Course Description:
As per the KSU catalog, this course examines selected major themes of American history since 1890, the multicultural nature of contemporary U.S. civilization, and the nation’s role in the global arena. It is a basic introduction to various aspects of our shared past -- the social, economic, political, and diplomatic history of the nation and how American culture evolved over the past 100+ years. As we study the issues that continued or arose during this era, the efforts to deal with those issues, and the disappointments and the successes along the way, attention will be paid to the roles of context and perspective in determining what’s “true” and for whom. We will use a variety of media in exploring the eras, events, people, institutions, and developments that have shaped the nation.

As part of the general education curriculum, US History Since 1890 helps provide you with grounding in the liberal arts tradition and is designed to further develop your skills as a listener, a discussant, a reader, a writer, an analyst, an interpreter of the historical record, and a person who is better prepared to be an educated, engaged citizen of the nation and the world.

Student Learning Objectives:
Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to
1. identify major themes, patterns, and issues that have shaped the nation since 1890;
2. demonstrate fundamental knowledge about key social, economic, political, and diplomatic events in U.S. history;
3. analyze and interpret historical evidence in both primary and secondary sources;
4. formulate sound arguments orally and in writing

Required Reading:
W.E.B. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folk
John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath
Philip Caputo, Rumor of War

These books are available through a variety of sources, including the campus bookstore. Other readings may be assigned from time to time and will be available online or through D2L.

Class Policies:
- Class Participation: I expect students to come to class having completed all assignments and prepared to participate fully in class discussions and other activities; failure to participate in an adequate and satisfactory manner will affect the grade negatively. Especially brilliant participation can have a positive effect on the final grade.
- Attendance: Students should attend all sessions of the class. Students with four absences will be penalized one letter grade. Students who miss more than four class sessions will not pass the course. No distinction is made between “excused” or “unexcused” absences. Students who arrive late, leave
early, or take breaks will be counted present or absent at the discretion of the instructor, but in any case, such an occurrence will count as at least ½ an absence. Attendance affects class participation and success in the course.

- **Electronic Devices:** Cell phones and similar devices should be turned off and put away during class. Using laptops and other electronic devices during class is discouraged for a variety of educationally-sound reasons. Use of laptops, ipads, etc., is therefore limited to those who have a specific, verifiable need to use them.

- **D2L:** Check regularly for assignments and messages. D2L is the preferred means of communication outside of class. You are responsible for checking the course site and email prior to each class meeting for any updates.

- **Late Work:** Late written work will generally not be accepted. If accepted, a penalty of up to 10% per day will apply for its being late. When assignments prepared at home are due in hard copy format, they are due at the beginning of the class period. In case of an absence on the day an assignment is due, email the work to me before class begins that day. If you are unable to do that because of serious illness or an accident, for example, please provide appropriate documentation (such as a doctor’s note) so that I can consider accepting the work.

- **Academic Integrity:** I expect students to do their own work. Please read the Student Code of Conduct and particularly note 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).

  Note: Unless otherwise specified, assignments should be done individually—no group work, copying of another person’s work, presenting another person’s work as your own, or plagiarism of any sort. Integrity is part of the glue that holds a civilized society together for it is the basis upon which trust is established. Just as you want those you deal with to be men and women of integrity, you must provide others that same assurance.

- **If you are having any difficulties regarding this class, please make an appointment so that we can talk about them. The sooner we can resolve problems, the better for all concerned.**

- **Changes in the Syllabus and Calendar:** It is possible that changes will be made in the syllabus and/or the course calendar. Any such changes will be for good cause and will be announced in class (if possible) and through D2L.
Contacting Me:

• Via Email: D2L email is the preferred means of written communication, however, please use my regular KSU email in case of an emergency. (A question about an assignment is not an emergency.) I generally respond to emails promptly though occasionally on a weekend or in the evening, I do not check. If you do not hear from me within 24 hours or so, please feel free to send a “gentle reminder” using my regular KSU email (on front page of syllabus).

• For Appointments: I will hold regular office hours on Wednesdays from 2:00 - 3:00. You do not need an appointment to come by during that time. If this time is inconvenient, please contact me via email or office phone to set up an appointment. Because I also supervise student teachers, I am often away from campus. Even so, I am regularly accessible and will be glad to meet with you.

disAbled Student Support Services:

Kennesaw State University provides program accessibility and reasonable accommodations for persons defined as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. A number of services are available to help disabled students with their academic work. In order to make arrangements for special services, students must visit the Office of disAbled Student Support Services (770-423-6443) and develop an individual assistance plan. In some cases certification of disability is required.

Any student who, due to having an individual assistance plan, may require special arrangements so as to meet course requirements should contact me at the beginning of the semester so that accommodations can be planned and made. Please present appropriate verification from KSU disAbled Student Support Services.

There are support/mentor groups on the campus of Kennesaw State University that address many types of disabilities and exceptionalities.

