

History 148

**U. S. HISTORY:
THE GLOBAL AGE**
Summer, 2008

(5 credits)

Dr. Tim Heinrichs, Instructor

CONTACT:

OFFICE: A100-B on campus

PHONE: (425) 564-2114

E-MAIL: (Please use the Vista E-mail if possible):

theinric@bcc.ctc.edu

WELCOME--

As the 20th century dawned, the United States had completed a remarkable era of growth and was already atop the world as an industrial giant. The nation--merely a mosquito in world affairs a century before--had just recently flexed its muscles, stripping Spain of its empire and demanding a voice in the counsels of the Great Powers. Living standards were climbing as the age of electricity dawned, and American civilization appeared to be tied to perpetual progress. In September President William McKinley traveled to the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, to greet the new era at this showcase for the amazing triumphs of American culture and technology...

But then, catastrophe! The President was shot by an anarchist. He lingered for a few days, while the technology that could save him was on display elsewhere at the exposition--the X-ray machine. But it was not put to use. The President died.

The new chief executive was the charismatic but unpredictable Theodore Roosevelt. This youngest President in American history gladly seized the reins of power. He loved the Presidency and made it the focus of American government. But as time went on, the Republican Roosevelt contemplated and often despaired over the possibilities and limits of political power. He pondered the apparently intractable divisions emerging in industrial society...the coming crash of the world order...the cultural crises facing an urbanized American civilization...the disturbing threat as well as the promise of the 20th century...

History 148 is a survey of the changes and opportunities that have characterized U. S. history over the past century, including many that were barely apparent at the dawn of this era. It is designed to follow the major changes since 1900 in how Americans have thought and lived and been governed. We will try to understand not only major social and political processes that

drove change, but also the human and personal experience of change. We will try to assess the long-standing issues of our time and use historical insight to interpret the new era facing us now. Are the American political and cultural values prevalent at the dawn of the 20th century at all relevant at the dawn of the 21st?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS—

Book--

* Edward Ayers et al, *American Passages, Compact Ed.* (Thomson). ISBN: 0495188573. This is the main text. It has ample on-line support. Note that, more than other textbooks, it tries to portray events in chronological order.

* There will be additional on-line readings, accessible in "Lectures & Discussion" for each week.

STRATEGY--

At the conclusion of this course, successful students will be able to:

1. Explain the significance of key people, facts, and events of the period under study, and develop standards to judge them from a historical-cultural perspective
 2. Demonstrate the importance of traditions of thought and ethical values in historical change
 3. Expand their vocabulary
 4. Evaluate historical arguments, judging the appropriateness of both logic and content
 5. Adapt scholarly processes of analysis, interpretation, and synthesis to articulate their own points of view, demonstrating a command of relevant facts and a framework of logical deduction...
- *Drawing inferences from data*
 - *Differentiating between facts, value judgments, and generalizations*
 - *Differentiating between description and explanation*
 - *Recognizing the role of cause and effect in historical analysis*

History is absolutely do-able if you think strategically. Think about overall trends. File facts away according to what they mean for major trends. The specific details absorbed in the course material will mean little unless you can do that. You are encouraged to put together your own interpretations of the facts.

COURSEWORK—

Be sure to look at the "**Reading Schedule**," located on the "**Assignments**" page (accessible from the Home Page). This will guide your reading through the term for lectures and textbook readings.

Be sure to find the "**Lectures & Discussions**" link on the Home Page. That takes you to the page with the lectures and online readings and assignment for each "Discussion." Read the lectures. Access the Discussion Assignment, and follow directions for the listed readings and brief essays.

After doing the reading, you choose one essay question to answer from the Discussion Assignment. Post your essay with the Discussion's "**Posts**" icon (**not with the Paper assignment, please!**). Each essay should be 250-400 words. The deadlines for these fall on Mondays and Thursdays. **You don't have to write one every week.** During the term you will write and post a total of **four** brief essays in answer to four Discussion assignments by the deadline given for each. Note: you must do essays from two of Discussions #1-5 and two of #6-#9 (again, by the assigned date for each one you choose).

