
HIST 3120

Postwar America, 1945-present



Above: "Hard Hat Riot," New York City, May 8, 1970

Course Description

This course will cover American history since 1945, exploring through documents and primary sources the key political, social, cultural, economic, and intellectual developments of the era. Topics will include the evolution of liberalism, the rise of conservatism, the development of America's role as a global superpower, the implications of the Cold War on domestic and cultural affairs, the evolution of youth rebellion and youth culture, the expanded role of the presidency in politics, and the rise of new forms of political culture and the role of the media in American politics.

Instructor: Katherine Jewell, PhD
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Office: Miller 301-B

Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-4 and by appointment

Required Books

Textbook:

- Gillon, *The American Paradox* (available on reserve at the library or through the bookstore/online)

The following books are all available through Interlibrary Loan, your local library, or cheaply through Amazon:

- John Steinbeck, *Winter of Our Discontent*
- Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*
- Hunter S. Thompson, *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail '72*
- Michael MacDonald, *All Souls*
- David Brooks, *Bobos in Paradise*
- William Finnegan, *Cold New World*

Policies

Academic Honesty: Citation, writing clarity, and grammar are important in making your argument effective and understandable. I suggest you visit this site to review writing skills and techniques and also that you make use of FSU's Writing Center to review your work, particularly if you have concerns. Please note that ignorance is not an excuse for plagiarism. Students are responsible for understanding and adhering to the university's policies regarding plagiarism and academic integrity. The consequences for violation are severe, including failure of the course and potential expulsion.



SNCC leader Ella Baker.

Email: is the best way to reach me. Please be aware that it may take me up to 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends to respond. If you do not hear back from me, it is likely that the answer is available on the syllabus. If your email issue takes more than a paragraph to explain, please come see me in my office hours.

Online Behavior: The discussion forums will by-and-large be informal spaces. Do not mistake this informality and creative space as a license to be unprofessional. Your fellow students are your colleagues and I expect you to conduct yourself as if you are sending business communication, even if our content is at times controversial, emotional, or provocative. Timeliness is another way to demonstrate your professionalism; submitting your work on time makes it easier for your fellow students to complete their own assignments (evaluation posts, etc.).

Discussion posts will be graded on a 10 point scale for quality (timeliness, use of sources, and clarity of argument) and creativity. To receive the maximum credit, you must engage with your fellow classmates. For more information on discussion grading, see the Discussion Board on Blackboard.

Late Policy: Late papers and assignments will only be accepted by prior arrangement. Late work will receive a penalty of one-third grade deduction per day late (i.e. an A becomes an A- after one day, and so on).



Grading: All grading is done using FSU's 4.0 scale. If you receive a numerical/percentage grade (e.g. 88%), it will be calculated using the corresponding GPA (3.3).

Fitchburg State encourages the full participation of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of campus living and learning. To support access and inclusion, Fitchburg State offers reasonable accommodations to students who have documented disabilities (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, sensory, etc.). If you require accommodations for this class, please provide me with a copy of your Accommodation Agreement as soon as possible so that we can discuss your specific needs. Any information that you share with me will be held in the strictest confidence, unless you give me permission to do otherwise. If you require academic accommodations but do not have an Accommodation Agreement, contact Disability Services a.s.a.p. to establish your eligibility: www.fitchburgstate.edu/disability or 978-665-4020.

About Online Learning

For many of you, online learning may be nothing new. For others, this might be your first experience with such a course. Since each of you bear the responsibility for your own learning, as well as that of your classmates, perhaps to a greater extent than in a face-to-face class, I would like to emphasize three points I believe are critical to your success in this online version of USII:

- **Personal responsibility.** You are responsible for working on your own and exerting the personal discipline necessary to complete assignments in a timely fashion. To do so, first read the syllabus—especially the course schedule—carefully to know your assignments for each week, when writing and discussion assignments are due, and the closing of each grading period. You will have to allow sufficient time to do the reading assignments before the postings are due. You have to take an active role in the discussions. All of

this represents a great responsibility and investment in time and effort on your part, especially considering the accelerated schedule of a summer course. Students who have taken this course previously report that there is a very direct relationship between effort and satisfaction – the more effort and time you put into the course, the more you are likely to gain from it.

