Overview and Course Goals:
This survey of U.S. history since 1877 has three main goals:
1. to help you understand major themes and transformations in U.S. history and fulfill the General Education American Institutions—U.S. History requirement.
2. to help you learn to think like a historian and appreciate how historical thinking offers insights that you can use in other classes and in life after college.
3. to help you develop skills of critical reading, discussion, and writing. You will analyze challenging documents, evaluate opposing points of view, develop your own interpretations, and express ideas in clear prose. No matter what you do after college, these skills of analysis and expression will prove useful.

As historians, we cannot hope to study every aspect of post-1877 U.S. history in just ten weeks. To help make sense of our nation and its past, we will focus on one big question. That main question is:

How well has government in the United States promoted the good life and a good society?

We will answer this question while paying particular attention to the history of diversity in the United States. Understanding historical debates about the role of government requires that we also understand the history of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and social class. We will also explore how our answer to this main question might change depending on the time periods we study. We will explore how government could play different roles in different times.

Student Learning Outcomes and Skills:
• Identify and explain the evolving role of government in a diverse U.S. society. Explain how and why ideas and practices surrounding government have changed over time. Explain how Americans’ diverse lived experiences, especially differences relating to race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and social class, have influenced and been influenced by the U.S. federal government.

• Read and interpret both primary sources (historical documents) and secondary sources (scholarship written by historians). Demonstrate ability to draw evidence from both types of sources and build generalizations from different forms of evidence.
• Construct and defend original arguments with clear and persuasive writing, effective public speaking and listening, and careful use of evidence.

Required Readings, Viewing, and Print Outs
• Readings posted on Moodle.
• Note: For satisfactory class participation, you must bring your own paper copy of each reading to the relevant class sessions. You will also need to bring two paper copies of each class preparation assignment.

Notes on Technology:
• You will need to download and view a few large video files from Moodle. Please plan ahead to ensure that you have access to these files. JFK Library is a good location for high-speed downloading. Many other class sessions require online video streaming. See the class schedule for details.
• To promote classroom cohesiveness and interaction, you need to turn off all laptops, tablets, cell phones, and other electronic devices and store them out of sight during class. Students with documented needs may request an exception.
Extra Credit: Before Session 20, bring to class a print-out of a primary source that shows someone protesting against a policy of the U.S. government. Your source could be a speech, a photograph, a movie poster, a work of art, song lyrics, and so on. Also write a polished paragraph (150 words, typed, double-spaced) explaining the government policy or action that the protesters wanted to change. If done well, this activity can add a full percentage point to your overall Class Prep grade.

Disabilities: As your professor, I want all students to succeed in this class. If you have a disability or any other issue that affects your learning, please let me know at any time. Also take note of the resources available through the Office for Students with Disabilities (Student Affairs Building Room 115, 323-343-3140). If you have a verified accommodations form, please show it to me by Week Two of the course.

Change: I may make reasonable changes to the syllabus when needed.

Class Participation: We will spend a substantial part of class time engaged in some activity other than lecture. Your participation grade will reflect both your attendance and your participation in activities. What is good class participation? Good class participation comes in many forms. It does not mean talking as often as possible in class. Here are different ways that you can achieve good class participation:

-Read carefully before class. Come to class with paper copies of the readings and good reading notes. Use the core class question on page 1 of the syllabus to guide your note-taking on the readings. Be prepared to point to specific page references in class. This is one of the most important steps you can take for good class participation.

-Help members of your small group. Receive help with enthusiasm.

-Raise your hand often and share ideas on a regular basis.

-Ask questions, no matter how broad or small.

-Get to know your classmates. Start a casual conversation while waiting for class to start, or right after class ends.

-Frame your comments in response to what classmates have said. If a classmate says something that strikes you as smart, funny, or provocative, let us know.

-Be a leader. Be aware of what the class needs at any given moment to keep our energy and focus on track. That could mean sharing a question, a reading passage, a joke, etc. It could mean keeping a small group on task. It could mean letting a constructive silence continue.

-Be aware if you are speaking too much. For students with a tendency to speak all the time, good class participation can mean stepping back and seeing what you and others can learn by listening to classmates for a while.

