

<p><b>Professor:</b> <b>Terry D. Bilhartz</b></p> <p><b>Office:</b> AB4 Room 441A</p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:his_tdb@shsu.edu">his_tdb@shsu.edu</a></p> <p><b>Office Phone:</b> 936-294-1483</p> <p><b>Office Hours:</b> MWF 8:30-10 TT 8:30-9:30</p>	<p><b>HIS164:</b> <b>U.S. History Since 1876 - the most interesting course offered at SHSU!</b></p>	<p><b>Class Time:</b> TTh 9:30 a.m.</p> <p><b>Location:</b> <a href="#">AB4--Olson Auditorium</a></p> <p><b>Co-Teacher:</b>  Liz Myers</p> <p><b>Office:</b> AB4 Room 309</p>
---	---	---

Welcome to the web page for HIS164: U.S. History Since 1876 for the Spring 2008 semester. Read over the entire syllabus, and then print it for further viewing. Please note that you are responsible for understanding all of the policies explained in this syllabus.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is a three credit-hour course covering U.S. history since 1876. Students will attend lectures, complete primary and secondary source readings and assignments, and take four exams, including the final. Finally, regular attendance is expected. All course materials, requirements, and policies are outlined below.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The objective of this course is to increase your knowledge of American social, political, economic, and religious history from the period of Reconstruction to the present. At the end of this semester, you will be able to speak confidently about the major events that have shaped America during the last five or six generations. Moreover, by reading and reflecting upon a collection of primary sources from each period studied, you will develop the detective skills that will enable you to become your own historian. After you perfect these skills, you will never again be willing to accept uncritically anyone's version of the past—even the past so brilliantly presented to you by your history teacher. As you learn to construct the past for yourself, you will discover the secret that all historians know—that “doing history” is more fun than simply memorizing and regurgitating it.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Gorn, Roberts and Bilhartz, *Constructing the American Past, Vol. 2* (6<sup>th</sup> Edition).

Bilhartz and Elliott, *Currents in American History, Volume 2*

**NON-REQUIRED TEXT:** If you are a super achiever, there's another book that you may like, too: Jules Benjamin, [A Student's Guide to History](#). This link will take you to the brief edition online that contains information for those of you who have trouble

[reading the syllabus carefully and understanding what is expected of you in the course](#), retaining information when [reading your history textbook](#), taking [notes during class](#), or taking [tests with objective or short-essay questions](#), as well as a lot of other useful information.

**OFFICE HOURS:** I hold a regular office hour each morning beginning at 8:30 a.m. However, since I am chair, I will be in the office at most times of the day when I am not teaching. If you need to meet with me at other times, call me and we will try to arrange a time for an appointment. NOTE: The moment you sense that you are falling behind, PLEASE come see me or my graduate teaching assistant, Liz Myers. The sooner we discuss the problem the sooner you can get back on track, and the better you'll do in the class. If you just have a quick question and don't have time to stop by my office, you can always email me at [his\\_tdb@shsu.edu](mailto:his_tdb@shsu.edu).

**EXAMINATIONS:** During the semester, we will examine three periods of early American history. After we complete the discussion of each period, we will take an in-class exam over the pertinent material. Each in-class exam will consist of 100 multiple-choice questions and will be worth 100 points. About 75 questions on each exam will come from the lectures or from material that is in your general textbook *Currents in American History*. About 25 questions from every exam will come from the assigned readings in *Constructing the American Past*.

The fourth in-class exam, a 100 point final, will be a comprehensive exam that will cover the larger themes discussed during the semester. You will be allowed to drop one of these four in-class exams. For every exam, you will need a Scantron Form No. 882-E or 882-ES and a #2 pencil.

**MAKE-UP EXAMS:** If you miss a test due to illness or family emergency, you MUST have documentation of your absence, such as a doctor's note, and then you will make-up the exam(s) during the regular class time on the last scheduled class day for this course, which is Thursday, May 4.

**HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS:** In addition to these exams, five times during the semester you also will turn in a homework assignment over the material in *Constructing the American Past (CAP)* and *Currents in American History, Volume 2*. Each assignment will be worth 50 points each. I will drop the lowest of your five homework grades, counting your four best grades, which together are worth a possible 200 points.

My graduate teaching assistants will grade your homework assignments. They also have full authority to make decisions regarding the required format of these assignments. Any questions regarding homework should be addressed to Liz or the TA who is assisting her.

