

History of the United States II: 1865 to the Present
21:512:202:02 (05587)
Hill Hall 102
Tuesday/Thursday: 4-5:20 p.m.
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Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday, 5:30-6 p.m. and by appointment

Course description

Leading questions and learning outcomes. How do we even begin to understand a broadly defined topic so open to varied and contesting interpretations as a “History of the United States from 1877 to the present”? Should we focus on the histories of elected officials and political elites, institutions and bureaucracies, the expansion (and contraction) of political rights, and other facets of the political process? What about the importance of ideas, arts, national culture, technology, mass communications, popular culture, and the various sub-cultural strains of a plural society? How important are the environment, epidemiology, pollution, and the management of natural resources to this history? How do we understand the changing dynamics of power, citizenship, and rights in a state built on the historical foundations of white supremacy, male domination, colonization, racial slavery, the dynamic of immigration and nativism, and heterosexual and cisgender privilege? To what extent is the history of the U.S. since 1877 a history of imperialism, military intervention, and global hegemony; or, as presidents from McKinley to Obama have argued, is the United States a unique evangelist of “freedom” in a global order? Should we consider the histories of industrial and financial capitalism, the ascendance of the corporation and labor unions, and the domination of global economic networks?

To what extent do these themes overlap and inform one another, thwarting our attempt to isolate and reduce these themes to discrete sub-disciplines or genres of historical inquiry like **political history, cultural history, social history, diplomatic history, and economic history**? What about more recent interdisciplinary and post-disciplinary scholarship under the broad heading of **cultural studies**, such as **women’s, gender, and sexuality studies; American studies; or African-American, Africana, Asian-American, Chicana/o, Latina/o, Jewish, and other so-called “ethnic studies”** of the relationship between race/ethnicity and identity? How can we better understand a “History of the United States from 1865 to the present” through the use of concepts and methods of sub-disciplinary forms of historical study as well as cultural studies in order to specify, clarify, and ultimately make the best use of the past?

In this course, we will take up these questions and their broader implications through close analysis of **primary sources**, secondary writing that critically interprets and reinterprets history (**historiography**), and active engagement in the lectures that frame and contextualize the course materials in a broader synthesis of global history. The most important task of this course is to carefully consider the evidence of primary sources and to critically engage the historical interpretations presented to you through readings and lecture. *History is not an assemblage of*

dead facts; history is a lively and contested discussion that exposes our relationship with the past and attempts to understand the past on its own terms.

Course organization and approach to United States History. Chronologically, this course surveys the history of the United States from the Compromise of 1877, which effectively ended the Reconstruction of the post-bellum South and commenced the long “Jim Crow” era, until the present era, marked by the on-going wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the “Great Recession,” and the election of the country’s first African-American president, Barack Obama. The course is divided chronologically into three broad units of study. Covering the period from roughly 1870 to 1920, the **first unit** of study will focus on what historian Nell Irvin Painter has characterized by a “**Progressive Movement**,” but more broadly this part of the course examines the era of Jim Crow and the early struggle against racial violence, the last of the “Indian Wars” and the end of American Indian sovereignty in the western U.S., the immigration-fueled growth of the industrial economy and labor politics, women’s activism and the Woman Suffrage movement, the making of the modern regulatory state during the Progressive Era, the technological emergence of mass culture (film and radio), U.S. military and colonial expansion into the Caribbean and the Pacific, and the First World War. In the **second unit** of study, covering the period from roughly 1920-1945, we will focus on what Ira Katznelson and other historians have described as the **New Deal State**, though this unit will also discuss the ascendance of mass communication and mass culture during the Jazz Age, the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the contested claim to post-war hegemony. The **third unit**, covering the period from roughly 1945 to the present, looks through the lens of the **African-American Civil Rights Movement** and the particular experiences of Ella Baker as described by Barbara Ransby, although this unit also assesses the broader context “Red Scare” and the Cold War, the resurgence of the cult of domesticity in the fifties, the New Left and the ascendance of the Counter-Culture, the Vietnam War, various race and ethnically based rights and radical power movements, the Sexual Revolution, Women’s Liberation, the LGBTQ movement, the Conservative Counter-Revolution and the “Culture Wars”, the end of the Cold War, and the global “War on Terror.”

