

**George Mason University**  
**HIST 122-001 Course Syllabus:**

**Development of Modern America: The U.S Since 1877**

**Meeting Time: MW 1:30-2:45 PM; Blueridge Hall, Rm. 129**

**Instructor: Dr. David Gerleman ["Dr. G"]**



READ THIS DOCUMENT IN ITS ENTIRETY AS YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ADHERING TO THE INFORMATION WITHIN

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course chronologically surveys the history of the United States from the tumultuous post-Civil War Reconstruction era through the digital age of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Students are introduced to *some* of the most significant people, events, and movements that shaped American history. Major topics include the rise of industrialization and urbanization, the advocacy and resistance to reform movements, and the economic and cultural developments enabling the United States to emerge as a global superpower. Students will exercise critical thinking skills to develop better understanding of the forces that shaped the American experience by using primary sources and interpreting imagery, photographs, and artifacts. Also included are discussions of the U.S. fits into the larger framework of global history and how America's past continues to impact current events.

**COURSE GOALS AND THEMES:** This course encouraging students to become critical thinkers, reflective scholars, and more informed and ethical citizens able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with the chronology of United States history from 1877 to the present.
- Comprehend and explain America's shift from an agricultural to an industrialized, urbanized consumer society which led to concomitant social, cultural, and economic changes.
- Trace the emergence of the U.S. as a world power through participation in two global wars.
- Cultivate historical literacy by analyzing primary, image, and film resources to interpret past events.
- Develop communication skills and ability to identify, evaluate, and cite digital and print resources.

**COURSE STRUCTURE:** Lecture meets on M/W from 1:30-2:45 PM. All course materials and announcements will be posted on Blackboard and graded assessments take place online.

I. **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:** Students must learn how to process and grapple with large amounts of information and identify important themes, events, and trends. The assigned textbook is James West Davidson et. al., *U.S. A Narrative History, Vol. II since 1865*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. available in a variety of formats for rent or purchase. Fenwick Library is acquiring a reserve copy for use in two-hour increments. Visit <https://publishing.gmu.edu/textbooks-on-reserve/>.

II. **GRADING AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** Grades are based on the standard scale of 90-100%= A; 80-89%= B; 70-79%= C; 60-69%= D; 59%= F and the plus +/-minus-adjustor may be applied to the final grade. Grades are NOT curved nor are assessments dropped. You must complete all exams and set requirements to pass this course. The instructor determines completion.

III. **ONLINE ASSESSMENT POLICY:** All exams and quizzes will take place online via Blackboard using GMU's Respondus LockDown browser installed on university machines but must be downloaded from the My-Mason tab on Blackboard page to personal computers. LockDown Browser operation can be viewed at <https://web.respondus.com/lockdownbrowser-student-video/>. Any installation difficulties should be referred to GMU's ITS at [support@gmu.edu](mailto:support@gmu.edu). We do not meet in person on Spring 2024: This syllabus may be altered as required with notice provided.

**COURSE POINT TOTALS:**

Exam 1:	100 pts.	20%
Exam 2:	100 pts.	20%
Exam 3:	100 pts.	20%
Six Quizzes [20 pts. ea.]	120 pts.	24%
Five <i>Picturing History</i> Essays	25 pts.	6%
Capstone Paper:	50 pts.	10%
Total:	495 pts.	

exam days to allow you to find a quiet and distraction-free environment to maximize test performance. You assume all responsibility for technical problems or internet connection issues if you choose to take your exams off campus and away from GMU computer labs. Students seeking accommodations must provide documentation from the DS office and coordinate with them to complete their assessments on days and times required.

