I. Immigration in Early American History

A. Attitude of ambivalence to immigrants

1. Need for laborers a constant theme as growth took place
2. Yet resentment against newcomers was not uncommon
   a. In colonial times, laws restricted the freedom of blacks
   b. Descendants of first European immigrants resented other Europeans they felt were racially impure or of the wrong religion
3. Government policy toward immigrants was also ambivalent
   a. Virtually no restriction or national control until 1880s
   b. When restrictions were imposed, they were against specific nationalities or groups
      i. 1875—criminals, prostitutes, and Chinese laborers
      ii. 1882—Chinese Exclusion Act banned all Chinese immigration
      iii. 1921—immigration quotas assigned to specific nations, favoring northern and western Europe

II. Immigration & Expansion in the 19th century

A. Westward expansion and the California gold rush created a continual demand for workers and settlers
B. Political unrest, dislocation caused by industrialism, and famine in Ireland led to waves of European immigration
C. Homestead Act and Burlingame Treaty (Chinese laborers) encouraged settlement encouraged immigration
   1) Between 1840 and 1870, over 6 million immigrants arrived in the U.S.
   2) Many came from southeast Europe (Italy, the Balkans) and China, regions that had previously sent few immigrants

III. Exclusion Policies

A. Chinese Exclusion Act 1882 limited and then banned Chinese immigrants
B. Immigration Act of 1891 created a Bureau of Immigration and allowed for deportation of unlawful immigrants, and added polygamists, and individuals with contagious diseases to the list of inadmissible aliens
C. Anarchist Exclusion Act of 1903—first restriction on political beliefs
D. Immigration Act of 1907—mandated the exclusion of “imbeciles,” “feeble-minded” persons, individuals afflicted by a physical or mental disability that might impede their ability to earn a living, those with tuberculosis, children not accompanied by their parents, and individuals who admit to having committed a crime of “moral turpitude.”

E. Despite these exclusions, between 1870 and 1930, 30 million immigrants arrived in the U.S.
   1) By 1910—14.7% of the U.S. population was foreign-born
   2) In 2010—12.5% of the U.S. population was foreign-born

IV. Quota Systems

A. Quota Law of 1921—first immigration law to impose numerical limits on immigration, capping overall immigration to about 350,000 per year and restricting immigration from any particular country to 3% of the number of people of that ancestry who were living in the United States in 1910

B. National Origins Act of 1924—reduced quotas and favored immigrants from northern and western Europe. Did not restrict immigrants from the Western Hemisphere

C. Restrictions were lifted for some groups in the 1940s, such as Chinese in 1943 (105 per year) and displaced persons due to World War 2

D. Demand for agricultural workers during World War 2 led to the bracero program which allowed for millions of temporary work permits for Mexicans

E. McCarran-Walter Act of 1952—eliminated racial restrictions, but set a quota for each country outside the western hemisphere at one-sixth of 1% of the number of persons of that ancestry living in the United States as of 1920; meaning that most immigration slots were reserved for immigrants from the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Germany

F. Immigration Act of 1965—abolished the discriminatory national-origins quota system. Immigration set at 170,000 per year for the Eastern Hemisphere—with a 20,000- per-country limit—and, for the first time, 120,000 for the Western Hemisphere—without a per- country limit.

G. Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (Reagan Amnesty Plan) allowed illegal immigrants to remain after paying a fine but created sanctions for employers knowingly hiring new illegal immigrants

V. Immigration Policy in the 21st Century

A. U.S. policies and attitudes remain ambivalent and conflicted
   1. From 2000-2013 the U.S. government has spent billions of dollars trying to control illegal immigration
   2. There are currently at least 12 million illegal aliens in the U.S., 28% of foreign-born people in the U.S.
   3. The DREAM Act allows the children of illegal aliens to have access to avoid deportation and have access to higher education

B. As federal legislative efforts for comprehensive immigration reform have failed, state and local authorities have attempted to use local police to act as immigration agents