COURSE OBJECTIVES:
No period of US history has more written about it than the twentieth-century. The abundance of literature, all from various methodological perspectives, is exciting to be sure. But it also poses challenges. How do we assemble the mosaic of twentieth-century US history? What questions are most relevant? What themes most prevalent? What subfields have persisted and how have they changed over the years?

This course addresses the history of the twentieth-century United States with the goal of providing provisional and useful answers to those and other historiographical questions. We read social, cultural, political, intellectual and political/economic history. We examine histories of a wide variety of Americans and their social movements, their relationships to economic developments, and their participation in and relationships to political and policy regimes. We read historians from different time periods – both classics and recent important works – and different social, political and theoretical perspectives. All along we will try to make intellectual connections among seemingly disparate specialized fields of American history. We will examine subfields along their own trajectories but also as part of the larger paths taken by the historical profession over the past sixty years. And within subfields, we critically analyze the strengths and limitation of existing historical studies.

This course is structured to help you prepare for qualifying examinations, establish foundations for teaching courses in U.S. history, and encourage creative thinking about the directions for future research.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading: This course requires a great deal of reading. Most weeks we read a monograph and an article or two. Some weeks, however, we read two monographs (marked with **). Please plan accordingly.
Participation: Each student will complete the required readings before class and participate fully in discussions of the readings at the seminar meetings. 15%

Oral Presentation of Class Materials: Each student will make one oral presentation to the class during the semester on the subject of the required readings for that day. The purpose of this brief presentation (10 minutes) is to open and guide initial discussion of the required readings by commenting as much as possible on their historiographical context and significance, while also raising questions about their strengths, weaknesses, methodologies and persuasiveness. The presenters must also circulate lists of questions about the readings to other members of the seminar one week prior to the scheduled presentation. 10%

Short Papers: Each student will submit three short (1000 -1200 word) review essays.

- Short paper one: will be a review essay that develops a critical perspective on the assigned monograph(s) for one day. The essay should creatively and concisely summarize and critique the book(s).
- Short papers two and three: will be review essays that develop critical perspectives on the assigned reading in conjunction with a selection from the recommended reading. Each essay should creatively and concisely summarize and critique the works, but with an emphasis on placing them in conversation with each other and a wider historiography.
- All short papers are due on the day of the discussion of the selected reading. It will be submitted in print and in electronic form. Late essays will be penalized a grade. 15% each, 45% total

Long Essay: Each student will submit a long essay (12-15 pages), based on more extensive reading (at least three books and two articles) on one of the topics addressed in the course or on another topic chosen in consultation with me. The essay is due December 15, the last day of class. In addition to concisely summarizing, comparing and criticizing specific books and/or articles, the essay should also seek to take the analysis further; it should develop two or more of the following: (A) a wider critical perspective on the “state of the debate” in a particular field or subfield; (B) an agenda for new research on the topic; or (C) a preliminary outline of a new interpretation. Late essays will be penalized. 30%

GRADING SUMMARY:
Class participation: 15%
Oral presentation: 10%
Each short essay: 15% (45% total)
Long paper: 45%
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
The main goal of graduate work in history is to prepare you for a career as a teacher, academic, researcher, policy maker, or professional in a related field. Most of this preparation consists of the intellectual work we’ll undertake in this class. However, solid preparation also requires maintaining an open mind and encouraging a tolerant, honest, and professionally appropriate attitude. In this class and throughout your careers, you are expected to constructively criticize and engage the work of other historians without prejudice, intolerance, or inappropriate behavior. As per AHA professional standards, harassment or discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, veteran status, age, or marital status is inappropriate, and will not be tolerated. For a primer on the ethical behavior that is expected of professional historians, see: http://www.historians.org/PUBS/Free/ProfessionalStandards.cfm

ASSIGNED BOOKS:


Dittmer, John, Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi (Champaign Urbana: University of Illinois, 1994)


Gosse, Van, Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretive History (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)


Horowitz, Daniel, Betty Friedan and the Making of the Feminine Mystique: The American Left, the Cold War and Modern Feminism (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000)

Kessler-Harris, Alice, In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in Twentieth Century America (2001)


**DAY 1: THURSDAY 9/8, INTRODUCTION**

**DAY 2: THURSDAY 9/15, AMERICAN EMPIRE**

*Required Reading:*
Kristin Hoganson, “What’s Gender Got to Do with It?” *OAH Magazine of History*, 2005;

*Recommended Reading:*
Emily Rosenberg, Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion (1982).

