Dr. Francis Ryan  
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Office: Comenius 301  
Office Hours: Tuesday 10-12, Thursday 10-12, and by appointment  
Class Meets Monday 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Course Overview:
This course is designed to provide a general introduction and overview of the significant events that shaped United States history since the end of the Civil War into the present time. Through readings, class discussions, lectures and films, the course will highlight such questions and themes as the period of Reconstruction, the settling of the Western states, the rise of cities and industry, Progressivism, the 1920s and the New Deal periods, the impact of the First and Second World Wars, and the emergence of mass consumer society.

Required Texts:

Michael Gold, Jews Without Money. Carroll & Graf, 1930  
F. Scott Fitzgerald, “Bernice Bobs Her Hair,” from Tales of the Jazz Age. Photocopy on hold in reserves at Reeves Library.

Course Requirements:

Participation/Preparation: 15%  
Each student is expected to read all assigned materials closely and critically, and to come to class prepared to discuss the readings thoughtfully. Each week, students will be provided with “Focus Questions.” It is expected that students will be able to respond to these questions in depth; however, it is also hoped that you will be able to go beyond these questions and be able to make connections to course material and related readings and presentations. The class may have periodic unannounced quizzes to test student knowledge, and these will be included as part of the overall participation grade. It is imperative that each student be present and on time so that they may contribute to discussions. Excessive absences and/or lateness will necessarily affect your final grade. If you anticipate that you will be late or absent, please inform me via email or telephone. While such notification will be appreciated and understood as courtesy, it will not be viewed as excusing the absence or lateness. Cases of absence based on medical reasons will be excused if a doctor’s note is provided.
Please also observe common courtesy in class regarding use of cell phones and eating in class.

**Mid-term exams: 15% each**
Students will take two in-class examinations based on assigned readings, lectures, films and discussions, the first on October 6, and another on November 10. The time allotted to take these in-class exams will be 70 minutes.

**2 short papers: 15% each**
Students will write two essays (4 pages each) analyzing specific themes from the assigned primary readings. Further details will follow. Out of justice to the other students in this class, all late papers will be downgraded one letter grade for each day of lateness. An exception to this would be serious illness verified by a physician. Please also note that cases of blatant plagiarism will result in an “F” grade for the semester.

**Final In-Class Examination: 25%**
This final exam, to be scheduled by the Registrar during finals week, will focus primarily on topics raised in class since the previous mid-term exam. However, students can expect to address a final essay question that draws on the major cumulative themes raised in this class.

Note: All of the course requirements listed above must be successfully completed to pass the course.

**Topics and Readings (tentative)**

**Week 1: Themes in United States History to 1865**
August 29: Introduction to the Class

**Week 2: Labor Day Holiday—No Class Meeting**
Sept. 5. Reading: please begin Laura Ingalls Wilder, Little House on the Prairie.

**Week 3: The Crisis of Reconstruction, 1865-1877.**

**Week 4: The Transformation of the Western United States**

**Week 5: The Development of Urban and Industrial Society**

**Week 6: Mid-term week.**
Oct. 3: **Mid-Term #1 exam in class.**

**Week 7: Fall Break**

**Week 8: The 1890s and the Spanish-American War**

**Week 9: Progressivism**

**Week 10: The Suffragist Movement in America**


**First short paper due in class Oct 31.**

**Week 11: The U.S. and World War One**
Nov. 7. Reading: The American Story, Chapter 24

**Mid-Term Exam #2 in class.**

**Week 12: The 1920s**

**Week 13: The Great Depression, Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal**

**Week 14: World War Two: The Greatest Generation and Popular Memory**
Nov. 28. Reading: To be announced

Viewing of film *Saving Private Ryan*. Location to be announced.
Week 15: *World War Two: Homefront Changes*
Dec. 5. Reading: *The American Story*, Chapter 27.

Second Short paper Due in Class, Monday, December 5.

Week 16: *Major Themes in Post-1945 America*
Dec. 12: Final Discussion on class themes.

Final Exam time and location to be announced by Registrar