The Writing Center:

One of the marks of an educated person is being able to write clearly and correctly. The quality of your writing influences the effectiveness of your communication and will affect your grade in this class. If you know or if you discover that you often make errors in your writing, or if you are already “pretty good” and want to get better, I suggest that you contact the KSU Writing Center for assistance.

The KSU Writing Center is a free service offered to all KSU students. Experienced, friendly Writing Assistants will work with you to become a better writer--regardless of your strengths or weaknesses. Commonly covered writing strategies include topic development, organization, revision, research, source documentation, and grammar, but the Writing Center listens to and works with each writer individually. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please visit http://www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter or stop by Room 242 in the English Building.

Assignments and Grades:

Please be aware that any course assignments or point designations may for good cause be adjusted during the semester. Such adjustments will be announced in advance through D2L.

Note: Most class sessions and most assignments are based on specific readings and/or other media sources. Doing the reading in a thoughtful manner in which you pose questions and challenge the author’s assumptions or arguments will help you successfully engage the material in class and in writing. Failure to do such intentional reading or only doing “surface reading” will likely yield predictable results.
Pay attention to instructions about where to turn in individual assignments. Some will be submitted to D2L, some will be turned in at the beginning of class, and others may be submitted to www.turnitin.com. Assignments submitted incorrectly may not be accepted at all or, at best, may be counted as late. Keep a copy of all graded assignments until the end of the semester, but please ask questions as they arise.

I do not believe in or offer extra-credit work. There are sufficient opportunities to “make the grade” you want to make by completing successfully the regular assignments.

Assignments will be counted according to the numbers of points indicated below.

I. Analyses of Required Books 600 Points (60% of final grade)

You will write four 3-4 page papers in which you focus on how a particular book relates to the historical content and context under review in class. I will provide additional guidance in class and on D2L, but always consider the following points: What is the author’s theme or thesis? Why did s/he write the book? What argument is being made? (What does the author want you to believe is “true”?) What evidence is used to prove the point? Is the author effective? What are the counter-arguments? It is insufficient just to summarize the plot or content or to restate what has been said in class, in a textbook, or in Cliff Notes. Each analysis will count 150 points.

II. Other Writing Assignments 200 points (20%)

Periodically, you will contribute a post to a discussion board on D2L or will write and bring to class a response to a question or prompt posed on D2L or in class. Discussion board posts or other assignments posted to D2L are due by 11:00 a.m. prior to class. Hard copy responses are due at the beginning of class on the announced due date. The nature of the assignments will vary according to the work (film, music, readings, class discussions, etc.) being addressed. There will be at least four of these assignments that are aimed at developing online conversations and/or classroom discussions. Point values for individual assignments will vary.

III. Class Participation 200 points (20%)

Class participation is a component made up of a variety of factors:

A. Since this course is by nature primarily a seminar, the active participation of every person in discussions is both desired and expected. Only in that way will we have the kinds of discussions that spark exciting ideas and intellectual growth. While I will on occasion lecture in order to provide some background information, most of our time will be spent in discussion.

Come to class prepared to discuss the content and assignment materials in a congenial and thoughtful manner. Be ready to present and defend your ideas and to comment on the ideas of others. Be ready as well to question the works under discussion and to listen to and discuss the ideas of others in the class. Remember that changing your mind (with good cause) is not necessarily being wishy-washy, but instead, is usually a sign of learning and open-mindedness. In such a setting, it is imperative, of course, that each person conduct him- or herself with courtesy and respect for others and for their ideas. No other behavior is acceptable.

B. In-class assignments, such as quizzes or other written or oral assessments, and certain homework assignments are another element of class participation. These assignments may be announced in advanced or unannounced. Point values on individual assignments will vary.
C. Attendance and punctuality are also elements of the class participation grade. Please keep in mind the policy regarding absences and missing parts of classes mentioned earlier.

Excellent attendance and punctuality are essential characteristics of professionalism and are generally matters of choice, habit, and respect. Punctuality involves meeting deadlines as well as being on time for appointments and class.

Class Calendar:

A complete class calendar will be posted to D2L and will be considered an addendum to this syllabus. Please also keep a personal calendar handy so that you can fulfill your responsibilities in a mature fashion. Due dates for major assignments will be included on the calendar; other assignments will be announced in a timely manner in class and/or on D2L. In the meantime, here is the schedule for the first few classes:

Jan. 8th: Introduction to the course and the content. Discussion of “what is history?”
        Begin reading The Souls of Black Folk

Jan. 13th: Why 1890? Review of post-Civil War period: Reconstruction, the End of the Frontier, the Agrarian Revolt, the Rise of Populism
        Continue The Souls of Black Folk

Jan. 15th: Urbanization, Immigration, Jim Crow, and the Progressive Era

Jan. 20th: MLK Day

Jan. 22nd: Discussion of The Souls of Black Folk

NOTE: Each student is responsible for knowing what is in the syllabus and for being prepared for class as indicated on the class calendar.