

HIST 385R  
Modern American History, 1945-Present  
Spring 2003, T Th 1:00-2:15  
appointment  
Seney Hall 322  
mailto:sashmor@emory.edu ]

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## COURSE SYLLABUS

### Course Description:

This course focuses on modern American history from 1945 to the present with particular emphasis on the social, political, economic, and cultural aspects of the United States. In order to understand post-World War II America we will look at four themes throughout the semester: 1) the variety of ways Americans have reacted to their abundant society, 2) the ways the Cold War affected Americans, 3) political interaction between the dominance of Democratic liberalism and ascending Republican conservatism, and 4) the contention over defining American freedom. Topics include, but are not limited to the political, social, and economic consequences of World War II; the modernization of the South; the evolving Cold War; the shift from a primarily industrial economy to a service economy; American culture and its critics; the various social movements of the period such as the civil rights movement, the student movements of the 1960s, the women's movement; issues and events focused on the Vietnam War; Watergate; and the Reagan era. Throughout the semester we will have the opportunity to visit a few of the historical sites associated with post-war America in Alabama and Georgia including the Museum of Aviation, Warner-Robbins, GA (Feb 22), the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (March 22), and the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library in Atlanta (April 26).

### Course Goals:

There are several objectives for this course. First, by gaining a factual knowledge of this historical period the course seeks to assist students in learning to think historically by recognizing and criticizing evidence and using primary and secondary sources to understand the process of history. Second, this course strives to help students discover, understand, and appreciate the interplay of forces and personalities that shaped the history of modern America. Third, as a writing intensive class that fulfills the sophomore writing requirement, this course will also assist students in developing and refining their writing abilities by organizing, describing, and reaching conclusions on paper about material that they have studied. These skills will benefit students in the future when they enroll in upper division courses.

**Required Reading:** These books are available at the campus bookstore

Kari Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932-1968*, The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 2001.

Tom Engelhardt, *The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation*, University of Massachusetts Press: Amherst, 1995.

Pete Daniels, *Lost Revolutions: The South in the 1950s*, The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 2000.

Larry Berman, *Lyndon Johnson's War: The Road to Stalemate in Vietnam*, W.W. Norton Press: New York, 1989.

Robert Cohen and Reginald E. Zelnik, editors, *The Free Speech Movement: Reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s*, University of California Press: Berkeley, 2002.

Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, Princeton University Press: Princeton, 2001.

Dan T. Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich: Race in the Conservative Counter Revolution, 1964-1994*, Louisiana State University Press: Baton Rouge, 1996.

Robert A. Wilson, editor, *Power and the Presidency*, Public Affairs: New York, 1999.

Michael Schaller, *Reckoning with Reagan: America and Its President in the 1980s*, Oxford University Press: New York, 1992.

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 3rd ed., Bedford/St. Martin's Press: Boston, 2001.

Primary documents and journal articles provided through JSTOR on the library web page under Information Gateway and/or by the professor.

### Grading and Assignments:

**Essay One** (4-6 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman type font size 10) on the Aftermath of World War II and the developing Cold War (10%) initial draft due **February 6** at the *beginning* of class and final draft due **February 18** at the *beginning* of class. **Essay Two** (6-8 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman type font size 10) on 1950s American culture (15%) initial draft due **March 4** at the *beginning* of class and final draft due **March 18** at the *beginning* of class. **Essay Three** (8-10 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman type font size 10) on 1960s America (20%) initial draft due **April 17** at the *beginning* of class and final draft due **April 29** at the *beginning* of class. **Discussion leader** (5%) you will sign up to work with three other people to organize and run class discussion once during the semester on Feb. 4, Feb. 27, March 20, April 3, or April 15. **Unannounced reading quizzes** (10%). **Participation and attitude** (10%) includes attending at least one outside trip scheduled throughout the semester: Feb 22 Museum of Aviation, Warner-Robbins Air Force Base; March 22 Birmingham Civil Rights Institute; April 26 Jimmy Carter Presidential Library. **Final Essay Exam, May 7, 9:00-12 noon** (30%). Study questions for the final examination will be passed out at least one week prior to the exam.

All assignments as well as your final course grade will be based on the +/- system.

### Honor Code:

We are a community of scholars. Therefore, academic dishonesty is not tolerated. Your name or signature on a paper or test submitted for credit shall indicate you have neither given nor received unauthorized information on the work, nor have you condoned the giving or receiving of unauthorized information by others. As a student at Oxford College of Emory University you have agreed to abide by the honor pledge and have taken upon yourself the responsibility of upholding the Honor Code; you are urged to inquire of the Honor Council about any doubtful case at any time throughout the semester. For complete details on the Honor Code please see pages 94-97 in the Oxford College 2002-2003 Catalog.

