COURSE DESCRIPTION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

CATALOUGE DESCRIPTION AND GENERAL EDUCATION CATAGORIES:
Survey of topics in American social history from the colonial period to the middle of the Twentieth Century. Subjects may include reform movements, immigration, racial problems, religion, medicine, and the role of women. Note: Fulfills state graduation requirement for U.S. History; fulfills three units of General Education D3A requirement.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS:
During the past generation, historians have been seeking to broaden what is meant by “history.” For many years, the “richly textured” quality of America’s history tended be covered over, as the nation’s story was consistently told from the perspective of the “great and powerful,” all but ignoring the place of the average person, the oppressed, and the marginalized in the creation of the country. Looking back at the development of this exclusionary “historical method” from the vantage point of the early twenty-first-century, the fact that scholars tended to ignore the “common” and to focus on the “elite” does not seem particularly surprising, as those who wrote these “narratives” assumed that the story quite naturally should emphasize the “roles of political and intellectual leaders, elections, diplomacy, and national institutions.” Disturbingly, the creation of these exclusionary narratives also led many to ignore the fact that America’s story unfolded in relationship to a complex, ever shifting process of global development.

As the twentieth-century dawned, this non-inclusive approach to writing history began to change, until, by the end of the century, America’s historical narratives began to be told from much more democratic perspectives. In writing this “social history,” scholars sought to retain the best of the traditional approaches while attempting to locate diverse points of narrative origin. Now, as we enter the new millennium, scholars who explore, write about, and teach America’s history must seek continually to expand the boundaries of their historical narratives beyond the “realm of elite actors and powerful institutions” until they encompass “far wider arenas of public and private culture.” Taking into consideration how race, class, and gender have helped to forge an intricately woven social identity in America, then, those of us who involve ourselves in the study
of history should aim at understanding the political, economic, religious, and cultural experiences of all of those who inhabit our diverse global community.

With this in mind, our course takes as its organizing theme the idea of “seeing” America from multiple perspectives. Thus, our primary goal will be to reveal the complex weave of individual threads that act to define the American social fabric. Toward this end, we will attempt to understand the American story as one that unfolds not only in relation to emerging political, economic, and religious institutions, heads of state, and explosive economic development, but also in relation to the work, family lives, and customs of what may be characterized as the nation’s “common” peoples.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Students will develop a better understanding of the chronology and pivotal issues and themes of U.S. social history from the colonial period through the middle of the twentieth-century
- Students will develop a better understanding of the relationship among colonization, the birth of the Republic, western expansion, war, and social movements in shaping the lives of America’s people
- Students will develop an understanding of and appreciation for the significance of region and geography in shaping the nation’s social history
- Students will develop an understanding and appreciation of the contributions, perspectives and agency of ethnic, racial and cultural populations, including Native American, African and African American, Latino, and Asian and Asian American in U.S. social history
- Students will develop an understanding of and appreciation for the contributions, diverse perspectives, and agency of women in U.S. social history
- Students will become acquainted with the use of primary sources
- Students will become acquainted with historical analysis and sharpen their critical thinking skills

REQUIRED READINGS:

Howard Zinn: *A People’s History of the United States, 1492-Present*
Howard Zinn and Anthony Arnove: *Voices of a People’s History*
Robert Heilbroner and Aaron Singer: *The Economic Transformation of America: 1600 to the Present*
Robert Huges: *American Visions: The Epic History of Art in America*

REQUIREMENTS:

1) You are required to do all readings and come to class prepared to discuss the material assigned for that session. **Note: The course is reading intensive!**

2) You will be given ten (10) essay quizzes during the semester. (See “Quiz Dates” section below for dates of quizzes.) These quizzes will cover the material in assigned readings and be worth ten points each for a total of 100 points. There will be no make-up quizzes! In order to get credit for a quiz, you must remain for the entire class session. **Note: These quizzes will constitute approximately 1000 words of writing.**

3) There will be two “mid-term” essay exams that will cover the material from assigned readings. (See “Exam Dates” section below for dates of exams.) These exams will be worth 50 points each, for a total of 100 points. I will hand out
study sheets for these exams at least one week prior to the exam date. Note: These exams will constitute approximately 2000 words of writing.

