

## Recent America: 1945-present

**HIST357, Section 0201**  
**Summer II 2008**  
**T, Th 6:00-9:15 p.m., KEY 0102**

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**Office hours: after class and by appt.**

This course explores key themes and topics in United States history from the end of World War II to the present, including: 1) the Cold War (origins, ideologies, evolution, end); 2) reform movements (civil rights, the Great Society, the New Left, feminism, environmentalism, neo-conservatism); 3) political economy (military-industrial complex, presidential politics, growth of the state, Reaganomics); and 4) culture (religion, racism, gender, family, mass media, consumer culture).

**Goals:** This course is designed to 1) strengthen student knowledge of post World War II U.S. history within a global context and 2) strengthen student skills in historical research and interpretation. The latter skills include the ability to distinguish among a variety of genres of primary and secondary historical texts; the ability to use historical texts appropriately and effectively in academic work; and the ability to define and argue persuasively a historical thesis.

**Requirements:** We will investigate each topic through multimedia presentations, discussions, and required readings. All students are required to complete two papers, one midterm exam, and one final exam. The following books – available for purchase at the University Book Center – are required reading:

- Paul S. Boyer, *Promises to Keep* (Houghton Mifflin, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2005); ISBN0-618-53383-X.
- Robert Griffith and Paula Baker, eds., *Major Problems in American History since 1945* (Houghton Mifflin, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2007); ISBN 0-618-55006-2.
- Richard Yates, *Revolutionary Road* (Vintage, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2000); ISBN 0-375-70844-8.
- Andrew J. Rotter, ed., *Light at the End of the Tunnel: A Vietnam War Anthology* (SR Books, rev. ed., 1999); ISBN 0-8420-2712-2.
- Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (Bantam, 1993); ISBN 0-553-37212-2.
- Jules Tygiel, *Ronald Reagan and the Triumph of American Conservatism* (Pearson Longman, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2006); ISBN 0-536-12543-0.

**Class participation.** Classroom discussions are one of the most important components of the course. The best way to earn high marks for discussion is to complete each week's required reading **before** class meetings; bring to class specific questions and issues for discussion; and participate regularly and constructively in class discussions.

**Course grades** will be calculated as follows:

	<b>Date due</b>	<b>percent of course grade</b>
Class participation	each class	20
Brief response essays	each class	20 (2 percent each)
Midterm exam	August 5	10
Paper	August 19	25
Final exam	August 21	25

**Make-up Exams and Late Papers.** If for any family or medical reason you find it absolutely necessary to miss an in-class examination, you must contact the instructor before the examination to obtain his consent to your absence if you wish to take a make-up exam. Papers are due *in class* on their due dates. Unless you make other arrangements with the instructor, late papers will be penalized one full letter grade for each day of tardiness.

**Students with Disabilities.** Please inform the instructor **at the beginning of the semester** if you require any disability-related special accommodations.

**Religious Observances.** The University System of Maryland policy provides that students not be penalized because of observances of religious beliefs, but rather shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment missed due to individual participation in religious observances. Please inform the instructor **at the beginning of the semester** if you are going to miss any assignments due to religious observances by personally handing him written notification of the projected absence at the beginning of the semester.

**Academic Integrity.** Essential to the fundamental purpose of the University is the commitment to principles of truth and academic honesty. The Code (see <http://www.shc.umd.edu/code.html>) prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, or forging signatures. Following the recommendation of the University Senate, students in this course will be required to write the following signed statement on each examination or assignment: *I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).*

**Disputing Grades.** If you believe one of your assignments was graded unfairly, please follow these steps: 1) Do not try to speak with the instructor about your grade at the end of the class period in which the assignment was handed back; take at least 24 hours to read and think about the comments and grade. But do not wait more than a few days to follow the steps 2-4; 2) Reread the assignment; 3) Write down the reason or reasons why you think the grade is inappropriate; 4) Give these comments to the instructor and arrange a time to meet with him.

## Schedule of Topics and Readings

- 7/15: **From World War to Cold War**  
Boyer, chs. 1-2; Griffith/Baker chs. 1-2.
- 7/17: **The Suburban Middle Class**  
Boyer, chs. 3-4; Griffith/Baker ch. 3; Yates, part 1.
- 7/22: **Intellectual Critiques of 1950s America**  
Boyer, pp. 132-147; Gitlin, chs. 1-3; Yates, parts 2-3.
- 7/24: **Struggles for African-American Civil Rights**  
Boyer, pp. 148-159, ch. 8; Griffith/Baker ch. 5.
- 7/29: **Liberalism at High Tide**  
Boyer, ch. 7; Griffith/Baker, ch. 6; Gitlin, Preface, Introduction, ch. 4.
- 7/31: **New Left and the Counterculture**  
Boyer, pp. 242-262; Griffith/Baker, ch. 7; Gitlin, chs. 5-10.
- 8/5: **Vietnam, Before Tet**  
Boyer, ch. 6, pp. 263-290; Griffith/Baker, ch. 4, pp. 324-334; Rotter, chs. 1 and 3.
- 8/7: **Vietnam: Tet to Withdrawal**  
Boyer, pp. 291-314; Griffith/Baker, pp. 334-349; Gitlin, chs. 11-15, 17-19; Rotter chs. 4, 7, and 8.
- 8/12: **Second Wave Feminism**  
Boyer, pp. 331-335; Griffith/Baker, ch. 8; Gitlin, ch. 16.
- 8/14: **Nixon's America**  
Boyer, pp. 314-330, 335-348; begin Tygiel.
- 8/19: **Reagan's Revolution**  
Boyer, pp. 350-424; Griffith/Baker, ch. 10; Tygiel, entire.
- 8/21: **final exam**

Revised July 15, 2008