Florida A&M University
College of Social Sciences
Department of History and Political Science
AMH 2020—U.S. History 1865-Present | 3 Credit Hours
Fall 2023

Instructor: Dr. Kyle Harris
Office Hours: Fridays 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Class Location: 208 BLPC
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Email: Kyle.Harris@famu.edu


In AMH 2020, students study the political, cultural and social growth of the United States from the end of the Civil War to the present. The main focus of their study will be the forces that shaped the nature of American society. The main text for the course is American History: A Survey Since 1865, Vol. II by Alan Brinkley. The text will be supplemented by handouts and films during the semester. In addition each chapter has WEB Resources, which will enhance some element of the material and be of significant help in gaining the extra information needed to excel. Reading assignments in the text are made in the syllabus and should be completed before class. Class sessions will often be devoted to discussion of the topics indicated in the syllabus as what should be learned from reading, but time will not permit discussion of every topic. It is, therefore, very important to read thoroughly and make notes. Keeping a notebook of responses to topics—combining information from reading and discussion is very important. Most identification and vocabulary items will be part of the responses to the more general topics. Those that are not should be included individually. Such a notebook can be the basis for exam preparation.

Attendance

Attendance is important. According to the Institute for Higher Education at the University of Georgia, the loss in learning and skill building of students who miss more than two or three classes a term is exponential. That is the amount lost multiplies rather than just being added to with each additional absence. This effect occurs whether or not the missed work is made-up. Therefore it is clear that absences are harmful and very likely to result in a reduction in grades earned. Since grades are a student’s means of showing graduate and professional schools and potential employers her/his
degree of success, the penalty for absences is obvious. In the spirit of positive reinforcement and rewarding desirable behavior, however, students in this class may earn extra credit through exemplary attendance. Students with perfect attendance from the second day of class through the first exam will receive five points on that exam grade. Perfect attendance between any two subsequent exams will also earn five points. Perfect attendance is defined as being present and ready to start class when the role is taken—no excuses will be accepted. Those who arrive late should either not sign the role or indicate after their signatures that they were late. Failure to do so will result in the entire class losing credit for attendance on that day. This policy is to reward exemplary effort; it does not change the option of making up work missed on occasions when there is a reasonable cause for being away. If a make-up is needed, consult with the instructor.

Turn off and put away all telephones and other electronic devices before the beginning of class. Work done outside of class should be typed. Work done in class must be written in ink. Once an in-class project has begun, you may not leave the room until it is completed. Leaving is the equivalent of turning in the project at that point. Be sure to visit the restroom, have a tissue, etc. before beginning such work.

Course Objectives:

- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate historical data concerning the U. S. and Florida.
- Identify the consequences of major technological advances such as the impact of railroads on national growth and industrialization.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the U. S. Constitution.
- Establish by reading and research and defend logically positions on vital issues in the U. S. today.
- Demonstrate the ability to separate factual data from opinion, for instance by a discussion of the impact of Social Darwinism on social policy.
- Identify economic, political, and social forces which have influence movements and events, for example by examining the political elements in shaping Reconstruction after the Civil War.

Learning Outcomes:

Students are expected to

a) analyze sources while conducting research and then write papers presenting their conclusions.
b) differentiate facts from opinion, for instance by analyzing claims that there was a conspiracy to kill John Kennedy to determine what is known and what is believed.
c) recognize inconsistencies in logic, for instance by seeing that the arguments of Social Darwinism can be perfectly logical but if based on a false premise lead to an incorrect conclusion.
d) understand and respect other values and cultures from a study of the confrontation
between Indians and the U. S.
e) examine forces shaping and altering social institutions for instance by studying the impact of the New Deal on such institutions.
f) recognize the changing roles of men and women over time and understand the causes for those changes

g) gain a basic knowledge of U. S. history since the Civil War.

Grade scale: A=100%-90% ; B=89%-80% ; C=79%-70% ; D=69%-60% ; F=below 60%.

