

Bergen Community College
School of Arts, Humanities, & Wellness
Department of History & Geography

Course Syllabus

HIS144-American Issues and Problems

Basic Information about Course and Instructor

Semester and year: Course and Section Number: Meeting Times and Locations: Instructor: Office Location: Phone: Departmental Secretary: [optional] Office Hours: Email Address:
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Course Description

This course is a study in a historical context of selected political, social, economic, and diplomatic issues and problems facing the United States in the contemporary world. The class also serves as an introduction to basic historical methodology and historiography. Students will acquire a solid understanding of historical facts and interpretation while gaining a sense of the broad scope of history as a discipline.

3-credits

Student Learning Objectives:

As a result of meeting the requirements in this course, students will be able to;

1. Identify and analyze the important political, economic, social, intellectual, diplomatic and religious issues and problems facing the United States in the contemporary world.
2. Summarize and interpret the continuity and change that occurs in contemporary American History.
3. Demonstrate the ability to develop a thesis and support it with historical evidence both in writing and orally.
4. Demonstrate basic research skills by locating and using source materials.
5. Summarize, paraphrase, and quote historical information in properly cited written analyses
6. Demonstrate the ability to state and support their own interpretation of historical issues concisely, coherently, and logically.

Course Texts

The required text for this course is Mindy Stomblor and Amanda M. Jungels, *Focus on Social Problems* 2nd Edition, Oxford University Press.

Assessment and Grading

In pursuit of the foregoing goals, the course is based on the reading and discussion of historical writings for both primary and secondary sources; the techniques of historical research and writing are reviewed, and students are expected to use subject specific resources in their preparation for active participation in class and for writing assignments. Students are required to do a substantial amount of expository and critical writing in response to the material presented in the course and by conducting outside research.

The course requires students to complete a variety of critical thinking and writing assignments. These assignments may include class discussions and debates requiring the application of critical thinking skills, short in-class essays, out-of-class writing projects (journals, research papers, argument-analysis papers, book reviews, etc.), tests and examinations containing essay components, and so forth. Instructors will respond to and comment on students' writing in detail.

Grading Policy

A student's final grade for the course is based primarily on his or her performance on the required work for the course (writing assignments, examinations, class presentations, etc.) and on his or her overall mastery of the material covered in the course. A student's class participation may also be evaluated, and the grade thereon may be used as a factor in determining the student's final grade for the course; but a class participation grade will count for no more than fifteen percent (15%) of the final grade. Examinations can consist of objective questions such as multiple choice and short answers, but an essay of some form should also be evaluated as part of the test. A sample grade distribution is as follows:

1 st Mid-Term Exam	20%
2 nd Mid-Term Exam	20%
Final-Exam (non-comprehensive)	20%
Writing/Research Assignments	30%
Participation/Collegiality	10%

Total	100%
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BCC Attendance Policy:

All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.

History and Geography Departmental Attendance Policy:

It is imperative that students attend class on a daily basis in order to secure the knowledge necessary to succeed in the course. Coming to class on time and staying for the entire class period is expected. Excessive absences will have a detrimental effect on your performance in this course. Attendance will be taken at each class session. It is expected that class will be conducted such that students will benefit in their written work by the lectures and class discussion. If students occasionally arrive late, they should be encouraged to enter quietly, not disturbing the class. If students miss class, they should be encouraged to use the course calendar to stay abreast of material. It is probably a good idea for students to find study partners and to exchange telephone numbers. Make-ups for examinations should be allowed by the instructor if, in the instructor's judgment, the student has presented a good excuse for missing the work. Instructors may penalize work which is late; however, the instructor's policies for make-ups and late work must be clearly specified on the student guide. Collegiality is expected at all times during the course.

Academic Dishonesty (From BCC Handbook):

Bergen Community College is committed to academic integrity—the honest, fair, and continuing pursuit of knowledge, free from fraud and deception. Students are responsible for their own work. Faculty and academic support services staff will take appropriate measures to discourage academic dishonesty. The college recognizes the following general categories of violations of academic integrity whenever a student does one of more of the following: uses unauthorized assistance in any academic work, copies from another student’s exam, gives unauthorized assistance to other students, fabricates data in support of an academic assignment, inappropriately or unethically uses technical means to gain academic advantage, and commits plagiarism.

Student and Faculty Support Services

The Henry and Edith Cerullo Learning Assistance Center	Room L-125 of Pitkin Building	Includes the Tutoring Center, English Language Resource Center, and Writing Center. 201-4477489
The Distance Learning Office – for any problems you may have accessing your online courses		201-612-5581 psimms@bergen.edu

The Tutorial Center	Room S-118 of Pitkin Building	201-447-7908
The English Language Resource Center	Room 126 in Ender Hall	For students whose native language is not English.
The Writing Center	Room L-125 of Pitkin Building	201-447-7136
The Online Writing Lab (OWL)		www.bergen.edu/owl This website will help students with all aspects of the writing process in every discipline.
The Office of Specialized Services (for Students with Disabilities)	L-115 of Pitkin Building	Students with documented disabilities who require accommodations by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) can request support services from the Office of Specialized Services. www.bergen.edu/pages/5175
The Sidney Silverman Library	2 nd Level of Pitkin Building	

Sample Format for Course Outline and Calendar

Note to Students: **The following Course Outline and Calendar is tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.**

Date	Lecture Topic	Learning Objectives	Assignments/Events
	Introduction: Course Information, History and Social Problems		
	Wealth and Income Inequality		
	Poverty		
	Racial and Ethnic Inequality		
	Gender Inequality		

	Social Problems Related to Sexuality		
	Exam I		
	Social Problems Related to Media		
	Social Problems Related to Education		
	Social Problems Related to Families		
	Social Problems Related to Health and Healthcare System		
	Exam 2		
	Social Problems Related to Crime and Criminal Justice System		
	Social Problems Related to Economy and Work		
	Social Problems Related to Environment and Food System		
	Strategies for Social Change		
	Writing/Research Workshop		
	3rd and Final Exam		