

## **United States History Survey since 1865**

Spring 2014

HIST 114 C

Tuesday/Thursday, 8:55-10:05 am

Moravian College

Comenius 309

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### **Course Introduction:**

This course will cover approximately 100 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, many of which are available in the course pack at the bookstore. 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. Don't try to read primary sources the same way you read a textbook or monograph. Instead of aiming to uncover "the general idea," you're looking at the details with an eye toward using those details to generate more questions.

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 most of your assignments for this course. You will write two formal papers, which will incorporate primary documents in some way, but three times throughout the semester, I will also ask you to complete document analysis assignments that are designed to focus more on mining the sources than crafting a polished written interpretation of their purpose and value. While each assignment will be unique, in general you will 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 4% of your grade.

### **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. Writing history means making an argument and then supporting your claim using evidence from the past. Clear arguments spring from clear, concise thinking, so the two formal papers for this class will not be long but will require you to be focused. The Midterm exam will also give you the opportunity to practice marshaling evidence to support an argument.

### **Papers and Exams:**

1. The first assignment will be on the book *Bread Givers* and is due in class on **Feb. 11**. In this somewhat autobiographical novel, Anzia Yezierska introduces us to the world of Jewish immigrants in early-twentieth-century New York. In your **3-5 page paper** you will discuss immigration's unique challenges for urban families. 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 **Feb. 27**. 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 in addition to material from lectures and the textbook. You will choose to focus on either the Civil Rights movement or the Women's Rights movement of the mid-twentieth century, and you will need to explain how the documents at your disposal illustrate the significance (or inadequately capture) the era in question. More details will be given later in the semester. The paper is due in class on **April 15**.

4. **Final Examination.** The final exam will be administered on **Thursday, May 1 at 8:30 am**. The exam will consist of approximately a dozen short answer questions, covering material since the Midterm. You will be given three hours to take this exam.

### Grades:

Quizzes	5%
Documents	12%
First paper	20%
Midterm	20%
Final paper	22%
Final exam	21%

### 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 when your final average falls in a borderline zone (ex: a final average of 79.9 will remain a C+ unless you have actively participated in class throughout the semester; a 79.1 will move from a C+ to a B- with great participation; an 80.1 will drop from a B- to a C+ with poor participation). 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. I prefer to not randomly call on students, but I will resort to that tactic if you are persistently silent.
2. **Attendance:** Attendance will also factor into my evaluation of your class participation. **Missing more than two 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).** **For the first assignment, any paper 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 25**.

4. No late work will be accepted after the last day of class, **April 24**.
5. **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.
6. I reserve the right to alter this syllabus should the need arise during the semester.
7. 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, and you should hand me a hard copy at the next class meeting.
8. All electronic devices should be turned off and remain invisible for the duration of the class period unless permission is granted by the professor.
9. If you are struggling in this class or with coursework in general, please don't hesitate to talk to me about it. If you wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability, contact Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Academic and Disability Support at 1307 Main Street or by calling 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

### **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. **Eight times throughout the semester I will also give short quizzes on the reading. If you miss one of these quizzes you can't retake it, but I will drop the lowest three scores before giving you a final quiz grade.** The following books are available at the bookstore:

**Give Me Liberty (fourth Seagull Edition), vol. 2, Eric Foner**  
**Bread Givers, Anzia Yeziarska**  
**Course pack containing several articles and primary documents**

**Course Outline**

Jan. 14: Course Introduction

Jan. 16: Reconstruction

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

Jan. 21: Shifting Frontiers: The South

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 648-657**  
**Documents for Document Analysis #1**

Jan. 23: Rise of Big Business

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 593-602, 616-626**

Jan. 28: Labor's Response

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 626-648**  
**\*Document Analysis #1 due\***

Jan. 30: Urbanization and Immigration

Reading: ***Bread Givers*, part 1**

Feb. 4: Immigration

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 658-661, 686-689**

Feb. 6: *Bread Givers* discussion

Reading: **Finish *Bread Givers***

Feb. 11: The West

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 602-616**  
**\**Bread Givers* paper due\***

Feb. 13: US Overseas Expansion

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 664-678, 725-733**

Feb. 18: Progressivism

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 681-686, 706-709, 697-702, 714-722**

Feb. 20: The Women's Movement

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 689-691, 702-705, 709-714**

Feb. 25: World War I

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 733-749, 757-766**

Feb. 27: **Midterm Exam**

**March 4, 6: No Class: Spring Break**

March 11: Race relations and the Great Migration

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 751-757, 796-798**

**“Unreconciled Strivings: Baseball in Jim Crow America,” course pack**

March 13: Flappers, KKK, and mass culture

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 776-778, 788-796**

**Documents for Document Analysis #2**

March 18: Economic boom and bust

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 691-694, 768-776, 778-784**

**\*Document Analysis #2 due\***

March 20: The First New Deal

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 798-824**

**“New Deal documents,” course pack**

March 25: The Second New Deal

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 824-847**

**\*First Paper Rewrites due\***

March 27: World War II: prelude to Pearl Harbor

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 853-860**

April 1: World War II: On the Home front

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 861-886**

**“Japanese American Women during World War II,” course pack  
Documents for Document Analysis #3**

April 3: The Cold War and McCarthyism

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 886-906, 916-927**

**\*Document Analysis #3 due\***

April 8: Consumerism and Suburbia: the 1950s

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 929-945**

April 10: The Civil Rights Movement

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 957-968, 972-978, 981-984, 989-993**

April 15: Vietnam

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 953-954, 993-1001, 1028-1030**

**\*Second Paper due\***

**April 17: No Class**

April 22: 1960s and 1970s cultural voices

Reading: **Give Me Liberty, 1001-1018**

April 24: Conclusion and Review

**Final Exam: Thursday, May 1, 8:30-11:30 am**