

HIST 2600.001
Spring 2007
MWF 9:05-10:03 AM
D027

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Office hrs.: MWF 8:00 – 9:00; MW 3:00-4:00

PROBLEMS IN U.S. HISTORY

Please read and review this syllabus carefully. You are responsible for knowing its contents and for requesting clarification. By staying in the course you are agreeing to all course policies.

The instructor reserves the right to modify course policy -- with appropriate notice to students -- if it is judged that doing so will further the course objectives.

Content: This course examines selected major issues and controversies in the history of the United States from the time of European colonization to the present.

Learning objectives: Upon completion of this course, the successful student will

- (1) be familiar with major issues and controversies in U.S. history.
- (2) understand the nature of historical argumentation, including identification of thesis; identification and evaluation of evidence; identification and evaluation of persuasive technique; and recognition of multiple and often conflicting perspectives on an issue.
- (3) be familiar with fundamental philosophical problems in history, such as the nature of causation, the nature of historical change, the roles of individual agency and surrounding circumstance, and the nature of individual and group motives for action.
- (4) have strengthened skills in critical and analytical reading, thinking, and writing.
- (5) have strengthened skills in sharing and discussing ideas in a classroom setting.

As a General Education course, HIST 2600 aims to fulfill the goals of all GE courses at CSUS: it is intended to convey basic subject matter, to improve skills in critical thinking and in oral and written communication, to improve awareness that there are multiple perspectives on issues, and to illuminate connections between history and other academic disciplines.

The academic discipline of history consists not simply of memorizing names, dates, and events, but of forming, understanding, analyzing, and criticizing arguments about the causes and significance of past developments. Among the most important course goals is to understand how historians make their arguments – how they use evidence, arrange and present their contentions and conclusions, and respond to opposing points of view. In other words, this course is designed to teach not simply a body of “facts” but, more importantly, the lifelong skill of *how to think and reason*. Attempting to present some linear narrative of objective “facts” would send an oversimplified and thus misleading message about what history and knowledge are. “Truth” is always complex, always contested, never simple or straightforward. Becoming an educated person involves learning to recognize and deal with that fact.

Requirements: All students in this class must:

- (1) attend and arrive on time at class sessions.
- (2) do the assigned reading and actively participate in class discussions.
- (3) take the weekly quizzes (more on these below) and the cumulative essay-style final exam.
- (4) submit one (1) short paper examining one (1) of the issues discussed in class.

Class activities: This course is arranged into units of 3 (or occasionally 2) class sessions each. The 1st class session of each unit consists of a multiple-choice quiz covering relevant textbook material, followed

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by a brief introduction of the weekly issues. The 2nd and 3rd will be classroom discussions, which are the heart of the course and are intended to (1) examine arguments and assess their persuasiveness, and (2) examine the deeper historical and philosophical issues raised by these arguments.

Participation in class discussions is a very important part of this course. You must come prepared to contribute to class discussions. Your level of class participation will be monitored. At the end of the semester, you will be assigned a classroom performance score based largely on participation (see section on "Grading," below) and counting for 1/4 of your course grade. The minimum score – given to one who never participates in class discussions – is a 70, though a participation score of 70 will never be permitted to raise the grade of a person whose scores in other course areas average below that number.

Study questions, designed to focus your thoughts about the reading, will be distributed in advance. Writing out your answers to these questions will benefit you greatly – both in class discussions and on the final exam – and is therefore strongly suggested.

Quizzes: As suggested above, there are weekly quizzes covering assigned readings from the course textbook, *A People and a Nation* (see "Required Books" below). There will be thirteen regularly-scheduled quizzes in all; you may drop the three lowest scores. (The course schedule below indicates exactly what material is covered on each of these quizzes.) In addition, there may be one or more unannounced quizzes – each covering an assigned issue in *Taking Sides* (see "Required Books" below) and given on the day the issue is discussed in class – should the instructor deem it necessary. Should one or more unannounced quizzes be given, a separate handout will be distributed explaining how these will be factored into the course grade.

You will need a scantron (882-E) and a #2 pencil for each quiz.

Late arrival for a quiz disturbs students who are already busy taking the quiz. Therefore, anyone arriving at class more than 5 minutes after a quiz has begun will not be permitted to take the quiz. But you should remain in class and will receive credit for attendance.

Attendance policy: While conflicting commitments and unforeseen and unpreventable developments may occasionally force an absence, this class, like one's family or job, is a major commitment. Attendance is required and will be monitored by means of daily sign-up sheets. (*You are responsible for making sure that you sign in.*) Leaving class early without the instructor's prior consent will result in a student's being counted absent for that day. To allow for unforeseen circumstances, every student will be permitted three "cuts" (the equivalent of a week of class), with no questions asked and no penalty. But 5 points will be deducted from your course point total (on which, see below) for each additional absence. If appropriate documentation for participation in university athletics, severe illness, employment conflict, or other compelling reason for absence is presented, that absence will be "excused" and will not be charged against you. (Car trouble, traffic jams, poor weather conditions, and the like will not be grounds for an excused absence.) This policy reflects life in the working world, where employers have strict attendance policies and the penalties for violating them are much greater. As in the working world, demonstrated commitment to the class in the form of perfect attendance will be rewarded. 10 points will be added to the course point total of anyone who completes the semester with no unexcused absences.

