American Studies 1B Seminar: American Civilization – Spring 2017
San José State University – Humanities Department
Section 21

Instructor
Judith L. Georges

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Office Hours
M/W/TH 4-5 p.m. (or by appointment)

Class Days/Time
M/W 10:30-11:45 a.m.

Classroom
Dudley Moorhead Hall (DMH) 354

Prerequisites
AMS 1A

Course Description
For the comprehensive course syllabus and lecture and reading schedule, see the AMS 1B, Section 10-20-30 home page, where course materials and due dates for assignments common to all three seminars are located. Assignments are due on the date under which they appear. Seminar-specific materials are on the home page of AMS 1B, Section 21. Use Section 21 to upload research paper assignments due online and to take the California Constitution Quiz.

Seminar Purpose
The purpose of the seminar is to analyze, question, and share perceptions of America’s past to seek relevance in the present and visions for the future. In the process you will also deepen your understanding of persistent historical themes and communicate your responses through discussions, group activities, papers, and essay exams.

The seminar is not another lecture session. It is a conversational forum. My role is to facilitate. Yours is to participate.

Keys to success:

• prompt, regular attendance and note taking in both lecture and seminar
• timely reading and writing
• thoughtful, vocal engagement in seminar in small and large group activities
Assignments, Protocols and Grading

Your seminar participation grade is worth 30% of your course grade: 20% for reading journals and 10% for vocal participation in seminar. **You must attend seminar to submit a journal for that session.** Seminar activities include reflections on lectures, oral review sessions, writing tips, small group activities, large group discussions, and other interactive learning experiences.

**Journals are not required on due dates of major assignments or exams.**

Late journals and papers will not be accepted under normal circumstances, and it is not acceptable to miss an exam, except for reasons I deem appropriate. Medical issues or family emergencies resulting in a late journal, paper, or exam require a private conversation with me and may result in a lower grade, depending on the circumstances.

Grade percentages for all AMS 1B assignments are listed in the comprehensive course syllabus. You will receive specific descriptions of grading criteria for journals, papers, and exams orally and in writing in advance of their due dates.

Exams and papers will receive letter and number grades according to the following percentage scale:

- A+ (97-100)
- A (93-96)
- 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 (63-66)
- D- (60-62)
- F (0-59)

Journals and quizzes will be graded on a ten-point scale, corresponding to letter grades as follows: 10 (A); 9 (A-); 8 (B); 7 (C); 6 (D); 5-0 (F). Class participation will be graded on a 100 pt. scale based on the quality and frequency of your contributions to seminar discussions.

**Instructor Requests**

- Silence cell phones and place them completely out of sight when class begins
- Laptops and tablets are prohibited unless I grant explicit permission to use them
- Bring textbooks with assigned reading to class on assignment due dates
- Alert me if you must occasionally arrive late or leave early
- Contact me if you miss consecutive classes, whether unintended or planned
- If you miss a lecture or seminar session, get notes from reliable classmates, but do not abuse this privilege or permit others to abuse it
- See or email me if you are confused about assignments, have academic difficulties, or wish to schedule an appointment to discuss issues pertaining to the course
- Alert me in advance if you require a grade check signature

Finally, one of the most underused university resources is the opportunity for one-on-one meetings with instructors. You are always welcome to visit during my office hours.