Note on writing and plagiarism: Students must be scrupulous to avoid plagiarism and to give very precise and complete citations for any work used in any way. Always make it precisely clear to the reader through the use of quotation marks and citations which words, if any, are taken from some other source. Be very careful if you draw on any source—whether from the internet or an archival reference—to give the precise source of each and every word used. Avoid using too many direct quotations; I am much more interested in your paraphrasing of, and commentary upon, the authors' arguments than in your ability to quote directly. Nevertheless, even when paraphrasing you need to cite the source used. For further details see Chapter 5 in Mary Lynn Rampolla's *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* as well as the American Historical Association's "Statement on Plagiarism" that will be handed out and discussed in class.

### Attendance Policy:

Class begins at 1:00 p.m. and ends at 2:15 p.m. A 300-level course requires your regular attendance and active participation in class. Students are allowed two absences, every absence after that will deduct points from the class participation/attitude portion of your final course grade. It is your responsibility to obtain missed notes from class and to turn in all assignments on time. During class discussion of reading material I expect you to have prepared before class. Your class participation grade will be based upon your discussion of the material at hand, merely talking for talking's sake is not considered valid participation. If you attend class regularly but never participate in class discussion your participation grade will be a B-, so do your best to offer your thoughts or opinions on the reading material throughout the course of the semester. You will be expected to attend at least one (although you can go on more than one) outside trip scheduled for **Feb 22** to see the Museum of Aviation, Warner-Robbins, GA; **March 22** to see the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute; **April 26** to see the Jimmy Carter Presidential Museum.

If you miss a due date for any assignment, **only absences due to medical or family emergencies** (for example, attending the funeral of an immediate family member) are valid. You will need to present written evidence of your illness or family emergency for an excused absence. If you miss a due date on a written assignment, whether in preliminary draft form or final form, a late penalty of **five points per day** (including weekends) will be deducted from your grade for that assignment. If you turn in your written assignment after the beginning of class but on the same day it is due you will be deducted **2.5** points from your grade for that assignment. **I do not accept written assignments turned in via e-mail. I only accept hard copies of written assignments.** You cannot change the time of your final exam because of travel plans, vacation plan, job opportunities, or having more than one final exam on one day.

I encourage you to visit me during my office hours, or make an appointment with me if my office hours do not coincide with your schedule. One of the positive experiences you can have at Oxford College is getting to know your professors well. So, take advantage of that opportunity and come see me throughout the semester.

#### **Class Etiquette:**

**E-mail:** We will have a class conference on LearnLink that corresponds with this course. I will post all assignments on the conference as well as other pertinent items that may enhance class discussion. When communicating with your fellow classmates on the conference or with me on my personal e-mail address do not post anything that you would not be comfortable saying to your classmates or to me in person.

The rules for writing e-mail in formal situations—class discussions, letters to professors, student discussion lists—do not necessarily apply when writing e-mail to friends and family. So, here are my suggestions for using e-mail in our class. When writing to me or on our LearnLink conference you should use a serious tone. Address me by my proper title, follow rules of grammar and mechanics, and do not use all lower or upper case letters. You should use black ink in your e-mail message and a normal size font. Avoid using expletives and other slang in formal situations. I have heard it said that writing is like fashion, one style is not appropriate for every situation. For example, you would not wear your bathing suit to a job interview at a bank. So, get in the habit of using your professional voice when communicating as a professional, in your case your profession right now is being a college student.

Do not assume just because you *can* get in touch with me when you want to that I will be available to read your message. I rarely check e-mail once I leave campus, which is usually around 5:30 p.m., and I don't check e-mail over the weekend. So, note that I read e-mail from 9:00-5:30 Monday through Friday. Also, take time to think about your message before you send it. Never send a message when you are feeling emotional, particularly if you are upset or angry. I also do not accept written assignments via e-mail. I only accept hard copies of written assignments.

Finally, know that e-mail is not a very private communication system. Your messages can be printed out, and they can also be sent on to others as forwarded messages. Any private message you send potentially can come under public scrutiny; therefore you should not write anything that would cause you or someone else embarrassment or trouble should your e-mail become public. Most importantly, remember that even though you cannot see them, you are communicating with real human beings whenever you send e-mail. Do not let the impersonal screen make you forget to be as respectful in your communication as you would be when speaking face to face.