In addition to discussing periods and events in United States history, we will also discuss historical categories of a) **broad socio-political organization** like the nation-state, electoral and judiciary processes, bureaucracy and other institutions, the military, international diplomacy, social movements, and domestic and public economies; b) **knowledge and cultural expression** like ideologies, philosophical concepts, scientific knowledge, literature, visual art, films, architecture, and music; and c) **social hierarchies** like race, ethnicity, class, religion, gender identity, erotic desire, and dis/ability. Students should also be mindful of less obvious categories of historical analysis, particularly the assumed division between the “human” and “natural” environment; the use and distribution of natural resources; as well as human embodiment, epidemiology, and ecology.

Required texts

Students are encouraged to purchase the books as soon as possible. Students will not be excused for failing to bring books to class or read assigned readings by the date on which they appear on the syllabus. Full-priced new as well as reduced priced used editions are available at the on-campus bookstore, Barnes & Noble at Bradley Hall 110. Students may also wish to purchase the

books electronically, available for \$9.99 on both the Kindle and iBooks on-line bookstores. All other readings will be available via the course Blackboard page. **Please note that because students will have different editions, the course calendar will list the readings for the textbooks solely by chapter title. Nonetheless, students must include page or, if using e-books, location numbers on all written assignments.**

Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: A Grassroots History of the Progressive Era* (WW Norton & Co., 2008)

Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005)

Accommodation and Support Statement

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

- **Students with Disabilities:** Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact ODS, register, have an initial appointment, and provide documentation. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and documentation submitted) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided to the student. The student must give the LOA to each course instructor, followed by a discussion with the instructor. This should be completed as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS: (973) 353-5375 or ods@newark.rutgers.edu.
- **Religious Holiday Policy and Accommodations:** Students are advised to provide timely notification to instructors about necessary absences for religious observances and are responsible for making up the work or exams according to an agreed-upon schedule. The Division of Student Affairs is available to verify absences for religious observance, as needed: (973) 353-5063 or DeanofStudents@newark.rutgers.edu.
- **Counseling Services:** Counseling Center Room 101, Blumenthal Hall, (973) 353-5805 or <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/>.
- **Students with Temporary Conditions/Injuries:** Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury that is adversely affecting their ability to fully participate in their courses should submit a request for assistance at: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

- **Students Who are Pregnant:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist students with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.
- **Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment:** Students experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, should know that help and support are available. To report an incident, contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. To submit an incident report: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. To speak with a staff member who is confidential and does **NOT** have a reporting responsibility, contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance: (973) 353-1918 or run.vpva@rutgers.edu.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center (<http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter>), located in Room 126 of Conklin Hall, offers writing tutoring and writing workshops to all undergraduate students currently enrolled in classes on the Rutgers-Newark campus. Their tutors work to help students become more independent readers and writers capable of responding well to the demands of writing within the university. Please inform your students that The Writing Center is available to them free of charge and encourage them to take advantage of their services to strengthen their reading, writing, and research skills.

Gender Pronouns and Names

This class affirms all forms of gender expression and identity. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct the instructor or any member of the class on your gender pronoun, or if you do not wish to use a gender pronoun. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance

Rutgers faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. Rutgers has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The University strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the University. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to Policy 10.3.12) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the University's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak with a staff member who is confidential and does not have

this reporting responsibility, you may contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at (973)-353-1918, or at run.vpva@rutgers.edu. Learn more about the office here: <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/vpva>

Classroom policies

****Please note that the classroom procedures on attendance (including missed classes), late coursework, and student conduct in the classroom are outlined below. Please read this policy carefully before the first day of classes.***

Attendance and absences.

Attendance in every class is expected. Occasional illness (including illness of a child, parent, or other dependent), serious injury, transportation delays, and bereavement are inevitable. However, it is not the instructor's responsibility to "catch you up." If you must miss a class meeting, please assume personal responsibility for work missed. Exchange contact information with a classmate to help you keep up with your lectures. **Given the time constraints and other classmates' needs, students should not expect the instructor to repeat or summarize a lecture via e-mail or during office hours.**

Be on time. Students who are repeatedly late may be documented, which may result in the penalization of the attendance/participation grade. Students who are more than half an hour late to class will not be marked present. Tardiness will only be excused with proper documentation.

Stay the entire time. The instructor will mark as absent students who leave the class and do not return before its conclusion. Students who do so may only be excused in case of a medical emergency or with proper documentation.

