

HIST 345 11J
Modern American History: 1945-Present
Fall 2012, T Th 11:50-1:30
Student Center, 2nd Floor, Room 27

Dr. Susan Youngblood Ashmore
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COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description:

This course focuses on modern American history from 1945 to the present. In order to understand post-World War II America we will look at four themes throughout the semester: 1) the ways the Cold War affected Americans socially, economically, and politically 2) political interaction between the dominance of Democratic liberalism and ascending Republican conservatism, 3) the contention over defining American freedom, and 4) the variety of ways Americans have reacted to their abundant society. Topics include, but are not limited to the political, social, and economic consequences of World War II; the development of the Cold War and its evolution across presidential administrations; American culture and its critics; American foreign policy especially toward the Middle East.

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, criticizing, and interpreting evidence and using primary and secondary sources to understand the process of history and the historical method. **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 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 especially benefit students in the future when they enroll in upper division history courses.

Required Reading: These books are available at the campus bookstore and on reserve at the library.

Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945*, Third Edition, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

Thomas Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium: Television, McCarthyism, and American Culture*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, *All You Need Is Love: The Peace Corps and the Spirit of the 1960s*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Susan J. Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media*, New York: Three Rivers Press, 1995.

Tim O'Brien, *If I Die in a Combat Zone*, New York: Broadway Books, 1975.

Frye Gaillard, *Cradle of Freedom: Alabama and the Movement That Changed America*, Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004.

Primary documents and journal articles provided through links on the Reserves-Direct page for our class and/or by the professor.

Grading and Assignments:

Essay One (15%): 5-7 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman type font size 10 or 12, one-inch margins) on the Aftermath of World War II and Cold War Culture due at the beginning of class **October 2**. **Essay Two** (20%): 6-8 double-spaced pages, Times New Roman type font size 10 or 12, one-inch margins) on the 1960s due at the beginning of class on **November 13**. **Peace Corps Oral History Project** (35%: Interview 10%, Transcription of Interview 5%, Formal Analysis of Interview using Hoffman *Love is All You Need* 15%, Presentation of Analysis 5%) **One-page Written Responses of Readings** (15%), **Discussion Leader** (10%) which includes working with one classmate to develop discussion questions and guide discussion during class. **Class Participation** (5%), which includes making meaningful contributions to class discussion, regular attendance, and active engagement in class. **Final Presentation of Peace Corps Oral History Project will be during the time for final exam, December 18th from 7:00-10:00 p.m.**

All assignments as well as your final course grade will be based on the +/- system. To get credit for your writing requirement you must earn a grade of C or higher. You can pass the course with a C- or D, but you will not

receive the writing requirement.

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 the Oxford College 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 sources. Be very careful if you draw on any source—whether from the internet, a book, or an archival reference—to give the precise source of each and every word used. Remember that even when paraphrasing you need to cite the source used. For further details see *Writing History* on reserve at the library reserve desk.

Attendance Policy:

Class begins at 11:50 a.m. and ends at 1:30 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 C+, so do your best to offer your thoughts or opinions on the reading material throughout the course of the semester.

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 and before 5:00 p.m. 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 presentation of the Peace Corps Oral History Project because of travel plans, vacation plan, job opportunities, or having more than one final exam on one day.

Visiting the Professor:

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. 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.

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. 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.

Electronics: I do not take phone calls during class so you should not either. Turn off your **cell phone** when you are in class. Do not refer to your cell phone text messages at anytime during class or during an exam. If necessary, I will require that you leave your cell phone with me during class or an exam. Do not leave class to check your cell phone for a call or a text message. You should be able to sit through the entire 1 hour and 40 minutes of class without leaving the room. If you need to take notes using a **lap top** you must have permission from me.

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 your professor.

SCHEDULE

Aug 30	Syllabus, What are the American ideals of today? What questions do you have about post-war America?	
Sept 4	Aftermath of WWII–the Holocaust	ResDirect: Abzug, FDR “4 Freedoms,” Hughes Poems, Douglas Chap 2
Sept 6	America and Middle East	Little, Introduction, Chap 1 and 3
Sept 7-10	Watch “Victory in the Pacific” online (1 hour, 50 minutes)	ResDirect link for film
Sept 11 Sept 13	Aftermath of WWII–the Atomic Bomb Business, Diplomacy, Middle East Oil	ResDirect, Hersey, Faulkner, HST Little, Chap 2
Sept 18	Cold War Culture	Doherty, Chap 1-3
Sept 20	Cold War Culture	Doherty, Chap 4-7
Sept 25 Sept 27	Cold War Culture Civil Rights–1950s Alabama	Doherty, Chap 8-10 Gaillard, Part I, pp 3-58
Oct 2	Pre-Feminism	Douglas, Chap 3-4
Oct 4	Essay One–Post War through Cold War Culture due at the beginning of class Civil Rights–1960	Gaillard, Part 2, pp.61-117
Oct 9 Oct 11	Peace Corps Peace Corps	Hoffman, Chap 1-3 Hoffman, Chap 4-6
Oct 16 Oct 18	Fall Break –No Class Civil Rights–Birmingham	Gaillard, Chap 9-12
Oct 23 Oct 25 Oct 30 Nov 1	Civil Rights–The Shadow of Death Vietnam Vietnam Peace Corps	Gaillard, Chap 13-15, “Four Little Girls ” ResDirect Guide to Vietnam, O’Brien Chap 1-10 O’Brien Chap 11-23 Hoffman, Chap 7-8
Nov 6 Nov 8	Civil Rights–Voting Rights Civil Rights–Black Power	Gaillard, Part 4, pp. 221-263 Gaillard, Part 5, pp 267-325
Nov 13	Presidential Doctrines	Little, Chap 4
Nov 15	Essay Two–1960s due at the beginning of class America, Egypt, Arab Nationalism	Little, Chap 5
Nov 20 Nov 22	Modernizing the Middle East No Class–Thanksgiving Holiday	Little, Chap 6
Nov 27 Nov 29	Feminism Kicking the Vietnam Syndrom	Douglas Chap 5-8 Little, Chap 7
Dec 4 Dec 6 Dec 11	Arab-Israeli Peace Process Bush Doctrine, Iraq, and Radical Islam Discussion of Peace Corps Oral Histories	Little, Chap 8 Little, Chap 9

Dec 12

Reading Day

Dec 18

Presentations of Peace Corps Oral History Projects 7:00-10:00