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Course Syllabus

AMH 2020-U01B (54331): AMERICAN HISTORY 1877 to the PRESENT

Professor Michael Sanchez

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Office Hours: Mondays 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM via Zoom

The student may contact the instructor via FIU e-mail, Canvas messaging, or Zoom office hours.

[Zoom Virtual Office Link](https://fiu.zoom.us/j/5579033347) (<https://fiu.zoom.us/j/5579033347>)

Course Description and Purpose

This class focuses on central themes and questions pertaining to recent United States History, from the 1860s through the late twentieth century. We will examine a broad range of topics, including tenets of the U.S. constitution and landmark laws and judicial decisions, social movements, war, economic and political development, immigration, and issues pertaining to race, ethnicity, and gender. Readings and assignments will help you figure out not only what happened in the past, but also the many possible explanations for why things happened.

You will be equipped to intelligently engage with questions such as:

- What ideas have shaped American democracy and the country's republican form of government?
- What is the role of government in economic and social life?
- How has the definition and lived experience of citizenship changed over time?
- What has led the United States to engage in war, and what has been the impact of war on American society?
- How, and in what context, have different social groups vied for power and rights?

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to discuss why certain events and people are important and have a sense of how history shapes our contemporary world. After completing this class, students will be able to:

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Course Objective 1: Assess key events, central themes, and questions pertaining to recent United States history.

Course Objective 2: Gain experience reading and analyzing written arguments by engaging with a variety of types of sources.

Course Objective 3: Learn and apply the techniques of writing an argumentative, thesis-driven and evidence-based paper.

This is a Social Science Tier 1 course that counts towards your University Core Curriculum requirement. UCC Social Sciences courses teach the following skills:

Course Objective 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to examine behavioral, social, and cultural issues from a variety of points of view.

Course Objective 5: Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavioral, social, and cultural issues, past and present, local and global.

This is also a Global Learning Foundations course that counts towards your Global Learning graduation requirement. One of the themes of this course will therefore be the ways that different groups of people interacted over the period covered by the course. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

Course Objective 6: Demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems. (Global Awareness)

Course Objective 7: Conduct a multidimensional analysis of local, global, international, and intercultural problems. (Global Perspective)

Course Objective 8: Demonstrate an eagerness to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving. (Global Engagement)

Finally, upon successful completion of the course, students shall be able to demonstrate civic literacy. In particular, they will be able to:

Course Objective 9: Demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government.

Course Objective 10: Demonstrate an understanding of the United States Constitution.

Course Objective 11: Retain and apply knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance.

Course Objective 12: Demonstrate an understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases and their impact on law, society, and how Court decisions impact daily life.

In order to meet these requirements, you must achieve a grade of C or better!

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COURSE PREREQUISITES:

There are no prerequisites for this course.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Schaller, Greenwood, Kirk, et. al., *American Horizons, U.S. History in a Global Context*, Third Edition, Vol. 2, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-19-065949-3

Books are available for purchase from campus bookstore website under the ISBN numbers listed above. You are responsible for having read the assigned materials and having completed the assignments indicated on the schedule by the date and time noted.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly Debates/Discussions

Each week, the instructor and students will discuss the reading from the textbook and primary sources provided. The book excerpts and primary sources will rotate around one or two key questions, which historians still debate today. Students are required to do the readings beforehand and come to class prepared to contribute their own viewpoints and to ask their classmates to clarify their views. It should be pointed out that if the questions have more than one answer, it is usually possible to defend any one of them. The point of these discussions is not for all of the students to arrive at the same answer *per se*, but to understand different perspectives of viewing the same processes, in order to have a more complete understanding of these processes. One process might have positive effects for one group and negative effects for another, and often times will have consequences no one in that process could have imagined or predicted.

Written Assignments

You are responsible for four (4) written assignments. ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS aside from the community engagement paper MUST HAVE a THESIS STATEMENT, an ARGUMENT, REFERENCES and a BIBLIOGRAPHY section. You MUST also put your name at the top of the first page. The references MUST be in the Chicago Notes-Bibliography style. These assignments will become more challenging as the

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semester progresses and you become a stronger writer. All written work will be submitted to the instructor through Canvas itself.

Any paper submitted without references will receive a failing grade.

