

DOANE COLLEGE LINCOLN  
HIS 206: History of the U.S. 1865-1954 (3 credits)  
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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Investigation and analysis of the American national experience with emphasis on intellectual and institutional factors. This course provides the student with the significant facts and historical interpretations of the American experience 1865-1954, which will lead to an understanding of the individuals and ideas, the social and political movements, involved. The emphasis will be on America's ability to respond to social change. This course satisfies the Doane Plan history requirement.

### TEXT

McMILLEN, Neil R. A Synopsis of American History. Vol. II, 8<sup>th</sup> edition.  
Ivan R. Dee, Publisher, 1997.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completing this course the student should have acquired:

- a knowledge of the major events, personalities, and trends in the history of the United States from 1865-1954 as demonstrated in class reports and examinations
- the ability to recognize the interrelationship of past and present events (historical context)
- the ability to recognize primary and secondary sources and begin to discern and question accuracy in historical sources as demonstrated in class research and reports
- familiarity with the issues surrounding diversity in the United States, and an ability to consider the questions of values when analyzing major areas of history as demonstrated in class reports and examinations.

### COURSE OUTLINE

Class I Introduction  
The instructor will address current issues in historiography and discuss the assignment of a report, the purpose of which is to introduce the student to primary & secondary sources and accuracy and legitimacy in historical writing. As American experiences the post-industrial era, the implications of that enormous social change will be examined in light of America's historical response to past social transformation. Each lecture will call attention to differences of opinion and will consider diversity and change in historical thought. Illustrations will accompany lectures; discussion will be welcomed.  
Lecture: Reconstruction and the Gilded Age  
Southern social realities and the political policies of congressional reconstruction; the parade of politicians (from Hayes to Cleveland)  
Film: "Birth of a Nation"  
Text: Chapters 16 & 19

- Class II                    Lecture: The Social Response to Industrialization and Urbanization  
The watershed era of industrialism; the prototypes of corporate power (Vanderbilt, Rockefeller); labor organization and confrontation (Haymarket, Homestead); urban growth and immigration patterns; racism and Social Darwinism; the “opening” of the West; the Populist challenge  
Possible reports: W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington (reform or accommodation?); the legend of Crazy Horse  
Text: Chapters 17, 18 & 20
- Class III                    Lecture: Theodore Roosevelt and Manifest Destiny  
The U.S. becomes an imperial power; the Spanish-American War and the taking of the Philippines; the Cuban question and the Panama Canal; Progressive reform and the election of 1912  
Possible reports: Theodore Roosevelt as “trust buster”; the “Big Stick” policy; labor leaders and social confrontation  
Text: Chapters 21 & 22
- Class IV                    EXAM  
Possible reports: the journey of William Jennings Bryan---  
From Populist hero to fundamentalist
- Class V                    Lecture: Woodrow Wilson and World War I  
Wilson’s progressive legislation; the epochal struggle of WWI; the Creel Committee; the League of Nations treaty  
Possible reports: Wilson’s legacy; the ideas of self-determination and the vision of a “world order”  
Text: Chapter 23
- Class VI                    Lecture: Illusion and Reality in the ‘20s and ‘30s  
The dichotomy of the 1920s; reaction (the “new” Klan, Prohibition, fundamentalism) vs. modernism (flappers, film, the Model T); mass production and advertising; the Great Depression and the New Deal---conservation or radical change?  
Possible reports: Franklin Roosevelt as seen by Schlesinger, Goodwin, and others; the role of Eleanor Roosevelt as reformer  
Text: Chapters 24 & 25
- Class VII                    Lecture: World War II and Its Aftermath  
The “Good War”; industrial transformation of the U.S.; beginnings of the Cold War; legacy of WWII and the unique anxiety of the 1950s  
Possible reports: Major battles of WWII---Europe and Pacific;  
Text: Chapters 26, 27, 28 & 29
- Class VIII                    EXAM

## COURSE POLICIES

Students are responsible for the required text and any additional readings and are expected to attend all classes. Absences will affect the performance on exams, since extensive material is covered in the lectures. There will be a midterm and final, which will be identification and essay exams with some choice of questions. Grammar and spelling will be noted only if they interfere with the comprehension of the exams. In case of emergency, make-up exams may be arranged, but no tests will be repeated and all results are final. Research for an oral report will be required and presentation of the report will be considered as a contribution to class discussion. Each exam will be worth 40% of the final grade and the reports (and discussion) will be worth 20%. The Doane College academic integrity policy will be adhered to in this class. All projects and tests will represent the student's own work; any use of others' ideas or words without proper citation is plagiarism and will result in a loss of all points for an assignment or exam.

Because of the amount of information and the considerable time period covered in this course, it is not possible to include an adequately representative bibliography in this syllabus. The instructor will be providing the names of authors and "experts" throughout the term, and will be happy to suggest further sources on any topic or individual.