

Course Description and Objectives:

This course covers American history and culture from the end of the Second World War to the present. Topics to be discussed include postwar American life, the Cold War, liberal consensus politics, conflicts in Korea, Vietnam, and the Middle East, broadcast media and film, the civil rights movement and other rights movements, political history, the rise of both political and religious conservatism, post-industrialism, globalization, the environmental movement, and contemporary American culture. The aim of the course is to educate as broadly as possible about this period and to include a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. A survey course provides an overarching narrative framework which many students will find helpful and tidy, but one of the course's goals is to destabilize the notion that there is one single American story.

In this course you will learn information about the past, but more importantly, you will learn about the craft of doing history. This is more of a history "lab" course than a lecture course. You will become familiar with multimedia and digital resources for historical research, as well as more traditional archival and print resources in the library. You will hone your writing and critical thinking skills. You should expect to be actively involved in your own learning and will begin the process of contributing to the field as budding historians.

Required Texts:

Our textbook will be William Chafe, Harvard Sitkoff and Beth Bailey, editors, *A History of Our Time: Readings on Postwar America* 7th edition (Harvard University Press).

You should also make sure you have a history survey textbook. If you took US History II (HI 112) or another American history class and still have a textbook that covers 1945 to the present, then use the one you have.

If you don't have a survey textbook that covers 1945 to now, then purchase the e-text of George Donelson Moss, *Moving On: The American People Since 1945*, 3rd edition (Pearson Longman). You can do that through the bookstore, or directly [from the publisher \(http://instructors.coursesmart.com/0131898256\)](http://instructors.coursesmart.com/0131898256) which gives you online access to the book for several months.

Additional readings will be posted online as PDFs; you will need (free) Adobe Reader or FoxIt Reader in order to open and use them. It is recommended that you print the readings if you have your own printer, or bring your laptop to class to access them during our discussion. Consider the cost of a ream of paper for printing readings to be part of the materials cost for the course.

Course Requirements:

This course involves extensive reading, writing and discussion. You will be expected to read 20-50 pages a week (sometimes more), and to write approximately 20 pages over the course of the term. You will need to put in consistent effort during the whole semester. You'll need to have (or learn) basic computer research skills.

To take advantage of multiple learning styles, and to help create a community of learning in this classroom, this course will assess your learning in several different ways.

- Attendance and participation in class (20%) - I will take attendance in each class session. You should be prompt, present, and ready for discussion each day. I expect class discussion will be lively, respectful, and substantive.
- Exams (30%) - we will have 3 closed-book hour-long tests. The last test will take place during the final exam period but will be the equivalent of the other two exams. Your lowest test score is dropped; there are no make-up exams. Exams are held Feb 25, April 1, and May 8 (Sec 04) or May 13 (Sec 01).

You'll note that half of your grade involves showing up ready for class, and taking at least 2 of the 3 exams. The other half of your grade is based on your written work and research.

- Response Papers (4 @ 5% each = 20%) - 5 are assigned, so you can miss or drop one. Each RP assignment asks you to consider a different kind of historical source, or explore a different approach to historical interpretation. You then write a short (2-page) paper. These small assignments are a good way for you to experiment with new formats or sources and to give you hands-on experience with making your own conclusions from historical evidence. For your grade I will take the best 4 out of these 5. No makeups or late work accepted on Response Papers. One of your RPs will be posted to the course blog for others to read and comment on. RPs are due on Jan 23, Feb 4, March 4, April 17 & April 27.
- Hundred Days (15%) - we will be keeping track of President Obama's first hundred days in office (20 January 2009 - 30 April 2009). You will be assigned a period of days and will record what happens or what action President Obama takes during that period, and then will post a summary to the course blog. Your post is worth 5%. Near the end of the semester, you will write a short paper about the hundred days, which is worth another 10% & due on May 4.
- Responses to Blog Posts (5%) - you are expected to contribute to online discussion by commenting on others' posts and news summaries. 2 of your comments will be chosen at random and assessed for their substance & contribution to the quality of online discussion.
- Research Essay (10%) - you will research and write one paper (5-7 pages) representing original research using a defined set of primary sources. Due April 10.

