

the fifties

Honors First Year Seminar

Come explore the decade you only THINK you know...



Pop-culture images of the 1950s seem conflict-free and innocent, with 3D drive-in movies, classic cars with fins, poodle skirts, saddle shoes, and dancing to 45's on the jukebox. Happy families lived in suburban ranch houses and everyone liked Ike, right? Not so fast! Explore American life and culture in the fifties through film, fiction, history, music and art. This

course is also designed to give first-year students an introduction to the rigors, joys, and challenges of college life and the honors program through inquiry, writing and seminar-style discussion. Take a closer look at the fifties and discover it might have been far more troubled -- and interesting -- than you thought possible. ♣

Your Keys to the Course

WHERE & WHEN

MWF 10:30 am Sullivan 120

X Hour: Weds 9:55 - 10:25 S-119

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

Instructor: Dr. Tona Hangen
(History Department)

Office: Sullivan 327D

Phone: x8688

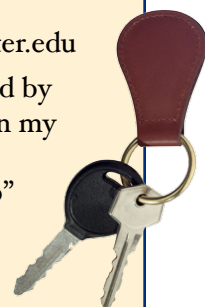
Email: thangen@worchester.edu

Office hours: T, Th, F and by appt; hours are posted on my door & on the course website under "Prof Info"

Peer Mentors: TBA

Paired with: EN 250
"Creative Thinking and Critical Writing" with Dr. Sharon Yang, TR 11:30

CREDITS (3*) - Meets your FYS requirement in LASC; also counts as one of your 7 Honors courses. *See course website for the official University definition of a credit hour.



A WORD ABOUT THE HONORS PROGRAM

This course, along with the other four honors first-year learning communities, is a key component of the Commonwealth Honors Program at Worcester State University. You have been invited to be part of one of the state's premier programs for high-achieving students who show great academic promise. The Honors Center is located in LRC 218 on the main floor of the library; phone x8467. Stay up to date with



honors news and events by subscribing to the Google calendar (see worchester.edu/honors), liking the Honors Facebook page, subscribing to the blog (wsuhonors.wordpress.com) or following its Twitter feed, @HonorsWSU. The Director is Dr. Karen Woods Weierman (English)

kweierman@worchester.edu and the Assistant Director is Dr. Jennifer Hood-DeGrenier (Biology) jhooddegrenier@worchester.edu.

COURSE OVERVIEW

The course involves reading, writing, research and group discussion. It is set up as a seminar, not a lecture course. It is intended to be a challenging course for Honors students. You will be expected to read 50-100 pages a week (sometimes more), and to write approximately 30 pages over the course of the semester. You will need to put in consistent effort during the whole term, including with your attendance. You'll enhance your research and writing skills through targeted history labs. You'll need to speak up in class and demonstrate active learning, not passive absorption. **Learning is not a spectator sport**; seminar-style learning is successful when discussion involves everyone in passionate, informed conversation. To take advantage of multiple learning styles and to help create a community of learning in this classroom, this course will assess your progress in several different ways. See page 3 for the specifics on how your grade is calculated.

READING LIST

Andrew Dunar, *America in the Fifties* (Syracuse UP, 2006) ISBN 0815631286

Waldo E. Martin, *Brown v. Board of Education: A Brief History w/ Documents* (Bedford St. Martins, 1998) ISBN 978-0312111526

Grace Metalious, *Peyton Place* (Hardscrabble Books - Fiction of New England, Northeastern, 1999) ISBN 1555534007

Recommended: Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*, 7e (Bedford/St Martins 2010) ISBN 0312601433



STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES



All first year seminars must fulfill these three student learning outcomes for the LASC program; under each one is how I've "translated" it into terms meaningful for this course.

1) Students will demonstrate effective oral and written communication

For us that means... through consistent and substantive contribution to class discussion over the semester, students will

construct a group framework for understanding the cultural landscape of the 1950s in the US and the world. Students demonstrate effective written communication in labs and on the course blog, and effective oral communication in class and at the FYE Poster Event.

Students will demonstrate active engagement in seminar-style learning, which includes: creating an inclusive environment for all students, taking intellectual risks without fear of failing or ridicule, cooperating with others in groups and discussions and being part of a learning community.

2) Students will apply skills in critical thinking

For us that means... students will analyze course texts along multiple

dimensions of culture and meaning (i.e. on a deeper level than just their content), forming and synthesizing their own original evidence-based interpretations.

3) Students will apply skills in information literacy

For us that means... students will learn to navigate electronic databases, find references to books and articles on a topic, physically locate books and periodicals, evaluate resources for reliability, authority, accuracy and usability, and demonstrate use of standard methods of reference and citation.



