

HIS 008
Spring 2023
MWF 9:15-10:20 AM
Winter Hall 210

Dr. Alastair Su
Deane Hall 207, x6787
Th 1:15-2:45 PM ([link](#))
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UNITED STATES, 1877-PRESENT

This course surveys the history of the United States from Reconstruction to the present. Themes include the rise of United States as a global superpower, changing conceptions of citizenship and class, and the legacy of racial injustice.

Although this is an introductory lecture course, students should prepare themselves for a classroom environment based on active participation. Every week, students will work in teams to do a close reading of historical texts or engage in flashpoints, exercises that are designed to bring key concepts and events into focus.

GENERAL EDUCATION 1: THINKING HISTORICALLY

This course fulfills Westmont's General Education requirement in Thinking Historically. "Thinking Historically" is a central element of a Christian liberal arts education. Students in this course will develop an awareness and appreciation for the dynamics for the particularities of time and place, a sense of the complex process of change and continuity over time, the ability to work critically with a range of primary and secondary historical texts, and appreciation for the construction of historical narratives.

GENERAL EDUCATION 2: JUSTICE, RECONCILIATION AND DIVERSITY ON BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL GROUNDS

In addition, this course fulfills Westmont's General Education requirement in Justice, Reconciliation and Diversity on Biblical and Theological Grounds. The readings, assignments and exams in this course will help students examine personal actions, social norms, and systemic practices involving race and racism in the United States and challenge them to discern the responsibility in the work of justice and reconciliation in their own local context. Through the flashpoint exercises, students will also have the opportunity to model Christlike dialogue while confronting challenging and sensitive issues.

Commented [AS1]: I added this section to include the new GE requirement. The language is virtually identical to that used in the combined document.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Demonstrate a grasp of the major themes, concepts, and events in American history from Reconstruction to the present.

- Develop biblically and theologically grounded understandings of justice, reconciliation and diversity through examining key historical examples.
- Historicize primary sources with adequate care, setting them in their proper context and relating them to larger ideas.
- Conduct historical research individually and in groups using physical and digital sources.

Commented [AS2]: I added a new course learning outcome to reflect the course's GE requirement.

READINGS

The textbook for this class is the *American Yawp*, an open-source, free-to-use resource that is accessible online. Each *Yawp* chapter consists of a long essay and a set of primary sources. Students are expected to read both the essay and *all* primary sources. Chapters of the *Yawp* will be supplemented with selections from secondary texts. These readings will provide a more detailed analysis of important concepts and themes for that week, while showcasing work from today's most influential historians.

Commented [AS3]: Issues related to "race and racism" are a major theme of the readings for this course, including the textbook (CC #1)

In addition to the *Yawp*, students are required to purchase the following book: Kristin Kobes Du Mez, *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured A Nation* (New York, 2020). Du Mez's book will serve as the main basis for the research paper.

Please note that as a courtesy to your time, readings for this course are capped at no more than 100 pages a week. In return, I expect you complete all assigned readings by Wednesday of each class. Spend no less than 2 hours and no more than 4 hours on reading.

EVALUATION

- **Attendance and Participation (15%).** A significant portion of your grade will come from attending class and doing the assignments. You will receive full credit for a) showing up to class and b) turning in all "deliverables" by the deadline. Short assignments are graded on a complete/incomplete basis (C/I). Failure to turn in the assignment will result in a penalty of 2 points; excellent submissions graded (graded check plus) will result in a bonus of 1 pt. Note that you are allowed up to three unexcused absences for the entire semester.
- **Flashpoints (15%).** Flashpoints are historical simulations of key turning points in US history and constitute a major component of this class. Students will compete in teams to persuade the "voters" (i.e. their peers) to take their position over a controversial issue. Please see the handout on Canvas for more details.
- **Side Quest (10%).** Together with your teammates, you will embark on a "quest" of your own choosing. The quest will stretch your research, teamwork, creativity and writing skills. Examples include attending and critiquing a film or play; experimenting

Commented [AS4]: Students submit a total of four short essays or guided response papers, where they have to answer a set of questions. I will modify each of these assignments so that students will have to answer at least one question which requires the application of "gospel and appropriate disciplinary frameworks" (CC #1)

Commented [AS5]: Flashpoints provide a prime opportunity for students to "model Christlike dialogue... when confronting challenging or sensitive issues" (CC #3)

with a historical recipe; playing through and analyzing a historical board game. Please see the handout on Canvas for more details.

