HIST 3430-001-U.S. Progressive Era, 1890-1920
David Wrobel, MWF, 1:30-2:20pm, DAH (Dale Hall) 103
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Course Description: The period from 1890 to 1920 included the worst economic depression in U.S. history, the most violent episodes of industrial violence, the most radical agrarian protests, the greatest racial divisions in the nation’s history, the acquisition of an overseas empire and involvement in the First World War. These years also witnessed a stunning array of enlightened social reforms, some of the most memorable clashes of ideas, and some of the most remarkable leaders the U.S. has seen, including Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, William Jennings Bryan, Jane Addams, and Mother Jones, “the most dangerous woman in America.” This course explores how contemporary America is best understood through the incredible lenses of the Progressive Era.
Course Description Continued: The first era of modern American liberalism, the Progressive period is generally contrasted with the more conservative Gilded Age that preceded it and with the 1920s, the era of Republican ascendancy and conservative reaction that followed it. However, both of those periods were also marked by significant reform initiatives, and the Progressive period was characterized by reactionary impulses, particularly with respect to matters of race.

The course begins with an exploration of the preludes to Progressivism, with particular emphasis on the crisis-ridden 1890s and the connections between Populism and Progressivism. The second part of the course focuses on the political developments and political ideologies of the period and their fascinating parallels in the present. The final segment of the course examines the impact of World War One and the Red Scare on Progressivism.

Course Objectives: The primary goal of the course is to enhance understanding of contemporary thought, politics, and events through the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of an earlier period that offers a wealth of parallels. In addition, the course will provide opportunities to develop writing and critical thinking skills.

Course Required Reading:


*Additional scholarly articles and primary source documents will be posted on the D2L course site.

Course Assignments:
Two-part midterm exam: In-class and take-home (250 points total) 25%
Essay (250 points) 25%
Final Exam (two hour, in-class) (250 points) 25%
Class Discussion and Presentations (250 points) 25%
Course Grading: The +/- grading system will be used for all assignments (not for final grades). The scale is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60-66</td>
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<td>F</td>
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Course Exams: The in-class midterm exam covers just one class period and is comprised of three Triads (chosen from a list of five). The take-home midterm exam is comprised of a single essay of around five pages (1,500 words) drawing on course readings, lectures, and discussions. The final exam is two hours in length and is comprised of three sections: a) Triads; B) Document Analyses; C) an Essay.

The exams are not intended primarily as tests of your memorization skills; rather, they are designed to gauge your understanding of the main themes and readings. If you read the assigned books carefully, attend class, take good notes and regularly review/rewrite them, and participate in discussions you will be well prepared for exams. Make-up exams will be given only in rare circumstances and only if you have a genuine, verifiable, and important excuse. Study guides for both the midterm and final exams will be posted on D2L at least one week in advance of each.

Term paper: The course paper (6-8 pages: 1,800-2,400 words) requires scholarly research beyond the course readings and may focus on an individual, a place, an idea, incident, or type of reform. (More details will be provided on D2L).

Effective Essay Writing
Your take-home midterm exam and your paper should take the form of well-written, well-organized essays in which you draw on pertinent historical evidence to support an argument. Please be sure to proof read your work carefully. If you have concerns about your prose, then take a draft of your paper to the Writing Center or bring a draft to me to look over. Do not turn in poorly written work with the explanation that writing is not your strong point. Instead, take the time to make strong writing a hallmark of your papers. Form and content are inseparable: if your writing is weak then your ideas and arguments will lack clarity and. as a consequence, they will appear weak too.

As you prepare to write your papers you should take the following steps:
1) Clear your topic with me first.
2) Develop a key theme or argument.
3) Think of an appropriate title that reflects the paper's key theme or argument.
4) Introduce your topic clearly in the opening paragraphs.
5) Present evidence to support your argument.
6) Design a strong concluding paragraph for your paper.
7) Proofread your paper carefully for grammatical, typographical, and spelling errors.
8) Go through the stages of Pre-Writing, Draft Writing, and Re-Writing before submitting your paper.
9) Submit your paper early or on time.
10) Consider submitting a draft of your paper to me so that I can provide feedback.
Effective Reading
Take the time to read the assigned materials carefully. It is often helpful to make
marginal comments in the books. If you do not fully comprehend a particular point the
author is making then write a note to that effect in the margin and raise the matter in the
next class. You will find it helpful to write a brief summary of each chapter when you
finish reading it. As you read each chapter ask the following questions:

What major points is the author trying to make?
What evidence does the author use to support those arguments?
What is the author’s perspective or point of view?
What kind of evidence does the author use to support her/his arguments?
How does the author’s perspective and argument parallel or depart from those expressed
in class?

