

HIST 109
The US in Modern Times, 1877 - Present
Spring 2015
#ASHIS109

Prof Robin Morris

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Office Hours: Mondays 11:30am-1pm and by appointment.

This course meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:30-11:20 in Buttrick 219.

CLASS TECHNOLOGY:

Class Twitter is @ScottieHistory

Class blog is www.agnesscotthistory109.wordpress.com

You may use that Twitter ID or the Hashtag #ASHis109 to Tweet about the class or to the class.

I'll try to keep up!

Please bookmark that blog as you'll be using it often.

OVERVIEW AND GOALS

This course will examine the period of US History from 1877 through the present. It will provide a solid foundation for any future American history courses you will take at Agnes Scott. Even if you do not take any more history, though, you will leave this class with a greater understanding of the political, cultural, social, and economic factors of past and those that shape the present. We will examine history both from the top-down and the bottom-up. This means that we will study Presidents and CEOs as well as people who could not even vote in elections.

The thematic questions we will cover this semester include:

- How and why did the United States become an international power?
- How and why did the role of the federal government change over time?
- How and why did individual and community rights expand or contract in the years we cover?

As you may imagine, this course will move fast. We will cover about a decade per week. You will read one chapter of the text and supporting primary documents every week. As long as you keep up with the readings, you will be fine. You will have approximately 50-70 pages per week. Getting behind for even one day will only hurt you, your grade, and your sanity as the exams get closer. Please keep up with the readings. If you have trouble understanding anything, please see me in office hours *before* you fall behind.

By the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Locate, summarize and analyze a primary source for historical meaning.
- Write a historical argument and use primary and secondary sources to support that argument.
- Use online databases to locate primary sources.
- Identify major political and social movements and their impact on US and global history.
- Evaluate, present, and teach major events on a specific theme in US History.
- Present historical analysis for public reading using the Wordpress Blog platform.

TEXTBOOKS

These textbooks are required for all students. They are available bundled together in the college bookstore or you may find them new and used online. Please be aware of the edition numbers. The first book is your textbook which gives you an overview of each period. The second book is your document reader in which you will read primary documents written in each of the periods we study.

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty!: An American History* Volume 2, Third Seagull Edition, 2010.

Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary Reader*, Volume 3, Third Edition, 2010.

You may use other editions, but please be aware that the page numbers may be different from those on the syllabus. You may also need to borrow a new edition for later weeks.

You also have other readings, assignments, and video assignments as noted on the syllabus.

THE HONOR SYSTEM

As in all aspects of Agnes Scott life, you are expected to uphold the Honor System in this course. You should come to class prepared and ready to bring your own ideas to the discussion. Your fellow scholars in this class are relying on you to uphold your share of our intellectual work. Respect yourself and your classmates by maintaining your commitment to the Honor System. If, for any reason, I or a fellow student believe there is reason to suspect a violation, I will ask you to turn yourself in to the Honor Court and we will proceed from there. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism with regard to your work, please set a meeting with me before a due date. I am happy to help you any time before an assignment is due.

ACCOMMODATIONS

If you require special accommodations, please let me know via email or in person as soon as possible. The sooner I am aware of your needs, the sooner we can work together for your success. If you are not yet registered with the Office of Student Disabilities but require accommodations, please schedule an appointment with Kelly Deasy (kdeasy@agnesscott.edu or Buttrick 104B) as soon as possible.

If you know you will miss class for a school-related function such as an athletic event or an academic conference, please let me know ahead of time. These will factor in to your three allowed absences. Ask a trusted classmate to help you catch up with any notes you have missed. If you will miss an assignment deadline, you are still responsible for getting your work to me on time. Most assignments are due on the Google drive or on our Wordpress blog, so you should be able to turn everything in even when you are not on campus. I will accept early assignments. **I will not accept late assignments.**

I am happy to help you attain success in this class. In all cases, I am better able to help you BEFORE a problem arises. I can also be useful during or immediately after a situation. Please do not wait until the last week of class or, even worse, the exam period to ask for help.

COURTESIES and POLICIES

For this course to be successful, everyone must be engaged and respectful. Your behavior in class should encourage a positive learning atmosphere. We are all learning together, and this means we may disagree. Disagreement opens exciting opportunities for all of us to challenge our ways of thinking. It does not, however, present a time for anyone to be rude or disrespectful.

Turn your cell phone off, to airline mode, or to totally silent (not vibrate) and stow it for the duration of the class. I do not want to see your phone on your desk, in your hand, or in your lap. You may use a laptop for notetaking, but please do not go shopping, Tweet, Facebook, etc. during class. This is distracting for you and for the person sitting next to you.

