**HIST 1025: The U.S. Since 1865**

MWF 4:00-4:50 pm  
Hellems Hall 247

Alexander P. Langer, Instructor  
alexander.langer@colorado.edu  
Office Hours: MW 3:00-4:00 pm, Hellems 351

**Overview**

This is an introductory course in American history, beginning with the end of the Civil War and finishing around the turn of the 21st century. As such, students will be expected to have a solid understanding of American history by the end of the course. To facilitate comprehension and cohesion of narrative, this course centers around several themes. They are:

1. **Freedom**: The Civil War fundamentally changed the notion of freedom in America. We will trace how various groups and types of Americans grappled with, experienced, and fought for an ever-increasing vision of freedom.

2. **Federal Government**: From an entity with limited powers and limited impact on American lives to the (allegedly) all-encompassing entity that it is today, how has the federal government grown and changed in its, and how have Americans facilitated, fought, or welcomed those changes?

3. **Capitalism**: The story of the last one hundred fifty years of American history has also been the story of the growth of capitalism. How has our economy changed? How has it been shaped by policy? Who does it help and who does it hurt?

4. **Foreign affairs**: From an isolated and generally isolationist nation to the dominant global power, how has the United States changed its relationship with the world? How has our foreign policy altered domestic policy, and vice versa?

By the end of the course, student will understand the ways these forces and themes have shaped and continue to shape our lives in the United States. The study of history is more than the study of dates and names; it is the study of how actions affect lives, of how policy comes from politics, and how the lessons of the past give meaning to the arguments of today.

Many of the issues we face today, we have faced before. We will encounter familiar arguments in this class. We will examine how Americans of different eras confronted the same problems with different answers. Every example of these problems gives us insight into how to approach the future. The study of history is a tool to use in everyday life. Learn to use it well, and it will help you for the rest of your life!

**Books and Other Readings**

This course has one required textbook: *The Story of American Freedom*, by Eric Foner. It is available in the University Bookstore, on Amazon, and in local bookstores for $19.95. (I recommend Boulder Bookstore. It is a fabulous local bookstore on Pearl Street). In addition, students will read two to four outside readings per class. These will generally be short but will form much of the evidence base you will call upon during your examinations.
Reading primary sources entails more than simply reading. It entails comprehension, summation, and questioning. Students will be expected to come to class having read, understood, and summarized the readings. We will discuss every reading in class. If you seem like you have not read, I will begin asking you to turn in your summaries of the primary source readings, for attendance credit.

All readings outside of Foner’s textbook will either be uploaded to the course site or are easily accessible online. (If you cannot find Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address online, for instance, it is written in marble on his memorial).

**Course Requirements**

**Assignments:** Students will be required to complete two tests. Each test will cover approximately one half of the course and will **not** be cumulative. The tests will be a mix of several IDs, taken directly from the key terms listed on the syllabus, and a short essay that explores some of the larger themes of that period of the course.

Students will also be required to write three essays of varying length throughout the semester. The first essay will be capped at 250 words and will be an introductory paragraph for a hypothetical larger essay. The second essay will be a research paper, exploring primary sources, that will be 3-4 pages. The final essay, due with the final, will be a longer essay, approximately 5-6 pages, wherein the student will tackle one of the four themes of the course and summarize the ways that theme played out over the last one hundred and fifty years. More details about these essays will be made available at least two weeks before they are due, in class and on the course site.

As stated in the readings, there will be daily primary source readings that students will be expected to have read and be ready to discuss. Students should print out (or have readily available on a computer or tablet) their readings, with a summary of the document and at least one question for their classmates or the instructor. These discussions, and the preparations for them, will make up the bulk of the participation grade.