- **Research Paper (30%).** You will write an original research paper consisting of 8-10 pages. The paper will examine how the Westmont community responded to racial activism during the Civil Rights era using sources from the college archive. The paper will analyze how Christian commitments informed the community's response to various issues, such as Barry Goldwater's Republican nomination and Freedom Summer. The research paper will be written and evaluated in parts. It will consist of a book review (worth 5%), a research essay (worth 10%) and the finished product (worth 15%). Please see the handout on Canvas for more details.
- **Exams (30%).** There will be two midterms and one final for this class. The format for each exam is identical. The first part will consist of identifications (IDs). Students will be presented with a short list of concepts, or milestones or phrases which they must contextualize and explain in 3-4 sentences. The second part consists of an essay response. Students will have the benefit of accessing both the IDs and essay questions several days in advance of the exam. On exam day, both the IDs and essay question(s) will be randomly chosen from the preselected list.

Commented [AS6]: I have completely redesigned the research paper component to bring it in alignment with CC#1.

BONUSES, PENALTIES AND EXTRA CREDIT

If you would like feedback on your papers, turn them to me no more than one week before they are due. I will give comments.

GRADING INFORMATION

A = 95-100%	A- = 90-94%	B+ = 85 to 89%	B = 80 to 84%
B- = 75 to 79%	C+ = 70 to 74%	C = 65 to 69%	C- = 60 to 64%
D- = 55 to 59%	D = 50 to 54%	D- = 45 to 49%	F = 44% or below

- Participation (15%)
- Group Work (25%)
- Essay (30%)
- Exams (30%)

POLICIES

Office Hours and Contact Information. I hold weekly office hours on Thursday afternoons from 2 to 4 PM at Deane Hall 207. To prevent scheduling conflicts with others, please sign up using this link: <https://calendly.com/deane207/ushistory>. You can show up without an appointment, but I will give priority to students who have already signed up to meet with me. If Thursday afternoons do not work for you, email me directly at asu@westmont.edu to find an alternative time. For all email communication, please give me at least 24 hours to respond.

Accommodations. Students who have been diagnosed with a condition that meets the criteria of a disability are strongly encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) as early as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations for this course. Formal accommodations will only be granted for students whose disabilities have been verified by ODS. These accommodations may be necessary to ensure your full participation and the successful completion of this course. Please contact the website for more information: <http://www.westmont.edu/offices/disability/>

Library Support. Westmont librarians are available to help you. You can go to the Research Help Desk in the library for help with research for your assignments. You can also set up an appointment with history department liaison, Dr. Jana Mullen (jmayfield@westmont.edu). For online resources, it is recommended that students start with the library's research guides: <http://libguides.westmont.edu/history>

Emergency. If an emergency occurs during instruction, it is important to be familiar with the practices in place for the classroom. Please review the document at <https://integready.app.box.com/AnticipatingInClass> and direct any questions or concerns to the Office of Institutional Resilience.

Academic Integrity. Dishonesty of any kind may result in loss of credit for the work involved and the filing of a report with the Provost's Office. Major or repeated infractions may result in dismissal from the course with a grade of F. Please familiarize yourself with the College's plagiarism policy, found at: <https://www.westmont.edu/sites/default/files/AcademicIntegrityPolicy-FinalwithOnlineSharing.pdf>

Assignment deadlines. I expect all assignments to be turned in punctually. Overdue assignments graded on a check/fail basis will be immediately failed. For the essay assignment, 10% of your final score (worth 3% of your overall grade) will be deducted for every 24-hour elapsed after the deadline. I am happy to grant extensions if students provide legitimate reasons and adequate notice.

Electronics. The use of laptops is permitted for taking notes only. Mobile phones are not allowed unless instructed. Please recognize that inappropriate usage of electronics—such as checking emails, shopping, monitoring sports scores, and so on—not only affects your ability to focus during class, but it distracts your neighbors too.