**ATTENDANCE:** You are expected to be in every class. Emergencies may arise, however, so every student is allowed to miss **two or three** classes and, if these are the only absences, no points will be subtracted from the total point you earn. Excessive absences, however, will result in a lower attendance and participation grade. Students also may be counted absent for coming in late and for sleeping or distracting other students during class. They may be asked to leave, as well, if this behavior continues. See Course policies at the bottom of the syllabus

## ASSIGNMENTS:

### UNIT 1 – due Jan 24

Introducing Primary Sources: **YOUTH IN LOVE AND WAR:** Read the letters that are posted in the Course Documents section on Blackboard. Note that the first set of letters was written by individuals who were about your age during World War II and the second set was written by individuals about your age during the War in Vietnam. Using these letters as your period sources, in a 400-800 word creative essay tell me about the lives and concerns of the writers of these letters. Conclude your essay by comparing and contrasting these letters with the types of exchanges likely to be made between soldiers in Iraq today and their loved ones back home.

### UNIT 2 – due Feb 6

The year is 1890 and you live in America. You can be a fictional character or a real person who was alive at that time. Write a 600 – 1000 word creative essay in which you tell me who you are, in what part of America you live, when and why you or your descendants came to America, and what you think, good or bad, about the region in which you live. **YOU MUST BASE YOUR ANSWERS ON THE PRIMARY SOURCES CONTAINED IN CAP, CHAPTERS 1-4.**

### UNIT 3 – due Mar 6

The year is 1933 and America is in the midst of a terrible depression. You can be a fictional character or a real person who was alive at that time. Write a 600-1000 word creative essay in which you tell me who you are, where you live, what happened to you between 1918 and 1933, and whether or not you support the New Deal program that has been suggested by the newly elected president, Franklin Roosevelt. **YOU MUST BASE YOUR ANSWERS ON THE PRIMARY SOURCES CONTAINED IN CAP, and the information contained in *Currents in American History*.**

### UNIT 4 – due Mar 27

The year is 1968 and Americans are in the midst of a presidential campaign. You can be a fictional character or a real person who was alive at that time. Write a 600-1000 word creative essay in which you tell me who you are, where you live, what happened to you and/or your parents between 1941 and 1968, and how you plan to exercise your right to vote in the 1968 election. **YOU MUST BASE YOUR ANSWERS ON THE PRIMARY SOURCES CONTAINED IN CAP, and the information contained in *Currents in American History*.**

### UNIT 5 – due Apr 24

Option A: The year is 2000. You can be a fictional character or a real person who was alive at that time. Write a 600-1000 word creative essay in which you tell me who you are, where you live, what happened to you since the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and who you support in the election of 2000. **YOU MUST BASE YOUR ANSWERS ON THE SOURCES CONTAINED IN CAP and *Currents in American History*.**

## **GRADING:**

The maximum number of points that you can receive for the semester is 500 points (300 from your best 3 major exams and 200 points from your best 4 Homework Assignments). To ensure a grade of A, B, C, or D, you will need to have an overall average, respectively, of 90%, 80%, 70% and 60%. I

reserve the right to raise your points if I feel that a curve is warranted and if you have an excellent attendance record.

Words to the Wise - for only the wise ever listen to them:

(1) Since 200 homework points plus a large minority of the points on each of the major exams come from *Constructing the American Past* and *Currents*, you will not be able to score enough points to pass the course if you do not read these books, even if you ace every question that comes from lecture material.

(2) Read a little in one of your books every night and you will never fall behind. I warn you, however, that it will be very difficult to catch up if you fall behind since the course is designed to start slow and then gain momentum as it progresses. So please, do not fall behind in the readings.

One final word: students with a disability that affects their academic performance are expected to arrange for a conference with the instructor in order that appropriate strategies can be considered to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. The physically impaired may contact the Director of the Counseling Center for more information (extension 4-1720).