**Class Discussion:** We will spend time this semester discussing readings written by professional scholars as well as by ourselves. In this process of discussion it is important to nurture the habit of being a good listener. Practice paying close attention to what others are saying as well as what you are saying. Through this process of listening well we will also respect each other. Our goal is to understand, not to operate only out of a place of judgment. In this manner we will be able to see the nuance and historical context of what we study to gain a deeper understanding. It is also essential that we build a sense of trust among ourselves that will enable us to speak frankly about some difficult parts of our historical past. If education means anything it changes us. That is not easy because we do not like change. So we have to be prepared to face historical reality to enable us to see the world from the perspective of others.

Students should approach discussions having read the assigned readings and thought of questions and ideas provoked by the material. Do not be modest in introducing ideas in class or in politely opposing the ideas of others. Ideally, discussion is a form of active learning that reinforces the sense that the classroom is a community of learning. Students should expect to learn a great deal from each other, as well as from the reading material and their professors.

**Cell Phones:** I do not take phone calls during class so you should not either. Turn off your cell phone when you are in class or when we are visiting a historic site.

#### **SCHEDULE**

Jan 16	Syllabus, What does it mean to live in an abundant society?	
Jan 21	Making Connections between History and English	Readings on Writing
Jan 23	Impact of World War II—the South as an example	Lecture and Daniels pp 1-60

Jan 28	Aftermath of WWII—the Holocaust and the A-Bomb	E-Reserves Abzug & Hersey
Jan 30	Early Cold War Culture	Engelhardt pp 3-65
Feb 4	***Student-Led Discussion of Impact of WWII***	
Feb 6	Origins of the Cold War	Lecture
<b>Draft of Essay One on the Aftermath of WWII due at the beginning of class.</b> Bring five copies of your essay to class (20% of paper grade).		
Feb 11	Post War Politics	Frederickson pp 1-117
Feb 13	Post War Politics	Frederickson pp 118-238
Feb 18	Cold War Culture	Engelhardt pp 69-171
Feb 20	<b>Final Draft of Essay One due at the beginning of class</b> (80% of paper grade).	
Feb 20	Cold War Culture	Daniels pp 91-175, Ginsberg
Feb 22	Field Trip to Museum of Aviation, Warner-Robbins Air Force Base	
Feb 25	Civil Rights Movement 1950s	Daniels pp 179-283
Feb 27	***Student-Led Discussion of 1950s America***	
March 4	Civil Rights Movement 1960-1964	Lecture, Daniels pp 284-305,
	<b>Draft of Essay Two on 1950s American Culture</b>	Wilson pp 47-67
<b>due at the beginning of class.</b> Bring 5 copies of your essay to class (20% of paper grade).		
March 6	Free Speech Movement at Berkeley	Cohen pp xiii-72
March 11	No Class Spring Break	
March 13	No Class Spring Break	
March 18	Free Speech Movement at Berkeley	Cohen (we will divide readings and teach each other what we read)
<b>Final Draft of Essay Two due at the Beginning of Class</b> (80% of paper grade)		
March 20	***Student-Led Discussion of CRM and Free Speech Movement***	
March 22	Field Trip to Birmingham Civil Rights Institute	
March 25	Vietnam	Wright pp 69-93 Berman pp xi-113
March 27	Vietnam	Berman pp 114-203, 215-240
April 1	Vietnam	Engelhardt pp 175-259
April 3	***Student-Led Discussion of Vietnam***	
April 8	Reaction to the 1960s	McGirr pp 3-146
April 10	Reaction to the 1960s	McGirr pp 147-273, Carter pp xi-23
April 15	***Student-Led Discussion of Reaction to the 1960s***	
April 17	Nixon and the 1970s	Lecture, Carter pp 24-54, Wilson pp 95-109
<b>Draft of Essay Three on 1960s America due at the Beginning of Class.</b> Bring five copies of your essay to class (20% of paper grade).		
April 22	Ronald Reagan and the 1980s	Schaller 3-98
April 24	Ronald Reagan and the 1980s	Schaller 99-182
April 26	Field Trip to Jimmy Carter Presidential Library	

April 29	The 1990s	Englehardt pp 263-303, Carter pp 55-123, Wilson 137-156
grade)		<b>Final Draft of Essay Three due at the beginning of class</b> (80% of paper
April 30	Reading Day	
May 7		<b>Final Exam, 9:00-12 noon. Bring a large blue book and pen or pencil.</b>