Course Description

This course is a survey of United States History from 1865 to the present. Given the breadth of the topic, complete coverage is unreasonable. Consequently, we will concentrate on major themes from modern U.S. history. Some of these themes include the transformation of the United States from a rural, farming nation to an urban, industrial one, how individual and community identity have been shaped by issues such as race, ethnicity, class, the environment, and technology, globalization, and the causes and consequences of America’s emergence as a world power.

There are additional themes which are woven into the fabric of the entire course. No idea has received more attention in American history than freedom. As a result, I have selected a text, *Give Me Liberty!* which prioritizes how Americans have comprehended this changing ideal, and their efforts to achieve it. Other themes which will receive heavy emphasis include political, social, and economic equality, race, immigration, labor, the development and impact of leisure and entertainment, the movement of people groups over time, and how Americans have understood and interacted with the physical landscape and its non-human organisms.

The development of writing and thinking skills are also central to this course. While the accumulation of knowledge is certainly important, I prioritize complex thinking, effective argumentation, and clear prose. Consequently, I will push you to excel in each of these areas, and reward those who demonstrate progress.

Required Books

- Additional Readings: The texts above do not constitute all of the readings for the course. During some weeks, there will be additional readings/alternative readings. When this happens, alternative readings will either be posted on D2L, or available on reserve for you in the library. If these changes occur, you will be given at least one week of lead time to adjust.

Evaluation

Below is a list of major assignments and their point value in terms of your final grade:

- Midterm exam – 100 pts.
- Final exam – 200 pts
- Weekly Reaction Essays – 100 pts. (10 graded responses of 10 pts. each)
- Attendance and participation – 100 pts.
- Moody Paper – 100 pts.

Exams: There will be two major exams during the semester - a midterm and a final. For the midterm, you will be responsible for all learning during the first half of the course. It will include a take-home section and an in-class section. The final will consist of two sections. The first section will include all learning from the second half of the semester. The second section will require you to write a comprehensive essay which synthesizes the entire course. Taken together, the midterm and final will account for 50% of your grade.

Attendance and Participation: I expect you to attend class regularly, to be consistently prepared, and to participate during discussions. Attendance and participation at weekly discussion sections are particularly crucial—if you miss these discussion sections, or if you show up unprepared, your grade in this course will suffer. Attendance will be taken for ALL meetings and you will be allowed two absences without penalty. Each additional absence will incur a 2% reduction in your overall grade. Official excused absences should be accompanied by a written note including contact information. Pop quizzes may be given as a check on whether you are keeping up with attendance and required readings. They will count toward your participation grade, and no make-ups will be given for unexcused absences.

Weekly Reaction Essays: These are due at the beginning of class each Friday and consist of one-page responses to the readings for the week. The first reaction paper will be due this Friday. Only ten of them will be counted toward your overall grade. This means that I will drop the lowest scores for all reaction papers in excess of ten. This is meant to give you some “throw-aways” as you work on improving your writing. Historical writing is not easy, and so you should not expect to get it right the first time. (see more below)

Moody Paper: During the second half of the course, we will be reading Coming of Age in Mississippi, by Anne Moody. It is a classic about the trial of being a young, black female during and immediately preceding the Civil Rights Era in the United States. You will write a take-home essay which addresses some of the major themes of the book. Details will be provided later in the semester.

Weekly Reaction Papers
Each week, prior to your discussion section, you will write a reaction essay based upon the assigned primary source readings and/or alternative readings. The primary function of the reaction essays is to prepare you for discussion. You should use these essays to develop your discussion agenda. I have also assigned these essays because I want you to practice writing on a regular basis. Most importantly, I want these to be thought pieces; you should grasp onto those aspects of the week’s reading that interested you, troubled you, confused you, excited you, and/or angered you, and then use the essay to think through the issues involved. Please understand that while part of the function of these essays is to make sure you are doing the reading, I do not want these essays to simply regurgitate the reading’s major themes. Let me repeat: these essays should NOT be merely summaries of the week’s readings; they are your opportunity to explore a theme that you would like to see addressed during discussion. The best essays will focus on a single idea or topic and develop it succinctly but thoroughly.

Electronic Devices in the Classroom
Laptop computers, tablet computers, cellphones, and other electronic devices may not be used in this class.
Using D2L (learn.colorado.edu)
Most (perhaps all) documents which are created for this class will be available on D2L. It is your responsibility to check it regularly for additions, deletions, and changes to the course. Items you will find on D2L include:

- Changes in the syllabus
- Lectures
- Instructor-created documents, Reading and Exam Guides, and Grading Rubrics
- Grades (TBD)
- Supplementary readings
- Essential Questions which we use to guide our historical inquiry

Course Schedule (Subject to change!)

August 25, 27, and 29
Lecture and Discussion: Course Introduction, Legacy of the Civil War, The New Freedom for Blacks, Political Reconstruction
(read only the intro)

*Reaction Essay Due on Friday*

September 3 and 5
Lecture and Discussion: The New West, The Transformation of the Plains, The End of the Frontier?
Readings: *Give Me Liberty!*, Chapter 16: The Transformation of the West and ALL Supplementary readings for week 2 on D2L.