Document excuses. The instructor will only excuse absences with proper documentation, and all students who miss classes must meet with the instructor briefly before class in order to receive an excuse. Proper documentation should be dated and include a signature. Proper documentation includes physician or medical care provider notes (including for sick children and dependents), court documents, obituaries, and formal requests from administration or faculty. Students who miss more than a day of classes are strongly encouraged to self report their absences at the following website: <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>. In addition, students with extended absences (longer than two weeks) should notify the Dean of Students at Rutgers-Newark. University policy stipulates that work scheduling conflicts and family vacations will not be excused. Students who simply e-mail the instructor without documentation, or who fail to follow up with documentation will not be excused. Furthermore, University and history department policy stipulates that students will lose half a letter grade (5 percentage points) of their FINAL COURSE GRADE after the fifth unexcused absence. Students who miss eight or more classes through any combination of excused or unexcused absences will not earn credit for the course. Such students should withdraw from the course.

E-management, organization, and podcasts. Students must participate in all aspects of the course, including Blackboard assignments. Students must have a working Rutgers username and password, as well as the coordination of e-mail and Blackboard usage. The instructor will frequently send e-mail reminders and assign material on Blackboard. In the event that the

instructor cannot hold a physical class meeting—typically due to inclement weather or conflict with an academic conference—the instructor will post a podcast and lecture slides. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with podcasts and lecture slides just as they are responsible for attending in-class lecture. Podcasts and lecture slide material may be used for written assignments, quizzes, and exams.

In addition to using Blackboard, students will also use the University libraries website (libraries.rutgers.edu) in order to download required readings and, when necessary, conduct research.

Students are responsible for keeping up with and contributing to any on-line components of the class. Please do not contact the instructor if you have a problem with Blackboard access. If students have e-management issues, students should immediately contact the Newark Computing Services Help Desk, located in Hill Hall 109, or call at 973-353-5083.

Student conduct. Please be respectful of your peers, your instructor, and the university setting. Students may be asked to leave the class for the following reasons: cell phone use and texting during class (except for students with children and/or other dependents), using laptops to surf social media and other irrelevant websites, sleeping in class, persistently talking or whispering while the instructor or other students are speaking, blatant disruptions, and ad hominem attacks on other students or the instructor, including attacks couched in racism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, discrimination based on ability, and religious intolerance. Students who become distracted by or who distract others with technology *for any reason* may be asked to sit in the front rows if they wish to continue to use a laptop or tablet. Students who consistently misuse technology will not be allowed to bring laptops or tablets into the classroom.

Course readings. Students must complete the readings before each class meeting, prepared to bring questions and comments for class. Students must purchase or otherwise obtain copies of the required texts. All other texts will be available on the course blackboard page. **Students are required to bring the readings to class in order to reference page numbers and other references to the readings in lectures.** Students will read an average of 30-40 pages per class meeting, which is typical for an undergraduate course in history. Although on a handful of days we will exceed that limit, many days will consist of only 10-20 pages of readings. Some students may find the amount of reading difficult, and such students should make plans to dedicate extra hours in order to successfully complete the course readings. **The University suggests that students schedule or otherwise dedicate 3-6 class hours per week reading and studying for this course. In addition to the readings listed on the course calendar, students are responsible for reading all supplemental materials, including the syllabus, the writing guide, and all prompts.**

Late policy. Late work submitted without documentation will be accepted only at the discretion of the instructor. Late work is generally assessed at a 10% penalty for each 24-hour period an assignment is late.

Statement on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

If you plagiarize, you will at a minimum fail the assignment, and you may possibly fail the course. Students will submit all written work to Turnitin, and students must sign the University honor pledge when submitting any in-class assignments. Any student who commits plagiarism or other acts of academic dishonesty will be asked to withdraw from the course. Violations will be reported to the appropriate university authorities and may result in further disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes unauthorized collaboration on homework assignments and, of course, cheating on in-class assignments.

All work electronic work must be submitted to the Turnitin module on the course Blackboard page. All in-class and electronic work must include the following pledge: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination / assignment.”

****From the University’s Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students:**

“Plagiarism is the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or by appropriate indentation and must be properly cited in the text or in a footnote. Acknowledgment is required when material from another source stored in print, electronic or other medium is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in one's own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "to paraphrase Plato's comment..." and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material. Information which is common knowledge such as names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., need not be footnoted; however, all facts or information obtained in reading or research that are not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged.

In addition to materials specifically cited in the text, only materials that contribute to one's general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography. Plagiarism can, in some cases, be a subtle issue. Any questions about what constitutes plagiarism should be discussed with the faculty member.”

