

**HIS 315L** - The United States Since 1865 - Unique 39350 - MW 3:30-5:00 – UTC 2.112A

**H. W. Brands** - GAR 3.306 – M 11-12, W 2:30-3:30 and by apt. - hwbrands@austin.utexas.edu

**TAs:** Dharitri Bhattacharjee, D.B. Briscoe, Mehmet Celik, Holly McCarthy, Eddie Shore, Robert Whitaker

**Subject and themes:** The course will cover American history from the end of the Civil War to the present. The basic themes will be (1) the struggle to define the boundary between the public sector and the private sector in American life, or between democracy and capitalism; and (2) the striking fact that a nation that professes to love peace has so often gone to war

**Textbook and documents:** H. W. Brands et al., *American Stories*, 2nd edition, volume 2, with My History Lab (where the chapter exams and documents are located; course ID: **brands41555**).

The book and access card can be purchased at the UT Co-op or online at <http://www.mypearsonstore.com/bookstore/american-stories-a-history-of-the-united-states-volume-9780205073351>.

## **Exams and assignments**

**Chapter exams:** There will be one exam for each assigned textbook chapter. These will be taken online in My History Lab. Students may take each exam twice and receive the higher of the two grades. The chapter exams will total to 40 percent of the semester grade.

**Essay tests:** Three, in class. Students will write on one question per test, given below. Students may bring one note card (3 by 5 inches) to class with notes. 20 percent total.

**Papers:** Three, on documents from My History Lab. Writing prompts are given below. 20 percent. The papers will be submitted in class on the due dates.

**Classroom exercises:** Periodically during the semester, students will be given writing exercises in class. These will be graded on a pass/fail basis. They will be unannounced and there will be no makeups without approved excuse (documented illness, family emergency, etc.). 20 percent.

**Makeup and late policy:** Makeups for the essay tests will be given, with instructor's permission, on Friday afternoons at 2 in GAR 0.128. Late papers will incur penalties of 5 points per day, to 20 points.

**Grades:** A = 90s; B = 80s; C = 70s; D = 60s; F = below 60. Straight letter grades only; no +/-.

**Supplemental Instruction:** The class will include Supplemental Instruction discussion sections (SI). These optional sessions will be led by Eddie Shore and will reinforce course content and strengthen pertinent skills. Students who participate regularly in SI sessions almost always raise their grades.

**Academic accommodations:** The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-6441 TTY.

### **Schedule**

Jan 14-18	Ch 16. Take chapter exam by 11:59 pm Jan 21
Jan 21-25	Ch 17. Exam by Jan 25. No class Jan 21
Jan 28-Feb 1	Ch 18. Exam by Feb 1
Feb 4-8	Ch 19. Exam by Feb 8. <b>Paper 1</b> due in class on Feb 6
Feb 11-15	Ch 20. Exam by Feb 15. <b>Essay test 1</b> on Feb 13
Feb 18-22	Ch 21. Exam by Feb 22
Feb 25-Mar 1	Ch 22. Exam by Mar 1
Mar 4-8	Ch 23. Exam by Mar 8. <b>Paper 2</b> due Mar 6
Mar 11-15	Spring break – no classes
Mar 18-22	Ch 24-25. Exams by Mar 22*
Mar 25-29	Ch 26. Exam by Mar 29. <b>Essay test 2</b> on Mar 27
Apr 1-5	Ch 27. Exam by Apr 5
Apr 8-12	Ch 28. Exam by Apr 12
Apr 15-19	Ch 29. Exam by Apr 19. <b>Paper 3</b> due Apr 17
Apr 22-26	Ch 30-31. Exams by Apr 26*
Apr 29-May 3	Ch 32. Exam by May 3. <b>Essay test 3</b> on May 1

## **Paper 1 prompt**

The conclusion of the Civil War marked the demise of slavery in the United States. But social and economic arrangements for freed people remained in flux as the former Confederacy uneasily rejoined the Union.

Read Jourdon Anderson's letter in light of the reorientation of relationships between one-time masters and slaves. Explore elements of continuity and renegotiation as Anderson weighed an offer of employment from a man who once wielded complete and arbitrary power over him.

Write an essay in which you relate Anderson's letter to the fluid and uncertain environment of postwar race relations and the Reconstruction of the South. Use quotations from this correspondence in your essay to support your ideas.

350 to 500 words

When you have written your essay, please **print a paper copy** to turn in at class.

Also please go to the following site and **paste your essay** in the window, and submit. (This is for data-gathering purposes, to improve the teaching of the course. It is not required, but it will be a help to your successors.) Where it asks for Student ID, enter **2013**.

<http://katengine.com/collector/he-hist/prompt/MyHistoryLab022/begin>

## Paper 2 prompt

The transparency of the political process and the pursuit of the common good by public officeholders have been vital to a sense of virtue and national uniqueness within the U.S. republic dating back to its Founders.

Read George Washington Plunkitt's rationale for "honest" graft and consider the role of political machines, such as Tammany Hall. Explore where this operative drew the line between appropriate and unsavory exercises of influence. Set this description of urban politics against the backdrop of a rapidly changing U.S. society at the turn of the twentieth century, characterized by a breakneck pace of economic growth with little oversight provided by public officials.

Write an essay in which you summarize the consequences, both beneficial and negative, of a philosophy of "honest" graft and explain its historical context. Use quotations from Plunkitt's interview in your essay to support your ideas.

350 to 500 words

When you have written your essay, please **print a paper copy** to turn in at class.

Also please go to the following site and **paste your essay** in the window, and submit. (This is for data-gathering purposes, to improve the teaching of the course. It is not required, but it will be a help to your successors.) Where it asks for Student ID, enter **2013**.

<http://katengine.com/collector/he-hist/prompt/MyHistoryLab027/begin>

### **Paper 3 prompt**

One of the hallmarks of American democracy is the peaceful transition of leadership from one president to another, as occurred in January 1961 with the transition from Dwight D. Eisenhower to John F. Kennedy.

Read President Eisenhower's Farewell Address to the Nation, and think about the major political, economic, and foreign policy events experienced by the United States during the 1950s. Think about the Cold War and its impact on American society during this time. Also consider how American citizens viewed President Eisenhower and his successor, President Kennedy.

Write an essay in which you summarize the meaning of President Eisenhower's Farewell Address and explain its historical background and consequences. Use quotations from the Farewell Address in your essay to support your ideas.

350 to 500 words

When you have written your essay, please **print a paper copy** to turn in at class.

Also please go to the following site and **paste your essay** in the window, and submit. (This is for data-gathering purposes, to improve the teaching of the course. It is not required, but it will be a help to your successors.) Where it asks for Student ID, enter **2013**.

<http://katengine.com/collector/he-hist/prompt/MyHistoryLab033/begin>

## **Essay Test questions**

In each essay, **organize your thoughts** carefully. **Make general statements** and **support them with evidence**.

**Essay Test 1.** Was industrialization good for the United States, or bad? Who gained? Who lost? How did the emergence of modern capitalism challenge existing democratic ideals and practices?

**Essay Test 2.** How did the reform movements of the Progressive era and the New Deal reflect the evolving relationship between capitalism and democracy?

**Essay Test 3.** Why has the United States gone to war since 1898? Propose a general theory or explanation and apply it to each war.