- IV. **EXAMS AND QUIZZES:** Your absorption of course content and ideas will be tested by three exams [100 pts each] and six quizzes [20 pts each] comprised of multiple choice/ true-false or matching/identification questions. Exams 1 and 2 will ONLY be accessible during official class time on test days. Online quizzes occur on selected Fridays OUTSIDE of class time. All assessments have set time limits for completion. Wireless connections can be problematic; use direct access if possible and extend your computer's sleep settings! Students are advised to complete assessments early as delaying until the end of the access period risks unexpected problems that may result in no points being awarded. **The final exam will be a non-cumulative 65 minute assessment on 1 May from 1:30-4:15 PM.**
- V. **PICTURING HISTORY SUBMISSIONS:** [5 pts each] Students have the opportunity to draw from images, photographs or artifacts to practice writing and historical interpretation skills in a low-stake format. Students will choose five of ten offered short essay questions throughout the semester to write a one paragraph minimum response submitted via the assignments tab on Blackboard. Question availability ends on due date. Only five may be submitted for a grade.
- VI. **CAPSTONE FINAL PAPER:** [50 pts.] Students will respond to **ONE** [of three] overarching questions by writing a reflective and well-argued essay that demonstrates an understanding of the readings, lecture, historical trends, and your thoughts as to how they fit together. **Sources other than the text book must come ONLY from Fenwick Library's holdings.** Paper questions and full guidelines are located in a separate course content folder on Blackboard. **NOTE! FAILURE TO SUBMIT A CAPSTONE PAPER RESULTS IN YOUR FINAL COURSE GRADE DROPPING A FULL LETTER GRADE!** Award of bonus credit or improvement dividend points are also contingent upon submission. Final papers are **due on 1 May by 11:59 PM!**
- VII. **IMPROVEMENT BONUS DIVIDEND:** Students demonstrating improvement by scoring higher on the final exam than on the second exam may have the positive point difference added to the total course points. [\*If you scored 75 on the second exam and 85 on the final then 10 additional points would be awarded] \*Awards capped at 15 points *and contingent on final paper submission.*

### **COURSE POLICIES:**

- **Office Hours and Email:** In-person office hours in Horizon Hall 3220 are Wednesdays from 12:30-1:20 PM; other meeting times using ZOOM can be arranged if requested. Contact the instructor at [dgerlema@gmu.edu](mailto:dgerlema@gmu.edu) to schedule a meeting and remember to include your course/section number as well as sign your message.
  - ✚ For advice on how to email professionally at the university level, see <http://mleddy.blogspot.com/2005/01/how-to-e-mail-professor.html> or <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/how-to-build-relationships-with-college-professors>. You are strongly urged to utilize your GMU email account's automatic signature function to avoid forgetting to identify yourself!
- **Plagiarism and Cheating:** All students should be familiar with the Honor Code as stated in the George Mason University *Undergraduate Catalog*. Students who engage in any form of academic dishonesty fail the course and face further university disciplinary action. This includes use of AI

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technology such as ChatGPT for all graded work. If you have questions about the honor system or what constitutes plagiarism see: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm#plagiarism>.

- **Late Policy:** Students are responsible for adhering to all set deadlines. Make-up assessments are only permitted only under extraordinary circumstances with documentation required.
- **Electronics Policy:** Students may use laptops for note-taking as long as you refrain from unprofessional activities such as gaming, email, chat, etc. Please keep cell phones out of sight during class time; headphones/earbuds are also not permitted. Any recordings of class meetings, including audio, visual, or textual information, are not permitted without specific instructor permission. All Blackboard posted course materials, including presentations, videos, and class discussions are private; by federal law, any materials that identify student (names, voices, or images) must NOT be shared with anyone.
- **Disability Services and Accommodations:** If you have documented need for accommodations, please visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu) ; Phone: (703) 993-2474. No accommodations granted without authorization.
- **Available Student Resources:**
  - ✚ GMU's Writing Center [[writingcenter.gmu.edu](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu)] located in the Johnson Center offers students a variety of resources to improve their writing skills, including tutors, ESL specialists, and the opportunity to meet either face-to-face or via email through the Online Writing Lab. Book appointments early.
  - ✚ *Learning Services* ([learningservices.gmu.edu](http://learningservices.gmu.edu)) provides students a wide range of services including support with learning differences, study skill counseling, and provision of tutoring resources. Services are confidential and at no cost.
  - ✚ *Counseling & Psychological Services* ([caps.gmu.edu](http://caps.gmu.edu)) provides a wide range of free services to students, faculty, and staff by licensed clinical psychologists, social workers, professional counselors, learning specialists, and a psychiatrist dedicated to enhance students' personal wellness and academic performance.
  - ✚ *Student Support & Advocacy Center* ([ssac.gmu.edu](http://ssac.gmu.edu)) services include assisting students who are encountering barriers to academic success, interpersonal violence prevention, alcohol and drug education, health promotion/healthy relationships, student crisis intervention, and connecting students with appropriate campus and off-campus resources.

