HISTORY 4461
THE GILDED AGE & PROGRESSIVE ERA
or
VICTORIAN AMERICA

Instructor: Dr. Kay Reeve  Office: 4102 SS Classroom Bldg.
Phone: 770-423-6143  Office Hrs: T–Th
And By Appointment

Contact Information:
Emails: For Course related contact, please use course email for contact.
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CLASS MEETINGS:  T-Th 6:30-7:45  SS 1020

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION: An examination of the expansion, industrialization, and
urbanization of the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and of the era’s cultural,
political, economic, intellectual and social issues.
NOTE: The readings assignments will be particularly numerous and long in this course. The era is
complex and cannot be appropriately studied without dedication to reading a substantial amount of
material.

TEXTS: DeSantis, The Shaping of Modern America: 1877-1920 (3rd ed.) Chapters 1-12 (or possibly 13).
Thomas J. Schlereth, Victorian America: Transformations in Everyday Life, 1876-1915

Additional Course Readings – In addition to the required readings in the texts, there will be
LOTS of required readings concerning specific topics that will be posted on D2L course site.
You will find links to access readings, PDF scans, etc. in the modules on the site. Students
should expect to need to print out many of these readings in order to facilitate in class
discussion and group activities.

OTHER NON-NEGOCIABLE REQUIREMENTS:
1) Familiarity with library databases and search procedures
2) The ability to correctly use Turabian or Chicago Manual of Style citation form.
3) Written expression & analytical abilities appropriate for an advanced (4000) level history course.

IMPORTANT DATES:
Approx. Dates of Exam: TBA
Spring Break: March 3-9 (no class)
Last Day to Drop w/out Penalty: March 12
Last Day of Class: April 26
Final Exam: May 1: 3:30 – 5:30

COURSE ORGANIZATION: The course follows a blended chronological and topical approach. Classes
will consist of lectures, discussion of assigned reading (texts and additional readings), and group and
individual in class activities focused on the readings. Students are expected to read the assigned text
material, online articles and primary materials BEFORE coming to class. Class discussion that
results in valid content acquisition cannot occur if the students are unprepared. Class attendance &
participation, in class quizzes & group and individual class assignments, etc. = 40% of grade, thus
much of your grade is dependent on your dedication to being prepared and fully participating in the workload of the course.

OBJECTIVES:
1. Students will increase both their “factual” knowledge of general events and developments of the period and gain and demonstrate a deeper knowledge of additional more specific elements related to U.S. history & and its peoples in Victorian Era, 1876 -1914. (Focus of the exams, quizzes & other assignments.)

2. Students will increase their ability to gain information and draw conclusions based on the reading of both primary documents and interpretive essay and demonstrate that skill. (Focus of readings, class discussions.)

3. Demonstrate the ability to recognize and be able to analytically discuss interpretations of historical events and topics, and express their understanding in oral and written expression suitable for formal history papers and presentations. (Focus of calls assignments, discussion, papers.)

4. Students will practice and demonstrate competence in the written expression of their knowledge of all the above in a direct, observable manner as demonstrated in independent work appropriate to historians in training. (Focus of the papers.)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING BASIS:
Students will demonstrate their individual level of mastery the above objectives by successful completion of the following:

EXAMS: Total 40% of course grade. (20% each)
There will be a Mid- Term Exam (with a possible take home section) during the semester and a comprehensive Final Exam.

Exams will consist of a mix of objective questions, identification questions, short essays, and essay questions requiring greater length and interpretation. It is possible that there will be a take home portion with each exam.

CLASS PARTICIPATION, QUIZZES & OTHER COURSE RELATED ASSIGNMENTS: Totals 40% of the course grade.

Throughout the semester there will be a series of short quizzes and assignments on the required readings. The specific number of quizzes will to be determined as the course progresses. Quizzes will be both announced and unannounced. Students should ALWAYS be prepared to discuss the assigned topics or readings. Participation in class activities “counts” both here and in the participation grade.

The quizzes and all in and out of class activities & assignments will provide the chance to raise (or lower) your course grade a substantial amount. Keep up, do your reading, master the material and make a better grade.

Students who come to class and engage in full discussion of the concepts and content in the class can expect to receive full credit for up to 5% of their course grade.
PAPER: Totals 20% of course grade.

This will be a formal history paper in nature. Your paper will review and compare two articles in the style of a “Taking Sides” format. You will read several of these “Yes or No” formatted essays for the class. For example, one such reading asks the question “Was City Government in the Gilded Age a Failure?” This is NOT a research paper. It will follow the same approach as the Taking Sides essays you will read, especially the introductions, and will require that you analyze scholarly articles written about a topic and draw and support conclusions. Fuller specific details for the paper, due dates AND required paper related activities will be provided in separate web postings for the assignment.