-Pay attention to emotions—yours and others. An honest examination of history requires us to explore the role of racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice in both the past and the present. Discussing these topics can sometimes be disturbing or upsetting, but this discomfort is often an essential part of the learning process. Hopefully, you will find yourself provoked, intrigued, at times amused, but above all enlightened during this class. You can help in this effort by respecting the views of your classmates and by being eager to listen to what classmates and historical sources have to say.

-Visit my office hours. This also counts as class participation.

-Attend class. This is big. If you have responsibilities outside your academic studies, make sure that you can prioritize attending class.

We will use a “+/-” system: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (60-66), F (0-59). Please note that you will receive a failing grade for the course if you miss five or more class sessions or fail to submit either paper. If you don’t understand the basis of the grade you received or if you disagree with the assessment, speak to me—but only after letting twenty-four hours pass for you to absorb and reflect on the evaluation. Please act within two weeks of the return of the assignment.

Special Note: Sometimes work, health, or family can make it hard to attend class or meet deadlines. If you see a problem approaching, please stop by office hours or send me an email to give me a heads up. When an unexpected problem arises, please let me know as soon as possible. If a real hardship arises and you let me know what’s going on at an early stage, I will do my best to work with you and help you do well in the class.

Class Preparation (Preps): On Moodle, you will find 19 short “class preparation” assignments or “preps,” usually based on the daily reading or viewing material. Preps will receive a grade between 0 and 10. In calculating your Class Prep grade (40% of the course), I will drop your lowest two scores and will calculate your grade based on your best 17 preps. If you submit all 19 preps, you will receive an extra “10/10” prep score added to your overall prep grade.

Printing Your Preps: You need to arrive in class with TWO COPIES of your prep work—one to submit and one to use in class. You can type or hand write preps. If handwritten, you need to photocopy your work. If typed, print two copies.

Late Preps: Except for documented family or health emergencies and the Free Lates, no late preps will be accepted.

Free Lates: You may submit two preps up to one week late with no penalty. Write “Free Late” at the top of your work when using one of your two Free Lates.

Meeting with the Professor: Before the end of Tuesday, 2 February, your group needs to visit my office, which is just next to the classroom. Bring your notes with you. We will have sign-ups in class to schedule meeting times.

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Advice on Taking Notes in Class

• Start each day with the topic and the day’s date.
• Pay special attention to my thesis (i.e. my main point), which I’ll present at the start of each lecture. Mark or flag this thesis so you can find it easily later.
• Create visual variety in your notes. Find a way to visually highlight big ideas and generalizations, as opposed to smaller supporting examples. Create a system to mark these differences and use it consistently.
• You don’t need to copy all the details. Focus on the big ideas and on the examples that really illustrate those big ideas.
• Don’t simply write nouns. Nouns alone do not convey big ideas. Verbs are very important. Pay particular attention to verbs that show cause and effect relationship. Examples: caused, provoked, inspired, created, led to, prevented, transformed, changed, and so on.
• A little doodling is ok and might actually help prevent daydreaming. But don’t get carried away. Too much doodling becomes daydreaming.
• Remember that your classmates have lots of insight to share. Don’t limit your notes to what I say or show on the computer projector. I’ve designed this class so that many of the big ideas and examples emerge through class discussion and class activities. Listen to you classmates and write down in your notes their ideas and examples, especially those that help answer our main class question.

Essays:
Your grades on the essays will be based on three related criteria:
1. development of an argument that answers your essay’s question with clarity, substance, and creativity (interpretation);
2. use of the relevant class material (evidence); and
3. expression of ideas in a clear, concise, engaging prose (writing).

Grading rubric on essays:
A: excellent. Outstanding in all three areas.
B: good. Strong in all three areas, or strengths in one offset by weakness in another.
C: average. Adequate in one or more areas, offset by weakness in others.
D: poor. Problems in all three areas, or lack of engagement with the assignment.
F: unacceptable. Serious flaws in all three areas, or lack of engagement.

Late Policy on Essays: Late essays during the quarter will be penalized 2% of their value for each day late, stopping at 10% per week late. Email your essay as soon as it’s done to reduce the late penalty and then bring a paper copy to our next class. Late final essays will be penalized 4% of their value for each day late. Final essays cannot be submitted more than four days after the deadline.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism refers to the use of another author’s words or ideas without acknowledgement of this use. This includes copying from texts or webpages as well as submitting work done by somebody else. Other forms of plagiarism include altering a few words or the sentence structure of someone else’s writing and presenting it as your own writing (that is, without quotation marks or footnotes). Violators will receive at minimum a zero on the assignment and will be reported to University authorities. Please also read the following statement about www.turnitin.com, which comes from the CSU General Counsel and will apply to this class:

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. You may submit your papers in such a way that no identifying information about you is included. Another option is that you may request, in writing, that your papers not be submitted to Turnitin.com. However, if you choose this option you will be required to provide documentation to substantiate that the papers are your original work and do not include any plagiarized material.