🔗 **FINAL NOTE:** *You are responsible for managing your academic career.* If you encounter difficulties during the semester, please contact your instructors immediately. Failing to attend class, missing deadlines, or not submitting assignments are financially and academically costly.

### HIST 122-001: Class Schedule—Spring 2024:

#### Week of January 17: Course Introduction:

**Read:** **Textbook:** Chapter 17, Reconstructing the Union, 1865- 1877;

**Watch:** Reconstruction: Crash Course Black American History #19

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGPAnLDzQYY>

#### Week of January 22/24: Reconstruction and New South

**Read:** **Textbook:** Chapter 17, Reconstructing the Union, 1865- 1877 + Chapter 18, The New South and Winning the West, 1870-1890; **Primary Source Reading:** *The Ku Klux Klan in Alabama*

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**Watch:** Reconstruction and 1876: Crash Course US History #22 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nowsS7pMApI>

**Complete:** Online Test Run of Respondus LockDown Browser [January 26]; *Picturing History Mini Essay Selection #1: [Due Friday, January 26]*

**Week of January 29/31: Westward Expansion/Gilded Age Politics**

**Read:** *Textbook:* Chapter 18, The New South and Winning the West, 1870-1890 + Chapter 19, The New Industrial Order, 1870-1890; *Primary Source Reading:* *The Carlisle Indian Industrial School*

**Watch:** Gilded Age Politics: Crash Course US History #26

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Spgdy3HkcSs>

Westward Expansion: Crash Course US History #24

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q16OZkgSXfM>

**Complete:** *Picturing History Mini Essay Selection #2: [Due Friday, February 2]*

**Week of February 5/7: The New Industrial Order, 1870-1890**

**Read:** *Textbook:* Chapter 19, The New Industrial Order, 1870-1890 + Chapter 20, The Rise of the Urban Order, 1870-1890; *Primary Source Reading:* *Haymarket Square, Chicago, 1886*

**Watch:** The Industrial Economy: Crash Course US History #23

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6tRp-zRUJs>

Growth, Cities, and Immigration: Crash Course US History #25

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRhjqqe750A>

The Gilded Age, The American Experience <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjpYzFtxfjU>

**Complete:** Online Graded Quiz #1 /February 9; Introduction + Chaps. 17-18 ]; *Picturing History Mini Essay Selection #3: [Due Friday, February 9]*

**Week of February 12/14: American Empire**

**Read:** *Textbook:* Chapter 21, Empire at Home and Abroad, 1877-1900; *Primary Source Reading:* *Two Sides of American Anti-Imperialism*

**Watch:** American Imperialism: Crash Course US History #28

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfsfoFgsFk4>

**Complete:** *Picturing History Mini Essay Selection #4: [Due Friday, February 16]*

**Week of February 19/21: Progressive Era and Reform Movements**

**Read:** *Textbook:* Chapter 22, The Progressive Era, 1890-1920 + Chapter 23, The U.S. and the Collapse of the Old World Order, 1901-1920; *Primary Source Reading:* *Debating Prohibition in Ohio*

Video Primary Source: *Futurist from 1901 Describes The World of 2001* from *Ladies Home Journal*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gzBhTL4oAs>

**Watch:** The Progressive Era: Crash Course US History #27

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0Q4zPR4G7M>

Progressive Presidents: Crash Course US History #29

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7fISW1PGsA&t=274s>

The Century: America's Time - The Beginning: Seeds of Change

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dssfIPirT2U&list=PL3H6z037pboHR-knzU-dc9XecG8UKrZs0>

**Complete:** Online Graded Quiz #2 [February 23; Chaps. 19 + 20]; *Picturing History Mini Essay Selection #5: [Due Friday, February 23]*

**Week of February 26/28: Jazz Age and Isolationism**

**Read:** *Textbook:* Chapter 23, The U.S. and the Collapse of the Old World Order, 1901-1920

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+ Chapter 24, The New Modern Era: 1920-1929; **Primary Source Reading:** *America's War at Home in Wisconsin* and *The Scope's Trial in Dayton, Tennessee*.

