

HIST 347: Modern America: U.S. History, 1945-present

Messiah College

Spring 2017

Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays
1:50-2:50 p.m.
Boyer 338

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Thurs., 10:30-noon; & by apt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course looks at a fairly short period of time in U.S. history--the seventy years or roughly two generations between the end of World War II and the present. Yet this time has seen enormous change in American society, economics, politics, race relations, gender roles, and other areas. In looking at American society during the last half of the twentieth century, we will note a striking degree of both dissent and consensus at different points. We will see much that is new--for example, new roles played by minorities, women, and young people in American society. Yet we will also see that old questions continued to face Americans during the last half of the twentieth century. For example--How democratic a society is America? Who in American society has the power to effect change? What role should the government play in American life? New answers would be given to these old questions in America between 1945 and the present. A major theme in all of U.S. history since 1945 is how the nation would use its unprecedented wealth and power. In this period, America's wealth and power posed problems as well as opportunities. One of the main challenges that has faced U.S. from 1945 to the present has been about how to use its formidable resources--both at home and abroad. This would shape the development of various social, political, and moral reform movements such as the civil rights movement and War on Poverty. It would also influence how the U.S. would become involved in the Cold War, the Vietnam War, and the recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

COURSE OBJECTIVES--FOR ALL HISTORY COURSES AT MESSIAH COLLEGE:

1. Historical Knowledge: Students have a better historical understanding of political, social, cultural, economic, and religious practices and structures.
2. Historical Methods: Students demonstrate an understanding of historical causation, an ability to conduct basic historical analysis of primary and secondary sources, and an ability to communicate that analysis in effective written and oral communication.
3. Historical Interpretation: Students use texts and other cultural resources to make sense of the past, understand ways in which the past influences the present, and consider how the present influences our study of the past.
4. Historical Convictions: Students become more thoughtful, curious, and empathetic due to their evaluation of the historical complexity of human identities, cultures, and societies from the perspective of Christian faith.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Zaretsky, Natasha et al. *Major Problems in American History Since 1945*, 4th ed. Cengage Learning. ISBN-13: 978-1133944140.

Gillon, Steven M. *The American Paradox: A History of the U.S. Since 1945*, 3rd ed. Cengage Learning. ISBN-13: 978-1133309857.

Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 8th ed. Bedford/St. Martin's. ISBN-13: 978-1457690884.

Online readings.

REQUIREMENTS:

read all assigned readings

participate in class discussions and debates

write one primary source analysis (1 p. each) per week (total of 11)

write two articles reviews (3 pp. each) from *Major Problems*

edit a classmate's paper

write a research paper (10-12 double-spaced pp.)

STANDARD OF EVALUATION:

The final grade for the course will be derived as follows:

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| participation in class discussions | 10% |
| participation in debates | 5% |
| primary source analyses | 20% |
| article reviews | 10% |
| peer editing | 5% |
| research paper | 40% |
| summative essay or speech | 10% |

PARTICIPATION:

This class will be run like a seminar; students will have the responsibility for contributing to and sometime for leading discussion. Be sure to come to each class having read the assigned reading for the day and ready to contribute.

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSES:

You'll write one primary sources analysis of one-page each per week, for a total of 11. Among the questions your primary source analyses might address are:

What's the author's background and what led him or her to write this?

Who was the original audience the author hoped to reach?

What did the author hope his or her text would achieve?

What rhetorical and logical strategies does the author use to try to sway his or her audience?

Do you believe that this text is successful in what it set out to do?

How has the situation discussed by the author changed in American life since he or she wrote?

ARTICLE REVIEWS:

You'll write reviews of two articles of your choosing from the *Major Problems* reader. These should be 3 pages long, and assess the article—including its thesis, its use of evident to support of the thesis, and its place within other scholarly literature.

