

Prof. Peter C. Baldwin

Office Hours (225 Wood Hall): Wednesdays, 3:30 to 4:30, and by appointment.

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### What is this course?

This course is an overview of United States history since 1877. A lot has happened since 1877, obviously, so we can't cover everything. We focus on a few selected topics and consider them from different perspectives. As a writing-intensive (W) course, this class is intended to help students improve their writing skills.

### What will students get from this course?

- ❖ **A structure of American history.** History 1502 does not follow the high school emphasis on memorizing facts and dates. Still, it does provide students with a rough chronological and thematic framework of American History since 1877. This framework will help students make sense of the past, regardless of whether this is the first or the last history course they will ever take.
- ❖ **Improved critical thinking skills.** History 1502 will approach the study of the past in ways that may be unfamiliar to many students. Our purpose is to interpret, not just to memorize. We will try to understand **why** things happened the way they did, keeping in mind that things could have turned out differently under different circumstances. This approach will be useful both for further study of history, and for thoughtful consideration of our own moment in time.
- ❖ **Improved writing skills.** In class, we will discuss ways to express ideas in a more organized and persuasive form. Students will be required to apply these methods in writing and revising a series of short essays.
- ❖ **Progress toward graduation.** History 1502 counts toward completion of the University's general education requirements for Writing (W) and Content Area One (Arts and Humanities). It can also count toward the completion of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences general education requirements for Content Area C (History). In addition, it meets the State of Connecticut's requirement for a U.S. History survey course for public school teacher certification.

### What will happen in class?

Most of the time in class will be devoted to lectures on events in American History, and class discussion concerning the assigned readings and primary sources (eyewitness accounts and other documents produced at the time). In addition, we will have occasional "writing workshops" concerning the process of writing and revising an essay.

**Lectures** are not intended to go over the same material covered in the readings. Rather, they are intended to supplement the readings. Some lectures will provide a broad interpretive framework for understanding a time period or a theme; others will focus on a specific problem or event.

**Discussions** will give students an opportunity to examine the meanings and implications of the assigned readings. Students should make sure to complete each day's reading before coming to class, so that they can participate actively and constructively in the discussions.

**Writing workshops** will involve reviewing the work of other students. It is imperative that students examine each other's work in a thoughtful and constructive manner. Students will be graded on the quality of their assistance in the writing workshops.

### How will students be graded?

**Homework and peer reviews (25% of course grade):** Students are expected to complete **at least eight of the twelve** homework assignments, and **all three of the peer reviews**. These assignments **will not be accepted late even if you are sick or otherwise unable to attend class**. Students who do more than eleven of these assignments will be graded on their eleven best. **Homework assignments** will be evaluated both on their content and on the quality of the writing. They should be written in complete sentences free of errors in grammar and spelling. Homework will be marked as "full credit" (two points), "half credit" (1 point), or "no credit." **Peer reviews** will be evaluated for their accurate understanding of the essay and for their presentation of insightful written commentary, including constructive criticism aimed at improving the essay. Students who get full credit on more than 11 of these short assignments may receive extra credit. Grades will be calculated as follows:

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|-----------------------|------------------|--|
| ❖ 21 or 22 points = A | ❖ 17 points = B- | ❖ 13 points = D+                             |
| ❖ 20 points = A-      | ❖ 16 points = C+ | ❖ 12 points = D                              |
| ❖ 19 points = B+      | ❖ 15 points = C  | ❖ Less than 12 points is an F                |
| ❖ 18 points = B       | ❖ 14 points = C- | ❖ Full credit on 12 assignments or more = A+ |

**Three five-page papers (45% of course grade):** The assigned essays will examine issues raised by the assigned readings. They will be graded both on the quality of the argument and the gracefulness of the prose. Each paper will be reviewed by a fellow member of the class as well as by Prof. Baldwin. Following the review, students will be expected to carefully revise the paper and resubmit it for grading. Your final grade for that paper will be the average of the two drafts, rounded up. For instance, if you receive a B- on the first draft, and a B or a B+ on the second, your grade for the assignment will be a B; if you receive an A- or an A on the second draft, your grade will be a B+. Revisions are expected to be substantial. Merely correcting the errors in spelling and grammar will not be sufficient. According to university-wide policies for W courses, **you cannot pass this course unless you receive a passing grade for all its writing components.**

**Appearance and style of the third paper (5% of course grade).** The third paper will receive an additional grade for its success as a formal essay in the field of history. It is expected to be completely free of errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. It is expected to use proper citations and proper pagination. It is expected to use quotation marks and italics correctly, and to introduce quotations appropriately.

**Midterm (10% of course grade):** The 60-minute midterm exam will consist of some multiple-choice or true/false questions, along with some “long identification” questions. The “long identification” questions will ask you to define an important term or name and to provide a paragraph explaining its significance in American history.

**Final Exam (15% of course grade):** The final exam will mostly cover the second half of the course, but may also include some questions that cover material from the first half. It will consist of the same sorts of questions as you saw in the Midterm.