This class is only 50 minutes, so please do not walk in and out of class. Doing so will hurt your attendance and participation grade. I treat leaving class for any amount of time as a tardy and will count it as 1/2 of an absence toward your final count. Additionally, walking out of class is distracting to others and disrespectful of your classmates and your professor.

In all matters, please show responsible adult judgment.

Grading:

Reading guides: 20%

Blogs: 20%

Class Presentations: 15%

Midterm: 10%

Final: 15%

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Grades will be administered according to the following scale:

93-100 = A	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	60-69 = D
90-92 = A-	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	0-59 = F
	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	

Reading Guides: 20%

You will read 12 chapters of the textbook. Each week, you will complete a reading guide and submit this by Tuesday at 6pm to the “Submitted Chapter Guides” folder in the HIS 109 Folder on Google drive. You must complete 10 of the 12 weekly guides. This means you may choose which 2 you will not do. But, if you miss more than 2, there are NO MAKE UPS. There are also NO late assignments. I will move the documents into the “To Grade” private folder at 6pm every Tuesday.

Blogs-- Group and Individual: 20%

You will work in a group of 3-4 members throughout the semester. In the second week, you will determine your theme for the semester. Each week, everyone in your group will post a blog entry that addresses how your theme develops in that decade. You will do this in 2 ways.

1. How does *Give Me Liberty* address your group’s topic in that week’s decade? What are the major events and/or advances relating to your theme?
2. Find and analyze an article from *The Historic New York Times*. Post a link to the article and include the title of the article, the date published, and the page number. Summarize the article and also explain why this article is important for the development of your theme in that decade.

If you’d like to do podcasts or videos, you may do up to four blogs in these different formats throughout the semester.

Each member of your group should post at least ten times. Coordinate so that your whole group does not take the same week off. Everyone in your group should also cover different *New York Times* articles. I will not grade until after 6pm on Thursdays, so you have until then to edit/tweak/change your blogs. I do expect to see different people posting throughout the semester.

Possible topics include: Public Health, Technology, Fashion, Immigration, Environment, Childhood, Sexuality, Education. I will consider other topics, but they must be broad enough to encompass the entire 20th century.

Class presentations: 15%

Throughout the semester, your group will give regular presentations on your research progress. These should be true group presentations with all members participating.

Midterm: 10%

This is scheduled for Friday, March 6 in class time. There are no make-up exams without a doctor’s note or a coach’s excuse for tournament play.

Final 15%

Self-scheduled and comprehensive.

Attendance and participation: 20%

You may miss up to three classes for ANY reason. There is no difference between excused and unexcused absence. Being late to class (anything after class has started) counts as a half-absence. Participation includes listening as well as speaking in large and small groups.

To summarize, MOST (not all) of your weekly deadlines look like this:

Monday: Class with active participation 10:30am-11:20am

Tuesday: Reading Guide (individual assignment) due on Google Drive by 6pm.

Wednesday: Class with active participation 10:30am-11:20am

Thursday: Blog post by 6pm.

Friday: Class with active participation 10:30am-11:20am.

You should schedule your individual reading and group meetings on your own time.

Calendar

DATE	What we'll cover	What to Prepare BEFORE class
W-Jan 21	Introductions to course and each other	
F-Jan 23	Meet in McCain 211. We will go over using nytimes.com and we will set up your WordPress.com accounts.	Meet in McCain 2011. If you'd like, you may bring your laptop or tablet.
WEEK 2	Read <i>Give Me Liberty</i> , Chapter 17, "Freedom's Boundaries at Home and Abroad"	Reading guide due in Google Docs by Tuesday at 6pm.
M-Jan 26	Where are we in history in 2015? What are the important issues today? You will participate in a class discussion about important issues today. We will break into our semester-long thematic groups today.	Using nytimes.com, find an article from 2015 that relates to your major or career choice. Type a blog entry of 200-400 words that describes the main idea of the article, key points you find interesting, and why you think it is important to know this information for your major or career field. Upload to WordPress blog by Sunday, Jan 25 at 6pm. Use the Keyword "2010s"
W-Jan 28	Introduction to the Gilded Age.	Read Chapter 16 of <i>Give Me Liberty</i> . Complete the reading guide on Google docs and be prepared to discuss.

