

SOST302

Introduction to Southern Studies: The 20th Century Spring 2022

Course Description

SOST302 is an overview of the 20th century South via examinations of history, literature, popular culture, economics, politics, and sociology, with particular focus on South Carolina (because we're UofSC) and the neighboring states of North Carolina and Georgia.

The 20th century South is defined by three things: 1) the Jim Crow system of segregation; 2) the absolute domination of Southern politics by the Democratic Party; and 3) the emergence of a Southern cultural history and mythology based in the experience of the Civil War and Reconstruction that is shared across all Southern states and serves to distinguish the region from the rest of America. As these three features have their basis in the defeat of the Confederate States of America in 1865, we begin our semester in the late 1860s. As these three features undergo radical changes in the late 1970s, we end our semester there. In other words, while the course title suggests that this is an examination of the South from 1900-2000, it's better to think of it as an examination of the South from Reconstruction to Jimmy Carter. The South ever since is covered by SOST305: The Contemporary South.

SOST302 fulfills the GHS—Global/History component of the Carolina Core, as well as the research component for GLD (graduation with leadership distinction).

The course also counts toward the minor in Southern Studies. If this class sparks your interest in the South, you should consider minoring in Southern Studies! More information about the minor may be found on the [Institute for Southern Studies website](#).

University Course Catalogue Description (Standardized Description, Required for Inclusion by the University):

A topical examination of the American South ranging from Reconstruction to the Civil Rights Movement.

Itemized Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of SOST302, students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe the most significant political, economic, and cultural features of 20th century South and how they evolved from the 19th century;
2. discuss and evaluate the creation and development of Southern identity through the 20th century in an articulate and informed way, using examples from 20th-century Southern history and literature;
3. develop skills in academic research and literary interpretation;
4. explain the development of popular conceptions of the South and how these interact with history and literature.

Carolina Core Outcome:

GHS - Global Citizenship and Multicultural Understanding: Historical Thinking: Students will be able to use the principles of historical thinking to understand past human societies.

Required Texts:

- Cooper, Terrill, and Childers: *The American South: A History*, Volume II (Fifth Edition)
- Cash: *The Mind of the South*
- Gaines: *A Gathering of Old Men*

Several other readings will be provided as pdfs, via Blackboard.

Assignments/Grading Criteria:

Grades are given on UofSC's standard 10-point scale. There are no minus grades, and plus grades are the top three points in a range (e.g. 87-89 is a B+). There is no A+ at UofSC.

- Reflections (25%)—Ten 1-1.5 page (single-spaced) papers in which you reflect on the material to be discussed in class that day. Engage the ideas presented in that day's reading/film, asking about how they fit into our overall discussion. Feel free to be as abstract or as personal as you'd like here, discussing how today's material surprises you, challenges you, confuses you, etc. I'm looking for honest, thoughtful reflections and interrogations here, not just you telling me what you think I want to hear. While you should write with grammatical and mechanical precision, the tone here should be conversational. There is no need to write these as essays.
 - Maximum of 10 points each
 - You may turn in a reflection at any time during the semester (beginning on 20 January, the first class period after drop/add), but it must be *on that day's assigned material*.
 - You **may not** do more than ten to in order to get extra credit.
 - You must turn in a physical copy **at the start of class**—emailed submission will not be accepted except under extenuating circumstances.
- Newspaper Assignment (25%)—In a 7-9 page (double-spaced) paper, you will use the University Library's [Historical Newspapers of South Carolina](#) database to research an event of your choice that took place in South Carolina between the end of the Civil War and the outbreak of World War II (i.e., 1865-1940). A separate assignment sheet is posted to Blackboard. This assignment is due, via Blackboard, at 5pm on Friday, 8 April.
- Midterm and Final Exam (25% each)—Each exam will be a take-home, open-book exam. You will be given five essay prompts and will be required to answer three of them; each essay will typically be 2-3 (double-spaced) pages long. The midterm exam will be distributed after class on 3 March and will be due, via Blackboard, by the beginning of class on Thursday, 17 March; it will cover everything up to that point in the semester. The final exam will be distributed on 21 April and due, via Blackboard, at 3pm on 3 May (our University-scheduled exam period is 3 May, 12.30-3.00); it will cover everything we've done since the midterm.

Please note that late work will not be accepted under any but the most extreme (e.g., you were hospitalized or called up for military service) circumstances. Otherwise, if your work is late, it's a zero. Period.

