations achieved immense power; the United States became an imperial nation; farmers created the Populist movement; and many city folk and others became enthused over the Progressive movement. In this course students will study the major events, issues, organizations, and personalities that emerged during this period of American history.

History Mission Statement

The curriculum for a bachelor's degree in History at USF Sarasota-Manatee is designed to prepare students for a future in the history profession and other professions that require solid research, writing, and analytical skills. By the time History majors graduate, they should be able to write well organized and grammatically correct papers that contain clear thesis statements and evidence to support their arguments. Moreover, in each course, students will be trained in the evaluation of primary and secondary source materials, weighing the impact of historical context on the construction of documents – a skill we label “thinking historically.” During their senior year, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their acquired skills in the Pro-Seminar capstone course.

Course requirements:

Books:

Dreiser, Theodore, *Sister Carrie*

Calhoun, Charles W., ed., *The Gilded Age* (2nd edition)

Chambers, John W., *The Tyranny of Change*

Written:

Each student will be required to write a term paper on the topic of his/her choice that pertains to the period of American history 1877-1914. The paper must be 10-12-pages in length (2,700 – 3,200 words) double-spaced, with title and bibliography pages. *Be sure to number your pages.* See instructor for approval of topic. Term papers will be due November 21, 2011. All written papers will be

graded on content, grammar, and organization. The papers should be based upon at least six sources, excluding encyclopedias. The Internet may be used for finding journal articles and primary sources.

Students will be expected to give an oral presentation of their paper.

Journal article assignments - See "Group Projects"

Each week, students will need to bring to class written questions or points for discussion based upon the weekly readings. These will be due on the Monday of each week unless otherwise noted in the Weekly Schedule. This assignment will be a part of student's "participation" grade.

Exams:

There will be two essay exams—a midterm and a final. Be sure to be in class on days of exams as there is a 20% deduction in the score for all make-up exams. The midterm will be in two parts. The first part, representing 70% of the midterm grade, will be given on October 3; the second part, representing 30% of the grade, will be given on October 19. Failure to take exams on the scheduled dates will result in a 20% reduction in the student's score(s).

Group Projects:

There will be several in-class group projects for which grades will be given. These projects are not noted on the weekly schedule, and may not be announced prior to the class. There will be a maximum of 10 "group project" points awarded on each of those occasions. In most instances points lost because of absence on day of group project cannot be made up.

Journal Article Assignment

Each student will choose two articles from a list of journal articles, which he/she will read, critique, and give an oral report on in class. The written papers should each be approximately 700-800 words in length.

At least two people will be working on each journal article; therefore, the student should meet and/or correspond with the other(s) working on the article and decide how they wish to present the oral report. The written portion will be done individually.

Attendance/Participation:

Attendance and participation in classroom discussion is vital for the successful completion of this course. Much of the material that will be discussed in class is not readily available elsewhere. Thus, missing even one class may significantly impair your understanding of later material. Poor attendance and non-participation would very likely have a negative impact on your understanding of the information covered, and would therefore adversely affect your grade. More

than 9 hours of unexcused missed class time=F for the attendance and participation portion of your grade.

Policy on Religious Holidays

Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class due to the observation of a major religious observance must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor, in writing, by the second class meeting.

Blackboard use:

Students will need to become familiar with Blackboard. The syllabus is posted on Blackboard, as are all grades. Consult Blackboard frequently for Announcements. Blackboard may also be used for the posting of assignments and for on-line discussion. For those unfamiliar with Blackboard, there is a tutorial for USF-SM students:

http://www.sarasota.usf.edu/CampusComputing/Documents/CC_Student_Resources.php

If you need technical assistance with Blackboard, the toll-free helpline number is 866-974-1222, or you can receive online help at

<http://usfsupport.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/usfsupport.cfg/php/enduser/chat.php>

ADA Statement:

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with the Office of Student Disabilities Services (SDS) in order to receive special accommodations and services. Reasonable notice must be given to the SDS office (typically 5 working days) for accommodations to be arranged. It is the responsibility of the student to provide each instructor with a copy of the official Memo of Accommodation.