4) There will be a “final,” non-cumulative, essay exam during Finals Week. I will hand out a study sheet for this exam at least one prior to the exam date. Note: This exam will constitute approximately 1000 words of writing.

5) Writing Requirement: Although the writing requirement for this course is only 1500 words (4 ½ pages), we will be doing approximately 4000 words of writing (13-14 pages).

6) Although I do not have a formal participation grade, I am a big fan of discussion, and your questions and comments may convince me that you deserve a higher grade.

**GRADING:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quiz:</th>
<th>100 points</th>
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<td>Exam:</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<td>Final:</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td>250 points</td>
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**Exam Dates**

- First Exam: Tuesday, October 9
- Second Exam: Thursday, November 29
- “Final” Exam: Thursday, December 20

**Quiz Dates**

- Quiz 1: Thursday, September 13
- Quiz 2: Thursday, September 20
- Quiz 3: Thursday, September 27
- Quiz 4: Thursday, October 4
- Quiz 5: Thursday, October 16
- Quiz 6: Thursday, October 25
- Quiz 7: Thursday, November 1
- Quiz 8: Thursday, November 8
- Quiz 9: Thursday, December 6
- Quiz 10: Thursday, December 13

**GRADE BREAKDOWN:**

- 250-237: A
- 236-225: A-
- 224-220: B+
- 219-212: B
- 211-200: B-
- 199-195: C+
- 194-187: C
- 186-175: C-
- 174-170: D+
- 169-162: D
- 161-150: D-
- 149-0: F

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

The Sac State Catalogue says the following about Academic Honesty:

The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of scholars and teachers. California State University, Sacramento expects that faculty, staff, and students will honor these principles, and in so doing, will protect the integrity of academic work and student grades. Students are expected to know and abide by university policy about cheating, including plagiarism. The entire document, Policies and Procedures Regarding Academic Honesty, may be found on the university’s web site.
Cheating will not be tolerated in this course. If you cheat by using disallowed sources, copying from someone else’s paper, or plagiarizing, you will receive a failing grade for the course. You are also subject to being expelled from the university.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICIES:**
Cell Phones are not permitted for use in classroom during class sessions unless there is an emergency. This includes listening to messages, texting, e-mailing, etc. Turn phones to vibrate when you enter the room. If you are using a Cell Phone in the classroom during a class session you will be asked to leave the room for the rest of the session. You may use a computer in class to take notes or to check relevant course material. If you have other work to do on your computer or simply want to play games or watch videos, do those things elsewhere!

**COURSE OUTLINE:**
**Week One: September 3-7**
Introduction to Course
**Topic for discussion: Arriving in America**
• How western Europeans Imagined the “New World”
• Pre-Columbian “Americans”; customs; traditions; mythologies
• West African cultures and kingdoms; customs; traditions; mythologies
**Read:** *People’s History*
  Chapter 1: Columbus, the Indians, and Human Progress
  *Voices*
  Chapter 1: Columbus and Las Casas
**Economic Transformation**
  Introduction: Economic Transformation as a Theme of History
  Chapter 1: Out of the European Cradle
**American Visions**
  Chapter 1: O My America, My New Founde Land

**Week Two: September 10-14**
**Topic for discussion: Old Worlds and New Worlds**
• Western European societies: internal transformations; agriculture and commerce; rise of nation-states; Renaissance and Reformation; Portuguese and Spanish exploration; the “metaphor” of Columbus
• The beginnings of the “racialization of savagery”
**Read:** *People’s History*
  Chapter 2: Drawing the Color Line
  *Voices*
  Chapter 2: The First Slaves
**Economic Transformation**
  Chapter 2: The Colonization of America

**Quiz 1: Thursday, September 13**

**Week Three: September 17-21**
**Topic for discussion: Struggles for Domination and the Formation of the Colonies**
• Major Players in the New World: Spain, France, the Netherlands and England
• Economic visions among the new nation-states: From Spain’s feudal/mercantilism to England’s mercantile/capitalism; the rise of indentured servitude among the western European poor and dispossessed
(Week Three, cont.)

