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HIST 436-01, Origins of Modern America, Spring 2007

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HIST 436 – Origins of Modern America

Saxe - Section #27141, Clough 304, 4-6:30 M

E-mail: saxer@rhodes.edu; Phone – 843-3249

Office Hours – 9-10 MWF or by appointment, 307 Clough

Course Description:

Required Texts:

Linda Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction*

Tera Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors after the Civil War*

Robert C. McMath, *American Populism*

David Montgomery, *Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles*

Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*.

Robert H. Zieger, *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience*

The professor will provide additional readings throughout the course.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation

Active participation in class discussions over readings and other topics. This also includes presenting one week's readings. Students prepare a list of discussion questions that will help lead the class for that week. 20% of final grade.

Short Essays

Students will write a series of short essays throughout the semester. 40% of final grade.

Final Essay

Final paper of approximately 5000 words. This paper must be a historiographic essay or a work of original research. The most difficult challenge of this kind of paper is to decide on a workable topic. A quick survey of the required readings may help to narrow down an area of interest. Another approach is to look at the types of sources that are both available and interesting to the writer and develop a topic from that point. The nature of the topic of this paper is wide open, but it will need to be related to the theme of the course. Race relations, labor relations, popular culture and the Great War can all be fruitful areas of research for papers for this course, and students are encouraged to pursue their own individual interests when designing their topics. Specific guidelines for papers will be handed out in the coming weeks and discussion time will be dedicated to answering research questions and problem solving with peers. Students are encouraged to meet with the professor to discuss any questions with finding or shaping a topic. 40% of final grade.

List of deadlines for the final essay

1. February 12 – Introductory paragraph and bibliography

This is a 200-300 word abstract of your proposed topic in as detailed form as possible. You will also need to include a preliminary list of primary and secondary sources. This needs to be a hard copy turned that I receive in class

2. March 5 – Final Bibliography

The final list of all the sources you will include in your essay.

3. April 2 – Final draft of essay

The last draft of your essay is due. It needs to be typed and double-spaced, and it must include a bibliography. It should be footnoted using the *Chicago Manual of Style* as its guide. Due, in class, and an email copy must be sent to me, as well.

4. April 30 – Revised draft

After receiving comments from the professor, students will have the option of revising their draft and turning it in April 30 by 5:00 PM to me. Students can improve their paper grade up to one full letter grade through revision. Due, in my office by 5, and an email copy must be sent to me, as well.

Course Policies:

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed one absence without penalty. Students are required to find out what they missed in class on the day of their absence. If students miss more than one class, they are required to meet with the professor to discuss their absences. Failure to do so will result in the lowering of a student's final grade by one third grade point for every absence over one. Please consider this policy when planning for extracurricular activities (sports, mock trial, etc.)

Due dates and times for writing assignments are fixed. All assignments are due in class, not in the professor's mailbox. Late assignments will receive a failing grade. All assignments must be turned in to the professor. Failure to complete an assignment will result in a failing grade for the class.

The professor supports the Rhodes College Honor Code. To demonstrate commitment to the Code, each student must write "pledged" and sign his/her name on every assignment. If you have questions about plagiarism, please talk to me directly.

Course Calendar

January 15

MLK Day – no class

January 22

Introduction; The End of Reconstruction; the Closing of the West
(Hunter, Ch 1, 2; Trachtenberg,, Preface, Ch. 1)

January 29

Work and Workers in Industrial America
(Montgomery, Ch. 1-5; Trachtenberg, Ch, 2, 3)

February 5

The Gilded Age and the Rise of the City
(Trachtenberg, Ch. 4-7)

February 12

Agrarian Revolt
(McMath, all)

February 19

The Rise of Jim Crow and the African-American Response
(Hunter, Ch. 3-6, 9)

February 26

Not all Fun and Games: Amusement and Reaction
(Hunter, Ch. 7, 8)

March 5

Imperial America, 1890-1914

March 12

Spring Break

March 19

What is Progressivism?

March 26

Immigration and Taming the West
(Gordon, Preface, Ch. 1-4)

April 2

A White Man's Country
(finish Gordon)

April 9

The Great War and the Making of Modern America
(Zieger, Introduction, Ch. 1-5)

April 16

The End of Everything and the Beginning of "the American Century"
(finish Zieger; Hunter Ch. 10)

April 23

Final Thoughts