Contact Information: Pat Lakey, Coordinator, 941-359-4714, plakey@sar.usf.edu, www.sarasota.usf.edu/Students/Disability/

Academic Dishonesty:

Please note that any form of plagiarism or cheating on exams, projects, or papers is considered unacceptable behavior. Software may be utilized to assess potential plagiarism. Sources must be properly cited. Please be sure to review the university's policy in the student handbook or check:

<http://www.sar.usf.edu/handbook/academics/ImportantAcademicPolicies.htm>

Academic Disruption

The University does not tolerate behavior that disrupts the learning process. The policy for addressing academic disruption is included with Academic Dishonesty in the catalog: [USFSM Undergraduate Catalog](#) or [USFSM Graduate Catalog](#) and the [USF Student Code of Conduct](#).

Cell phones/Computers:

Please be sure your cell phones are turned off while in the classroom. If you bring your computer to class, be sure that you use it only for note-taking and

other activities that pertain to this course. **Keep laptops closed during showing of videos and during student presentations.** If you do not observe these courtesies, you may be asked to leave.

Recordings:

All unauthorized recordings of class are prohibited. Recordings that accommodate individual student needs must be approved by the instructor in advance and may be used for personal use during the semester only; redistribution is prohibited.

Emergency Preparedness:

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USFSM to suspend normal operations. During this time, USFSM may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Blackboard, Elluminate, Skype, and email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It's the responsibility of the student to monitor Blackboard site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USFSM and College websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information. The USF hotline at 1 (800) 992-4231 is updated with pre-recorded information during an emergency.

See the Safety Preparedness Website for further information.

<http://www.sarasota.usf.edu/facilities/SafetyPreparedness.php>

Course Evaluation:

Attendance and participation	20%
Midterm	20%
Group projects	20%
Term paper	20%
Final Exam	20%
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	100%

Grading will be on the plus/minus system, and will use points that will be converted to a letter grade.

A+ = 98-100 points; A = 94-97; A- = 90-93; B+ = 88-89; B = 84-87; B- = 80-83; C+ = 78-79; C = 74-77; C- = 70-73; D+ = 68-69; D = 64-67. Less than 64 = F.

Note: Syllabus subject to change at discretion of the instructor.

Course Goals and Objectives:

The goals for this course are:

- 1) To acquire the ability to think historically, to analyze and evaluate documents and materials presented in class and in texts.
- 2) To acquire an understanding of American politics, society, and culture during the period 1877-1914.
- 3) To be able to make associations concerning the United States of those years and the United States of today.
- 4) To gain an understanding of how the United States became a leader in technology by the beginning of the 20th century.
- 5) To learn why the United States became involved in the race for imperialism.
- 6) To acquire an understanding of how the Progressive Era affected the United States in the decades that followed.
- 7) To understand how Americans adapted to the change from a rural nation to an urban/industrial nation.

By the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

- 1) Write a term paper that is well organized and grammatically correct, and reveals an understanding of American culture, society, and politics of the era 1877-1914.
- 2) Identify factors that led to the growth of big business and technology in late 19th century America.
- 3) Identify problems faced by farmers during the late 19th century and list and discuss reasons why the Populist movement developed.
- 4) Identify and describe circumstances that led to the Progressive Movement in the United States, and explain how reforms emerging from that movement affected American society in the early 20th century and in later decades.
- 5) Explain how the United States became an imperial nation, and discuss the nations that were affected most by American imperialism and in what ways.
- 6) Name and describe the major labor unions that were active during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and explain why labor unions in the United States were less successful than many of the unions in Europe during this period.
- 7) Demonstrate an understanding of what was meant by “Gilded Age” and “Progressive Era,” and their importance in American history.

UNITED STATES 1877-1914
Weekly Schedule - Fall 2011

Be prepared to discuss readings on the Monday of each week unless otherwise noted.