- Puritanism and the “City Upon a Hill”
- The Glorious Revolution as a “watershed” moment in U.S. history: how “glorious” was it?
- The British Civil War; Oliver Cromwell and his Navigational Acts; James II and Charles II

Read: *People’s History*
  - Chapter 3: Persons of Mean and Vile Condition

*Voices*
  - Chapter 3: Servitude and Rebellion

*Economic Transformation*
  - Chapter 3: Setting the Economic Stage

Quiz 2: Thursday, September 20

Week Four: September 24-28

**Topic for discussion: Colonial Maturation and Conflict**

- Growth in the colonies and geographical differences between the north and south
- The decline and fall of indentured servitude in the colonies
- The Atlantic slave trade; the stain of “slavery for life”
- The seduction of the “free market”
- England’s need for revenue after the wars of King William, Queen Anne, and King George
- The “War for Empire”: French and Indian/Seven Years

Read: *People’s History*
  - Chapter 4: Tyranny Is Tyranny

*Voices*
  - Chapter 4: Preparing the Revolution

*American Visions*
  - Chapter 2: The Republic of Virtue

Quiz 3: Thursday, September 27

Week Five: October 1-5

**Topic for discussion: The Beginnings of the “American Experiment”**

- Rethinking the relationship between England and the colonies; markets and goods; attempting to “legislate” obedience
- The Stamp Act Crisis; Townsend Duty Crisis; the Boston Tea Massacre and problems with tea
- The first Continental Congress; Lexington and Concord
- George Washington, Valley Forge, and the descent of the “exuberance of war” into despair: hunger, taxes, desertion
- The French Alliance
- The difficulty of becoming a “united states” of America; the Articles of Confederation and “states rights”
- Constitutional Congress
- Independence
(Week Five, cont.)

Read: People’s History
   Chapter 5: A Kind of Revolution

Voices of Freedom
   Chapter 5: Half a Revolution

Economic Transformation
   Chapter 4: The Declaration of Economic Independence

Quiz 4: Thursday, October 4

Week Six: October 8-12

Topic for discussion: Gendered Oppression
   • Women in the New Republic
   • Establishing a “Women’s Movement”

Read: People’s History
   Chapter 6: The Intimately Oppressed

Voices
   Chapter 6: The Early Women’s Movement

First Exam: Tuesday, October 9

Week Seven: October 15-19

Topic for discussion: America’s New Nationalism
   • What to do about the “problem” of Natives in an expanding Republic
   • The Mexican “Cession”
   • Manifest Destiny: bringing together the religious with the nationalistic
   • The encounter with the Mexican “other”
   • Making slavery illegal in Texas; Americans as “illegal aliens” in Mexico
   • The myth of the Alamo
   • Political ambiguities; what kind of nation will we become?

Read: People’s History
   Chapter 7: As Long as Grass Grows
   Chapter 8: We Take Nothing by Conquest, Thank God

Voices
   Chapter 7: Indian Removal
   Chapter 8: The War on Mexico

Economic Transformation
   Chapter 5: Preparations for the Age of Manufacture

American Visions
   Chapter 3: The Wilderness and the West

Quiz 5: Thursday, October 18

Week Eight: October 22-26

Topics for discussion: A “Great Civil War” and “Reconstruction”
   • The Election of 1860; how did Lincoln understand slavery?
   • Death, despair, hopelessness: Stalemate on the Battlefield
   • Financing the War and economic consequences of the War
   • 1863: Emancipation transforms the War, although it does not end it
   • Lincoln’s First Inaugural Address
   • The Emancipation Proclamation
   • Reconstructing America
(Week Eight, cont.)
Read: People’s History
  Chapter 9: Slavery Without Submission, Emancipation Without Freedom
  Chapter 10: The Other Civil War
Voices of Freedom
  Chapter 9: Slavery and Defiance
  Chapter 10: Civil War and Class Conflict
Economic Transformation
  Chapter 6: The Structural Transformation
Quiz 6: Thursday, October 25