COURSE GRADING:		GRADING SCALE:	
First Exam:	100 points	A	90%-100% of possible points
Second Exam:	100 points	B	80%-89% of possible points
Third Exam:	100 points	C	70%-79% of possible points
FINAL Exam:	100 points	D	60%-69% of possible points
Homework Unit 1	50 points (max)	F	59%-0% of possible points
Homework Unit 2	50 points (max.)		
Homework Unit 3	50 points (max.)		
Homework Unit 4	50 points (max)		
Homework Unit 5	50 points (max)		

**ASSISTANCE WITH LEARNING:**

Before we go any further, I'd like to encourage you again to contact me and/or the [SAM Center](#) (Student Advising & Mentoring Center) as soon as you find yourself confused by the material we're reading and discussing or if you're falling behind on your work. Some of you may wish to work with the [SAM Center](#) even if you're doing well, but wish to do better. They are "a resource dedicated to helping students adjust to academic life at Sam Houston State University. Services available include career testing, aid with time management and/or study skills," and *much* more. These services are available to you as an SHSU student, and I encourage you to take advantage of them. The [SAM Center](#) is located in room 210 in Academic Building IV, which is south of the Lee Drain Building at the corner of Avenue I and Bowers Blvd. You may contact them to make an appointment at [SAMCenter@shsu.edu](mailto:SAMCenter@shsu.edu) or by telephone (936) 294-4444. You also may wish to become familiar with the Writing Center that is located in Wilson 114.

## Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

These reading assignments are structured to correspond to the lectures to best assist you in understanding the subjects being discussed. The topics and reading schedule may be adjusted to accommodate the pace of this course. Outlines for lectures and study questions from old exams are available on Blackboard.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Lecture Topics</b>	<b>Reading Assignment</b>	<b>Homework or Exams</b>
Week of Jan 14	Course Introduction	Read posted letters on Blackboard	
Week of Jan 21	Getting in and out of Reconstruction	<i>CAP, chap 2</i> <i>Currents, Intro</i> <i>Currents, Chap 7</i>	
Week of Jan 28	America: Golden or Gilded?	<i>CAP, Chap 3 &amp; 4</i>	Unit 1 Homework due by Jan 29
Week of Feb 4	Politics in the Age of Big Business	<i>Currents, Chapters 8 &amp; 9</i>	
Week of Feb 11	Populists and Imperialists	<i>CAP, Chap 5</i>	Unit 2 Homework due by Feb 12
Week of Feb 18	Exam 1 Intro to the 20 <sup>th</sup> Century	<i>CAP, Intro &amp; Chap 6</i>	Exam 1 on Feb 19
Week of Feb 25	The Progressive Era	<i>Currents, Chap 10</i> <i>CAP Chap 7</i>	
Week of Mar 3	War and Peace	<i>CAP, Chap 8</i>	
Week of Mar 10	Spring Break	<i>Read Currents Chapter 11</i>	

Week of Mar 17	Life in the Twenties	<i>CAP, Chap 9</i>	Unit 3 Homework due on Mar 20
Week of Mar 24	FDR and the New Deal	<i>CAP, Chap 10</i>	
Week of Mar 31	War and Peace Part 2 Exam 2	<i>CAP, Chap 11</i>	Exam 2 on April 3
Week of Apr 7	Understanding Your Grandparents	<i>CAP, Chap 12</i> <i>Currents, Chap 12</i>	
Week of Apr 14	Understanding Your Parents	<i>CAP, Chap 13</i> <i>Currents, Chap 13</i>	Unit 4 Homework due on Apr 15
Week of Apr 21	Understanding Your Childhood	<i>CAP, Chap 14</i> <i>Currents, Chap 14</i>	
Week of Apr 28	The America You Will Always Remember	<i>CAP, Chap 15</i>	Unit 5 Homework due on Apr 29
Week of May 5	Exam 3 Make up Exam Day		Exam 3 on May 6

### **COURSE POLICIES**

NOTE: Student enrollment in this course confirms that you have read and accepted these policies.

#### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and may be punished by failure on the exam, paper, or project; failure in the course; and/or expulsion from the university. The SHSU Student Guidelines academic honesty policy states:

*All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of*

*academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.*

See <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide.html>

Please read Jules Benjamin's (A Student's Guide to History) [discussion of plagiarism](#) as well.

**Classroom Rules of Conduct:**

Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Cellular telephones and pagers must be turned off before class begins. Students are prohibited from using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave class. Students who are especially disruptive also may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

**Classroom Visitors:**

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

**Copyright Statement**

The materials presented in this syllabus and course are copyrighted. Reproduction of these materials for commercial purposes without the express permission of the copyright holder is prohibited.

**STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY**

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s).

**DISABLED STUDENT POLICY**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic or Student Life program or activity. Disabled students may request help with academically related problems stemming from individual disabilities from their instructors, school/department chair, or by contacting the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and Director of the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex, or by calling (936) 294-1720. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

---

This course was designed and is maintained by Terry D. Bilhartz