RESEARCH PAPER:

You will write a research paper for this course of 10-12 double-spaced pages which will be due Fri., Apr. 21 in class. You may choose to focus on any person, group, trend, issue, or idea in the U.S. from 1945 to the present that interests you. The research paper must be based on primary as well as secondary sources. Examples of primary sources might include magazine runs (several articles on a particular topic), newspaper runs, books, diaries, novels, etc. In addition to your reading and analysis of primary sources, you should also use at least two secondary sources, to reveal what other historians have written on your topic. To ensure a successful final paper, the research and writing process will be divided into the following stages with accompanying deadlines. Please email the required information to the instructor before class that day.

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| topic | due Fri., Feb. 24 |
| title and bibliography (including both primary and secondary sources) | due Fri., Mar. 3 |
| outline and thesis or theme | due Fri., Mar. 10 |
| first draft | due Fri., Mar. 31 |
| final draft | due Fri., Apr. 21 |

SUMMATIVE ESSAY OR SPEECH:

In place of a final exam, you'll have the choice of either writing an in-class summative essay or giving a summative speech during our scheduled exam week meeting. More details will be forthcoming.

NOTE ON ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND CLASSROOM COURTESY:

Electronic devices can be a source for both good and ill in education. On the one hand, the proliferation of the internet and portable computers have made vast amounts of information available to more people at more places in more places. The operating hours of libraries and archives no longer pose a barrier to study and research. This is certainly a good thing. On the other hand, the proliferation of electronic devices has also produced what some have called the "problem of divided attention." Although some people can truly and effectively multi-task, many others find themselves permanently distracted by ringtones, twitter feeds, incoming emails, and the like. And since a class such as ours is a community that hopefully cares about our neighbor's opportunity to learn as well as our own, this problem of divided attention is not just an individual problem, but a corporate one, as well. As a result, I'd ask that you observe the following classroom rules out of courtesy both for your classmates and for me.

Regarding cell phones: Please turn off your cell phone before coming into the classroom. Do not answer the phone or text during class. If you are expecting a very important call, please put your phone on vibrate (silent), and let me know about the situation before class begins.

Regarding laptop computers: You are welcome to bring your computer to lecture to take notes and to seminar to take notes and access online readings, but while in lecture and seminar, please use your computer only for purposes related to this course. Do not use computers for entertainment (i.e. surfing, gaming, chatting, messaging, emailing, etc.) during class. If you use your computer to take notes, please email them to me following class.

NOTE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Personal integrity is a behavioral expectation for all members of the Messiah community: administration, faculty, staff, and students. Violations of academic integrity are not consistent with the community standards of Messiah College. These violations include:

Plagiarism: Submitting as one's own work part or all of any assignment (oral or written) which is copied, paraphrased, or purchased from another source, including on-line sources, without the proper acknowledgment of that source. Examples: failing to cite a reference, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate, misrepresenting another's work as your own, etc.

Cheating: Attempting to use or using unauthorized material or study aids for personal assistance in examinations or other academic work. Examples: using a cheat sheet, altering a graded exam, looking at a peer's exam, having someone else take the exam for you, using any kind of electronic device, communicating via email, IM, or text messaging during an exam, etc.

Fabrication: Submitting altered or contrived information in any academic exercise. Examples: falsifying sources and/or data, etc.

Misrepresentation of Academic Records: Tampering with any portion of a student's record. Example: forging a signature on a registration form or change of grade form on paper or via electronic means.

Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: Helping another individual violate this policy. Examples: working together on an assignment where collaboration is not allowed, doing work for another student, allowing one's own work to be copied.

Unfair Advantage: Attempting to gain advantage over fellow students in an academic exercise. Examples: lying about the need for an extension on a paper, destroying or removing library materials, having someone else participate in your place, etc.