Week Nine: October 29-November 2
Topics for discussion: The “Gilded Age” and “Progressive Reform”
  • Building the infrastructure; who pays, who benefits?
  • Industrial beginnings; immigration; urbanization
  • The end of the slave trade but not of slavery
  • The Voice of the Other: women’s rights
  • Colonizing Beyond Our Borders: A New Imperialism
Read: People’s History
  Chapter 11: Robber Barons and Rebels
  Chapter 12: The Empire and the People
  Chapter 13: The Socialist Challenge
Voices
  Chapter 11: Strikers and Populists in the Gilded Age
  Chapter 12: The Expansion of Empire
  Chapter 13: Socialists and Wobblies
Economic Transformation
  Chapter 7: The Age of the Businessman
  Chapter 8: The Technology of Industrialization
  Chapter 9: From Trust to Antitrust
American Visions
  Chapter 5: The Gritty Cities
Quiz 7: Thursday, November 1

Week Ten: November 5-9
Topics for discussion: Modernism, War, and Civilization’s Discontents
  • The Tragedy of the “Machine Age”
  • The Horror of War
  • Industrializing the “Common Life”
  • The Fear of the “Other”
Read: People’s History
  Chapter 14: War Is the Health of the State
Voices
  Chapter 14: Protesting the First World War
Economic Transformation
  Chapter 10: Workers and Work
  Chapter 11: Industrialization Rubs Off on Life
American Visions
  Chapter 6: Early Modernism
Quiz 8: Thursday, November 8
Week Eleven: November 12-16
Topic for discussion: Take a Breath, Catch Up, Recover!

Week Twelve: November 19-23 (note: no class on November 22, Thanksgiving Break)
Topics for discussion: Post-War America and the Slide Toward Depression
  • The Rise of the Soviet Union
  • Racism in America
  • A Renewal of the Fight for Women’s Rights
  • An Economy in Crisis
Read: People’s History
  Chapter 15: Self-Help in Hard Times
  Voices
  Chapter 15: From the Jazz Age to the Uprisings of the 1930s
Economic Transformation
  Chapter 12: The Great Depression
American Visions
  Chapter 7: Streamlines and Breadlines

Week Thirteen: November 26-30
Topics for discussion: A New Deal and a “People’s War”
  • Roosevelt’s New Deal
  • Liberal Politics
  • Fighting for Freedom
  • Artistic Influences from Abroad
Read: People’s History
  Chapter 16: A People’s War?
  Voices
  Chapter 16: World War II and McCarthyism
Economic Transformation
  Chapter 13: The New Deal

Second Exam: Thursday, November 29

Week Fourteen: December 3-7
Topic for discussion: Post-War Rebellions
  • The Communist Threat and “Containment”
  • The Fair Deal
  • The “Affluent Society”
  • The Growth of the Suburban Family
  • “Black is Beautiful”
  • Women React to 50s Oppression
Read: People's History
  Chapter 17: “Or Does It Explode?”
  Voices
  Chapter 17: The Black Upsurge Against Racial Segregation
Economic Transformation
  Chapter 14: From Postwar Boom to Postwar Inflation
American Visions
  Chapter 8: The Empire of Signs

Quiz 9: Thursday, December 6
Week Fifteen: December 10-14
Topics for Discussion: Vietnam and the Sixties
- The War in Southeast Asia
- Voices Raised in Protest and Revolt

Read: People’s History
  Chapter 18: The Impossible Victory: Vietnam
  Voices
  Chapter 18: Vietnam and Beyond: The Historic Resistance

Quiz 10: Thursday, December 13

Week Sixteen: Finals Week, December 17-21
“Final” Exam: Thursday, December 20, 12:45-2:45