

Course Syllabus: History 5310: W01: America: 1920-1945

Fall 2016/Dr. Mark Saad Saka/Sul Ross State University

Course Objectives

The objective of this course is to present a history of the epical years in American history that covers the “Roaring 1920s”, the Great Depression and the Second World War. I use the term “epical years in that this quarter-of-a century shaped American history in ways modern Americans no longer grasp or conceptualize.

Required Readings

Frederick Lewis Allen, *Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the 1920s*. Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2010. ISBN # 978-006095653

David M. Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. Oxford University Press, 1999. ISBN # 978-0-19-514403-1

One of the Following Books is Required

Philip K. Dick, *The Man in the High Castle*, Mariner Books, 2012. ISBN # 978-0547572482

Sinclair Lewis, *It Can't Happen Here*, Signet Classics, 978-0451465641

Course Requirements

The requirements for this course include the following:

1. Regular contact through Sul ross email. This is a distance education (web based course) and communication with me is important. You need to turn your written assignments in to me through your Sul Ross account as an attached email. (Please do not ask me to use your hotmail, yahoo, gmail, twitter etc. accounts). I do not use Blackboard extensively so just send me your assignments and correspondence through your Sully account. If you have an issue relating to time constraints or medical issues etc, please tell me. It is often frustrating when someone contacts me the week before the end of the semester and tells me that they haven't contacted me for x amount of weeks or months because of an issue and then request an incomplete.
2. Read the assigned books and write reviews of the chapters and send the reviews to me on the appointed days. Each week, you will be required to read a section of one the assigned readings and send in a brief synopsis of the reading (two to three pages). The dates for the assignment are listed below in the course outline.
3. You will also be required to write a book review over one of the two “alternative histories”, *The Man in the High Castle* or *It Can't Happen Here*. We often think history is linear and inevitable. It is not. History often has pivotal turning points that could take us one direction or the other. These books offer visions of histories that could have been quite disastrous to America (and the world's) history and future. Sinclair Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here* is a classic novel on the rise of fascism in America in the 1930s and Philip Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* has become a classic, in part because of Amazon Prime's creation of a mini-series based on the book, of what if

the Nazi-Japanese Axis powers had won the Second World War? The book review should be five to six pages and answer the question “Is History Inevitable?” and “What If”?

4. A fifteen-page research paper on a topic that covers a critical turning point in the years 1920-1945. What is a critical turning point? October 1929 (stock market crash), December 7, 1941 (Pearl Harbor), June 1942 (the Battle of Midway), June 6, 1944 (D-Day), the New deal (various dates), etc. I must approve our topic but I want you to pick a subject that you are interested in, I want you to enjoy researching and writing your topic.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The graduating student in history will be able to:

1. Develop an informed, critical, and articulated approach to the study of history.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of historical events, movements, major turning points, and personalities of the past.
3. Demonstrate an ability to identify and relate the role that historical interpretation plays in assessments of the past.
4. Write effectively, logically, and persuasively about topics in history.

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) will be measured by the administration of exams as well as a book review and oral history project.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT:

In order to receive accommodations on exams or assignments, proper documentation must first be provided to the Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services, Contact Mary Schwartze (Office: Ferguson Hall 112) to set up an accommodations meeting, or call (432) 837-8203. Students must then present this documentation to the instructor as soon as possible so that accommodations may be arranged.

DIS TANCE EDUCATION COURSE STATEMENT

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university’s academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students’ identities and to protect students’ information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Course Outline

August 29-review over the book *Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the 1920s* due (five pages).

September 5-chapters one and two of Kennedy due

September 12-chapters three and four of Kennedy due

September 19-chapters five and six of Kennedy due

September 26-chapters seven and eight of Kennedy due

October 3-chapters nine and ten of Kennedy due

October 10-chapters eleven and twelve of Kennedy due

October 17-chapters thirteen and fourteen of Kennedy due

October 24-chapters fifteen and sixteen of Kennedy due

October 31-chapters seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen of Kennedy due

November 7-chapters twenty, twenty one, and twenty two of Kennedy due

November 14-book review due for either Sinclair Lewis or Philip Dick due.

December 5—research papers due (5:00 p.m.)