DAY 3: THURSDAY 9/22, REFORM IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY
Required Reading:
http://www.jstor.org/pss/2701822

Recommended Reading:
Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform (1955)
Lawrence Goodwyn, The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America (1978)
Robyn Muncy, Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1935 (1991)
James Weinstein, Decline of Socialism in America, 1912-1925 (1986).
Doug Rossinow, Visions of Progress: The Left Liberal Tradition in America (2009)

DAY 4: THURSDAY 9/29, RACE, NATION AND MIGRATION
Required Reading:
John Higham, *Strangers in the Land*

**Recommended Reading:**

**DAY 5: THURSDAY 10/6, BUILDING THE STATE, I (The Conservative State)**

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**
*Note: this is an emerging historiography on the conservative state. It covers early, mid and late twentieth century, from things military to things prison and other topics in between. Please consult with me if you know of another book you wish to read, and which I should add to this list.*


Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Drugs* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).

**DAY 6: THURSDAY 10/13, BUILDING THE STATE, II (The Liberal State)**

*Required Reading:*


Steven Fraser and Gary Gerstle, *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order* (introduction).


*Recommended Reading:*


**DAY 7: THURSDAY 10/20, THE AFRICAN AMERICAN FREEDOM STRUGGLE**

*Required Reading:*
John Dittmer, Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi (Champaign Urbana: University of Illinois, 1994)

*Recommended Reading:*
Nancy MacLean, Freedom is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace (2006).
Danielle McGuire, At the Dark End of the Street (2011).
Rhonda Williams, The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women’s Struggles against Urban Inequality (2005)

**DAY 8: THURSDAY 10/27, THE COLD WAR**

*Required Reading:*

*Recommended Reading:*
Akira Iriye, Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World (2002).
Melvyn Leffler, For the Soul of Mankind: The US, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War (2008)
Robert Dean, Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy, (2003)
**DAY 9: THURSDAY 11/3, SEXUALITY**

*Required Reading:*
Alan Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire*

*Recommended Reading:*
John D’Emilio and Estelle Friedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*
John D’Emilio, *The World Turned, Essays on Gay History, Politics, and Culture*

**DAY 10: THURSDAY, 11/10, FEMINIST MOVEMENTS**

*Required Reading:*

*Recommended Reading:*
Nancy Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*
Dorothy Sue Cobble, *The Other Women’s Movement* (2005)

**DAY 11: THURSDAY 11/17, 1960S MOBILIZATIONS AND BEYOND**

*Required Reading:*
Annelise Orleck, *Storming Cesaer’s Palace: How Black Mothers Fought their Own War on Poverty*
Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretive History*

*Recommended Reading:*
Bradford Martin, *The Other Eighties*
* DAY 12: TUESDAY 11/22, CONSERVATISM (THURSDAY COURSES MEET ON TUESDAY)
Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:
Donald Critchlow, Phyllis Schafly and Grassroots Conservatism (2008)
Williams, Daniel, God’s Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right (Oxford University Press, 2010)

DAY 13: THURSDAY 12/1, POLITICAL ECONOMY – LABOR, MARKETS AND POLITICS
Required Reading:
Bethany Moreton, To Serve God and Wal-Mart

Recommended Reading:
Judith Stein, Running Steel, Running America: Race, economic policy, and the decline of liberalism, (1998)
Dorothy Sue Cobble, “Don’t Blame the Workers,” Dissent (Winter 2012).
Jefferson Cowie, Staying Alive
Joseph McCartin, Collision Course: Ronald Reagan, the Air Traffic Controllers, and the Strike that Changed America (2011)
Angus Burtin,

DAY 14: THURSDAY 12/8, POSTMODERNITY
Required Reading:
Rodgers, Age Of Fracture

Recommended Reading:
Geoff Eley, The Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society (Univresity of Michigan, 2008)
David Harvey, A Brief History of Neoliberalism, (2005)
Astrid Henry, Not My Mother’s Sister: Generational Conflict and Third-Wave Feminism (2004).
Beth Bailey, America’s Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force, (2009)
Thomas Borstelmann, The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality (2013)
FINAL PAPER DUE 12/15