

# History 2710: The United States, 1865-Present

(Section 002)

Fall 2008  
MWF 11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.  
FAV 150

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Teaching assistant: Matt Lund  
Undergraduate teaching fellow: Sarah Lee

## Course Description:

This course explores the political, social and cultural history of the United States from 1865 to the present. Major themes include the rise of a powerful federal government, the development of industries and changing place of business within American society, the emergence and impact of reform movements, and the relationship between foreign and domestic affairs. Above all, the course emphasizes the diversity of Americans' experiences, interests, and beliefs in the last 140+ years. We will discuss racial, ethnic, class, and gender differences and consider what difference they made in the lives of individuals and the shaping of American society and politics.

By exploring American history and identity, this course will help students become better-informed citizens who can think analytically about important political, economic, and social issues. To that end, course assignments require students not only to synthesize lectures, discussions, and readings, but also to *analyze* primary and secondary materials.

## Course Objectives:

1. To familiarize students with key names, events, laws, trends, and issues in United States history from 1865 to the present.
2. To expose students to a wide range of historical sources such as speeches, letters, photographs, legal documents, editorial cartoons, and historical fiction.
3. To teach students how to analyze these sources in the context of late nineteenth- and twentieth-century American history.
4. To improve students' analytical abilities and written communication skills.
5. To fulfill goals set out by the Breadth American Institutions requirement, including computer and information literacy.

## Required Books:

Thomas Bell, *Out of This Furnace: A Novel of Immigrant Labor in America* (At USU Bookstore)  
John Hollitz, *Thinking Through the Past*, Vol. II (3rd edition)  
(Available at USU Bookstore and online, but make sure to get the right volume and edition)

**Requirements and Grading:**

Paper #1 (2-3 pages, due Sept. 19) -- 10%

Paper #2 (4-5 pages, due in late Oct. or early Nov., based on student's choice of topic) -- 20%

**Note: Papers must be typed, double-spaced, in a 12 pt. font, with one-inch margins.**

**Late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for each day (M-F) past deadline.**

Two midterm exams (Oct. 3 & Nov. 14) -- 10% and 15%

Final exam -- 25%

Attendance -- 5%

Participation, reading notes and other short assignments -- 15%

**Disability Resource Center:** Any student who requires accommodations for the course should contact the Disability Resource Center, located in University Inn, Room 101 (7-2444). The Center can also provide a copy of this syllabus in a variety of alternative formats.

**Early Alert Program:** USU has developed a new program to help students who are struggling in their classes. I will submit the names of all students who earn less than a C on the first paper and/or the first midterm. The Retention and First-Year Experience Office will then contact those students by email and ask them to stop by for an appointment. The goal is to help students learn about academic resources or deal with other concerns that may be affecting their grades. Please note that I am always happy to talk to and work with students outside of class as well. Feel free to email me or come to my office hours.

**Plagiarism policy:** Students should read the University's rules concerning academic honesty, which can be found online at <http://www.usu.edu/policies/PDF/Acad-Integrity.pdf>. **Any cheating, falsification, or presentation of another's work as your own will result in a failing grade in the course** and might lead to even more serious consequences, such as suspension or expulsion. If you have *any questions* about whether something constitutes plagiarism, ASK ME. If you are contemplating plagiarism out of desperation, particularly over a deadline, TALK TO ME. I would much rather grant you an extension or help you with your work than fail you for cheating. However, be aware that I have failed students for plagiarism almost every semester that I have taught at USU.

**Policy on incompletes:**

University policy states that students can receive an "I" for the course only in the case of a verifiable serious illness or family emergency and only when a small amount of the coursework remains to be done. An incomplete cannot be used to avoid a poor grade.

**Course schedule (subject to revision)**Week 1

Aug. 25 Course Introduction

Aug. 27 & 29 Reconstruction

**Reading:** Begin reading Bell, *Out of This Furnace*, Parts One, Two and Three (Part Four is not required)

Week 2

Sept. 1 Labor Day -- No class  
 Sept. 3 Black Life after Reconstruction  
 Sept. 5 Video on Andrew Carnegie  
**Reading:** Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth" (on reserve) and continue reading Bell, *Out of This Furnace*

Week 3

Sept. 8-12 Industrialization and Its Discontents  
**Reading:** Finish reading Bell, *Out of this Furnace*

Week 4

Sept. 15 & 17 The West and Native Americans **Reading notes will be due on Sept. 17**  
**Reading:** Hollitz, ch. 3  
 Sept. 19 Populism **Paper # 1 is due Sept. 19 at start of class**

Week 5

Sept. 22 & 24 Imperialism **Reading notes will be due on Sept. 24**  
**Reading:** Hollitz, ch. 4  
 Sept. 26 Video on Jane Addams and Hull House

Week 6

Sept. 29 & Oct. 1 The Progressive Era  
**Reading:** Hollitz, ch. 5  
 Oct. 3 Midterm #1 **Midterm #1 is on Oct. 3 in class**

Week 7

Oct. 6-10 WWI, the 1920s & the Great Crash  
**Reading and short assignment TBA**

Week 8

Oct. 13-16 The 1930s and the New Deal  
**Reading:** Hollitz, ch. 7 **Note that class meets on M, W, and TH this week. Friday, Oct. 17 is Fall Break.**

Week 9

Oct. 20-24 The 1940s and World War II  
**Reading:** Hollitz, ch. 8 **Paper #2 will be due during Week 9, 10, 11 or 12 depending on student's topic.**

Week 10

Oct. 27-31 The 1950s and the Cold War  
**Reading:** Hollitz, ch. 9

Week 11

Nov. 3-7 The Civil Rights Movement and the Great Society  
**Reading:** Hollitz, ch. 10

Week 12

Nov. 10-12 Vietnam

**Reading:** Hollitz, ch. 11

Nov. 14 Midterm #2

**Midterm #2 is on Nov. 14 in class**Week 13

Nov. 17-21 The 1970s &amp; 1980s

**Reading:** No reading, but...**Expect a video showing outside of class.**Week 14

Nov. 24 Transformations in the Lives of American Women and Families

**Reading:** Hollitz, ch. 12

Nov. 26 &amp; 28 Thanksgiving --No class

Week 15

Dec. 1-5 The 1990s and Today

**Reading: TBA****Final Exam December 10, 9:30-11:20 in FAV 150**