GRADING AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and Participation in class (20%)

I will take attendance each day. You should be on time and ready for lively, respectful and substantive discussion, having done the assigned reading. Bring the reading with you to class so you can refer to it during discussion.

History "Labs" (45%)

There will be 6 of these, each giving you experience analyzing a different kind of historical source: a Wikipedia article, two primary documents, a scholarly article, a novel, and a film.

They are front-loaded towards the first half of the semester, and give you opportunities to demonstrate increasing complexity of thought and prose as the term progresses.

**Blog Posts (10%)**

We will keep a class blog reflecting our emerging understanding of this decade and its importance. You will contribute two scheduled posts (500-750 words) and will also need to be involved in comments and discussion online, which factors into your class participation grade.

Poster Presentation (10%)

As a class, we'll participate in the First Year Experience poster session on Dec 10th.

You'll adapt one of your last 3 labs into a poster (detailed guidelines will be given later) and present it at the event, as a culminating experience tying together your learning in the course.

X Hour and Course Reflection (15%)

10% of your grade is X-Hour participation, and an end-of-term reflection counts for 5% of your course grade.

BREAKDOWN OF COURSE GRADE

Attendance/ Participation	20%	This includes blog comments. In class, silent attendance will not receive full credit, because seminar-style discussion is a big part of your successful experience in this course
X Hour	10%	Your peer mentors will keep track of X Hour attendance
History Labs 1 - 3 @ 5 each	15%	Due dates: 9/20, 10/4 and 10/18
History Labs 4 - 6 @ 10 each	30%	Due dates: 11/1, 11/15 and 12/6
Blog Posts	10%	2 posts on scheduled date - so due dates vary for each person
Poster Presentation	10%	Due on Reading Day: Dec 10th. Student Center, time TBA
Course Reflection	5%	Due on 12/9
	100%	

CLASS COMMUNICATION AND COURSE POLICIES



B Movies: *The 1950s was a memorable era for cheesy sci-fi flicks like this one, especially at the drive-in.*

Course Blackboard and Website:

All of the course information and material is available online in TWO places: on Blackboard and on a (public) website/blog. That way, if Blackboard is down, our work goes on. Your class gradebook is only found on Blackboard, however. You should bookmark the course website: wsu.tonahangen.com/fysfifties or subscribe to its RSS feed. In addition you can add the course Google calendar to your own to keep track of due dates and assignments.

My Standard Fine Print

- In-class technology: we will be busy in every class session and we don't need technological distractions. Silence your cell phones in class & refrain from texting and social media use. If you use a laptop (some days they will be needed), do so only for taking notes or accessing course materials.

- I will review proper citation with you; we will use MLA (which is thoroughly described in Hacker, *Writer's Reference*). Please demonstrate exemplary academic integrity in all your writing for this course; plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in failing the class.
- If you have a documented disability (learning or otherwise), consult with me immediately at the outset of the course so we can design a solution to help you be successful in this class.

Email: Your worcester.edu email account is your official university email for course and college-related correspondence; please use it rather than a private email address for any course-related communication.

Email is the best way to reach me; I check it several times a day, although I am more likely to answer it during business hours.
thangen@worcester.edu

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

Contact the **Honors Program** with questions about honors courses and events, and for academic advising related to honors. Library 218, x8467

Disability Services

Office is located in Admin A131, x8733, or at worcester.edu/DSO

Counseling Services

can provide confidential assistance in crisis or ongoing support for any student's emotional/mental health. Staff are also trained responders for sexual assault. Office: 3rd floor of Student Center, x8072

Career Services: yes, even first-year students should get to know this office for help with resume, career exploration, jobs, internships, and more. Office: 3rd floor of Student Ctr, x8072

Your Academic Advisor in your department is a very important resource! Meet with your advisor early and often!

The **Academic Success Center** is the go-to location for first-year and undeclared advising and for tutoring services (all free of charge). Location: Admin A130, x8139.

The **Writing Center** provides free assistance to all students in areas of research & writing. Location: Sullivan 306, x8112. Email: writingcenter@worcester.edu. For hours, info, and online writing lab, visit the website: worcester.edu/writing, or like its Facebook page.

Worcester State Library: in addition to its book, journal and reference collection, the library has access to many articles through online databases, and to nearly anything in print through interlibrary loan (ILL). If you hit a paywall in your research, do not pay: work with the reference staff to find the appropriate way to access materials you need; in all likelihood you can get them either online or via ILL without additional cost.