The course grade will be determined from the following:

1. Short quizzes and class participation--10%. Quizzes will cover the preceding and/or current day's reading assignment and will be electronically up-loaded onto Blackboard no later than 24 hours before the next class period. The quiz will be timed and will consist of a few short answers, multiple choice questions or a short (paragraph) essay. If the Blackboard quiz malfunctions, the student must email the professor within 12 hours of the next class period in order for it to be re-set. If the student does not notify the professor by 8:00PM via email the night before class, the quiz will not be reset and the student will receive a grade of zero. A similar quiz will be given during the first five minutes of each class period using clickers in order to take roll. Neither quiz can be made-up, but some (the number will depend on the number given during the semester) quiz grades will be dropped in the case of legitimate absences. Homework assignments will be submitted by the student via Blackboard/TurnItIn no later than 5 minutes before the beginning of the current day’s lecture. If the student is not able to upload the homework assignment via Blackboard/TurnItIn, he or she must physically submit it to the professor 5 minutes before the current class lecture in 208 BLPC. Any homework or quizzes submitted after the times in the above directives will not be considered for grading.

2. Examinations:

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<th>Examination</th>
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<td>Examination I:</td>
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<td>Mid-Term Examination:</td>
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<td>Examination III:</td>
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<td>Examination IV:</td>
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<td>Final Examination:</td>
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All examinations except for the final examination will be given via Blackboard. Each on-line examination will be opened at 5PM on Friday and closed on Sunday at 5PM on the weekends specified below. You will have 45 minutes to answer an examination consisting of 85 multiple choice, true/false and essay questions. Once the excuse has been verified, the student will be asked to take the exam at professor’s upcoming office hours during the following week.
3. American Heroes--Two biographies @ 5% each = 10%. Lists of contributors to the development of U.S. life and culture are listed in the “I & S” portions of each section of the syllabus. They are divided chronologically into two parts based on which half of the period covered by the course (1865-present) the major contributions of the individuals listed were made. Each student will select a significant figure from the “I & S” lists prior to March 2nd for the first biography and after March 2nd for the second biography. On September 26, 2023 and October 24, 2023, these assignments will be due to Blackboard TurnItIn by 8AM. The focus of the essays is to be the contributions made by the individual to the development of the U.S. Other information about his/her life should be presented ability, opportunity, or barrier to making his/her contributions, and not as main themes. Each American Heroes biography must be a minimum of 1500-1700 words, have 1 inch margins; left-justified, double-spaced, size 12 Times New Roman font. THE INSTRUCTOR WILL DEDUCT 5% PER PAGE FOR ASSIGNMENTS THAT HAVE THEIR MAIN TEXT FALL SHORT OF OR EXCEED THE SPECIFIED NUMBER PAGES/WORDS ON THE FINAL DRAFT. Late papers will not be considered without an official excuse from a dean. The student may include pictures, graphs, or references beyond the specified number of pages, but not the main text. The paper will be submitted via TurnItIn/Blackboard to deter plagiarism. The assignments must adhere to Chicago-style formatting found in the Kate L. Turabian’s A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers.

Evaluation of Biographical Sketches:

Every essay has strengths and weaknesses and in may cases strengths will more than counterbalance weaknesses or vice versa. Papers will, therefore, be evaluated holistically i.e. considered in their entirety rather than on any one specific quality. This does not mean, however, that qualities characteristic of strong and week papers cannot be identified. Such characteristics are likely to be achieved in levels (done better in some cases that in others), and so they cannot be treated as a check list so that having five strengths and one weakness means the overall paper is good. The strengths may be limited while the weakness is overwhelming. The following lists, then, should be used simply as guidelines for what should be sought and/or avoided when writing.

Characteristics of a strong paper:

-Has a clear thesis
-Provides critical analysis, for instance presenting and evaluating several points-of-view about the subject
-Has a logical structure with evidence leading to a conclusion
-Shows how and why the subject changed over time
-Shows signs of being based on a variety of sources
-Has a clear conclusion that outlines connections between point(s) proven and evidence presented
-Is written in clear, precise, grammatical English
Characteristics of a weak paper:

- Is superficial, for instance shows no awareness of conflicting points-of-view about the subject or of change over time
- Lacks logical structure and/or logical connections between points of evidence or such connections may be implicit
- May include significant amounts of irrelevant material
- Conclusion may be superficial (e.g., "she was a good person") and or not supported by the evidence presented in the body of the paper
- Writing may be confused and/or so ungrammatical that ideas are poorly communicated if at all