- **Constant and continual effort.** All of us have a tendency (and need, at times) to put work until the last minute. Doing so threatens your success in the course. You need to work on this class every day. Some of that work, like reading, discussion, and thinking about questions regarding assignments, as well as preparing writing assignments, will be done off-line. Whatever you are working on, however, you should log on to our Blackboard site at least one a day and keep abreast of any important messages or announcements, and to see how conversations about the material are developing.
- **Schedule your time.** Students often ask, “How much time should I put into this course?” Obviously, that varies from one student to another, and it will vary over the eight weeks we will be working together, depending on your work and personal schedules. Break down each reading assignment and the time required and budget accordingly. Do the same for your writing assignments. Create to-do lists for each assignment and think about how much time you will need for each step, then schedule those blocks into your calendar.



Assignments and Grading

Because this is an online course, assignments are writing intensive. This course will give you ample opportunity to improve your expository writing, argument development, and use of evidence.

10% Multiple Choice Quizzes Based on the Gillon textbook, each chapter will have a short, multiple-choice quiz to be completed on Blackboard.

15% Midterm An essay exam.

15% Final An essay exam.

20% Book Responses/Peer Review Students will submit a 2-3 page book review/response (800-1000 words) placing each of the memoirs or commentaries into context. These will be submitted via TurnItIn and students will complete a peer review through Blackboard/Turnitin one week after submissions are due (details will be posted on Blackboard).

There will be a set of questions to help frame each paper.

20% Discussions There are seven discussions on blackboard based around a question inspired by the textbook reading. Students must post their own response as well as respond to another student's post by the following week.

20% Research Paper A 6-page guided research paper due at the end of the semester.

Grading Policy

Grades are awarded on a numerical scale as follows:

| | | |
|-----|-------|------------|
| 4.0 | A | 95 – 100 |
| 3.7 | A- | 92 – 94 |
| 3.5 | A-/B+ | 89 – 91 |
| 3.3 | B+ | 86 – 88 |
| 3.0 | B | 83 – 85 |
| 2.7 | B- | 80 – 82 |
| 2.5 | B-/C+ | 77 – 79 |
| 2.3 | C+ | 74 – 76 |
| 2.0 | C | 71 – 73 |
| 1.7 | C- | 69 – 70 |
| 1.5 | C-/D+ | 67 – 68 |
| 1.3 | D+ | 64 – 66 |
| 1.0 | D | 60 – 63 |
| 0.0 | F | 0 – 59 |
| | IN | Incomplete |

Schedule of Assignments

All assignment due dates are on Wednesdays; however, all assignments may be (and should be) completed before the dates indicated. All assignments due by midnight of the date indicated.

*****Please Note***** *there are writing assignments, such as the midterm, final, and research paper, for which you will need to plan in advance to complete on time. The Reading Questions for each chapter (posted under Chapters on Blackboard) are VERY good ways to prepare for the midterm and the final, and I have a suggested timeline for preparing the parts of the guided research paper embedded within the syllabus. Remember that it is your responsibility to plan ahead of time for assignments that are clumped around the same due date.*

WEEK 1 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27

Be sure you have all the books, or are scheduled to check the books out from the library by the appropriate dates. Post a bio and an introduction on the course discussion board.

WEEK 2 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3

- **Read:** Gillon chapters 1-3 and complete **quizzes** for each chapter on Blackboard
- **Discuss:** Post response to **discussion question 1** on Blackboard

WEEK 3 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

- **Read:** Gillon chapters 4 and 5 and complete **quizzes** for each chapter on Blackboard
- **Discuss:** Post response to **discussion question 2** on Blackboard (and respond to discussion 1)

WEEK 4 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

- **Read:** Steinbeck, *A Winter of Our Discontent*
- **Write: 2-3 page response paper** placing the book in historical context with discussion of relevant themes to the course. Submit a peer review (by Feb. 24)

WEEK 5 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

- **Read:** Gillon chapters 6 and 7 and complete **quizzes** for each chapter on Blackboard
- **Discuss:** Post response to **discussion question 3** on Blackboard (and **respond** to discussion 2)

WEEK 6 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2

- **Read:** Gillon chapter 8 and Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, complete **quiz** for Gillon chapter on Blackboard
- **Write: 2-3 page response paper** placing the book in historical context with discussion of relevant themes to the course. Submit a peer review (by March 9).

WEEK 7 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

- **Read:** Gillon chapters 9-11 and complete **quizzes** for each chapter on Blackboard
- **Discuss:** Post response to **discussion question 4** on Blackboard (and **respond** to discussion 3)
- **MIDTERM DUE** (covers Chapters 1-9), submit via Blackboard. Questions submitted in Week 5

WEEK 8 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

(Spring Break): Review research paper topics and make selection. Send Prof. Jewell any questions, test your thesis, begin drafting. Topics will be posted on Blackboard by February 24.