Week 1—Aug. 22 and 24

Introduction; Course requirements

Lecture & Discussion: Reconstruction/Post-Reconstruction; View excerpt from film--D. W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*

Week 2—August 29 and 31

Read and discuss: *The Gilded Age*, pp. 1-27

Lecture and discussion: Growth of the West; Begin discussion of United States in an Industrial Age

Week 3—Sept. 5 – Labor Day – No Class on Monday

Wednesday, September 7:

Read and discuss: *The Gilded Age*, pp. 29-73

Lecture & Discussion: President Garfield; The United States in an Industrial Age (cont'd)

Week 4—Sept. 12 and 14

Read and Discuss: *The Gilded Age*, pp. 75-99; 143-165

The United States in an Industrial Age (continued); Labor

September 14:

Journal Article Reports: "Information, Markets, and Corruption: Transcontinental Railroads in the Gilded Age"

"The Art of Killing by Electricity': The Sublime and the Electric Chair"

Week 5—Sept. 19 and 21

Read and discuss: *The Gilded Age*, pp. 101-118; 167-186

The fate of Native Americans; Urbanization

September 21:

Reports: "American Indians and Land Monopolies in the Gilded Age"

"Buffalo Bill Meets Dracula: William F. Cody, Bram Stoker, and the Frontiers of Racial Decay"

"19th Century Indian Education"

Week 6—September 26 and 28

Read and discuss: *The Gilded Age*, pp. 239-305

Lecture & Discussion: Grover Cleveland; populism

September 28:

Report: "Cosmopolitan Domesticity: Importing the American Dream, 1865-1920"

Review for Midterm

Week 7—Oct. 3

Midterm Exam (Part I—to count for 70% of the midterm grade)

October 5: Individual discussion of progress on research paper, etc., held in Prof. Benowitz's office—C251.

Week 8—Oct. 10

Individual discussion of progress on research paper, etc., held in Prof. Benowitz's office—C251.

October 12:

Read and discuss: *Sister Carrie*, Chapters I-XXVII

Lecture & Discussion: Women; Social Gospel Movement; Immigration; William McKinley

Week 9—Oct. 17

Read and discuss: *Sister Carrie*, Chapters XXVIII-end

Reports: "Enforcing the Borders: Chinese Exclusion along the U.S. Borders with Canada and Mexico, 1882-1924"

"Ethnics Against Ethnicity: European Immigrants and Foreign-Language Instruction, 1890-1940"

October 19:

Midterm Exam (Part 2—to count for 30% of the midterm grade)

Week 10—Oct. 24 and 26

Read and discuss: *The Gilded Age*, pp. 307-332.

Lecture & Discussion: The New Empire; Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders

October 26:

Report: "I Am the Other: Puerto Rico in the Eyes of North Americans, 1898"

October 29—Last Day to Drop a Course and Receive a "W".

Week 11—Oct. 31 and Nov. 2

Read and discuss: *The Gilded Age*, pp. 333-371

Lecture & Discussion: The New Empire (cont'd)

Report: "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule between the British and United States Empires"

Week 12—Nov. 7 and 9

Read and discuss: *Tyranny of Change*, pp. 80-184

Lecture & Discussion: The Progressive Era

November 9:

Reports: "The High Cost of Living in the Progressives' Economy"

"W.E.B. DuBois, German Social Thought, and the Racial Divide in American Progressivism"

“An Outrageous Proceeding’: A Northern Lynching and the Enforcement of Anti-Lynching Legislation in Illinois, 1905-1910”

“Mr. Roosevelt is Guilty’: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for Constitutionalism, 1910-1912”

“The Gender of Reform Politics: Theodore Roosevelt and the Culture of Masculinity”

Week 13—Nov. 14 and 16

Read and discuss *Tyranny of Change*, pp. 184-216; 274-300

Lecture & Discussion: The Progressive Era (cont’d); the coming of World War I

November 16

Reports: “Modernism Gone Mad’: Sex Education Comes to Chicago 1913”

“German *Weltpolitik* and the American Two-Front Dilemma: The ‘Japanese Peril’ in German-American Relations, 1904-1917”

Week 14—November 21 and 23

Term papers due, begin oral reports.

Week 15—Nov. 28 and 30

Oral reports

Review for final exam.

Week 16—Date TBA

Finals Week—Final Exam

Weekly schedule subject to change at the discretion of the professor