4.) Reaction Paper to Dray, *At The Hands of Persons Unknown*. (15% total)

A reaction paper for Prof. Harris means a 500-700 word typewritten response to the reading (single-spaced; 12 pt. font; 1 inch margins; left-justified). The point of this exercise is to help you crystallize your critique of the book. Your essay must make at least one decisive argument about the book. In completing this exercise, you might want to consider how you would answer the following questions (these will form the basis of our discussions): What historical question is the author addressing? What is the author’s argument(s) about the historical question they are trying to answer? What types of sources did the author use to support her argument? Is his/her argument persuasive? Is the author entering into a historical debate with others and if so, who? Did the book change the way the history of this topic was written (look up sample book reviews using *Journal of Southern History* to answer) What would you say are the strengths of the book? The weaknesses?

The reaction paper is due on November 9, 2023.

**Disabilities**

Florida A&M University will grant reasonable accommodations and provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services to ensure all qualified students with documented disabilities achieve access to its programs and services. Students with disabilities should contact the Center for Disability Access and Resources (CDAR) at 850-599-3180 for assistance and advice. They should also inform the course instructor of their situation.

**Classroom Decorum:**

1. Attend all classes, arrive on time, and do not leave early. Tardiness will be treated as an absence and thus result in a zero for class participation for that day. It may also trigger a quiz.

2. Common courtesy must be observed: This includes wearing appropriate clothing, speaking in turn during discussions, being quiet during other class activities.
3. Electronic devices–cell phones, pagers, i-pods, computers, etc.–must be turned off and put away. Personal computers may be used if prior permission is obtained from the instructor. Other such devices should be out of sight during the class period. Answering a telephone during class will result in a zero for class participation for that day. It may also trigger a quiz.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

1. Cheating (i.e., the use of any outside source of information, unless such use is specifically allowed in the instructions) on any quiz or exam will result in a grade of zero on the assignment.

2. Plagiarism (i.e., the use of another’s words or ideas without proper credit being given) will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. If you not clear about the nature of the various types of plagiarism, please request a copy of my handout on the subject.

**Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA):**

Federal law gives students two rights concerning their education records kept by the university. The federal law is called the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, also known as FERPA or the Buckley Amendment. First, it requires the university to keep those records private. There are exceptions for emergencies, court orders, university official who have a need to know etc. Second, it provides that students have the right to inspect records about themselves that are maintained by the university. Pursuant to FERPA, the U.S. Department of Education has enacted legally-binding regulations that set out in detail what are student’s rights with respect to their educational records. For further information, visit the following web site: [http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/reg/ferpa/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/reg/ferpa/index.html)

**The procedures above and the schedule below are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.**

Section 1: Reconstruction and The New South
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 15

1. Compare and contrast Presidential (Lincoln/Johnson) and Congressional (Radical) Reconstruction policy and practice.

2. Discuss how and why Reconstruction resulted in changes in the U.S. Constitution.
3. Examine the reality of life in the Reconstruction era for freedmen. Typically, how did they earn a living, what political roles did they play, what economic power did they have, what was their relationship to their former masters, what sort of society did they create for themselves? How did all of these change over the period of Reconstruction? Would a freedman say Reconstruction was a success—or a failure? Why?

4. Evaluate Ulysses S. Grant as President of the U.S.

5. The Compromise of 1877 can be seen as either a pinnacle or nadir of U.S. politics. Argue one side or the other in this debate.


Section 2: The Conquest of the Far West
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 16

1. Outline the political issues that dominated the 1870s and early 1880s. Would stronger Presidential authority have changed politics significantly in this period? Why or why not?

2. Many of the gains made by African Americans during Reconstruction were lost in the next twenty years with the rise of the Jim Crow system. Describe the change and explain why and how it happened.

3. Booker T. Washington emerged as the most prominent black leader of the later 19th and early 20th century. He is now sometimes attacked as an accommodationist or “Uncle Tom.” Describe his goals and methods and explain why he chose them. Was he really an “Uncle Tom”?

4. Analyze the economic forces that drove Western expansion—agriculture, mining, railroads, etc.—and the cultural confrontations they produced.

