



[\(index.html\)](#)

[Syllabus \(syllabus.html\)](#)

[Schedule/lectures \(schedule.html\)](#)

[Assignments \(assign.html\)](#)

[Class discussions \(http://www.ilstu.edu/cgi-bin/netforum/hist136/a/1\)](http://www.ilstu.edu/cgi-bin/netforum/hist136/a/1)

[Internet Resources \(resources.html\)](#)

[History Department \(http://www.cas.ilstu.edu/History/website.htm\)](http://www.cas.ilstu.edu/History/website.htm)

[Illinois State University \(http://www.ilstu.edu\)](http://www.ilstu.edu)



[\(http://www.ilstu.edu/~mbecker\)](http://www.ilstu.edu/~mbecker)

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History of the United States Since 1865

History 136, Section 3

Fall 1997, Illinois State University

Instructor : [Marc Becker \(http://www.ilstu.edu/~mbecker\)](http://www.ilstu.edu/~mbecker),
mbecker@ilstu.edu (<mailto:mbecker@ilstu.edu>)

Course Meets: Schroeder 214, Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:00–9:50

Office: Schroeder 332-I; Phone: 438–8306

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3:30–5:30, or by appointment

World-Wide Web: <http://www.ilstu.edu/class/hist136> (<http://www.ilstu.edu/class/hist136>)

[Netforum class discussions](<http://www.ilstu.edu/cgi-bin/netforum/hist136/a/1>)

Syllabus

Description

This course introduces main themes in the history of the United States from the Civil War to the present. Not only will we be studying the actions of presidents and important people, but we will also look at how common people lived and acted. We will compare the different experiences of various ethnic, religious, and racial groups, social classes, and women. An intent of this course is to introduce the concepts, materials, and tools employed in the discipline of history, and to help develop writing and other skills used in the study of history. By the end of the course you should have developed your

ability to think clearly and critically, to ask and research significant questions, to read historical materials intelligently, and to express your ideas in a logical, concise manner.

Requirements

You are expected and required to attend every class session, and you are responsible for the material covered in the lectures, readings and films, and for any announcements made in class. Unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade. If you have a disability or any conflicts which may affect your class performance, please bring this to my attention immediately so that we can make arrangements for this to be a positive learning experience for you.

Readings

There are three required books for this class. You may either purchase them at campus bookstores or read them at the reserve desk in Milner Library. Read the assignments before class so that you are prepared to carry on an intelligent discussion of the material in class.

Mary Beth Norton, et al., *A People and a Nation: A History of the United States; Volume II: Since 1865* (4 th ed., 1994)

Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*

Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*

Internet

This course makes use of a web site (<http://www.ilstu.edu/class/hist136> (<http://www.ilstu.edu/class/hist127>)) and [Netforum class discussions group](<http://www.ilstu.edu/cgi-bin/netforum/hist136/a/1>) on the Internet to extend the scope of the class beyond that of the immediate classroom setting. Class schedule updates, lecture outlines, additional information on assignments, and other information related to the class will be posted to the web site. The newsgroup is designed for the posting of announcements, a forum to ask questions, continue class discussions, complain about the weather, etc. You are expected and encouraged to make active use of these resources. ISU provides students with free email accounts and access to computer terminals in labs around campus. Let me know at the beginning of the semester if access to these resources will be a problem for you.

Assignments and grades

Course grades will be based on two exams and two written essays. Each of these assignments will count toward twenty-five percent of your final grade. Grades on late assignments will be penalized one-half of a letter grade for each day that they are late. Study guides for each of the exams and more detailed information on the written essays will be posted to the web page. Use the [Netforum class discussions group](<http://www.ilstu.edu/cgi-bin/netforum/hist136/a/1>) to discuss these assignments with your classmates in a relaxed and informal virtual discussion session.

Class Schedule (Please consult the [Weekly Schedule \(schedule.html\)](#) for updates to this syllabus.)

August 18–22 Reconstruction

Read: Norton, ch. 16 ("Reconstruction"); Sinclair, *The Jungle*, ch. 1–8

August 25–29 Westward Expansion

Read: Norton, ch. 17 ("Transformation of the West and South"); Sinclair, *The Jungle*, ch. 9–16

Sept 1 Labor Day (no class)

Sept 3–5 Industrialization

Read: Norton, ch. 18 ("Machine Age"); Sinclair, *The Jungle*, ch. 17–24

Sept 8–12 Urbanization

Read: Norton, ch. 19 ("Vitality and Turmoil of Urban Life"); Sinclair, *The Jungle*, ch. 25–31

First essay due (Sept 12)

Sept 15–19 Progressive Reform

Read: Norton, ch. 20 & 21 ("Gilded Age Politics," "Progressive Era")

Sept 22–26 Imperialism

Read: Norton, ch. 22 & 23 ("Quest for Empire," "Americans at War")

Sept 29 **Midterm Exam**

Oct 1–3 Roaring Twenties

Read: Norton, ch. 24 ("New Era of the 1920s")

Oct 6–10 Great Depression

Read: Norton, ch. 25 ("Great Depression")

Oct 13–15 World War II

Oct 17 Fall break (no class)

Read: Norton, ch. 26 & 27 ("Foreign Relations," "Second World War")

Oct 20–24 Cold War

Read: Norton, ch. 28 & 29 ("Cold War Politics," "Cold War Era"); begin Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*

Oct 27–31 Urbanism

Read: Norton, ch. 30 ("American Society During the Postwar Boom")

Nov 3–7 Civil Rights

Read: __finish Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*

Second essay due (Nov 7)

Nov 10–14 Vietnam

Read: Norton, ch. 31 ("Contesting Nationalism and Revolution")

Nov 17–21 Watergate

Read: Norton, ch. 32 ("Reform and Conflict")

Nov 24 Reagan

Nov 26–28 T-day (no classes)

Read: Norton, ch. 33 ("A Turn to the Right")

Dec 1–5 1990s

Read: Norton, ch. 34 ("A New Century Beckons")

Final Exam : Wed., Dec. 10, 7:50 a.m.

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