Honor and Respect in the Classroom. Westmont's Community Life Statement calls us to treat each other according to two commands from Jesus: "Love one another as I have loved you," and "Love your neighbor as yourself." Further, our Diversity Matters document indicates that as we abide by these commandments, we learn to honor and respect one another. In this class, we will embody these commitments as we interact with one another and with the class material. If you experience or witness something that does not honor these commitments, please talk with the instructor as soon as possible. You may also find it helpful to access the College's policy on Bias, Harassment, and Discrimination.

Last updated Jan 5, 2023.

SCHEDULE

Note: Topics may change with adequate notice. Exams in **bold**. Flashpoints in *italics*.

	Date	Topic	Reading	Deliverable
1	1/9 1/11 1/13	Introduction The US in 1876 The Gilded Age	Yawp 16; King letter Start Bellamy, <i>Looking Backward</i>	Start Bellamy essay
2	1/16 1/18 1/20	MLK Day—No Class The Labor Question Seminar: Looking Backward	Yawp 18 Finish Bellamy, <i>Looking Backward</i>	Bellamy essay due on 1/19
3	1/23 1/25 1/27	The New South Reconstructing the West <i>Sherman Act</i>	Yawp 17 Start Du Bois, Rauschenbusch	
4	1/30 2/1 2/3	American Empire (I) American Empire (II) <i>The Election of 1900</i>	Yawp 19	
5	2/6 2/8 2/10	The Progressive Era (I) The Progressive Era (II) Seminar: The Social Gospel	Yawp 20 Finish Du Bois, Rauschenbusch	Essay on Atlanta riot due 2/10
6	2/13 2/15 2/17	World War I <i>Wilson and the League of Nations</i> MIDTERM I	Yawp 21 Start <i>Jesus and John Wayne</i>	Exam
7	2/20 2/22 2/24	PRESIDENTS' HOLIDAY – NO CLASS The New Era <i>The Scopes Trial</i>	Yawp 22 Sutton, <i>American Apocalypse</i> 5	Start Westmont essay
8	2/27 3/1 3/3	Hoover and the Great Depression FDR and the New Deal Seminar: Exam Review	Yawp 23 Cohen, <i>Making a New Deal</i> 6	
9	3/6 3/8 3/10	World War II (I) World War II (II) <i>Hiroshima and Nagasaki</i>	Yawp 24 Blankenship, <i>Christianity 4</i> , <i>Dower, War Without Mercy</i>	Westmont essay due on 3/10
	3/13 3/15 3/17	SPRING RECESS	Finish <i>Jesus and John Wayne</i>	
10	3/20 3/22 3/24	The Cold War (I) The Cold War (II) Seminar: Jesus and John Wayne	Yawp 25 Dudziak, <i>Cold War Civil Rights</i> 3	Book review due on 3/23
11	3/27 3/29 3/31	The Affluent Society <i>The Federal Interstate Highway Act</i> MIDTERM II	Yawp 26 Marsh, <i>Beloved Community</i>	Exam
12	4/3 4/5	The Civil Rights Era <i>SNCC and Black Power</i>	Yawp 27	

Commented [MOU7]: I will include Chapter 7 of Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and the Social Gospel* and have students interpret the text alongside Du Bois's *Souls of Black Folk*.

Commented [MOU8]: I have replaced the Dower reading with a chapter from Anne Blankenship, *Christianity, Social Justice and Japanese American Incarceration During World War II* (2016).

Commented [MOU9]: I have included Marsh's opening introduction from *The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice* to help students reflect about how the Christian faith informs social activism.

	4/7	EASTER RECESS—NO CLASS	Marsh, <i>God's Long Summer</i> 5	
13	4/10 4/12 4/14	EASTER RECESS—NO CLASS The Unraveling <i>Equal Rights Amendment</i>	Yawp 28	Research essay due on 4/14
14	4/17 4/19 4/20	Reagan and the New Right The Recent Past Writing Workshop (Attendance Optional)	Yawp 29	Side quests due 4/20
	4/24 4/26 4/28	Wrap-Up <i>Climate Emergency Act of 2021</i> STUDY DAY	Yawp 30	Research paper due on 4/28
16	5/4	FINAL EXAM (9-10 AM)		Exam