Your grade will be determined this way:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Attendance & Participation (A&P) | 20% |
| Exams (1 is dropped, so 2 @ 15 each) - 25 Feb, 1 Apr, 8 or 13 May | 30% |
| Response Papers (1 is dropped, so 4 @ 5 each) - 23 Jan, 4 Feb, 4 Mar, 17 Apr, 27 Apr | 20% |
| Hundred Days post (date TBA) and Paper due 4 May | 15% |
| Blog Responses - 2 comments chosen at random | 5% |
| Research Paper due 10 Apr | 10% |
| Total | 100 |

Note: your lowest test grade and one of the Response Papers will be dropped. For that reason, **there will be no makeup exams, and no makeups for missed RPs.**

The Fine Print:

- My in-class technology policy: we will be busy in every class session, and we don't need any technological distractions. Silence your cell phones before you enter the classroom. If you choose to bring a laptop to class, I expect that you will be using it **only** for taking notes or accessing the course's relevant electronic documents to refer to during discussion. Do not use your laptop in class to surf the internet, check your email, update your Myspace page, or the like.
- On papers and exams, doing your own work is absolutely essential - my general policy is that if you plagiarize a paper or cheat on an exam, you will get a zero on that assignment and you risk failing the entire class. You **must** cite the sources of any information or ideas which are not your own work. Please familiarize yourself with the college policy on Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.
- If you have a documented disability (learning or otherwise), and you need a reasonable accommodation made for you in this course, please consult with me immediately at the outset of the course so we can design a solution that will help you be successful in the class.

Syllabus:

Week 1

1. Wed 1/21 - The American People in the 21st Century
Reading: History of Our Time (HOT) 496-500
2. Fri 1/23 - America in 1945 (RP #1 due)
Reading: HOT 6-16 (McMahon)

Week 2

3. Mon 1/26 - The Atomic Age and the Cold War
Reading: HOT 17-40 (Kennan, Eisenhower, Good Housekeeping)
4. Wed 1/28 - McCarthyism
Reading: HOT 41-64 (HUAC, McCarthy, Haynes/Klehr)
5. Fri 1/30 - Korean & Vietnam Wars begin
Reading: <http://www.koreanwar.com/KoreanWar.htm> ("History" at KoreanWar.com) and online readings at DigitalHistory.uh.edu

Week 3

6. Mon 2/2 - the Affluent Society
Reading: HOT 65-79 (Hine, Marchand, Levittown)
7. Wed 2/4 - Tube of Plenty (RP #2 due)
Reading: Scheiner, "Would You Like to be Queen for a Day?" [pdf]
8. Fri 2/6 - The Fair Deal, Labor, and Organization Man
Reading: Harry Truman, State of the Union Address, 5 January 1949
<<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=13293>> and Jones, *A Social History of the Laboring Classes*, 204-216 [pdf]

Week 4

9. Mon 2/9 - Women and Work in the Postwar World
Reading: Evans, "The Cold War and the Feminine Mystique," *Born for Liberty* 243-262 [pdf]
10. Wed 2/11 - Youth Culture and "Juvenile Delinquency"
Reading: Ruth Alexander, "What Price the Fatted Calf? Juvenile Delinquency Approaching Epidemic Proportions," *Vital Speeches of the Day* 28 February 1956 [pdf]; "Bringing up Parents," *TIME* 22 March 1954 and "The Shook-Up Generation," *TIME* 27 April 1958 [pdf]
11. Fri 2/13 - International Affairs in the 1950s and 1960s
Reading: "I-Reporters Dreams Launched Along with Sputnik 50 Years Ago," CNN.com, October 2007 [pdf]; HOT 23-30 (Kennedy)

Week 5 (No class on Monday the 16th)

12. Wed 2/18 - The Election of 1960
Reading: HOT 81-93 (SDS Port Huron, YAF, and JFK Inaugural)
13. Fri 2/20 - Johnson and the Great Society
Reading: HOT 94-114 (Johnson, Schulman)

Week 6

14. Mon 2/23 - Civil Rights and Racial Justice

Reading: HOT 115-136 (Brown v. Board of Education, Declaration, Moody, Chafe)

15. Wed 2/25 - Exam #1

16. Fri 2/27 - Many Civil Rights Movements

Reading: HOT 137-162 (Rustin, Black Panthers, Rosales, Indians of All Tribes)