5. Discuss the cultural impact of the “myth of the wild West.”

6. I. & S.: Plessy v. Ferguson (1896), Atlanta Compromise, Dawes Severalty Act, Civil Rights Cases, Battle of the Little Bighorn, Comstock Lode, Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, “bloody shirt,” Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), Tariff, greenbacks, civil service, James A. Garfield, Hall v. De Cuir (1878), Hampton Institute, Tuskegee Institute, T. Thomas Fortune,

Section 3: Industrial Supremacy
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter, 17

1. Describe the conditions—economic, social, and political—that formed the basis for the growth of industrialization in post Civil War America.

2. Analyze the pros and cons of competitive versus monopolistic enterprise. Describe the struggle between the two in American industry and business, and be prepared to make a case for either side.

3. A variety of reform theories were propounded to deal with the problems of industrialization. Discuss those offered by Marx, George, Bellamy, and Lloyd. Were any of these practical?

4. Explain the causes for and assess the results of 19th century government efforts to control the excesses of Big Business.

5. Describe the rise of and assess the success of the American labor movement.


Section 4: The Age of the City
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 18

1. Compare and contrast the lives of the middle and working classes. How are these different from today?

2. Discuss attitudes about immigration. Who supported it? Why? Who opposed it? Why?

3. Unprecedented urbanization was one of the major demographic shifts of the late 19th century. Describe the problems that were associated with this change, and explain how they were addressed and how cities became more desirable places to live.

4. By the late 19th century there were some efforts at social reform in the U.S. Identify and critique these.
5. Discuss the phenomenon the text calls the “knowledge revolution.” Explain how this was reflected in journalism and higher education.

6. The 19th century saw the greatest intellectual development in human history. Explain how this is reflected in the hard and social sciences and in law and the study of history.

7. Define realism. Show how it influenced literature and other arts in the latter half of the 19th century.

8. Define pragmatism. Explain why it is a nearly perfect fit in American culture.


Section 6: From Crisis to Empire
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 19

1. Describe urban political machines. Show how these political organizations had both negative and positive roles.

2. Describe the problems faced by farmers in the late 19th century.

3. Discuss the Populist Movement. Did it represent a practical effort to resolve the problems of farmers?
2. Explain how and why the U.S. got into the Spanish American War and evaluate the results of that conflict.

3. Compare and contrast the U.S. handling of relations with Cuba and the Philippines.
4. Explain the goals and outcomes of the Open Door Policy.

5. Discuss the concept of “Non-colonial Imperial Expansion.”

6. Explain how the Election of 1896 was a watershed in U.S. politics. What was different after it?


Section 8: The Rise of Progressivism & The Battle for National Reform
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 20

1. Discuss the origins and themes of Progressivism.

2. Follow the path of Progressive political reform from city to state to national affairs. Identify major reforms in each stage and explain why the reforms continued to move to larger political arenas.

3. There was a women’s element within Progressivism. Explain why this was so and discuss the issues on which this part of the movement focused.

4. Compare and contrast Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft as Progressives. Show how their administrations had both Progressive and non-Progressive policies. Decide which was most Progressive and defend your choice.

5. Explain how Woodrow Wilson, a newcomer to the national political scene, won the election of 1912 over the better known Roosevelt and Taft.

6. Describe the policies of the Wilson Administration, compare them to those of Roosevelt and Taft. How Progressive was Wilson?

7. Identify African American leaders of the Progressive Era. What were the problems
confronting African Americans in this era and how were their efforts to solve these changing?


Section 9: America and the Great War
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 21.

1. Describe and critique the U.S. acquisition of the Panama Canal.

2. Consider the U.S. actions in the Caribbean in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and make a case for Latin American dislike of the U.S.

3. Describe the foreign policy of Woodrow Wilson and show how his policies were translated into the U.S. response to the outbreak of World War I in 1914.

4. Explain how the U.S. got actively involved in World War I.

5. Describe the impact of preparation for and the war itself on the American economy.

6. Critique the social impact of the war in the U.S.

7. Evaluate the American contribution to fighting the war.

8. Describe and critique the American involvement in making peace after World War I.

9. Describe post-war changes in the U.S. How much did the war have to do with shaping the next decade?


Section 10: “The New Era”
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 22.

1. Describe the changes in the lives of women and children in the decade after World War I. What were the causes of these changes? How permanent were they?