Class Discussion and Presentations: Class time will be devoted to a mix of
interactive lectures, class discussions, and student presentations. A full quarter of
your grade will be determined by the quality of your contributions to class
discussion and by the quality of your presentations to the class. Everyone will
deliver a brief presentation on their term paper and everyone will lead off at least
one discussion of course readings. This is a relatively small class, so everyone’s
participation is vital, and a lack of contributions to discussion from any student will
be conspicuous. The class atmosphere will be friendly and informal, so everyone
should feel comfortable participating.

Course Readings: All of the course readings listed above are required, as are the
additional readings that I will post on D2L. Every effort has been made to provide
readings that are accessible and informative, as well as affordable. It is your
responsibility to come to each class prepared to discuss the materials assigned for
that day.

Attendance: Attendance is expected in this class. Absences will adversely affect
your performance on exams and contributions to class discussion. Moreover, since
this is a small class, your absence will be conspicuous. You may be administratively
dropped from the course if you have more than six unexcused absences (i.e. twice
the number of weekly meetings).

D2L: It is your responsibility to check the course D2L site on a regular basis.

Academic Integrity: [http://integrity.ou.edu](http://integrity.ou.edu) As stated in Webster's New World
Dictionary of the American Language (Cleveland, 1964), plagiarism is "to take and
pass off as one's own the ideas, writings, etc. of another.” Plagiarism is easy to spot
and, more importantly, it is ethically unsound. Plagiarism on any assignment, or
any other academic misconduct (any cheating on exams) will result in an “F” for the
assignment, notification of the Student Conduct Office, a possible “F” for the class
and further disciplinary action. Please sign the integrity pledge for take-home
essays. (website address above).
Disabilities: Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities. The Disability Resource Center provides support services to students with disabilities: see www.ou.edu/drc, or please contact Director Suzette Dyer at drc@ou.edu, 325-3852 voice, or 325-4173 TDD.

Religious Accommodations: It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays.

Extra-Curricular Activities: Students involved in OU official extra-curricular activities should let me know at the beginning of the semester of any known scheduling conflicts.

PART ONE: PRELUDES:
CRISIS OF THE 1890s & REFORM BEGINNINGS

Wk 1: W, Jan 18: Course Introduction: The Progressive Era: A Window on Today
      F, Jan 20: A World of Clashing Darwinisms: Conservatism and Liberalism in Late 19th-Century America

Readings:

Wk 2: M, Jan 23: Crisis of the 1890s, I: The Cities
      W, Jan 25: Crisis of the 1890s, II: The Farms
      F, Jan 27: Readings:

Wk 3: M, Jan 30:
      W, Feb 1:
      F, Feb 3:
      Readings:

Wk 4: M, Feb 6:
      W, Feb 8:
      F, Feb 10:
      Readings:

Wk 5: M, Feb 13:
      W, Feb 15:
Readings: (1st take-home exam due in class)

F, Feb 17: 1st in-class Midterm Exam

PART TWO: PRESIDENTS: REFORMING THE NATION

Wk 6: M, Feb, 20:
       W, Feb 22:
       F, Feb 24:
       Readings:

Wk 7: M, Feb 27:
       W, Feb 29:
       F, Mar 2:
       Readings:

Wk 8: M, Mar 5:
       W, Mar 7:
       F, Mar 9:
       Readings:

Wk 9: M, Mar 12:
       W, Mar 14:
       F, Mar 16:
       Readings:

No class March 19, 21, and 23: SPRING BREAK

PART THREE: PARADOXES PROGRESSIVISM & THE WORLD

Wk 10: M, Mar 26:
        W, Mar 28:
        F, Mar 30:
        Readings:

Wk 11: M, April 2:
        W, April 4:
        F, April 6:
        Readings:

Wk: 12: M, April 9:
        W, April 11:
F, April 13:  
Readings:

Wk 13: M, April 16:  
W, April 18:  
F, April 20:  
Readings:

Wk 14: M, April 23:  
W, April 25:  
F, April 27:  
Readings:

Wk 15: M, April 30:  
W, May 2:  
F, May 4: Final Exam Review  
Reading:

**Wednesday, May 9, 8:00-10:00: Final Exam**