



## Fu Jen Catholic University

### HIST 212 US History 1900 to Recent

#### Summer 2019

**Class hours:** Monday through Thursday, 2 hours each day

**Review and Discussion:** Friday, 2 hours

**Office hours:** Friday/Saturday, 1 hour or by appointment

**Field trip:** According to Professors' teaching plan

**Credit:** 3

**Total contact hours:** 54 hours

**Instructor:** John Carr Shanahan

#### Course Description

This course introduces undergraduates to major themes in American history in the twentieth century. The course is organized chronologically but with an emphasis on three interrelated developments: the continuous social and economic transformations wrought by industrialization and urbanization; the contested development of American political institutions and state capacities to meet the challenges of a modern capitalist society; and struggles over lines of inclusion, identity, and citizenship that remade American culture and politics. The country's changing role in the world, as it grew from a regional power to a global colossus over the course of the century, is also explored, with an emphasis on the ways in which this shifting global role helped to shape American politics, society, and culture at home.

#### Format and learning objectives

This course is a mix of lectures and discussions. You will be graded based on your participation in discussions as well as exams. I expect active participation from you. Feel free to ask questions about the lectures and debate with each other. Do not sit in silence because it will bring your grade down. If you have issues about speaking in class, talk to me during office hours. The learning objectives are:

1. Identify the broad phases of change in American culture, economics, and politics over the course of the twentieth century;
2. Distinguish between major historical periods within the century;



3. Contextualize each major period through comparative and causal assessments of what came before and after in culture, economics, and politics;
4. Connect national developments to changes in America's role in the world;
5. Appraise contemporary debates about American politics and culture in a historically informed manner; and
6. Analyze and interpret historical documents and scholarship in the service of making arguments about change over time – in other words, do the work of historians.

### **Office Hours**

Office hours exist to clear up any misunderstandings about the course or its materials, to address a student's scholarship and, most importantly, to allow for one-on-one contact between you and me. I encourage the development of intellectual relationships that lead to self-discovery, so I cordially invite you to visit me.

### **Readings**

To enable students to fulfill the last goal, the course includes an array of primary sources among the assigned reading material. It also includes two 4-5 page paper assignments. The first assignment will ask students to derive an analytical argument out of their interpretation of a primary source document I will provide. In the second, students will be asked to read a 2008 essay by Nick Salvatore and Jefferson Cowie, "The Long Exception: Rethinking the Place of the New Deal in American History," as well as published responses from five fellow historians. Students will adjudicate among the arguments made in this roundtable and make their own argument about how to "place" the mid-20th century era in the broader sweep of American history.

Students will be expected to do the assigned weekly reading and to attend lectures and weekly discussion sections. In addition to the papers and participation in section, students' grasp of the material will be assessed through a midterm and final exam.

Each week we will be tackling a mix of primary source material and scholarly works. The following required readings are available and recommended for purchase. Library copies are also available on reserve:

Colin Gordon, ed., *Major Problems in American History, 1920-1945* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999)

James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996)

Bruce Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2001)

### **Requirements and Grading**

20% participation, 15% midterm, 20% paper 1, 20% paper 2, 25% final exam



## Course Outline

### Week 1

Monday lecture 1: Introduction to the Course and discussion of terms

Tuesday lecture 2: Age of Reform

Wednesday lecture 3: Varieties of Progressivism

Thursday lecture 4: Conformity and the Crash

Friday Discussion: Gordon, *Major Problems in American History, 1920-1945*, pp. 26-27 (“Attorney General Palmer’s Case against the ‘Reds,’ 1920”), 154-156 (“Congress Debates Immigration Restriction, 1921”), 156-167 (“A Jewish Leader Laments the Rise of Nativism, 1922”), and 159-160 (“Walter White Documents a Lynching, 1925”)

### Week 2

Monday lecture 5: The Policy “Big Bang” of the New Deal

Tuesday lecture 6: Global Catastrophe

Wednesday lecture 7: The Fair Deal and Korea

Thursday lecture 8: Europe Divided

Friday Discussion: Gordon, *Major Problems in American History, 1920-1945*, pp. 401-403 (“A Woman Worker Reflects on the ‘Good War’ at Home During the 1940s,” 405-406 (“A. Philip Randolph Argues for a March on Washington, 1942”), 406-407 (“An African American Soldier Notes the ‘Strange Paradox of the War, 1944”), 408-417 (Robert Westbrook, “Fighting for the American Family,” 1988), 417-425 (Ruth Milkman, “Redefining Women’s Work,” 1987), 429-430 (“The Atlantic Charter, 1941”), 429-431 (“Debating the Bretton Woods Agreement, 1945”), 431-344 (“The Yalta Conference,” 1945), and 446-443 (Michael Sherry, “Mobilization and Militarization,” 1995)

### Week 3

Monday: The Space Race

Tuesday: America and Decolonization

Wednesday lecture 9: MIDTERM DISCUSSION

Thursday lecture 10: MIDTERM

Friday Discussion: Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, Chs 2, 3, 11, 12

### Week 4

Monday lecture 11: The Civil Rights Struggle

Tuesday lecture 12: Vietnam

Wednesday lecture 13: Stagflation

Thursday lecture 14: The Conservative Revolution

Friday Discussion: Schulman, *The Seventies*, Chs 2, 4, 5, 7-9

### Week 5

Monday lecture 17: End of the Cold War



Tuesday lecture 18: Culture Wars  
Wednesday lecture 19: The End of Hegemony  
Thursday: FINAL EXAM DISCUSSION  
Friday lecture: FINAL EXAM

### *Course Grades*

Grade	Percent	GPA
80 to 100	A	4
70 to 79	B	3
60 to 69	C	2
50 to 59	D	1
49 and below	E	0

### **Remark:**

100 is the full mark.

W:withdraw

For the undergraduate students, the passing grade is 60.

### **Academic Integrity**

Cheating and plagiarism in any form or fashion are absolutely not tolerated throughout this course. We will uphold academic integrity is unconditionally. Homework assignments, quizzes and exams must be completed independently. However, active discussion and team spirit are encouraged in appropriate context. Anyone who violates these rules will receive appropriate punishment up to failing the course.