WEEK 9 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

- **Read:** Thompson, *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail '72*
- **Write: 2-3 page response paper** placing the book in historical context with discussion of relevant themes to the course. Submit a peer review (by March 9), (and **respond** to discussion 4).

WEEK 10 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30

- **Read:** Gillon chapter 12 and complete **quiz** for chapter on Blackboard
- **Write:** Turn in **draft** of research paper

WEEK 11 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6

- **Read:** MacDonald, *All Souls*
- **Write: 2-3 page response paper** placing the book in historical context with discussion of relevant themes to the course. Submit a peer review (by April 13).

WEEK 12 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

- **Read:** Gillon chapters 13 and 14 and complete **quizzes** for each chapter on Blackboard
- **Discuss:** Post response to **discussion question 5** on Blackboard

WEEK 13 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20

- **Read:** Gillon chapters 15 and 16 and complete **quizzes** for each chapter on Blackboard
- **Discuss:** Post response to **discussion question 6** on Blackboard (and **respond** to discussion 5)

WEEK 14 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

- **Read:** Finnegan, *Cold New World*
- **Write: 2-3 page response paper** placing the book in historical context with discussion of relevant themes to the course. Submit a peer review (by May 4).

WEEK 15 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, MAY 4

- **Read:** Gillon chapters 17 and 18 and complete **quizzes** for each chapter on Blackboard
- **Discuss:** Post response to discussion **question 7** on Blackboard (and **respond** to discussion 6)

WEEK 16 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, MAY 11

- **Read:** Finnegan, *Cold New World*
- **Write: 2-3 page response paper** placing the book in historical context with discussion of relevant themes to the course. Submit a peer review (by May 18), (and **respond** to discussion 7).

WEEK 17 - ENDS WEDNESDAY, MAY 16

Final **Research Paper** Due, submit via Blackboard.

FINAL EXAM due, submit via Blackboard. (questions posted during week15)

Discussion Questions

As you read the chapters in Gillon, think about the following discussion questions to craft your response.

(1) Chapters 1-3

Which was more threatening to the United States: the expansion of communism abroad or the Red Scare at home?

(2) Chapters 4, 5

What forces shaped the emerging world of suburbia in the 1950s the most: economic prosperity and federal policies; technological innovation and popular culture; or Cold War anxieties and political and cultural conformity?

(3) Chapters 6,7

In what ways was the year 1960 a turning point in American history? What paradoxes in American life moved towards resolution, and what paradoxes continued?

(4) Chapters 8-11

Looking at the rapid transformation of America in the Johnson and Nixon years, what factors would you highlight as the key to what historians have called the “unraveling” or “fragmentation” of the country?

(5) Chapters 12-14

What factors were more responsible for “morning in America” in the 1980s: a return to prosperity or Ronald Reagan’s presidency — or do you reject the idea that the US returned to “normalcy” after the crises of the 1970s?

(6) Chapters 15, 16

What conflicts have best defined—or should define—America’s role in international affairs in the post-Cold War world?

(7) Chapters 17, 18

Does the idea of multiculturalism potentially resolve the paradoxes in American life that we have studied this semester? Do the same paradoxes continue, or do we confront new ones in the coming years?

To Do: HIST 3120 Spring 2016

Use this list to check off the requirements for the semester. Use this to plan the dates by which you will complete each assignment (making note of the final due dates in the course schedule)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Post introduction/bio on course discussion board | <input type="checkbox"/> Read Thompson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 1; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Submit response to Thompson; peer review |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 2; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to another post on Thompson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 3; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 12; quiz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Post to discussion 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Read MacDonald |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 4; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Submit response to MacDonald; peer review |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 5; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to another post on MacDonald |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to discussion 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 13; quiz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Post to discussion 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 14; quiz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Steinbeck | <input type="checkbox"/> Post to discussion 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Submit response to Steinbeck; peer review | <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 15; quiz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to another post on Steinbeck | <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 16; quiz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 6; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to discussion 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 7; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Post to discussion 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to discussion 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Read Finnegan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Moody | <input type="checkbox"/> Submit response to Finnegan; peer review |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Submit response to Moody; peer review | <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to discussion 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to another post on Moody | <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to another post on Finnegan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to discussion 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 17; quiz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 8; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 18; quiz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 9; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Post to discussion 7 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 10; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Read Brooks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Gillon Ch. 11; quiz | <input type="checkbox"/> Submit response to Brooks; peer review |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Post to discussion 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to another post on Brooks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Select research paper topic | <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to discussion 7 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Submit Final Research Paper (May 16) |