**Attendance and Participation:** Being here is the best way to learn! I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. You are all adults, and it is your choice what to do with your time. We meet approximately 40 times this semester, fourteen weeks. You **get three absences without question or penalty.** That is about ten percent of our course time. If you don’t feel like coming to a Friday class because you want to head to the mountains early, that is fine. If you’re down with the flu and don’t want to come to class, that is fine. If you had a tough class earlier in the day and don’t feel up to attending, also fine. You get three. After that, additional absences will lower your attendance grade by 5%. Failing any section of the grade book is grounds for failing the class.

If you do miss class, it is you who is responsible for finding out and absorbing the material covered in the classes you missed. I will put up my class slides, but I often go off-note. If you email me asking me if you missed anything important, my reply will be a simple “yes.” Make friends with classmates, share notes, form study-groups.

Of course, if you have extenuating circumstances (long illness, mental health issues, family issues, etc.) do not hesitate to talk to me about it. I am reasonable. I understand that life can sometimes get in the way of learning. I want you to learn.
Grading Breakdown:
Midterm: 20%
Final: 20%
Paper 1: 10%
Paper 2: 20%
Paper 3: 20%
Attendance & Participation: 10%

Course Schedule

Monday August 27
Syllabus Day

Wednesday August 29
The Civil War and the Fight for Reconstruction
Readings: Foner, Introduction; Alexander Steven’s “Cornerstone Speech”; Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address.

Friday August 31
The Wars over Reconstruction
Readings: Foner, Chapter 5; Douglass’ Reconstruction Letter.

Monday September 3
LABOR DAY—NO CLASS

Wednesday, September 5
Radical Reconstruction and its End

Friday, September 7
How the West Was Lost
Readings: Frederick Jackson Turner, “Frontier Thesis”; Chief Joseph’s writings; Pratt: “Kill the Indian to Save the Man.”

Monday, September 10
Jim Crow
Readings: Foner, Chapter 6; Booker T. Washington’s Atlanta Compromise Speech of 1895; DuBois critique of Washington; Record of Henry Smith’s lynching, 1893, Paris, Texas.

Wednesday, September 12
Industrialization and its Discontents

Friday, September 14
Populism and Popular Politics
PAPER #1 DUE
Readings: Foner, Chapter 7; Debs, “What Can We Do for Working People?”

Monday, September 17
The Progressive Movement  
**Readings**: Suffrage Images.

**Wednesday, September 19**  
America’s Imperial Moment  

**Friday, September 21**  
Over There: The Origins of the Great War  
**Readings**: Woodrow Wilson: “Fourteen Points.”

**Monday, September 24**  
Over Here: America and the Great War  
**Readings**: Foner, Chapter 8; World War I Propaganda.

**Wednesday, September 26**  
Immigration, Citizenship, and the First Red Scare  

**Friday, September 28**  
The Roaring Twenties  
**PAPER #2 GROUP 1 DUE**  
**Readings**: Excerpts from *The Sun Also Rises*; Jazz & Blues Standards.

**Monday, October 1**  
The Great Depression  
**Readings**: “Migrant Mother”; “The Adventures of Superman.”

**Wednesday, October 3**  
The Only Thing We Have to Fear is Fear Itself: Recovery and the New Deal  
**Readings**: Foner, Chapter 9; FDR’s First Inaugural Address.

**Friday, October 5**  
The Economic Bill of Rights: Security and the New Deal  
**Readings**: FDR’s Fireside Chat on Social Security; The Economic Bill of Rights.

**Monday, October 8**  
Totalitarianism: The Origins of World War II  
**Readings**: Foner, Chapter 10; Umberto Ecco’s “Ur-Fascism”; Charles Lindbergh’s “An Independent Destiny for America,” 1941.

**Wednesday, October 10**  
“A Date which will Live in Infamy”: Pearl Harbor and the Second World War  
**Readings**: FDR’s “Four Freedoms”; Potsdam Declaration.