HOW TO READ AND INTERPRET PRIMARY SOURCES

Many of the readings that you will do in this class come in the form of what historians call primary sources. As a general, rule, primary sources are documents created during the time period under study. Examples of primary sources include diaries, letters, paintings, newspaper and magazine articles, and novels, so long as they were created during the time period under study. Oral history interviews and testimonies from first-hand participants, even if created years after the event in question, are also primary sources. Primary sources can be fun to read and analyze, because they give us access to the words, ideas, and emotions of people living in a strange world (the past). However, primary sources, because of their strangeness, can take a long time to read. To do well in this class, you should budget plenty of time to absorb and think about our primary-source readings. To improve your note-taking and prepare for class discussions and essays, use these questions:

1. Context: What kind of person was the author of this source? Who was the original intended audience for this source? How did the source reach its audience (e.g. via newspaper, public speech, secret government telegram, etc.)?

2. Motives: What were the author’s possible motives in creating this source? Think of both short-term and long-term motives. What details in the source provide clues to the author’s motives? How might the author’s motives have affected what the author chose to include or leave out of the document?

3. Argument: What was the main idea that the author tried to convey? Imagine that the source has a thesis just like a student essay would. In your notes or marginalia, summarize each source’s argument, putting it in your own words (i.e. paraphrasing).
4. Assumptions/Worldview: What assumptions did the author make? Did the author make assumptions about groups of people or about how one group relates to another group? How would you describe the author’s overall outlook on the world (optimistic, pessimistic, nationalistic, racist, anti-racist, religious, etc.)? What specific passages or word choices provide evidence of these assumptions and views? Remember, sources can convey ideas and assumptions that the author did not intend to reveal.

Historians define primary sources in contrast to secondary sources, which are usually articles and books by scholars or other authors written years after the events described. We’ll be reading some of these too, so that we can learn to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in scholars’ interpretations of the past. Many of the same tactics used to analyze primary sources also apply to scholarly secondary sources.

BRIEF WRITING GUIDE

For my full writing guide, see my faculty web page: www.calstatela.edu/faculty/cendy

Tip 1. Write with a concise introduction and thesis statement. Start the essay with a half-page intro. The intro needs to include a thesis statement that clearly answers the assigned question. Avoid details and evidence in the introduction, but let readers know the basic reasoning behind your thesis.

Tip 2. Topic sentence arguments (TSA’s) are crucial to good argumentative essays, but they rarely emerge in first drafts. A topic sentence is the first sentence of a paragraph in the body of an essay. Each topic sentence should have a mini-thesis statement (or TSA) that conveys the main argument of that paragraph. When you start body paragraphs with a clear and interesting TSA, you can show to your readers (and yourself) that you know the purpose of that paragraph. Most first drafts have weak TSA’s, or they bury the TSA idea at the end of the paragraph. The best time to work on TSA’s is after you complete your first draft. At that point, you know exactly what evidence and ideas each paragraph conveys, and you can thus better summarize the main argument of that paragraph in the opening TSA.

Tip 3. Write with clear paragraphs. In the body of your essay, a paragraph should contain just one basic idea or point. Paragraphs should hardly ever be more than 1/2 or 2/3 of a page (typed, double-spaced). If a draft paragraph grows longer, break it in pieces and give each new paragraph a good TSA.

Tip 4. Use lots of short quotations, and provide adequate context for each one. Brief context and analysis makes your evidence meaningful. Explain who wrote or said the words. When useful, convey how that person’s position in society shapes the meaning of the quotation.

Tip 5. Write in the active voice. The active voice stands in contrast to the passive voice. Passive voice hides key information from your readers. Your audience cannot tell who took the action (or held the viewpoint) that your sentence describes. Historians care deeply about cause and effect, and active-voice sentences do a better job than the passive voice in conveying causality.

ACTIVE: Truman’s White House accused the movement of being communist.
PASSIVE VOICE: The movement was accused of being communist.