2. Assess the impact of mass media on society and culture.

3. The post war era saw a growing split between modernism and tradition (often divided geographically into urban and rural conflicts). Discuss these attitudes and be prepared to argue the case for either side over fundamentalism, prohibition, race, and political radicalism.

4. Some literary intellectuals of the 1920s are called “the lost generation.” Identify writers and works in this group. Discuss the themes they addressed and explain why they were “lost.”

5. Alain Locke published The New Negro in 1925. Discuss the circumstances of African Americans in the 1920s and explain what this title meant.

6. Discuss technological change and economic growth in the 1920s.

7. Discuss the political and economic philosophies that dominated the U.S. during the 1920s. Are these being echoed in the contemporary era?

8. Critique U.S. foreign policy in the 1920s. How well did the nation respond to opportunities and challenges in international affairs?


Section 11: The Great Depression
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 23
1. Assess the Harding and Coolidge administrations. What were their successes and failures?

2. Analyze the economic situation of the U.S. in the 1920s and show how there were underlying problems that led to the Great Depression.

3. Critique the Hoover Administration’s handling of the first stages of the Great Depression.

4. Describe the impact of the Great Depression on Americans and on the country.

5. Evaluate the promise of Franklin Roosevelt in 1932.


Section 12: The New Deal
Reading: Brinkley: Chapter 24

1. The domestic program of the Roosevelt Administrations endeavors can be roughly broken down into the areas of Relief, Recovery, and Reform and into the first (1933-35) and second (1935-39) New Deals. Discuss each of these areas of activity, giving at least three examples of each, and compare and contrast the two New Deals. Explain why they differed.

2. Describe the social and psychological impact of the Depression and how the New Deal changed these.

3. Identify important literary achievements of the Depression era. Why would such a difficult, often desperate, time produce a flowering of literature?

4. Identify major opponents of FDR. Outline and assess the validity of their criticisms of the New Deal.

5. Explain why FDR tried to change the make up of the U. S. Supreme Court and why he failed.

6. Discuss the New Deal and minorities. Does the reality justify the great shift of African American votes to the Democratic Party during the 1930s? Did other minorities react the same?

7. Discuss U.S. foreign policy in the 1930s. Show how the country got, reluctantly, involved in the problems that became World War II.

Section 13: The Global Crisis & America In A World at War
Reading: Brinkley: Chapter 25-26

1. Trace U.S.-Japanese relations and show the pattern that led to Pearl Harbor.

2. In regard to the home front, discuss:

   A. the war’s impact on the economy;
   B. the war’s impact on society, especially on women and minorities;
   C. the difference in treatment of German, Italian, and Japanese Americans.

3. Outline the events of the war in each theater (Europe and the Pacific) and explain why the Allies won in each.

4. Critique the decision to drop the Atomic-Bomb.

5. Discuss the deterioration of war time alliances and the emergence of the Cold War.

Section 14: The Cold War & The Affluent Society
Reading: Brinkley: Chapter 27 & 28

1. Describe the U.S. economy and society from the end of World War II through the early 1950s.

2. Discuss the emergence of the Cold War. Who was at fault? As a part of your discussion critique the Containment Policy, Truman Doctrine, and Marshall Plan.

3. Explain why Harry Truman was not supposed to but did win the election of 1948.

4. Explain how the U.S. got involved in the Korean war and why it did not win.

5. Describe McCarthyism in theory and practice. Explain how and why such a despicable policy was tolerated in the U.S.

6. Critique Dwight D. Eisenhower as President and his policies both domestic and foreign.


Section 15: The Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam, and the Ordeal of Liberalism
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 29

1. Discuss the emergence of the civil rights movement to 1960.

2. Movie Clips from PBS Eyes on the Prize Series

3. Elaborate on the Causes and Effects of the Vietnam War

I & S: White Citizens' Councils, NAACP (handouts will be distributed with the rest of the terms)

Section 16: The Crisis of Authority
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 30

Key Concepts and I&S Terms will be distributed by Instructor
Section 17: From the “Age of Limits” to the Age of Reagan
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 31

Key Concepts and I&S Terms will be distributed by Instructor

Section 18: The Age of Globalization
Reading: Brinkley, Chapter 32

Key Concepts and I&S Terms will be distributed by Instructor

Final Examination covering Chapters 15-32