Each of these assignments will ask you to practice thinking like a historian; that is, you will read primary sources and interpret them to answer an interpretive question about United States history. Papers are formal writing assignments and are intended to provide you with practice in college-level writing. They should conform to the conventions of standard written English.

Short Writing Assignments 1 and 2: These assignments are designed for you to practice the habits of clear, concise writing that relates to the subject under discussion. For these assignments, you are required to write several pages answering questions put forth by the book. These short writing assignments fulfill the Global Awareness and Global Perspective learning outcomes.

Mini-Essay: The assignment asks you to defend or refute a thesis statement that relates to a topic we are discussing in this course by using evidence from a chosen text to illustrate your answer.

Short Paper: This assignment is designed to demonstrate your ability to write a persuasive thesis and support your thesis with historical evidence. You will write a paper that answers a question related to a period in America's past and you will use examples from scholarly works and primary sources to support your thesis.

Community Engagement Paper: The community engagement assignment is worth 100 points. You may fulfill this requirement by reading an article in the popular media on the period or region under consideration and writing a one-page letter to the editor. The community engagement paper fulfills the Global Engagement learning outcome.

Grade Breakdown

Assignments	Points	Weight
Weekly Debates/Discussions	100	20%

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Short Writing Assignment 1	100	15%
Short Writing Assignment 2	100	15%
Mini-Essay	100	15%
Short Paper	100	20%
Community Engagement Paper	100	15%

Important Information

Before starting this course, please review the following pages:

- [Accessibility and Accommodation](#)
- [Academic Misconduct Statement](#)

Grading Scheme

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%
A	93 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 92	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	59 or less

The final grade percentage will be rounded to the nearest whole number; for example a final grade of 79.4 or 79.49 will round to a 79, whereas a 79.5 will round to 80.

RESOURCES

The professor is happy to offer feedback on rough drafts for written assignments prior to submission. These rough drafts do not count for or against your grade. You may submit as many rough drafts as you wish, however for each draft you must allow a minimum of three days' turnaround time. Aside from reaching out to your professor, you can rely on various offices on campus.

For student resources in general, please visit the following link: <https://history.fiu.edu/undergraduate/resources-for-students/>

The Writing in History program: aids with papers and other written assignments. Note that tutors have specialized knowledge of writing for History classes. For more information, please

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see: history.fiu.edu/tutoring.

Center for Academic Success: provides free tutoring for homework assignments, ongoing class work, mid-terms, and finals. For more information, please see: <https://cfas.fiu.edu/>

Counseling and Psychological Services: provide students with emergency and short-term counseling, including emergency appointments, and links students with programs and organizations that can then provide care over the long term. They have both BBC and MHC offices and a 24-hour emergency hotline: (305) 348-3000. For more information, please see: <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/health-and-fitness/counseling-and-psychological-services/>

SCHEDULE:

We will meet via Zoom for the dates and times noted. For each class, the professor will lecture on the course material, lead discussions and debates on historical topics and provide feedback on assignments.

Week 1: 6/22/2020. The American Civil War and Reconstruction

In this week, the syllabus is explained and the class has introductions. Students will read on, reflect and debate the nature of slavery in the antebellum era and the nature of sharecropping in the postwar era. Students will read sections from chapter 15 and the documents *An Alabama Freedman Remembers Reconstruction* and *How Free Is Free? A Sharecropping Contract*.

First paper due 6/28/2020 at 11:59 P.M.

June 29, 2020: Last day to add courses; last day to drop courses or withdraw from the University without incurring financial liability for tuition and fees.

Week 2: 6/29/2020. The Gilded Age, American Expansion, World War I

In this week, students will read on, reflect and debate how different groups of people experienced growing wealth and foreign influence, the different approaches to ending poverty and America's involvement in World War I. Students will read sections of chapter 21 and the documents *Returning Soldiers* by W.E.B. DuBois and *How the Other Half Lives* by Jacob Riis.

Second paper due 7/5/2020 at 11:59 P.M.

Week 3: 7/6/2020. The Great Depression, the New Deal, World War II

In this week, students will read on, reflect and debate on the causal factors and responses to the Great Depression, whether or not the "alphabet soup" of government programs helped to

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end the crisis, and the demographic consequences of World War II. Students will read excerpts of chapter 23 and the documents *Report on Federal Relief Efforts* by Lorena Hickock and *The Unemployed Man and his Family* by Mirra Komarovsky.