F- Jan 30	Introduction to <i>The Historic New York Times</i> database, online through McCain Library. Introduction to SOAPSTONE reading method. Be prepared to discuss documents in Chapter 16 of <i>Voices of Freedom</i> .	Before class, read all documents in Chapter 16 of <i>Voices of Freedom</i> . By Thursday, Jan 29 at 6pm , your GROUP should post one joint blog entry that introduces the members by name, year, major, career interest(s), and any other relevant interests. As a group, also write a short paragraph that sets out your goals and questions for your group work over the semester-- what questions are most intriguing about your field? What do you most hope to learn about the history of this topic?
WEEK 3	Read <i>Give Me Liberty, Chapter 18, "Freedom's Boundaries, at Home and Abroad, 1890-1900"</i>	Reading guide due in Google Docs by Tuesday at 6pm.
M-Feb 2	The Wonderful World of Oz	Read <i>Voice</i> 105 "The Populist Platform"
W-Feb 4	Progressivism	Read <i>Voices</i> 119 "The Progressive Party Platform" and at least 2 other documents from Chapter 18 in <i>Voices of Freedom</i> .
F-Feb 6	Progressive Primary Documents-- class discussion of Progressivism	Read all documents in the folder of Progressive Voices on the Google Drive. I will assign one to your group to analyze and teach to the class. Use the SOAPSTONE method to read for meaning. Do some research on the author-- who is he/she? Why is he/she important to history? You should include this document in the week's blog.
WEEK 4	Read <i>Give Me Liberty</i> Chapter 19: Safe for Democracy: The United States and WWI, 1916-1920	Reading guide due in Google Docs by Tuesday at 6pm.
M-Feb 9	Everything that Could Kill You in 1918	<i>Voices</i> document 120
W-Feb 11	Return to Normalcy?	<i>Voices</i> documents 122, 125, 126

F-Feb 13	Group Presentations: Your group will prepare a 5-6 minute presentation on the History of your topic from 1877-1920. What are the major developments in your field? Share one document from the <i>New York Times</i> that you find most interesting. What question would you most like to ask someone who lived in that time about your topic?	
WEEK 5	Read <i>Give Me Liberty</i> , Chapter 20: From Business Culture to the Great Depression: The Twenties, 1920-1932	Reading guide due in Google Docs by Tuesday at 6pm.
M-Feb 16	The Roaring 20s and the Market Crash	<i>Voices</i> documents 128 “The New Society” 131 “Congress Debates Immigration”, 133 Alain Locke, “The New Negro”, 134 Elsie Hill and Florence Kelley Debate the ERA
W-Feb 18	New Deal or Raw Deal	Document 138, FDR “Greater Security for the Average Man” Document 139, Hoover on the New Deal and Liberty.
F-Feb 20	Voices of the Great Depression in class	
WEEK 6	Chapter 21	Reading guide due in Google Docs by Tuesday at 6pm.
M-Feb 23	WWII at home	<i>Voices</i> documents 143, “The Four Freedoms” ; 147 “WWII and Mexican Americans” ; 148 “African Americans and the Four Freedoms” ; 149 “Dissent in Korematsu”
W-Feb 25	WWII Abroad and the Start of the Cold War	Voices document 151 “The Truman Doctrine”
F-Feb 27	The Cold War	Voices document 156, “Joseph McCarthy on the Attack” 158, Nixon, “What Freedom Means to Us” Youtube: The Kitchen Debates
WEEK 7	Chapter 22	Reading guide due in Google Docs by Tuesday at 6pm.
M-Mar 2	Group Presentations: Your group will prepare a 5-6 minute presentation on your theme in the 1930s-1950s. What are the major events relating to your theme? What changes happen over time? Relate these events to the bigger picture-- how do they relate to the Great Depression, World War II, or the Cold War?	
W-Mar 4	Review for Midterm	
F-Mar 6	MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS	

F-April 24	Class discussion: Evaluating the past and predicting the future.	By Sunday at 6pm, post an individual blog to the site that is a news story for April 27, 2016. You may write on any topic, any theme-- but write in the style of the New York Times. You should include a headline. You may even make up sources and events. Think about where the US will be in one year.
WEEK 14 Looking Ahead		
M-April 27	No Class Meeting-- Time for group planning	
W-April 29	Group Presentations-- each group will present for 8-10 minutes with 5-7 minutes for class discussion.	Your group will present on the entire century. What were the most important developments for your theme? What stories are relevant today? What should scholars today take from the past? What is the future of your field?
F-May 1	Group Presentations	
M-May 4	Exam Review	
May 8-13	Self-Scheduled final exam	