**Watch:** America in World War I: Crash Course US History #30

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y59wErgg4Xg&t=52s>

The Century: America's Time - 1914-1919: Shell Shock

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GBWDQ5cF\\_U&t=378s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GBWDQ5cF_U&t=378s)

Crash Course U.S. History: The Roaring 20's: Crash Course US History #32

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VfOR1XCMf7A>

Like Pale Gold - The Great Gatsby Parts 1-2 Crash Course English Literature #4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xw9Au9OoN88>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cn0WZ8-0Z1Y>

The Century: America's Time - 1920-1929: Boom To Bust

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RN7ftyZigYs>

**Complete:** Required Online First Exam Chaps. 17-21 [Wednesday, February 28]

Week of March 4/6: **Spring Break—No Classes**

Week of March 11/13: Great Depression and New Deal

**Read:** **Textbook:** Chapter 25, The Great Depression and the New Deal, 1929-1939; **Primary Source**

**Reading:** *Californians Face the Influx of 'Dust Bowl' Migrants*

**Watch:** The Great Depression: Crash Course US History #33

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCQfMWAikyU>

The Century: America's Time - 1929-1936: Stormy Weather

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSfzFWU5LbY>

The Century: America's Time - 1936-1941: Over The Edge

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWg2xghlbnc&list=PL3H6z037pboHR-knzU-dc9XecG8UKrZs0&index=5>

**Complete:** Online Graded Quiz #3 [March 15; Chaps. 22 + 23]; **Picturing History Mini Essay Selection #6: [Due Friday, March 15]**

Week of March 18/20: World War II and Cold War

**Read:** **Textbook:** Chapter 26, The U.S., World War II. And the New Global Order, 1927-1945 + Chapter 27, America and the Cold War; **Primary Source Readings:** *Congress and the Red Scare*

**Watch:** Crash Course World History: World War II: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q78COTwT7nE> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Objoad6rG6U>

The Cold War: Crash Course US History #37: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9C72ISMF\\_D0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9C72ISMF_D0)

The Cold War in Asia: Crash Course US History #38:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y2IcmLkuhG0>

The Century: America's Time - 1941-1945: Homefront

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPP0ae2zrXY&list=PL3H6z037pboHR-knzU-dc9XecG8UKrZs0&index=6>

**Complete:** **Picturing History Mini Essay Selection #7: [Due Friday, March 22]**

Week of March 25/27: 1950s and New Frontier

**Read:** **Textbook:** Chapter 28, The Rise of Suburban America, 1945-1963; **Primary Source Reading:** *Integrating Levittown, Pennsylvania* and *The Problem that has No Name*

**Watch:** Civil Rights and the 1950s: Crash Course US History #39

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S64zRnnn4Po>

The Century: America's Time - 1946-1952: Best Years

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VdXTw4q6y8>

The Century: America's Time - 1953-1960: Happy Daze

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6dsc5p5-3A>

**Complete:** Online Graded Quiz #4 [March 29; Chaps. 24 + 25]; **Picturing History Mini Essay Selection #8: [Due Friday, March 29]**

#### Week of April 1/3: Great Society and Vietnam

**Read:** **Textbook:** Chapter 29, The Great Society, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties; **Primary Source**

**Reading:** *Confrontation in Birmingham, 1963*

**Watch:** The 1960s in America: Crash Course US History #40

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkXFb1sMa38>

The Century: America's Time - 1960-1964: Poisoned Dreams

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93iBar-VrqA&list=PL3H6z037pboHR-knzU-dc9XecG8UKrZs0&index=9>

The Century: America's Time - 1965-1970: Unpinned

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jET2qR8Y-Ng&list=PL3H6z037pboHR-knzU-dc9XecG8UKrZs0&index=10>