GRADING SCALE:
AVERAGE: 100-90=A  80- 89=B  70- 79=C  60- 69=D  Below 60 =F

CLASS POLICIES:

• ATTENDANCE:
  Students who arrive late, leave early, miss a substantial part of the class for any reason are considered absent for 1/2 class meeting. Students who are absent cannot participate, thus absences = lowered grade. A student may miss two class meetings for any reason. Beyond two absences, any other absence form class should be an excused absence as defined by the University Senate (serious illness, serious illness or death of a family member, university related trips, major religious holidays or other reasons approved in advance by instructor). Otherwise a reduction from the final grade average will occur.

• THE COURSE SITE AS A COMMUNICATION & ASSIGNMENT TOOL: Keep up to date. Please check the D2L course page and its email at least once between class meetings. As well, you are expected to know how to access materials on the website. Become familiar with it by the second class meeting.

• ELECTRONINC DEVICES: Please turn cell phones off when you enter the classroom. No texting, surfing, etc. during class. If you can’t commit to be fully engaged in the class each day, consider taking another class.

Laptops are to be used for note taking. If you are using a laptop you may be asked to “share” those notes at any given moment. Be sure you are using the technology for class purposes, not for entertainment. Students who distract the instructor or their classmates by using laptops to check Facebook, browse the web, etc., will asked to leave class and will receive a grade reduction as noted below. As well, in the future they will NOT be allowed to use their laptop for any purpose.

• CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: Commitment to learning, preparation for class, thoughtful participation and engagement in the activities of the class, and respectful treatment of your peers is expected. You will be asked to leave the class if your behavior or attitude interferes with the ability of others to have a full opportunity to learn. You are expected to be in class on time and prepared for each day’s topic. Please respect your professor and fellow students. There are many topics included in this course that touch on issues that could seem as “current” as “past.” Differences of opinions about such issues are a fact of life. Be certain that you state your opinions in a civil manner and respond to differing views in like manner.
As to basics, talking while others are talking, texting, using laptop computers for non-class related activities is disruptive to the learning environment needed to foster the success of all students, and may result in your dismissal from the class.

- ACADEMIC HONESTY: Academic honesty is required of all KSU students, as in following the class policies. Students are expected to report breeches of the code and the policies by themselves of others. Please report student who can not adhere to both the code of academic honesty found on the KSU website and below. As well, unless otherwise instructed, all work is to be completed individually and without the use of non-course related materials (i.e Wikipedia, etc.)

From Section II A of the KSU Student Code of Conduct, modified for Fall semester 2011): No student shall receive, attempt to receive, knowingly give or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work required to be submitted for credit (including examinations, laboratory reports, essays, themes, term papers, etc.). Unless specifically authorized, the presence and/or use of electronic devices during an examination, quiz, or other class assignment is considered cheating.

Engaging in any behavior which a professor prohibits as academic misconduct in the syllabus or in class discussion is cheating. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic based information or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a paper or used in a project, they should be duly acknowledged. No student may submit the same, or substantially the same, paper or other assignment for credit in more than one class without the prior permission of the current professor(s).

- CHANGES IN THE SYLLABS: It is possible that we will have to make changes in this syllabus, especially the schedule. Any such changes will be for good cause and will be announced in class (if possible) and through the email function of the D2L course page.

**Course Schedule:**

A schedule (always subject to change as needed) for the entire semester will be posted on the D2L course site no later than the end of the add/drop period. Be aware that every semester – and class – is different. The instructor reserves to right to adjust the schedule as needed to maximize student engagement and leaning.

The schedule below addresses the topics covered and the required reading for the first three class meetings:

Jan. 10 & 17 – Topic #1 -Overview of the Characteristics of the Era & the Supports for Industrial Development

Text(s)Readings: (read for Jan. 17 )
- Desantis, Chapter 1, p. 1 to10 (top); Chapter 5, p. 80-82, p. 89
- Schlereth, Intro. & Prologue

D2L:
Document on the philosophy of the age posted in Week Two Module :
William G. Sumner, “We Must Not Help the Weak”

Jan. 19 – Topic #2 – An Industrial Giant of the Age – Railroads in the Age of Industry
Text(s) Readings:
- DeSantis, Chapter 2, pp. 21-24; Schlereth, pp 22-23; (bottom) 29-31
**Personal Issues:** If you have any special difficulties regarding this class, please make an appointment so that we can talk about them. (Because of the need for flexibility in arranging advising duties, office hours are limited, but I am available at some point most days.) The sooner we can resolve problems, the better for all concerned.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disability and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. A number of services are available to help disabled students with their academic work. In order to make arrangements for special services students should visit the Office of Disabled Student Support Services (770-423-6443) located in the Student Center room 267 can provide a list of approved accommodations and arrange an individual assistance plan. In some cases, certification of disability is required.

**Final Word:** I sincerely enjoy the content of this class and hope that you do too. Let’s work together to make this an intellectually challenging, but fun semester together!