Tip 6. Save time to revise your drafts. Good writing takes time.

Tip 7. Seek advice and ask questions. I am very happy to work with you individually to improve your writing skills. Please visit office hours to talk more. If you cannot make my office hours, I am very happy to schedule another time to meet.

A great online resource comes from the Writing Center at the University of North Carolina. Visit the website below and you can find “handouts” offering more detail on both grammar issues (e.g. run-ons, passive-voice, quotation set-ups) and “big picture” issues (e.g. thesis statements, procrastination).

http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/

You can also receive free writing tutoring from the University Writing Center, located in JFK Library, Palmer Wing, room 1039A. Stop by, call (323-343-5350), or visit their website:

http://www.calstatela.edu/centers/write_cn/

But remember to come to me as well. I am here to help you improve your writing.
### CLASS SCHEDULE: Bring print-outs of all readings and two copies of all class prep assignments. Check Moodle for full assignment instructions.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session # &amp; Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Viewing</th>
<th>Assignment Highlights</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Jan 5</td>
<td>Introduction: What Am I Doing Here? Can I Pass the Class?</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part 1: Gilded Age and Laissez Faire Era (1870s-early 1900s)</strong></td>
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<td>2. Jan 7</td>
<td>Big Businesses and Government Fight the Working Class</td>
<td>-3 pages</td>
<td>-Prep 1 worksheets</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part 2: Progressivism (1890s-1919)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Jan 14 (online only; no class meeting this day)</td>
<td>Keep Your Culture or Fit In: Immigration and “Americanization” (1880-1910s)</td>
<td>-Yezierska, pp. 7-44</td>
<td>-Prep 3 online activity -Prep 4 paragraph</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Jan 19</td>
<td>Progressivism: Sex, Drugs, Regulation, and Racism, (1890s-1919)</td>
<td>-Cohen article, 24 pp.</td>
<td>-Prep 5 worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part 3: The Twenties (1920-1929)</strong></td>
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<td>7. Jan 26</td>
<td>Decline of Progressivism: Blaming Immigrants and Radicals</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-ESSAY DUE! -submit in paper and via Moodle</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part 4: Great Depression and the New Deal (1929-1940)</strong></td>
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<td>9. Feb 2</td>
<td>The Great Depression: Unions, Deportation, and Growing Pressure on the U.S. Government</td>
<td>-5 pages</td>
<td>-Prep 8 worksheet -Last day to visit professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Feb 4</td>
<td>The New Deal’s Expanding Government: Race, Manhood, and Megawatts</td>
<td>-3 pages</td>
<td>-Prep 9 worksheet poster prints</td>
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- **Part 5: Building the Middle-Class Security State (1940s to early 1960s)**

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<tr>
<td>11. Feb 9</td>
<td>World War II: Censorship, Race, and Womanhood (1941-1945)</td>
<td>-Roeder article, 23 pp.</td>
<td>-Prep 10 worksheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Feb 11</td>
<td>The Cold War and the National Security State: Commies and Pod People (late 1940s-1950s)</td>
<td>-1 page -videos (~30 minutes)</td>
<td>-Prep 11 paragraph</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part 6: Outsiders Take Center Stage (1960s-Early 1970s)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Feb 23</td>
<td>Liberalism’s Peak: The War on Poverty (mid 1960s)</td>
<td>-3 pages</td>
<td>-Prep 14 worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Feb 25</td>
<td>Liberalism Challenged from the Left: Black Power, the Chicano Movement, and Women’s Liberation (1960s-mid 1970s)</td>
<td>-3 pages</td>
<td>-Prep 15 worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part 7: Conservatism (mid 1970s and on)</strong></td>
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<td>17. Mar 1</td>
<td>The Rise of Cultural Conservatism and “Family Values” (1970s and on)</td>
<td>-3 pages</td>
<td>-Prep 16 paragraph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Mar 8</td>
<td>“Government is the Problem”: Race, Class, &amp; Conservative Political Solutions</td>
<td>-2 pages</td>
<td>-Prep 18 worksheet</td>
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- **Preparation for the Final Essay**

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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. Mar 10</td>
<td>What did I learn? How can I write a great essay?</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-Prep 19 worksheet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FINALS WEEK:** Final essay due via Moodle by 5:00 pm on Thursday, March 17.