**Friday, October 12**  
Two Bombs over Japan  
**Readings**: Bernard Feld’s 1980 recollection of the Nagasaki Bombing.

**Monday, October 15**  
MIDTERM

**Wednesday, October 17**  
The Cold War  
**Readings**: Foner, Chapter 11; Mr. X: “The Long Telegram.”; Lippman: “Critique of Containment

**Friday, October 19**
The Cold War Gets Hot: Interventions Abroad

**Readings:** Documentary on Operation PBSUCCESS

**Monday, October 22**
Affluence and the Consumer’s Republic

**Readings:** *I Love Lucy*—“Job Switching.”

**Wednesday, October 24**
Civil Rights I

**Readings:** Foner, Chapter 12; “The Southern Manifesto” (1956); Letter from Birmingham Jail.

**Friday, October 26**
Civil Rights II

**Readings:** LBJ’s Speech on the Voting Rights Act; “And this Happened in Los Angeles:” Malcom X interview on Police Brutality, WBAI Radio 1962.

**Monday, October 29**
Liberalism and the Great Society

**Readings:** Port Huron Statement—Students for a Democratic Society.

**Wednesday, October 31**
The Longest War: Vietnam

**Readings:** “Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.”

**Friday, November 2**
1968

**PAPER #2 GROUP 2 DUE**


**Monday, November 5**
Getting Out of Vietnam

**Readings:** Tim O’Brien: “On the Rainy River.”

**Wednesday, November 7**
The Nixon Years

**Readings:** “Nixon Was Far Worse.”

**Friday, November 9**
NO CLASS—Instructor out of town.

**Monday, November 12**
Watergate

**Readings:** The “Smoking Gun” tape, June 23, 1972.

**Wednesday, November 14**
Runnin’ on Empty: the 1970s Recession

**Readings:** Foner, Chapter 13; Carter’s “Crisis of Confidence Speech”, July 15, 1979.

**Friday, November 16**
2nd Wave Feminism and the Rise of the New Right

**Readings:** Stop ERA!” Phyllis Schlafly.

**Week of November 19-23**

NO CLASS—FALL/THANKSGIVING BREAK

**Monday, November 26**
Morning in America? Reaganism and Trickle-Down Economics  
**Readings:** “Morning in America,”—1984 Re-election ad.

**Wednesday, November 28**  
Iran-Contra and the Evil Empire  
**Readings:** Reagan at the Brandenburg Gate, 1987; Selections from Walsh Report on Iran-Contra.

**Friday, November 30**  
The End of the Cold War and the New World Order  
**Readings:** George H.W. Bush’s “New World Order” speech.

**Monday, December 3**  
The 90s, Globalization, and Culture Shock  
**Readings:** “The End of History?”—Francis Fukuyama.

**Wednesday, December 5**  
9/11 and the War on Terror  

**Friday, December 7**  
George W. Bush and Iraq  
**PAPER #2 GROUP 3 DUE**  
**Readings:** “15 Years Ago I Helped Start a War that Hasn’t Ended”; “Lie by Lie.”

**Monday, December 10**  
The Election of 2008 and the Obama Years  
**Readings:** SNL Trilogy of Palin Sketches.

**Wednesday, December 12**  
Rising Polarization and Review

**FINAL EXAM:** Wednesday, December 19, 7:30-10:00 pm.  
**FINAL PAPER DUE AT FINAL EXAM TIME.**

**Accommodation for Disabilities**  
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the Disability Services website. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions under the Students tab on the Disability Services website.

**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 race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. 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. For more information, see the policies on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct.

**Honor Code**
All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code (honor@colorado.edu; 303-492-5550). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the Honor Code Office website.

**Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation**
The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering a positive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, exploitation, harassment, dating or domestic violence, and stalking), discrimination, and harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or cureport@colorado.edu. Information about the OIEC, university policies, anonymous reporting, and the campus resources can be found on the OIEC website. Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

**Religious Holidays**
Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, exams can be made up if they fall on a religious observance. Essays will be due the day before, in my mailbox, for any student who does not wish to attend class on a day of religious observance. See the campus policy regarding religious observances for full details.