

**History 302-H
America in the 1970s
Spring 2011**

T/Th, 1:30-2:45
UNIV 319

Professor Darren Dochuk
Office: University Hall 125
Office Hours: T/Th, 3:00-4:00 (or by appointment)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides both a chronological and thematic approach to the history of 1970s America. Recognizing the incredibly complex and diverse nature of historical development in this era, our class time will be spent focusing only on a few of the most significant shifts in American politics, culture, and society. As such, the course will encourage us to think more deeply about the fate of liberalism in post-1960s America, the rise of ethnic identity and its impact on the rights revolution, gender and the politics of sexuality, religion and the rise of the South, Nixon and Watergate, Carter and political malaise, urban decay, environmentalism, and the United States' earliest encounters with terrorism. We will engage questions such as: What happened to the liberal consensus in the 1970s? How did this decade reshape American political culture and to what effect in popular culture? How have civil rights, feminism, environmentalism, the Christian Right, and other grassroots movements/interest group politics at work in the seventies changed American society? Were these years more important than the sixties in shaping this country's current political obsessions and concerns? How did the ideology of American exceptionalism overcome the "Vietnam Syndrome"? How did it contribute to/suffer from the rise of international terrorism? Was the Reagan revolution truly a revolution?

While selective and episodic in its examination of particular themes, therefore, this course will be deliberately historical in its approach. Indeed, through its choice of readings, lectures, discussions, documentaries, movies, and music this course will challenge its participants to understand particular themes in terms of broader, sequential changes in society and to think critically about how each of these themes are related. What it means to research and write "good history," moreover, will be as central to our agenda as absorbing historical "facts and figures."

FORMAT:

This course will be reading and writing intensive. The instructor will provide historical context to each week's readings and discussions through short "talks," but the majority of class time will be spent in a less formal, collective engagement with the readings, film clips, and music selections. All students will be expected to attend class prepared to discuss the required readings and media presentations. The primary responsibility of students, however, will be to complete a major paper dealing with primary and secondary sources related to a dominant theme in 1970s American politics and culture. Significant time during the middle and late stages of the semester will be set aside for this task.

REQUIRED READING:

- Beth Bailey and David Farber, eds., *America in the 70s* (University Press of Kansas, 2004)
- Jonathan Mahler, *Ladies and Gentlemen, The Bronx is Burning: 1977, Baseball, Politics, and the Battle for the Soul of a City* (Picador, 2005)
- David Farber, *Taken Hostage: The Iran Hostage Crisis and America's First Encounter with Radical Islam* (Princeton University Press, 2006)
- J. Anthony Lukas, *Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families* (Vintage, 1986)

- William Graebner, *Patty's Got a Gun: Patricia Hearst in 1970s America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008)
- Welch Suggs, *A Place on the Team: The Triumph and Tragedy of Title IX* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

Breakdown of Grades (total of 300 possible points):

80 Points:

Class Involvement

[40 points Attendance and Discussion]

[40 points Group Work/Progress Report/Research Presentation]

80 Points:

Two Review Essays

[40 points Review #1]

[40 points Review #2]

140 Points:

Research Paper

Participation and Films:

Students are expected to be present at all lecture, discussion, and workshop sections, and to be prepared to participate actively in these settings. Films assigned for discussion section should be watched in advance of the weekly meeting. Students should analyze films with the same rigor as reading assignments—as historical documents and as cultural texts—taking notes in preparation for discussion section and in anticipation of graded assignments.

Writing Assignments:

Please be aware that this will be a reading- and writing- intensive course. As such:

- All students will be required to write **two short review papers (4-5 pages double spaced)**, one that analyzes the movie for a particular week, the other that assesses the quality of one of the assigned books. These are to be short, concise opinion pieces that pinpoint the key themes of the source and critique the arguments presented. The goal of these papers is to show how you, as an informed reader and interpreter of film and literature, are able to engage the ideas, issues, personalities, and developments of the 1970s on a critical level. Students will be **required to hand these review papers in before class on their assigned day and to help lead class discussion that day. Students assigned to lead discussion on the same day will be expected to collaborate with each other; meeting before class to plan a course of action will be highly encouraged.**
- All students will be required to write **a research paper (22 pages double spaced)**. The essay will be due in my office by **5:00 May 3**. Through a process of consultation with me and with classmates, students will design and carry out primary and secondary research on a major topic of their choosing. Throughout the semester class time will be set aside for research, writing, and work shopping. The latter will require you to come to class ready to share parts of your writing with classmates and to discuss possibilities for improvement.

OTHER EXPECTATIONS AND STANDARDS:

Late Policy:

Essays and review papers turned in late will be penalized a half-letter grade per overdue class-day.

Keeping in Touch:

Open communication between the members of the class, including me, is of vital importance in making this experience work. If at any point in the semester you think that this course could be improved, please don't hesitate to talk to me. We can set up an appointment if my office hours are not good for you.

A Note About Plagiarism:

Any violation of the following principles in students' completed work constitutes plagiarism, which is normally considered a major offense. The penalty is, thus, failure in the course.