Make-up and quiz drop policy: Making up a quiz is permitted only when the quiz was missed because of an excused absence supported by appropriate documentation. But since people sometimes miss or perform poorly on quizzes for other reasons, you may drop the lowest three scores received on regularly scheduled quizzes, including the zeroes that will result from missed quizzes. Make-ups of the final exam will be *oral* examinations and will be permitted only in extraordinary circumstances verified in writing to the instructor by the appropriate authority before the official exam time. The time of a make-up exam will be arranged by the student and the instructor.

Grading: Please note that *plus-minus grading is used in this section of HIST 2600*. A maximum of 400 points will be available for the course. These points are distributed as follows:

- 100 points maximum for the ten best quizzes
- 100 points maximum for the paper
- 100 points maximum on the final exam
- 100 points maximum for classroom performance (participation, disciplinary problems, etc.)

Grades will be assigned largely on the basis of total points earned, as follows:

370 – 400 = A	350 – 359 = B+	310 – 319 = C+	270 – 279 = D+
360 – 369 = A-	330 – 349 = B	290 – 309 = C	250 – 269 = D
	320 – 329 = B-	280 – 289 = C-	240 – 249 = D-

Points earned for perfect attendance will be added to your total, and points lost due to excessive absence will be subtracted from your total.

IMPORTANT NOTES CONCERNING GRADING:

- 1) For CR/NC students, 280 points are required for credit.
- 2) A passing letter grade or a CR requires that both the term paper and the final exam be submitted.
- 3) Change of grading option from letter grade to CR/NC will be granted after the university deadline (identified below) ONLY IF compelling reasons, supported by appropriate written documentation, are offered. Compelling reasons include but are not limited to (a) a change in work schedule that makes regular attendance at class impossible; (b) an illness serious enough to require hospitalization or doctor-ordered bedrest for a lengthy period. Reasons NOT considered compelling include but are not limited to (a) avoidance of a low or failing grade; (b) avoidance of grade-related loss of financial aid.

Extra credit policy: Your grade for the course is based solely on required course work. *No opportunity for extra credit is available.*

Required books and readings:

Mary Beth Norton et. al., *A People and a Nation* (brief 7th edition)
 Larry Madaras and James M. SoRelle, *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in American History* (12th ed.), vols. 1 & 2

There are also several course readings on reserve at Vasche Library

<u>Important Dates:</u>	Last day to drop:	M 3/12
	Last day to choose CR/NC option:	M 3/12
	Final exam:	W 5/30 8:30-10:30

PLEASE NOTE: The instructor will accommodate needs arising from legitimate instances of disability, supported by documentation from the appropriate university authorities. *Making the necessary arrangements is the student's responsibility and should be done during the first week of the course.*

PLEASE NOTE: The course policy regarding academic dishonesty is Zero Tolerance. Any student caught in any act of academic dishonesty will fail the course and may be subject to full disciplinary procedure.

COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: Unless indicated otherwise, assigned readings from *A People and a Nation* begin and end at major section breaks, indicated in the text by appropriate spacing and large, boldface lettering.

APAAN = *A People and a Nation*; **TS1** = *Taking Sides*, v. 1; **TS2** = *Taking Sides*, v. 2

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTORY

Reading: Syllabus and paper guidelines

W	Feb. 14	Introduction to course
F	Feb. 16	QUIZ 1: syllabus; paper guidelines

UNIT 2: CONTACT: EUROPEANS AND NATIVE AMERICANS

Reading: APAAN, 12-17, 25-28, 32-36
On reserve: "Was Columbus an Imperialist?" & "Were the English Colonists Guilty of Genocide?"

M	Feb. 19	QUIZ 2: APAAN, 12-17, 25-28, 32-36 / Introduction of issues
W	Feb. 21	Discuss "Was Columbus an Imperialist?"
F	Feb. 23	Discuss "Were the English Colonists Guilty of Genocide?"

UNIT 3: COLONIAL AMERICAN SOCIETY

Reading: APAAN, 28-32, 53-55
On reserve: "Was the Colonial Period a 'Golden Age' for Women in America?" & "Were Socioeconomic Tensions Responsible for the Witchcraft Hysteria in Salem?"

M	Feb. 26	QUIZ 3: APAAN, 28-32, 53-55 / Introduction of issues
W	Feb. 28	Discuss "Was the Colonial Period a 'Golden Age' for Women in America?"
F	Mar. 2	Discuss "Were Socioeconomic Tensions Responsible for the Witchcraft Hysteria?"