*Reaction Essay Due Friday*

September 8, 10, and 12
Lecture and Discussion: Industrial America, Gilded Age Politics, Freedom of Contract and Labor,
Readings: *Give Me Liberty!*, Chapter 16: Read what remains from last week. *Voices of Freedom*, Chapter 16

*Reaction Essay Due Friday*

September 15, 17, and 19
Readings: *Give Me Liberty!*, Chapter 17: The Populist Challenge, The Segregated South, and Redrawing the Boundaries, and *Voices of Freedom*, #s 107-110

*Reaction Essay Due Friday*

September 22, 24, and 26
Lecture and Discussion: The New American Empire, Patterns of Consumption and Leisure, Making Sense of Progressivism
Readings: *Give Me Liberty!*, Chapter 17: Becoming a World Power, and Chapter 18: An Urban Age and a Consumer Society, and Varieties of Progressivism and *Voices of Freedom*, #s 111-119

*Reaction Essay Due Friday*
September 29, October 1 and 3  Lecture and Discussion: Progressivism in Politics, The Great War, Post-War in the United States, Reaction to War  
Readings: Give Me Liberty!, Read the rest of Chapter 18 and ALL of Chapter 19, and Voices of Freedom, #120, and ALL of Chapter 19  
*Reaction Essay Due Friday

October 6, 8, and 10  Lecture and Discussion: Race and Immigration in the 1920s, Modernism, Fundamentalism and other “isms”, Agriculture and the New Urban America  
*Reaction Essay Due Friday

October 13, 15, and 17  Lecture and Discussion: Midterm Review, Causes of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl  
Readings: Give Me Liberty!, Chapter 20: The Great Depression, and something on the Dust Bowl (TBD)  
Midterm Exam: October 16

October 20, 22, and 24  Lecture and Discussion: The New Deal and Other 1930s Visions of America, Big Dams, Big Agriculture, Big Waste?, World Conflict and the Limits of Reform  
Readings: Give Me Liberty!, Chapter 21, Voices of Freedom, Chapter 21  
*Reaction Essay Due Friday

October 27, 29, and 31  Lecture and Discussion: The Home Front and WWII, Race, Gender, and War, Technology, Fighting the War, and the Logic of the Atomic Bomb  
Readings: Give Me Liberty!, Chapter 22, Voices of Freedom, Chapter 22 (optional), and Moody, Part I  
*Reaction Essay Due Friday

November 3, 5, and 7  Lecture and Discussion: The Emergence of the Cold War, The Cold War, Anti-Communism, and the Developing World Affluence, Suburbia and the Other America  
Readings: Give Me Liberty!, Chapter 23, Voices of Freedom, Chapter 23 (optional), and Moody Parts II, and III  
*Reaction Essay Due Friday

November 10, 12, and 14  Lecture and Discussion: The Long and Short Civil Rights Movements, The Other Civil Rights Movements, Discussion of Moody book, The New Left and the Origins of Protest,  
Readings: Give Me Liberty!, Chapter 24, Moody Part IV, and Voices of Freedom, Chapter 24 (optional)  
*Reaction Essay Due Friday
November 17, 19, and 21
Lecture and Discussion: Feminism, Vietnam and the Logic of the Cold War, 1968 and the End of Protest
Readings: Give Me Liberty!, Chapter 25, Voices of Freedom, Chapter 25
*Moody Essay Due on November 17
*Reaction Essay Due Friday

November 24 - 28
Fall Break – No Class

December 1, 3, and 5
Lecture and Discussion: The Greening of America?, Understanding the Conservative Turn, The 1970s and the End of Affluence
Readings: Give Me Liberty, Chapter 26, Voices of Freedom, Chapter 26
*Reaction Essay Due Friday

December 8, 10, and 12
Lecture and Discussion: Reagan Revolution, the End of the Cold War and the Clash of Civilizations, Technology, Globalization and the 21st Century, Review for Final Exam
Readings: Give Me Liberty!, Chapter 27, Voices of Freedom, Chapter 27
*Reaction Essay Due Friday

Final Exam:
Thursday, December 18, 10:30am – 1:00pm

Other Matters

Accommodations for Disabilities:
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to your professor a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions: Injuries, Surgeries, and Illnesses guidelines under Quick Links at Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

Religious Observances:
If you have religious commitments that will interfere with class attendance or with the completion of a scheduled assignment, please let me know in advance so that I can make appropriate arrangements.

Classroom Behavior:
Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at
http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at
http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

Academic Honesty: The CU Honor Code establishes the principle of academic honesty and integrity for all members of our community. In this class, you will be expected to adhere to those principles; failure to do so will result in serious sanctions. I will be glad to discuss individually any uncertainties or concerns you may have about these issues – I recognize that they are not always clear-cut. You will find information on the Honor Code, including a section on “Avoiding Plagiarism,” at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://honorcode.colorado.edu. The History Department’s guidelines on writing and documentation may be found on the department’s website at http://www.colorado.edu/history/guidelines/index.html.

Discrimination and Harrassment:
The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://hr.colorado.edu/dh/