1. All written work submitted for credit is accepted as the student's own work; it may not have been composed wholly or partially by another person.
2. The wording of written work is taken as the writer's own. Thus one may not submit work that has been copied, wholly or partially, from a book, article, essay, newspaper, another student's paper or notebook, or any other written or printed or media source. Another writer's phrases, sentences, or paragraphs may be included only if presented as quotations and the source acknowledged.
3. The ideas expressed in a paper or report are accepted as originating with the writer. Written work that paraphrases any written or printed media material without acknowledgement may not be submitted for credit. Ideas from books and essays may be incorporated in the writer's work as starting points, governing issues, illustrations, and the like, but in each case the source must be cited.
4. Students may correct and revise their writing with the aid of reference books. They may also discuss their writing with peer writing groups or with peer tutors. However, students may not submit writing that has been revised substantially by another.
5. No written work may be submitted for credit that has been used to fulfill the requirements of another course, in whatever department, unless permission to coordinate work has been granted by both teachers.

Course Schedule/Calendar:

*What follows is a rough estimate of our schedule for the next several weeks. Please keep in mind that some alterations might be made to the schedule as the semester unfolds. Handouts and additional readings might be requested/provided in addition to the assigned readings listed below.

**Unless noted otherwise, all readings and film critiques are due on Thursday of the relevant week.

Week One: When does the 1970s Begin?

Assigned Reading:

- Bailey/Farber, *America in the 70s*, "Introduction"

Assignment:

- Short Reflection Piece Due Thursday
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|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Tuesday, Jan. 11 | Introduction to the Course |
| Thursday, Jan. 13 | Introduction to the Seventies |

Week Two: Hard-Hat Revolution

Assigned Reading:

- Bailey/Farber, *America in the 70s*, Chapters 3&4

Assigned Film:

- *The Godfather*
- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Tuesday, Jan. 18 | 1970 |
| Thursday, Jan. 20 | Un-meltable Ethnics and Unbending Common Folk |

Week Three: Law and Order

Assigned Reading:

- Lukas, *Common Ground*

Assigned Film:

- *A Clockwork Orange* or *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*
- | | |
|------------------|------|
| Tuesday, Jan. 25 | 1971 |
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Thursday, Jan. 27 The Politics of Pedagogy and Rage

Week Four: The South Rises Again

Assigned Reading:

- *Handout*

Assigned Film:

- *Nashville* **or** *Deliverance*

Tuesday, Feb. 1 1972

Thursday, Feb. 3 The Southernization of America

Week Five: Battle of the Sexes

Assigned Reading:

- Suggs, *A Place on the Team*
- Bailey/Farber, *America in the 70s*, Chapter 5

Assigned Film:

- *Annie Hall* **or** *The Stepford Wives* (1975 version)

Tuesday, Feb. 8 1973

Thursday, Feb. 10 Below-the-Belt Politics

Week Six: Watergate Watershed

Assigned Reading:

- Bailey/Farber, *America in the 70s*, Chapter 1
- *Handout*

Assigned Film:

- *Chinatown* **or** *All The President's Men*

Assignment:

- Preliminary research for paper Prospectus

Tuesday, Feb. 15 1974 and Nixon's Demise

Thursday, Feb. 17 **Research Day (no class)**

Week Seven: Disco and Disillusionment

Assigned Reading:

- *Handout*

Assigned Film:

- *Saturday Night Fever*

Assignment:

- Prospectus due Tuesday
- Workshop prospectuses Thursday

Tuesday, Feb. 22 1975 and The "Me Decade"

Thursday, Feb. 24 **Prospectus Workshop**

Week Eight: Bicentennial Boon and Bust

Assigned Reading:

- Graebner, *Patty's Got a Gun*

Assigned Film:

- *Network* **or** *Star Wars*

Tuesday, Mar. 1 1976

Thursday, Mar. 3 The State of the Nation

Week Nine: New York Moment

Assigned Reading:

- Mahler, *Ladies and Gentlemen, The Bronx is Burning*
- Bailey/Farber, *America in the 70s*, Chapter 6

Assigned Film:

- *Taxi Driver* **or** *Rocky*

Tuesday, Mar. 8 1977

Thursday, Mar. 10 The Politics of Decay

SPRING BREAK--NO CLASS

Week Ten: A Crisis of Confidence

Assigned Reading:

- *Handout*

Assigned Film:

- *The Deer Hunter* **or** *Apocalypse Now*

Assignment:

- Outline and Introduction due Tuesday
Tuesday, Mar. 22 1978 and Carter's Malaise
Thursday, Mar. 24 *Student Meetings with Me*

Week Eleven: The Politics of Terror

Assigned Reading:

- Farber, *Taken Hostage*

Assigned Film:

- *Black Sunday*
Tuesday, Mar. 29 1979
Thursday, Mar. 31 Carter's Crisis

Week Twelve: Morning in America

Assigned Reading:

- *Handout*

Assignment:

- First Draft of Essay due Thursday in class
Tuesday, April 5 1980
Thursday, April 7 Reagan's Revolution

Week Thirteen: Writing

Assignment:

- First Drafts Due Tuesday to Professor and Peer Group
Tuesday, April 12 *Workshop First Drafts*
Thursday, April 14 **Writing Day (no class)**

Week Fourteen: Writing

- Tuesday, April 19 **Writing Day (no class)**
Thursday, April 21 **Writing Day (no class)**

Week Fifteen: Class Presentations

Assignment:

- Student presentations of research
Tuesday, April 26 Class Presentations
Thursday, April 28 Class Presentations

May 3 Final Papers Due in Office by 5:00