### Ground Rules:

- ❖ **Attention.** In order to ensure a positive learning environment for everyone, please keep your attention focused on the lecture or class discussion. Students who create significant or repeated disruptions may be asked to leave the room and will have their grades reduced.
- ❖ **Electronic devices. Please turn them off.** Class time is not to be used for talking on the phone, texting, playing games, listening to music, or using your computer in any way. Laptops have proven to be distractions in the classroom. If you feel that unusual circumstances require you to use your computer to take notes, please discuss the matter with me in advance; I would like to see supporting documentation from the Center for Students with Disabilities stating that you are incapable of taking notes by hand. **If I have to remind you of this expectation, you can be confident that your grade is dropping; if you persist, you will be asked to leave the class.**
- ❖ **Courtesy.** Students are expected to behave themselves in a way that shows courtesy to everyone in the room. They are expected to be attentive and respectful. Language or behavior that demeans or harasses other students will not be tolerated.
- ❖ **Punctuality** is important and expected. By arriving late, you cause a distraction for everybody. By wandering out for a “break” during class, you create distractions twice. **If you have to leave during class, please take your things with you and do not return.** If you repeatedly arrive late or leave early, you risk a reduction in your grade for class participation.
- ❖ **Meals.** Drinks and small snacks are OK, but please don’t eat meals in class.
- ❖ **Email** is a form of professional correspondence that should be handled in a professional and courteous manner. Try to write in full sentences, with correct punctuation and spelling. (This is good practice for the real world). Etiquette is important, so choose your words carefully. If you are upset about something pertaining to class, e-mail is probably not the best way to discuss it. Please discuss it with me in person, outside of class time.
- ❖ **Deadlines.** The papers should be submitted on time. Students who encounter an emergency that prevents them from submitting a paper on time are required to discuss the matter with me in advance, if at all possible. For each day that either draft of a paper is late without permission, the grade for that paper will be reduced by a third of a grade (for instance from an A- to a B+).
- ❖ **Formatting.** Papers must be typed, double-spaced, with standard 1-inch margins, in a normal-looking font. Title pages do not count in the page limits. Please number the pages. Homework assignments may be written longhand, but must be plainly legible. Please edit your papers carefully for style, spelling, and grammar. Error-ridden final drafts may receive failing grades.
- ❖ **Cheating and Plagiarism.** Any student found to have committed what I consider a serious act of plagiarism, academic dishonesty, or cheating **will fail the course.** In this course, you are encouraged to build on the ideas and texts of others; you are also encouraged to study together, discuss readings outside of class, share your drafts during peer review and outside of class, and get help from the Writing Center. But when you use another’s ideas or language—whether through direct quotation, summary, or paraphrase—you must acknowledge that debt by signaling it with a proper citation. For University policies on academic honesty, please see UConn’s Student Code: <http://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-appendix-a/>. Further, students must produce original work for this course. They should not recycle any part of their own work produced for any other course. Re-use of work from other courses is grounds for failing the entire course.

## Schedule (Please do the reading before the class session)

A system of abbreviation is used below. "Foner 15" means Foner, *Give Me Liberty*, chapter 15.

Date	Required Reading	Assessment	Lecture
Wed., 1/18			Introduction
Mon. 1/ 23	Foner 15; readings on HuskyCT	Homework # 1	Reconstruction
Wed. 1/25	Foner 16; readings on HuskyCT	Homework # 2	Conflicts in the West
Mon. 1/30			The New South
Wed. 2/1	Foner 17; Kazin, <i>Populist Persuasion</i> , intro and chap. 2; Donnelly, preamble to Omaha Platform.	Homework # 3	Populism
Mon. 2/6	Primary sources on HuskyCT	<b>PAPER 1: POPULIST LANGUAGE</b>	Industrialization and Urbanization
Wed. 2/8		<b>Peer review # 1</b>	Social Darwinism and Social Gospel
Mon. 2/13	Readings on HuskyCT	Homework # 4	War & Empire
Wed. 2/15	Foner 18	<b>Resubmit Paper 1</b>	Progressive Reform
Mon., 2/20	Foner, 19; Kasson, <i>Amusing the Million</i>	Homework # 5	The Great War
Wed., 2/22	Foner 20		Immigration restriction
Mon., 2/27		<b>PAPER 2: CONEY ISLAND</b>	Scopes Trial
Wed., 3/1	Kazin, chap. 4; reading on HuskyCT	Homework # 6	Prohibition
Mon. 3/6	Foner 21	<b>Peer Review # 2</b>	Great Depression and New Deal
Wed. 3/8		<b>MIDTERM TEST</b>	
Mon. 3/20	Kazin, chap. 6; reading on HuskyCT	Homework # 7	Labor Activism
Wed. 3/22	Foner 22	<b>Resubmit Paper 2</b>	World War II & the Homefront
Mon. 3/27	Foner 23; Primary sources on Husky CT	Homework # 8	Suburban America
Wed., 3/29	Foner 24		Civil Rights Movement
Mon. 4/3	Foner 25; primary source collection on Husky CT	Homework # 9	Racial conflict in the 1960s
Wed. 4/5			The War in Vietnam
Mon. 4/10	Readings on Husky CT	Homework # 10	Second wave feminism
Wed. 4/12	Foner 26; Kazin, chap. 9	Homework # 11	Conservative Backlash
Mon. 4/17		<b>PAPER 3: WOMEN'S LIB</b>	Watergate
Wed. 4/19		<b>Peer review # 3</b>	Rise of the Religious Right
Mon. 4/24	Foner 27; Kazin, chap. 10	Homework # 12	The Reagan Revolution
Wed., 4/26	Foner 28	<b>Resubmit Paper 3</b>	Deindustrialization