Attendance Policy:

I will not be taking attendance. However, if you don't come to class regularly, you almost certainly won't pass. To put it plainly: whether or not you come to class is up to you—and as a result, so is whether or not you do well in the course. I treat you with the presumption that you are a mature, responsible, and intelligent adult, and I thus consider you to be the ultimate arbiter of your own success in the course. That success begins with you choosing to come to class.

Disability Accommodations:

I am very happy to make special accommodations for any student with a documented disability on file with the University's Student Disability Resource Center. Please note, however, that unless your disability is on file with SDRC, I cannot ethically provide you with any accommodations not also given to other students.

Academic Honesty:

My policy is simple and straightforward: Plagiarism on the papers, doing some else's work for them, and writing your reflections, papers, or exams in collaboration with someone else are all considered cheating for the purposes of this course. If you cheat, you'll fail that assignment. If it's egregious enough, I'll fail you for the course.

Please let me know if you have questions about any part of this policy.

Expectations for Classroom Behavior:

For this course to be successful, we need to have certain standards of behavior and decorum that work to create an intelligent, engaged, and respectful atmosphere. As such:

- Treat everyone with respect, and do not engage in personal attacks.
- Feel free to have an unpopular position on a topic—but be prepared to defend that position.
- If you disagree with someone, disagree with his or her idea, don't attack that individual *as a person*.
- If someone disagrees with you, engage that individual with the assumption that she or he is disagreeing with your idea, not attacking you *as a person*.
- If you come in late, seat yourself in the nearest available seat; try as best you can to not bring attention to yourself.
- Be smart about your food and drink choices—avoid smelly, noisy, and messy food and drink. Use common sense.
- Put your phone on silent or vibrate and keep it put away. If someone calls and you need to take it, quietly go out into the hall and take it. If you need to send a text, quietly go out into the hall and do so. Otherwise, leave your phone in your pocket/your purse/your bookbag, etc.
- Do not take photos or videos in class without the explicit consent of others. This can be a serious invasion of privacy and is just creepy.

Covid-Related Issues:

While we are hopefully getting near the end of how Covid-19 has disrupted normal life, no one can predict what the semester will ultimately look like. However, as things stand in early January, the University expects us to conduct traditional, in-person instruction. As such, I will not be live-streaming class meetings, and there is no online option for the class. If you are quarantined, we will work out something one-on-one.

University policy requires masks to be worn in all classrooms. For more information, see [the University's current Covid-19 guidelines](#).

These policies will be revised as I am instructed to do so by the University.

Course Schedule:

January

11—Introductions/Syllabus.

13—Backgrounds. Introduction to W. J. Cash

18—Cash, *The Mind of the South*, “Preview to Understanding” (pp. xvii-li) and portions of Book One, pp. 3-70

20—Cash, “Of the Frontier the Yankee Made”, pp. 103-144 **First chance to turn in a Reflection**

25— Cooper, Terrill, Childers (hereafter CTC), Chapter 16

27— Sidney Andrews, *The South Since the War*, Chs I, II, V, IX, XI

February

1—CTC, Chapter 17

3—Hemphill, “Reconstruction in South Carolina” in *Why the Solid South?*, Herbert (editor). Finishing Up Reconstruction

8— CTC, Chapter 18

10— Page, “Marse Chan”; Chesnutt, “The Goophered Grapevine”; Harris, “Trouble on Lost Mountain”

15— CTC, Chapter 19; Grady, “The New South”

17— Faulkner, “Barn Burning” and “A Rose for Emily”

22— CTC, Chapter 20

24— More on Southern Progressivism/Populism and a discussion of “Pitchfork” Ben Tillman and Tom Watson

March

1— Washington, *Up From Slavery* (Chs 1, 7, 10, 14)

3— CTC, Chapter 21

15— CTC, Chapter 23

17— Straker, “A Black Man’s View of the New South”; Barrows, “What the Southern Negro is Doing for Himself”

22— CTC, Chapter 24

24— Keaton, *The General* (watch before class)

29— CTC, Chapter 25

31— CTC, Chapter 25

April

5— CTC, Chapter 26; Percy, “Stoicism in the South”

7— CTC, Chapter 26; King, “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”

12— CTC, Chapter 27

14— CTC, Chapter 27, Southern Rock selections (listen before class)

19— Gaines, *A Gathering of Old Men*