Week 4: 7/13/2020. The Cold War, the Civil Rights Movement, New Legal Frameworks

In this week, students will read on, reflect and debate on the Cold War global order established after World War II, the Civil Rights Movement and changes in society both as a reaction to and resulting from this movement, and the Supreme Court taking a new direction with regard to individual protections. Students will read excerpts of chapter 27, *A Time to Break the Silence* by Martin Luther King, Jr., the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* opinion by Judge Earl Warren and *The War on Poverty* by Marian Wright.

Third paper due 7/19/2020 at 11:59 P.M.

Week 5: 7/20/2020: The Close of the Twentieth Century

In this week, students will read on, reflect and debate on the origins and consequences of globalization: is it, on balance, a positive or negative force for America and the world? Students will read excerpts of chapter 29 and *Two Sides of Globalization* by Ohmae and Norberg and *Technology, the Great Equalizer* by Solomon O. Trujillo.

Week 6: 7/27/2020: History as the Lifeboat in the Digital Sea

In this week, students will read on, reflect and debate on the rise of the Internet and how it has eroded national borders for good and ill, what projects computers have allowed historians to undertake (and revealed what questions to ask), and how a knowledge of the past prepares us to better plan for the future. Students will read excerpts of chapter 31.

Fourth paper due 7/31/2020 at 11:59 P.M.

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is required and does count toward your grade (see Weekly Debate section above). The professor will grant extensions only in the case of legitimate, verifiable cases of illness and emergencies, religious holidays, military service, and legal requirements such as jury duty.

History, at any level, cannot work in isolation; we depend on the insights, experience and knowledge of colleagues to help us. During the semester, we will be bringing a variety of different points of view to the table and our dialogue will be richer for it. We will also bring in, as appropriate, current events and other sources of information that contribute to our discussion.

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In order to achieve this dialogue, your job is come to class and do so prepared.

Classroom Behavior: FIU defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which 1) makes submission to or rejection of such conduct either an explicit or implicit basis for employment and/or academic decisions affecting the individual; or 2) unreasonably interferes with the individual's employment or academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Late Policy: The professor will not accept any assignment past the due date, unless an extension is granted as per the Attendance and Participation section. There are no makeups for quizzes or exams, unless an extension is granted as per the Attendance and Participation section.

Academic Misconduct: Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Conduct and Honor Code. Penalties for academic misconduct range from receiving a zero on the assignment to failure in the course and reporting to the University.

Academic Misconduct includes:

Cheating

The unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids or assistance from another person on any academic assignment or exercise, unless explicitly authorized by the course Instructor;

Assisting another Student in the unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids, unless explicitly authorized by the Instructor; and

Having someone substitute complete any academic assignment or completing an academic assignment for someone else, either paid or unpaid; and

Plagiarism

The deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and

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the representation of such work as the Student's own.

Assisting another Student in the deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own.

Note to Students with Disabilities: If you have or believe you might have a disability-related need for modification or reasonable accommodations in this course, contact the Disability Resources Center (drc.fiu.edu). I am very happy to work with you and with them to accommodate you in the best way possible. Even if you do not need accommodation, I highly advise you to let me know if you have a disability that might affect your performance in this class.

Accommodations: If you foresee any possible problem meeting any of the requirements of this course—including attendance and prompt submission of assignments—please e-mail me as soon as possible. It is easier for everyone to address an issue before it becomes a problem.

The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus to facilitate better learning.

Course Summary:

Date	Details	
Mon Jun 22, 2020	 AMH2020 U01B 1205 Class Meeting 6/22/2020 https://fiu.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=149997&include_contexts=course_67711	10am to 11am
Sun Jun 28, 2020	 Short Writing Assignment 1 https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/67711/assignments/880616	due by 11:59pm
Mon Jun 29, 2020	 6/29/2020 Class Meeting https://fiu.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=153272&include_contexts=course_67711	10am to 11am
Sun Jul 5, 2020	 Short Writing Assignmnt 2 https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/67711/assignments/880616	due by 11:59pm