#	Date	Topic	Reading	What's Due
1	Wed 9/4	Course Intro		
2	Fri 9/6	A Fifties Timeline	glance through Dunar,	Bring Dunar's book
Unit I: The Way We Were (Or Not)				
3	Mon 9/9	Before the '50s: Roots of Change	Dunar, Ch. 1, pp. 1-25	
4	Wed 9/11	Fair Deal (For Whom?)	Dunar, Ch 2, pp. 26-51	
5	Fri 9/13	The Luckiest Generation	Hine, "Luckiest Generation" PDF	
6	Mon 9/16	Wikipedia Workshop	Wikipedia: "United States in the 1950s"	bring laptops
7	Wed 9/18	The Nostalgia Trap	Coontz, "What We Miss" PDF	
8	Fri 9/20	The Postwar War	Dunar, Ch. 3, pp. 51-87	H-Lab #1 Wikipedia
Unit II: American Bandstand: Music and Popular Culture				
9	Mon 9/23	The Age of Television	Dunar, Ch. 8, pp. 232-249	
10	Wed 9/25	School of Rock / The King	Dunar, Ch. 9, pp. 265-277 + Halberstam 31A PDF	
11	Fri 9/27	Inventing the DJ/ Song Wkshop	See links online	bring laptops
12	Mon 9/30	The Beats	Dunar, Ch. 9, pp. 257-265 + Beats, "Intro" PDF	
13	Wed 10/2	Modern Art	Website: RPRP + Penick: "Design" PDF	
14	Fri 10/4	Song Sharing Day	none; prepare to share/discuss your findings	H-Lab #2 Song Study
Unit III: Race and Identity				
15	Mon 10/7	Context: Ike's Domestic Politics	Dunar, Ch. 4	
16	Wed 10/9	Birthing the Movement	Dunar, Ch. 7	
17	Fri 10/11	Brown I	Martin, Intro to p. 40	No Class Mon 10/14
18	Wed 11/13	Brown II	Martin, Popular Response chapter	
19	Fri 11/1	Revisiting Rosa	Theoharis PDF + Halberstam 36 PDF	H-Lab #3 Brown
Unit IV: Peyton Place and Levittown				
20	Mon 10/21	Suburbs and Small Towns	Dunar, Ch. 6, pp. 167-181 + Brier "Peyton" PDF	
21	Wed 10/23	Levittown's Little White Houses	Halberstam 9 PDF	
22	Fri 10/25	Peyton I	Metalious, <i>Peyton Place</i> , Book One	
23	Mon 10/28	Peyton II	Metalious, <i>Peyton Place</i> , Books Two & Three	Your Peyton Logs
24	Wed 10/30	The Problem with No Name	Dunar, Ch. 6, pp. 186-202 + Friedan PDF	
25	Fri 11/1	Film & Discussion: <i>Peyton Place</i>	none	H-Lab #4 Novel

#	Date	Topic	Reading	What's Due
Unit V: How Historians Argue About the Fifties				
26	Mon 11/4	Gender and Family in the 1950s	"More is Better" + "Beyond Cleavers" PDFs	
27	Wed 11/6	Library Day (tentative)	none; bring laptops and meet TBA in library	
28	Fri 11/8	Article Workshop	none; bring your article with you to class	<i>No Class Mon 11/11</i>
29	Wed 11/13	Cold War & McCarthyism	"Venona Project" PDF + Cold War PDF	
30	Fri 11/15	Civil Rights Movement	"Internationalizing the CRM" PDF	H-Lab #5 Scholarly Article
Unit VI: The Fifties On Film				
31	Mon 11/18	At the Movies in the 1950s	Dunar, Ch. 8, pp. 250-256	
32	Wed 11/20	The Monster Flick	"Big Bugs" PDF	<i>No Class for us Fri 11/22</i>
33	Mon 11/25	The Western	McGee, "Why Shane Never Comes Back" + Costello, "ReWriting High Noon" PDFs	
No Class - Thanksgiving Break 11/27 - 12/1				
34	Mon 12/2	The Film Industry & the Blacklist	"The Hollywood Ten" PDF	
35	Wed 12/4	Rebels: The Teen Pic	Halberstam 31B PDF	
36	Fri 12/6	Film Day (TBA your choice)	none	H-Lab #6 Film
37	Mon 12/9	Course Wrap-Up	Eisenhower, "Farewell to the Fifties" PDF	Course Reflection
	Tues 12/10	Poster Day		

Note: the syllabus is subject to change; always check the course website for any updates!