I like an essay that comes to grips with the student's chosen question--that tries to answer it logically with details and facts. It is especially desirable to use facts and details from the Discussion (especially online) readings and lectures. The Ayers text is helpful, but don't write a mere summary of what the Ayers text says. Don't base your essay on an encyclopedia article (especially that unreliable Wikipedia), though feel free to consult a decent encyclopedia for background. Use paraphrases and quotes from the sources to back your points, not to make them, and avoid both long quotes (more than 40 words) and overly brief ones (less than 10 words). Remember what the assignment says about a purpose statement. Avoid typo's and misspellings.

On most occasions when you don't post an essay, you will do the week's reading anyway and post a **response** to the essay of another student. Access other students' essays through each Discussion Assignment's Posts icon. Each response should be at least 75 words long and should express agreement, disagreement, and reasons for your view. You will do a total of two responses in Discussions #1-#5 and two in Discussions #6-#9. (There will be none for Discussion #10.)

This means that during the term you must post four bulletin essays of your own and four responses to others' essays. Essays are graded on a 25-point scale; responses on a 5-point scale. There is **no extra credit** with essays or responses. **Note: there is no credit for posting a response on a Discussion for which you have already submitted an essay.**

The following is this term's schedule of due dates for essays and responses for each Discussion:

Assignment	Due Date	Assignment	Due Date
Discussion #1 Essay	Monday June 30	Discussion #6 Essay	Monday July 21
Discussion #1 Response	Thursday July 3	Discussion #6 Response	Thursday July 24
Discussion #2 Essay	Thursday July 3	Discussion #7 Essay	Thursday July 24
Discussion #2 Response	Monday July 7	Discussion #7 Response	Monday July 28
Discussion #3 Essay	Monday July 7	Discussion #8 Essay	Monday July 28
Discussion #3 Response	Thursday July 10	Discussion #8 Response	Thursday July 31
Discussion #4 Essay	Thursday July 10	Discussion #9 Essay	Thursday July 31
Discussion #4 Response	Monday July 14	Discussion #9 Response	Monday August 4
Discussion #5 Essay	Monday July 14	Discussion #10 Essay	Monday August 4

Discussion #5 Response	Thursday July 17	No Response to #10	--
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In addition to the brief essays and responses, you will compose a five-page paper (due **August 1**), following a sheet provided under "Assignments."

There will be two exams, each about two hours, on these dates: **July 17-18** and **August 5-6**. You will take them online, and you choose the times to take them on each date. You are responsible for having functioning equipment on test days. The tests will have multiple-choice and essay questions and will be based on the Ayers text and the lectures. There will be preparation sheets for each listing possible questions.

NOTE: Copying material in print or on the Internet is forbidden. A zero grade will be assigned to paper or test in which plagiarized material appears, or if on a Discussion essay, the entire Discussions grade (25% of the total term grade).

A note on late work--

Normally, late discussion essays are accepted but with a penalty of **.5/25** per day (up to a total of 3.5/25). If they are more than three days late, they must be sent to me by Vista email. Late responses are not accepted.

Late papers are assessed 2.5% per day (up to a total of 10%). This can be avoided if you obtain permission for an extension in advance of the due date.

If you miss the midterm or final exam for some legitimate reason, all is not lost. However, if you don't contact me and take the test right away, you will lose 10% right away and another 10% after a week.

GRADING--

The following is a breakdown of the final grade by category:

Discussions:	25%
Paper	25%
First exam	25%
Second exam	25%

All items will be assigned percentage grades, whose average will be translated into a letter grade according to the following:

93-plus A	77-79%	C+
90-92% A-	73-76%	C
87-89% B+	70-72%	C-
83-86% B	67-69%	D+
80-82% B-	60-66%	D

If you're ever not sure you're on top of it all, if you have any questions about the course, ask questions by WebCT e-mail, or to theinric@bcc.ctc.edu. Or call and leave a message at 425-564-2114.

Please let me know if you have questions about these matters. I hope you enjoy discussing this rather incredible century.