Penalties for Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy - A faculty member may exercise broad discretion when responding to violations of the Academic Integrity Policy. The range of responses may include failure of the course to a grade reduction of the given assignment. The typical consequence for violations will be failure of the assignment. Some examples of serious offenses which might necessitate the penalty of the failure of the course include cheating on an examination, plagiarism of a complete assignment, etc. The academic integrity policy in its entirety can be found in the student handbook and should be reviewed by every student, as the primary responsibility for knowledge of and compliance with this policy rests with the student.

NOTE ON AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT:

Any student whose disability falls within ADA guidelines should inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester of any special accommodations or equipment needs necessary to complete the requirements for this course. Students must register documentation with the Office of Disability Services. Contact DisabilityServices@messiah.edu, (717) 796-5382.

SCHEDULE

[N.B. All details subject to change.]

Mon., Jan. 30 - Introduction

Wed., Feb. 1 - The Cold War

reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 1; William H. Chafe, "America Since 1945" (1997) [on Canvas]

Fri., Feb. 3 - The Cold War

reading: *Major Problems*, ch. 1

Mon., Feb. 6 - Post-War Liberalism

reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 2

Wed., Feb. 8 - McCarthyism

reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 3

Fri., Feb. 10 - Library visit

Mon., Feb. 13 - Consumer Society

reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 4

Wed., Feb. 15 - Consumer Society

reading: *Major Problems*, ch. 2

Fri., Feb. 17 - Eisenhower

reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 5; Eisenhower's Farewell Address (1960)

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/dwightdeisenhowerfarewell.html>

Mon., Feb. 20 - The New Frontier

reading: *American Paradox*, chs. 6 & 7

Wed., Feb. 22 - The Great Society

reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 8

Fri., Feb. 24 - The Great Society

reading: *Major Problems*, ch. 5

Mon., Feb. 27 - The Civil Rights Movement

reading: *Major Problems*, ch. 4

Wed., Mar. 1 - The Civil Rights Movement

Fri., Mar. 3 - The Vietnam War

reading: *American Paradox*, chs. 9 & 10

Mon., Mar. 6 - The Vietnam War

reading: *Major Problems*, ch. 8

Wed., Mar. 8 - Debate: Could the U.S. have won the Vietnam War?

Fri., Mar. 10 - The New Left

reading: *Major Problems*, ch. 6

Carl Oglesby, Let Us Shape the Future (1965)

http://www.sds-1960s.org/sds_wuo/sds_documents/oglesby_future.html

Tom Hayden, "What the Port Huron Statement still has to say, 50 years on" (2012)

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/jun/14/port-huron-statement-50-tom-hayden>

Mar. 11-19 - Spring Recess; no class meetings

Mon., Mar. 20 - The Women's Movement
reading: *Major Problems*, ch. 7

Wed., Mar. 22 - Racial, Ethnic, & Sexual Politics
reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 11

Fri., Mar. 24 - Reading Recess; no class meeting

Mon., Mar. 27 - The Age of Limits
reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 12

Wed., Mar. 29 - The Age of Limits
reading: *Major Problems*, ch. 9

Fri., Mar. 31 - In-class editing; **first draft of research paper DUE**

Mon., Apr. 3 - Reagan
reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 13

Wed., Apr. 5 - 1980s Culture
reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 14; *Major Problems*, ch. 10

Fri., Apr. 7 - Debate: Was Reaganomics good for America?

Mon., Apr. 10 - The End of the Cold War
reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 15

Wed., Apr. 12 - The 1990s
reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 16

Apr. 14-17 - Easter Recess; no class meetings

Wed., Apr. 19 - The 1990s
reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 17

Fri., Apr. 21 - Post-Cold War America; **final draft of research paper DUE**
reading: *Major Problems*, ch. 12

Mon., Apr. 24 - Race in Contemporary America
reading: *Major Problems*, ch. 13

Wed., Apr. 26 - 21st century America
reading: *American Paradox*, ch. 18

Fri., Apr. 28 - Student Presentations

Mon., May 1 - Student Presentations

Thurs., May 4, 8:00 a.m. - Final Exam