UNIT 4: REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA

Reading: APAAN, 74-90, 93-95, 99-102, 111-116
On reserve: "Was the American Revolution a Conservative Movement?"
 TS1, issue 6

M	Mar. 5	QUIZ 4: APAAN, 74-90, 93-95, 99-102, 111-116 / Introduction of issues
W	Mar. 7	Discuss "Was the American Revolution a Conservative Movement?"
F	Mar. 9	Discuss TS1, issue 6

UNIT 4: WESTERN EXPANSION

Reading: APAAN, 195-197, 203-205, 210-211, 238-240 (end of 1st column)
 TS1, issue 14
On reserve: "Did the Westward Movement Transform the Traditional Roles of Women in the Mid-Nineteenth Century?"

M	Mar. 12	QUIZ 5: APAAN, 195-197, 203-205, 210-211, 238-240 / Introduction of issues
W	Mar. 14	Discuss TS1, issue 14
F	Mar. 16	Discuss "Did the Westward Movement Transform the Traditional Roles...?"

UNIT 5: SLAVERY AND ABOLITIONISM

Reading: APAAN, 114-116, 183-189
On reserve: "Was Thomas Jefferson Committed to Bringing an End to Chattel Slavery?"
 TS1, issue 15

M Mar. 19 **QUIZ 6:** APAAN, 114-116, 183-189 / Introduction of issues
 W Mar. 21 Discuss : "Was Thomas Jefferson Committed...?"
 F Mar. 23 Discuss TS1, issue 15

UNIT 6: LINCOLN AND EMANCIPATION

Reading: APAAN, 240 (top of 2nd column)-254, 265-267
 TS1, issue 17

M Mar. 26 **QUIZ 7:** APAAN, 240-254, 265-267 / Introduction of issue
 W Mar. 28 Discuss TS1, issue 17
F Mar. 30 Cesar Chavez Day Observance: no class

UNIT 7: THE LATE 19TH CENTURY

Reading: APAAN, 319-324, 333-335, 365-367, 385-387 (bottom of 1st column)
 TS2, issues 2 & 6

M Apr. 2 **QUIZ 8:** APAAN, 319-324, 333-335, 365-367, 385-387 / Introduction of issues
 W Apr. 4 Discuss TS2, issue 2
 F Apr. 6 Discuss TS2, issue 6

APR. 9 – APR 13: SPRING BREAKUNIT 8: THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

Reading: APAAN, 378-385, 387 (bottom of 1st column)-394, 436-438
 TS2, issue 9
On reserve: "Did the Woman's Movement Die in the 1920s?"

M Apr. 16 **QUIZ 9:** APAAN, 378-385, 387-394, 436-438 / Introduction of issues
 W Apr. 18 Discuss TS2, issue 9
 F Apr. 20 Discuss "Did the Woman's Movement...?"

UNIT 9: THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND WORLD WAR TWO

Reading: APAAN, 453-472, 481-490, 505-509
 TS2, issues 10 & 11

M Apr. 23 **QUIZ 10:** APAAN, 453-472, 481-490, 505-509 / Introduction of issues
 W Apr. 25 Discuss TS2, issue 10
 F Apr. 27 Discuss TS2, issue 11

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UNIT 10: THE LATE 20TH CENTURY: RACE RELATIONS AND IMMIGRATION

Reading: APAAN, 540-543, 557-563, 567-568 (top of 2nd column), 606-610
On reserve: "Did the Civil Rights Movement Improve Race Relations in the United States?"
 TS2, issue 17

M Apr. 30 **QUIZ 11:** APAAN, 540-543, 557-563, 567-568, 606-610 / Introduction of issues
 W May 2 Discuss "Did the Civil Rights Movement...?"
 F May 4 Discuss TS2, issue 17
Essays submitted after today may not be revised

UNIT 11: RECENT PRESIDENCIES I: NIXON AND REAGAN

Reading: APAAN, 570-572, 580-586 (end of page), 597-606, 610-611 (bottom of 2nd column)
On reserve: "Will History Forgive Richard Nixon?"
 TS2, issue 16

M May 7 **QUIZ 12:** 570-572, 580-586, 597-606, 610-611 / Introduction of issues
 W May 9 Discuss "Will History Forgive Richard Nixon?"
 F May 11 Discuss TS2, issue 16

UNIT 12: RECENT PRESIDENCIES II: CLINTON AND BUSH

Reading: APAAN, 617-630
On reserve: "Will History Consider William Jefferson Clinton a Reasonably Good Chief Executive?"
 TS2, issue 18

M May 14 **QUIZ 13:** APAAN, 617-630 / Introduction of issue
 W May 16 Discuss "Will History Consider...?"
 F May 18 Discuss TS2, issue 18
Final exam essay distributed in class today

WRAP-UP

M May 21 Course evaluations
 Discuss final exam essay
No essays may be submitted after today
 W May 23 Further discussion of final exam essay (if necessary)
 W May 30 **Official final exam time, 8:30 – 10:30**