**Complete:** Required Online Second Exam--[Wednesday, April 3; Chapters 22-27]

#### Week of April 8/10: Crisis of the 1970s and the Reagan Revolution

**Read:** **Textbook:** Chapter 29, The Great Society, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties + Chapter 30, America and the Vietnam Era, 1963-1975; **Primary Source Reading:** *Prospects for Peace in Vietnam*

**Watch:** The Reagan Revolution: Crash Course US History #43

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2h4DkpFP\\_aw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2h4DkpFP_aw)

The Century: America's Time - 1971-1975: Approaching the Apocalypse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cLv5FH0FA&t=769s> The Century: America's Time - 1976-1980: Starting Over <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vus0FTWWcXE>

**Complete:** Online Graded Quiz #5 [April 12; Chaps. 28 + 29]

#### Week of April 15/17: 1980s and the Clinton Era

**Read:** **Textbook:** Chapter 30, America and the Vietnam Era, 1963-1975 + Chapter 31, The Conservative Resurgence, 1976-1992; **Primary Source Reading:** TBD

**Watch:** Ford, Carter, and the Economic Malaise: Crash Course US History #42

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pyN5LPHEQ\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pyN5LPHEQ_0)

**Complete:** **Picturing History Mini Essay Selection #9: [Due Friday, April 19]**

#### Week of April 22/24: Bush to Obama

**Read:** **Textbook:** Chapter 31, The Conservative Resurgence, 1976-1992; **Primary Source Readings:** *Three Mile Island*

**Watch:** The Reagan Revolution: Crash Course US History #43

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2h4DkpFP\\_aw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2h4DkpFP_aw)

The Century: America's Time - 1981-1989: A New World

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNwrhgFrqSU>

**Complete:** Online Graded Quiz #6 [; Chaps. 30 + 31]; **Picturing History Mini Essay Selection #10: [Due Friday, April 26]**

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**Week of April 29: 21<sup>st</sup> Century America**

**Read:** **Textbook:** Chapter 32, The U.S. in a Global Community, 1989-2022: **Primary Source Reading:** *Illegal Immigrants and the Border Fence*

**Watch:** Obamanation: Crash Course US History #47

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUfh2ebjLOg>

**The Century: America's Time - The 90s And Beyond: Then And Now**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtSngdkwXkU>

**Complete:** **Deadline to submit extra credit is April 29!**

**Monday May 1: Required Online Final Exam: 1:30-4:15 PM: Chapters 28-32 Final Keystone Papers**  
**Due via Blackboard Assignments tab by 11:59 PM EST!**

**ADENDA A:  
VOLUNTARY BONUS CREDIT OPTIONS:**

**Current Events Paper/ Public History Paper/PowerPoint Presentation: [20 pts.]** Students may submit one selection as extra credit and/or a second choice to make up for a missed or low scoring quiz. [You cannot select the same option twice.] All written submissions must adhere to the same formatting, citation, and sourcing rules as the final paper. **ALL selections/topics must have instructor pre-approval** and be submitted in PDF format via the instructor's email account [dgerlema@gmu.edu](mailto:dgerlema@gmu.edu) any time before our last class meeting 29 April.

- a. **Option #1:** Students may write a 4 page [1000 words] paper explaining how a current news event connects to [or is a continuation of] one of the historical trends or issues discussed in the course. **You MUST email the article source link for instructor approval BEFORE beginning;** all articles must be less than 12 months old from recognized news outlets. Opinions and editorials are not allowed! Submit a pdf copy of the article along with your paper.
- b. **Option #2:** Students may submit a 4 page [1000 words] paper titled *American Consumerism—Then and Now* in which you peruse select several pages/items from the 1907 Sears & Roebuck Catalog found online at <https://archive.org/details/catalogueno11200sear/mode/2up?view=theater>. You may select items that most interest you, are oddities from a modern perspective, or are still relevant or in use today. In what ways has American shopping and consumption returned to this earlier mail-order format? What surprised you most?
- c. **Option #3:** Students can create a public lecture-style PowerPoint presentation [of 12 max. slides including bibliography] highlighting the impact of an individual, event, technology, or social/cultural trend not discussed in class that deserves additional exploration. Select something that interests you *and* has had a significant influence or impact on U.S. history since 1877 [Online images may be used.]