Week 7

17. Mon 3/2 - the Summer of 1968

Reading: Chicago 1968 oral history project,

<<http://www.areachicago.org/p/issues/6808/chicago-april-1968-oral-history-project/>>

18. Wed 3/4 - Second-Wave Feminism and the Women's Movement (RP #3 due)

Reading: HOT 163-197 (DeHart, NOW, Morgan/NYRW, Vasquez, Schlafly)

19. Fri 3/6 - Sexual Revolution(s)

Reading: HOT 197-221 (Blackmun, Shelley, Bailey)

Week 8

20. Mon 3/9 - Soldiers Speak about Vietnam

Reading: HOT 223-235 (Moore/Galloway) and O'Brien, "If I Die in a Combat Zone" and "The Things They Carried" excerpts [pdf]

21. Wed 3/11 - the Anti-War Movement (Research paper topic due)

Reading: HOT 236-260 (SDS, Chafe, Kerry, Clinton)

22. Fri 3/13 - Lessons of Vietnam

Reading: HOT 261-286 (McNamara, Lind, "Weatherman")

Week 9 (Spring Break, March 16-20)

Week 10

23. Mon 3/23 - the Watergate Crisis

Reading: HOT 287-311 (Schrag, McQuaid)

24. Wed 3/25 - the 1970s

Reading: HOT 312-330 (Farber, "Crisis of Confidence")

25. Fri 3/27 - Environmental Crisis and Activism

Reading: Congressional Testimony about Earth Day 1975

<<http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/tp&CISOPTR=7320>>

Gaylord Nelson Newsletter, first Earth Day 1970

<<http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/tp&CISOPTR=7452>>

Marist Environmental History Project page on the Storm King Mountain project

<<http://library.marist.edu/archives/mehp/scenicdecision.html>>

Week 11

26. Mon 3/30 - The Politics of Anger

Reading: HOT 336-354 (Carter)

27. Wed 4/1 - Exam #2

28. Fri 4/3 - Reagan and the Elections of 1980 and 1984

Reading: HOT 355-370, 385-389 (McGirr, Reagan)

Week 12

29. Mon 4/6 - the Iran-Contra Affair; "Tear Down This Wall"
Reading: Reagan's speech at the Brandenburg Gate, 12 June 1987
<<http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/speeches/detail/3415>>
and
<<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/reagan/peopleevents/pande08.html>>

30. Wed 4/8 - Politics of the Right & the Republican Contract with America
Reading: HOT 371-384, 390-392 (Dionne, Berman, Gingrich)

31. Fri 4/10 - Televangelism (**Research Paper due**)
Reading: none; film in class, "The Eyes of Tammy Faye"

Week 13

32. Mon 4/13 - Gulf War I
Reading: HOT 393-417 (Herring)

33. Wed 4/15 - The Clinton Years
Reading: "The Impeachment Trial of William Jefferson Clinton"
<<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/clinton/clintonhome.html>>

34. Fri 4/17 - The Year You Were Born (**RP #4 due**)
Reading: background research on the year you were born (see worksheet handout)

Week 14 (No class Monday 4/20)

35. Wed 4/22 - AIDS in America
Reading: Shilts, *And the Band Played On*, excerpt [pdf]

36. Fri 4/24 - Waco and Homegrown Terror
Reading: Hall, "The Ghosts of Mt Carmel," Texas Monthly April 2003 [pdf or text-only]

Week 15

37. Mon 4/27 - 9/11 and the Iraq War (**RP #5 due**)
Reading: HOT 418-438 (Coates/Vok, Bush, Sheehan, 9/11 Commission)

38. Wed 4/29 - Globalization
Reading: HOT 439-455 (Pew, Pink, Global Exchange)

39. Fri 5/1 - Inconvenient Truths
Reading: HOT 461-468 (McNeill)

Week 16

40. Mon 5/4 - Portrait of America (**Hundred Days paper due**)
Reading: HOT 469-481 (Census Bureau New Immigration, Thernstrom)
see also www.hurricanearchive.org, the Hurricane Digital Memory Bank

41. Wed 5/6 - The Election of 2008 and Obama's First Hundred Days
Reading: HOT 485-495 (Coontz, Kornblut)

Section 1 Exam #3 = Wed 5/13 8:30 am

Section 4 Exam #3 = Fri 5/8 12:30 pm

1/16/09