**HIST 2111: United States History I: to 1865**  
Spring 2020  
University of West Georgia (Newnan)  
TR 2:00-3:15 (Sec. 94)  
Room 186

Instructor: Richard Primuth  
Office: TLC 3103  
Office Hours: MW 1-2pm, 4:45-5:30 pm on Main campus; or by Appt. Before and after class.  
Email: rprimuth@westga.edu (preferred method of contact)

*To be ignorant of the past is to be forever a child* - Cicero

*The truth is rarely pure and never simple* - Oscar Wilde

**Course Description:** This course is a broad survey of the growth and change within the United States from its earliest settlements through the Civil War. Through lectures, readings, discussions and other activities we will examine political, cultural, and social themes in this nation’s early history. We begin with America’s pre-Columbian civilizations, conflict and colonization, Colonial America, move into the founding of a nation, the growth of democracy and end with the American Civil War. We will delve into such issues as race and slavery, women’s rights, and popular culture. The course is fairly light in reading, but emphasizes development of writing skills. Critical thinking and good analytical skills are essential in today’s workplace, and sharpening those skills will be a centerpiece of this course.

**Course Objectives:** In addition to gaining a basic understanding of themes, issues and events in American history to 1865, students will develop critical reading, writing, and thinking skills. Students will come out of the course with a broader understanding of the United States’ place within a global context, the nations’ diversity and the significance to their own lives.

**Required Texts:** (two)  
Main Text online and FREE: www.americanyawp.com  
Choose one of these short readers:  
*The Salem Witch Hunt: A Brief History with Documents* by Richard Godbeer OR  
*Black Americans in the Revolutionary Era: A Brief History with Documents* by Woody Holton

**Course Requirements:**  
**Movie Analysis:** You will need to write a 1 and a half to 2 page critical analysis of a movie dealing with any topic in American history before 1865. After a very short introduction and summary of the movie (1-2 sentences is plenty) the paper should concentrate on the film’s strengths or weaknesses. Was it accurate? Why or why not? Write on its accuracy or inaccuracy—not both! The paper needs an introduction, argument with supporting evidence (usually examples from the film to support your argument) and a conclusion. Movie suggestions include (but are certainly not limited to): 12 Years a Slave, The Revenant, Sleepy Hollow, The Madness of King George, John Adams, Cold Mountain, The Mission, Amistad, Glory, The Crucible, Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter, Gangs of New York, Gone with the

**Book essay:** On April 2 there will also be a short essay (2-3 pages) due. You will need to develop an argument and use examples (at least three direct quotes) from the documents (not from Introduction) to bolster that argument. “As part of the general education of every UWG student, this course aims to teach students to understand the political, social, economic, or cultural dimensions of world or American history. The purpose of this assignment, in part, is to measure the extent to which students in all sections of this course have learned what we have been trying to teach. We will collect and analyze essays from all sections in order to find ways to help future students learn this material more fully.” More details to follow. (Due April 2)

**Exams:** There will be three non-cumulative exams given in the course. These exams will be a mix of short identifications and essay questions. You will need to bring your own blue books which can be purchased throughout campus. (February 13, March 12, and a Final on May 5)

**Class Participation:** This will be taken into account when determining your grade and includes attendance and participation in class discussions. More than five unexcused absences will result in zero points for attendance/participation.

**Extra Credit:** You may write a short (1 and a half to 2 pages) review of a visit during the semester to a history museum, exhibit or site for extra credit. This needs to be a critical essay. Did the site or exhibit seem to have an overall theme or message? Were there historical inaccuracies? What was done well and what was done poorly? Suggested sites include The Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta, Atlanta History Center, Etowah Indian Mounds State Historic Site, Andersonville, West Georgia Museum of Tallapoosa, Allatoona Pass Battlefield, Pickett’s Mill Battlefield, New Echota State Historic Site, MLK National Historic Site, Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History, Kennesaw National Battlefield, and the Tubman African American Museum in Macon. (Due anytime through end of semester)

**Grading:**
- Movie Review: 15%
- Book Essay: 25%
- Exam 1: 15%
- Exam 2: 15%
- Exam 3: 20%
- Attendance/Participation: 10%
- Extra Credit: up to 5%

**Grading Scale:**
- 90%+   A
- 80%+   B
- 70%+   C
- 60%+   D
- 59% -  F

**Writing Assistance:** This course has several writing assignments constituting a large portion of your possible grade. If you are struggling (writing does not come easily to most people) seek help sooner rather than later. Suggestions include:
- The UWG Library website (includes citation and style guides, as well as important history databases such as America: History & Life)
- The Writing Center (TLC 1201)
- College writing skills books (many of these are quite good and can be found online for less than $1.00)
- Peers (having another pair of eyes proof your work is always a good idea)
- Class Instructor (I am happy to give any help that I can)
Class Rules:
- Turn cell phones off during class; this is common courtesy.
- No food in class, beverages are fine
- Attendance is expected, and please be on time. If you need to leave early please inform instructor and sit near exit.
- This is an academic environment, show respect for others.
- Academic honesty is expected. Do not submit the work of others as your own. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and is not tolerated at this university. For details see the Student Handbook, appendix A and the history department statement on plagiarism: http://www.westga.edu/~history/statementonplagiarism.pdf

Tentative Course Outline:

Week 1 (Jan. 6-9): Course Introduction; Reconstruction
Read: Chapter 15

Week 2 (Jan. 13-16): Reconstruction; The West
Read: chapter 17

Week 3 (Jan. 21-23; no class 20th): Industrialization
Read: chapter 16
(1st paper due Jan. 23 in class)

Week 4 (Jan. 27-30): Urbanization/Gilded Age
Read: chapter 18

Week 5 (Feb. 3-6): Progressivism
Read: chapter 20; two documents on CourseDen (Washington & DuBois)

Week 6 (Feb. 10-13): American Empire/WWI
Read: chapters 19, 21
Exam 1: Feb. 13

Week 7 (Feb. 17-20): Modernization & the Great Depression/ Roosevelt and the New Deal
Read: chapters 22, 23

Week 8 (Feb. 24-27): World War II
Read: chapter 24

Week 9 (March 2-5): World War Two/Cold War
Read: chapter 25; Online document “Executive Order 9066.”

Week 10 (March 9-12): Cold War/ American Affluence
Read: Chapter 26
Exam 2: March 12
Week 11 (March 16-19): SPRING BREAK!

Week 12 (March 23-26): The Sixties/Civil Rights  
Read: chapter 27

Week 13 (March 30-April 2): Civil Rights  
Read: chapter 28; Documents posted on CourseDen  
(2nd paper due in class April 2)

Week 14 (April 6-9) The 1970s and Rise of the Right (no class April 7)  
Read: chapter 29 (Sections I-V only)

Week 15 (April 13-16): From Reagan to Obama  
Read: chapters 29 (Only sections VI-X), 30

Week 16: (April 20-23): From Reagan to Obama, cont.

Final Exam: Tuesday May 5 from 2:00- 4:00 pm

Additional information on:

Americans with Disabilities Act  
UWG Email Policy  
University of West Georgia Honor Code  
Credit Hour Policy

[link]

http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf