

United States History Survey since 1865

Spring 2011

HIST 114 A

Monday-Wednesday, 1:10-2:20 pm

Moravian College

Comenius 309

Instructor: Dr. Sharon Sauder Muhlfeld

Office number: Comenius 301

Office Hours: Mon. 9:00-12:00 am, Thurs. 10:30-11:30 am and by appointment

E-mail: smsm@moravian.edu

Course Introduction:

This course will cover approximately one hundred years of United States history, stretching from the post-Civil War reconstruction period to the mid-1970s. Both ends of this span featured significant social, political, racial, and legal upheaval, which will give us ample opportunity to analyze the country's response to this kind of change in different eras. While many historians focus on the dramatic transformation of the US since the Civil War, we will also examine the ways in which the nation remained the same. For whom did change occur? Whose lives were circumscribed in the same way as their ancestors? What social, political, and economic factors determined whether someone's life was marked by continuity or change? To answer these questions, we will strive to get inside the heads of nineteenth- and twentieth-century figures, enabling ordinary people to share the stage with the most prominent movers and shakers.

Primary Sources:

To help you better understand what made these people tick, we will be examining a number of primary sources. We will spend a considerable amount of time in class discussing these documents, often in small groups. Reading primary sources is not always as straightforward as it seems. You will have to adjust to unfamiliar language, unfamiliar circumstances, and unfamiliar ideas, but in doing so, you will gain greater insight into the American past, which has shaped your American present.

It is also my intent that handling primary sources will introduce you to the task of the historian. History is not simply a collection of facts that historians spend their life chasing. Rather historians carefully examine the existing evidence (primary sources) and present an argument about it, much like a lawyer appearing before a jury. The evidence, however, is often tricky, requiring historians to analyze rigorously before reaching any conclusions about the past. For example, what might seem like a straightforward essay or personal account has to be inspected: What audience did the author intend to reach? How might the author have misread a situation? By the end of the course, I trust that asking such questions will seem natural to you.

These primary sources will also be at the heart of several of your assignments for this course. Three times throughout the semester, I will ask you to analyze several documents. Your job will be threefold: summarize the documents, identify what you don't understand and how those missing pieces might help to clarify the source, and connect the document to the broader course (ex: does the author seem to agree with the interpretations we talk about in class or you read in your textbook?). These assignments can be written less formally than your regular papers, but your analysis should be rigorous. Each one is worth approximately 3% of your grade. **No document analysis assignments will be accepted late unless you make prior arrangements with me.**

Writing:

While examining primary sources is an important part of the historian's job, another major segment is converting interpretations of the documents into coherent prose. Having analyzed primary material, this course will also enable you to practice the historian's craft through some of your written assignments. Again, writing history means making an argument and then supporting your claim using evidence from the past. Your first paper and the Midterm exam will require you to practice this skill.

Papers and Exams:

1. The first assignment will be on the book *Devil in the White City* and is due in class on **Feb. 14**. It will be a short paper (**3-5 pages**), so you will need to be concise and focused as you make your argument and present your evidence. I will give you a more detailed assignment sheet during the first few weeks of class.
2. **Midterm Examination.** This exam will be in-class and will occur on **March 2**. The format for this exam will be True/False/Justify. The entire exam will consist of several statements to which you will respond either true or false and then justify your answer. Points will be awarded only upon how completely and persuasively you justify your answer, not upon whether you select true or false.
3. Your final paper (**4-5 pages**) will require you to use several document collections as well as the book *Homeward Bound*. More details will be given later in the semester. The project is due in class on **April 18**.
4. **Final Examination.** The final exam will be administered on **Wednesday, May 4 at 1:30 pm**. The exam will consist of document analysis and short essay questions, covering material since the Midterm. You will be given three hours to take this exam.

Grades:

Documents and Quizzes	10%
First paper	20%
Midterm	20%
Final paper	25%
Final exam	25%

Policies:

1. **Participation:** I have not included participation as a specific percentage of your grade, but it will significantly affect my overall evaluation of your performance in this course. Participation will affect your grade particularly on borderline cases (ex: good participation will move your grade from a B+ to an A-; poor participation will reduce your grade from a B+ to a B). I realize that some of you are more reticent than others, so participation in discussion will not be the only basis for my evaluation, but your insightful comments and questions are the easiest way to indicate to me that you have thought about the material and are prepared for class. Each class will include some opportunity for discussion, often in small groups, so there will be plenty of opportunities to make your voice heard. For those of you who are naturally shy, I suggest that you come to class having already thought about what you can contribute ahead of time. In an effort to promote increased participation, I will randomly call on students, especially at the beginning of the semester.
2. **Attendance:** Attendance will also factor into my evaluation of your class participation. **Missing more than three classes without written permission from the health center or the dean will automatically result in a lowering of your grade.** Should you be absent for health or personal reasons, your written excuse should be delivered to me on your first day back. Any absence (even those without good excuse) should be reported or explained to me.
3. **Your two primary paper assignments** will be accepted late but will be reduced by a third of a grade for every day that the assignment is late (including weekends and breaks). **Papers receiving a grade lower than a C- must be rewritten unless the low grade is a result of being late. The student must also consult with me before rewriting.** For the first paper, students receiving a grade of C+, C, or C- have the option to rewrite (again, unless the grade has been altered by lateness) but only after consulting with me. In both cases, I will average the two grades together. No rewrites will be accepted for the first paper after **March 28**. Note again that **document analysis assignments will not be accepted late.**
4. **Plagiarism** will not be tolerated. Plagiarism occurs whenever you use someone else's words or ideas without putting them in quotation marks and citing their work in a footnote. The most egregious forms of plagiarism occur when students copy entire paragraphs or sentences from another source and try to pass them off as their own, but copying short phrases is just as illegal. Simply changing a few words from another author's paragraph or sentence does not get you off the hook

for plagiarism—you have still pilfered words and ideas. Moravian’s plagiarism policy is that you will either fail the entire course or fail the assignment. I have found that most students who have resorted to plagiarism in the past did so out of desperation, fearing that their paper would be poor or late. Please remember, however, that both of these conditions would be preferable to academic dishonesty, which affects not only your grade but your overall academic record as well.

5. I reserve the right to alter this syllabus should the need arise during the semester.
6. You are responsible for keeping hard copies of all of your work. Electronic submissions that fail to reach me in a compatible form will still be counted late. In general I discourage electronic submissions, but if for some reason you do send me an assignment via e-mail, I will always acknowledge the message. If you don’t get a response from me, it means I haven’t received your work.
7. All electronic devices should be turned off and remain invisible for the duration of the class period unless permission is granted by the professor.

Readings:

The schedule of readings accompanies the course outline listed below. Readings are to be completed by class time on their scheduled date. Your papers and some exam material will be based on these readings, and I will expect you to be able to converse in class about them. **Please note that you will also receive some primary documents at various points in the semester, which will also be part of the reading load for certain days. Several times throughout the semester I will also give short quizzes on the reading (usually with advanced notice). Some of these quizzes will affect your participation grade while others will be counted in the “Document Analyses and Quizzes” section of your final grade.**

The following books are available at the bookstore:

Give Me Liberty (Seagull Edition), vol. 2, Eric Foner
The Devil in the White City, Erik Larson
Homeward Bound, Elaine Tyler May

Course Outline

Jan. 17: Course Introduction

Jan. 19: Reconstruction

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, ch. 15**

Jan. 24: Shifting Frontiers: The South

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 608-616**

Jan. 26: Rise of Big Business

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 556-568, 579-588**
Devil in the White City, prologue and Part 1

Jan. 31: Labor's Response

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 589-608**
Devil in the White City, part 2
Document Analysis #1 due

Feb. 2: US Overseas Expansion

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 624-636**
Devil in the White City, part 3

Feb. 7: *Devil in the White City* discussion

Reading: **Devil in the White City, part 4 and epilogue (the entire book should be completed by today)**

Feb. 9: The West and Urbanization

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 640-642**

Feb. 14: Urbanization and Immigration

****Devil in the White City paper due****

Feb. 16: Immigration

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 617-619, 643-646**

Feb. 21: Progressivism

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 637-639, 650-652, 661-665, 669-677**

Feb. 23: The Women's Movement

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 647-648, 665-669**

Feb. 28: World War I

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 678-700**

March 2: **Midterm Exam**

March 7-9: **Spring Break**

March 14: Race relations and the Great Migration

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 700-718**

March 16: Flappers, KKK, and mass culture

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 739-748**

March 21: Economic boom and bust

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 719-735, 748-755**

March 23: The First New Deal

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 756-772**

Document Analysis #2 due

March 28: The Second New Deal

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 772-795**

Homeward Bound, ch. 2

First Paper Rewrites due

March 30: World War II: prelude to Pearl Harbor

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 796-807**

April 4: World War II: On the Home front

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 807-832**

Homeward Bound, ch. 3

April 6: The Cold War and McCarthyism

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 840-845, 860-870**

Homeward Bound, ch. 4

Document Analysis #3 due

April 11: Consumerism and Suburbia: the 1950s

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 871-881**
Homeward Bound, chs. 5-8

April 13: The Civil Rights Movement

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 899-918, 929-933**

April 18: Vietnam

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 933-943**
Second Paper due

April 20: 1960s and 1970s cultural voices

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 943-956**
Homeward Bound, ch. 9

April 25: **No Class**

April 27: Conclusion and Review

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 4, 1:30-4:30 pm