Course requirements

Participation (10%). Although on many days, the class will be centered on lecture and instructor-led exposition of the required readings, there will be a number of days throughout the semester in which students will be asked to lead and facilitate the discussion. One of the most critical aspects of this course is in-class participation. **Students must come to class each day with the assigned readings, prepared to discuss specific questions and issues raised by the readings.** Students that refuse to discuss the reading materials, repeatedly take the class discussion off-topic, engage in other disruptions, or fail to bring the readings into class risk harming their participation grade. So that we can fully integrate the text into our discussion, students will be asked to bring to each class a brief set of reading notes outlining the major points in the readings, including the type of source, the point of the argument, supporting evidence, etc.

Quizzes (30%). Students will complete 4-5 quizzes throughout the course of the semester, one or two of which will consist of take-home assignments that ask students to answer specific questions about the readings. In-class quizzes may or may not be announced, and only students with a documented excuse may make up quizzes for *lateness* or *absence*. Students will have about 20 minutes to complete the quizzes, which will consist of 10-20 matching or multiple-choice questions asking basic questions about the readings. Students should expect to be quizzed on any knowledge prior to the date of the quiz. Students who read and keep up with the lectures should have no problem earning high grades on quizzes.

Historiographical Essay (25%). Students will complete a historiographical essay consisting of no fewer than 1,800 words, a more detailed prompt of which will be made available on Blackboard. Historiographical essays will examine at least one of the two required books for this class. The essay will be due on Friday, April 24, no later than 11:59 p.m.

Final Examination (35%). Students will complete a comprehensive in-class and take-home final at the time designated by the University, on May 13, from 3-6 p.m. Please note that students with a record of perfect attendance *and* a 90% average or above in *all* areas of coursework are eligible to skip the in-class portion of the final. All students must complete the take-home portion of the final exam.

Calendar of Lectures and Readings

All readings marked with the symbol † will be scanned and posted on Blackboard.

All readings marked with the symbol * indicate slightly longer reading days, and students should plan their time accordingly.

Unit 1: From Reconstruction to the Gilded Age

Week 1

January 21 Introduction

January 23 “Reconstruction” from *Major Problems in American History, Volume I*†

Week 2

January 28 1) David Treuer, *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee (excerpt)*: 84-97; 2) Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History”†

January 30 David Treuer, *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee (excerpt)*: “Transforming Americans” 130-172†

Week 3

February 4 Painter, *A Fierce Discontent*: Introduction and Chapter 1: xiii-35

February 6 Painter, Chapter 2: 36-71

Week 4

February 11 Painter, Chapter 3: 72-109 (note that Chapter 4 is not required, but is recommended)

February 13 Painter, Chapter 5: 141-165

Unit 2: The Progressive Era, World Conflict, and Aftermath

Week 5

February 18 Painter, Chapter 6: 170-215
February 20 Painter, Chapters 7-8: 216-252

Week 6

February 25 Chapters 9-10: 253-305*
February 27 Chapter 11: 306-343

Week 7

March 3 Painter, Chapters 12, Epilogue, and Afterward: 344-end*
March 5 Ransby, Introduction and Chapter 1: 1-45*

Week 8

March 10 "Crossing a Cultural Divide: The Twenties" (documents and essays): 181-212†
March 12 Ransby, Chapter 2: 46-63

SPRING RECESS

Unit 3: The New Deal State, World War II, and the Cold War

Week 9

March 24 "The Depression, the New Deal, and FDR" (documents and essays): 215-245†
March 26 Ransby, Chapter 3: 64-104

Week 10

March 31 "The Ordeal of World War II": 246-270†
April 2 Ransby, Chapter 4: 105-148

Week 11

April 7 "The Cold War and the Nuclear Age" (documents and essays): 279-309
April 9 Ransby, Chapters 5-6: 148-208*

Unit 4: Civil Rights, Cultural Revolution, and the New American Empire

Week 12

April 14 Ransby, Chapters 7-8: 209-272*
April 16 Ransby, Chapters 9-10: 273-329*

Week 13

April 21 "Vietnam and the Crisis of American Power" (documents and essays): 289-324
April 23 1) Barbara Jordan, Speech to the Judiciary Committee; 2) Nixon, Resignation Speech; 3) Martha Shelley, "Gay is Good;" 4) Combahee River Collective: A Black Feminist Statement

April 24 Historiographical Essay Due

Week 14

April 28

“Politics and Popular Culture in the 1980s” (documents and essays): 368-408

April 30

1) “The 1990s and the Search for Post-Cold War Priorities” (documents and essays): 447-489 (excerpts); 2) Sanchez, “Race, Immigration, and Nativism”: 511-518; 3) Friedman and Mandelbaum, “Domestic Dysfunctions and American Decline”: 562-572

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May 13

3-6 p.m. Final Examination (tentative)