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**HIST 468: Recent American History**

**Spring 2018**

**T/Th 12-1:15**

**Wilmeth Active Learning Center 2127**

Dr. Brownell

Office: UNIV 22

Email: [Brownell@purdue.edu](mailto:Brownell@purdue.edu)

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-3PM and by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

History 468 will investigate the political, social, economic and cultural history of the United States during the last two decades of the twentieth century. The course includes such themes as the imperial presidency, the urban crisis, the evolution of race and ethnic identity, feminism and the family, the rise of Evangelical Christianity, the conservative movement and the shifting face of American liberalism, and the rise of a global information age.

**READING ASSIGNMENTS:**

All books can be purchased at the University Book Store, Follett’s, or through Amazon.

Required Reading Material:

Meg Jacobs and Julian Zelizer, *Conservatives in Power: The Reagan Years, 1981-1989.*

Howard Kurtz, *Spin Cycle: How the White House and the Media Manipulate the News.*

Ryan Gattis, *All Involved: A Novel.*

Michael J. Lewis, *The New New Thing: A Silicon Valley Story.*

**FORMAT:**

The course will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12PM. Because classes relies heavily on class discussion, students are expected to arrive to each class having completed the reading and research assignments for that day. Attendance is mandatory and expected throughout the semester. Students are allowed two absences, after which your participation grade will be reduced by a half a grade for every additional absence. If you fail in participation, you will fail the course.

**GRADE BREAKDOWN:**

Details for all assignments are posted on Blackboard.

* **1992 Election Group Project and Policy Brief (15%):** Due in class on **February 15.**
* **New Media Analysis (15%):** Due in class on  **March 8.**
* **Reading Responses: (20%):** Due in class on  **March 29 & April 19.**
* **Final Paper: (20%):** Due in Professor Brownell’s mailbox by 5PM on **May 1.**
* **Participation:(30%)** Participation and attendance are mandatory components of the class. You are expected to show up for each class prepared to discuss the reading material and any specific research assignments for that class.

Late policy: Late papers/projects will be penalized **one-third grade per day** (example: a B paper that is one day late becomes a B-). All students are required to keep copies of their graded essays and exams until the end of the semester.

General notes re: grades:

* Final grades in the course **will** be assessed according to the plus/minus scale.
* Neither exam grades nor final grades in the course will be provided or discussed via email. If you would like to discuss your exams, grades, and/or your coursework in general, please do not hesitate to see me during office hours. I will be happy to go over your grades with you at any point in the semester.
* **You must complete all assignments to pass the course. This includes participation.**

**CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

* No computers, tablets, i-Pads, phones, or recording devices are allowed in class. You are expected to take notes with paper only. I do not allow my lectures to be recorded or reproduced, unless you have my permission. Cell phones are also not to be used in class at any time. No reading papers, engaging in lengthy conversations with a classmate, taking walks during class, or other such distracting material. We meet for 75 minutes a day and I expect your attention and focus for all of these 75 minutes.
* Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class or via email, as circumstances allow.
* This class is intended to encourage open, informed discussions and I hope to protect and foster a classroom atmosphere that will encourage an open and enlightened discourse in the class. Ultimately I would hope that you take those ideas and informed discussions with you beyond the classroom. **Respect, open-mindedness and tolerance will be the standard for all classroom discussions.** I encourage you to ask questions you may have on this topic either in the class or during office hours.
* Email will be the preferred mode of contact outside of regular classroom hours and office hours. Please feel free to contact me directly (i.e., not via Blackboard’s email option) at any point. I will also create a class email list which I will use to send course-related announcements as needed. **For this reason, I expect you to check your Purdue email account at least once a day.**
* In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to changes as necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Any necessary changes will be announced via email and/or the class Blackboard page.
* During the last two weeks of the semester, you will be provided an opportunity to evaluate this course and my teaching. You will receive an official email from evaluation administrators with a link to the online evaluation site, and you will have two weeks to complete this evaluation. I consider your feedback vital, as does Purdue University. Your professors have access to these online evaluations only after grades are due.

**Academic Integrity**

* As a student in this class and at Purdue, you are expected to uphold the standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses and will be treated as such in this class.  You are expected to produce your own work and to accurately cite all necessary materials.

* Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: the use of papers or books not authorized by the instructor during examinations, quizzes, and other written assignments; giving or receiving answers during or in preparation for examinations and quizzes; and failing to cite sources employed for writing assignments.
* Those who engage in such practices should expect to fail the course and have their behavior referred to the Dean of Students. This is non-negotiable: if I find that you have plagiarized, you will fail the assignment and potentially will fail the entire course—period. Please do not put yourself in this situation.

**Student with Disabilities:**

* If you need any special accommodations to participate fully in class, please see me as soon as possible. I will keep all discussions confidential as long as the situation permits. Please not that, in order for Purdue University to accommodate your needs, you will need to provide appropriate written documentation and have it on file with Student Services. Students should be aware that Services for Student Disabilities are available at 494-1247 if you need further assistance.

**EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES**

**If you hear a fire alarm inside, proceed outside. If you hear a siren outside, proceed inside.**

• **Indoor Fire Alarms** mean to stop class or research and immediately **evacuate** the building. Proceed to your Emergency Assembly Area away from building doors. **Remain outside** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

• **All Hazards Outdoor Emergency Warning Sirens** mean to immediately seek shelter (**Shelter in Place**) in a safe location within the closest building. “Shelter in place” means seeking immediate shelter inside a building or University residence. This course of action may need to be taken during a tornado, a civil disturbance including a shooting or release of hazardous materials in the outside air. Once safely inside, find out more details about the emergency\*. **Remain in place** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

*\*In both cases, you should seek additional clarifying information by all means possible…Purdue Home page, email alert, TV, radio, etc…review the Purdue Emergency Warning Notification System multi-communication layers at http://www.purdue.edu/ehps/emergency\_preparedness/warning-system.html*

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES:**

Review the **Emergency Procedures Guidelines** https://www.purdue.edu/emergency\_preparedness/flipchart/index.html

Review the **Building Emergency Plan** (available from the building deputy) for: o evacuation routes, exit points, and emergency assembly area

* when and how to evacuate the building.
* shelter in place procedures and locations
* additional building specific procedures and requirements.

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AWARENESS VIDEOS**

"Shots Fired on Campus: When Lightning Strikes," is a 20-minute active shooter awareness video that illustrates what to look for and how to prepare and react to this type of incident. See: http://www.purdue.edu/securePurdue/news/2010/emergency-preparedness-shots-fired-on-campus-video.cfm (Link is also located on the EP website)

**MORE INFORMATION**

Reference the Emergency Preparedness web site for additional information: <http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness>

**READING AND LECTURE SCHEDULE**

Material posted on Blackboard is denoted with a \*\*. You will find all reading assignments and posted PDF excerpts under each week’s “Readings, Assignments, and Expectations” folder on Blackboard.

**Week 1: Course Introduction**

January 9: The Perils and Possibilities of Recent History

January 11: The End of the American Century?

ASSIGNED READING

1. Renee C. Romano, “Not Yet Dead: My Identity Crisis as a Historian of the Recent Past.”\*\*

**Topic 1: Political Polarization**

**Week 2: The New Right Ascendency**

January 16: The New Right Coalition

January 18: The Reagan Ascendency

ASSIGNED READING:

1. *Conservatives in Power,* pp.1-65.
2. Joseph Crespino, “Ronald Reagan’s South: The Tangled Roots of Modern Southern Conservatism.” \*\*
3. Michelle Nickerson, “The end of the conservative Republican.” *Washington Post,* October 29, 2017. \*\*

**Week 3: Conservatives in Power**

January 23: A Reagan Revolution?

January 25: Newt Gingrich and Conservatives in Congress

ASSIGNED READING:

1. *Conservatives in Power,* assigned documents
2. Gil Troy, “Ronald Reagan’s 100-Day Revolution.” \*\*
3. Brent Cebul and Nicole Hemmer, “The Were Made for Each Other” *The New Republic,* June 11, 2016. \*\*

**Week 4: The Challenge of Modern Liberalism**

January 30: The Fracturing of New Deal Liberalism

February 1: What is Neoliberalism?

ASSIGNED READING:

1. David Greenberg, “The Reorientation of Liberalism in the 1980s.” \*\*
2. Sean Willentz, “The Politics of Clintonism.” \*\*

**Week 5: Electoral Divides: Part I**

February 6: The Culture Wars

February 8: Group Workshop

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Andrew Hartman, “The Battle for the American Mind.” \*\*
2. Stacie Taranto, “Why abortion—not sexual misconduct—is likely to decide the Alabama Senate race.” *Washington Post,* November 30, 2017.

**Week 6: Electoral Divides: Part II**

February 13: Group Workshop

February 15: The 1992 Election: Group Presentation

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Margaret O’Mara, “1992.”

ASSIGNMENT: 1992 Policy Brief Due in Class on February 15

**Topic 2: Scandal and the Politics of Clean and Dirty**

**Week 7: The Legacy of Watergate**

February 20: The Nixonian Legacy

February 22: The Adversarial Press and Assertions of Bias

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Howard Kurtz, *Spin Cycle,*  xiii-90.
2. Nicole Hemmer, “From ‘Faith in Facts’ to ‘Fair and Balanced’: Conservative Media, Liberal Bias, and the Origins of Balance.” \*\*

**Week 8: C-SPAN, CNN, and the Cable Revolution**

February 27: Politics on Cable Television

March 1: New Media Group Workshop

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Howard Kurtz, *Spin Cycle,*  pp. 91-252.

**Week 9: Impeachment**

March 6: Group Presentations

March 8: Impeachment Discussion

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Howard Kurtz, Spin Cycle, pp. 252-328.

ASSIGNMENT: New Media Analysis Due in Class on March 8th

**Week 10: NO CLASS**

**Topic 3: Race, Gender, and Identity Politics**

**Week 11: The Rights Revolution during the Reagan Era**

March 20: Civil Rights Accomplishment and Obstacles

March 22: “Run Jesse Run”

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Stephen Tuck, “Reagan, Rap, and Resistance, 1979-2000.” \*\*
2. Ryan Gattis, *All Involved,* pp.1-198.

**Week 12: Rodney King and Crisis in L.A.**

March 27: Police Brutality and the War on Crime

March 29: Discussion of Gattis

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Max Felker-Kantor, “The 1984 Olympics fueled L.A.’s war on crime. Will the 2028 Games do the same?” *Washington Post,* August 6, 2017.
2. Ryan Gattis, *All Involved,* pp. 203-359.

ASSIGNMENT: Reading Response #1 due in class on March 29

**Week 13: Sexual Politics**

April 3: Breaking Glass Ceilings?

April 5: The AIDS Crisis

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Sara M. Evans, “Feminism in the 1980s: Surviving the Backlash.” \*\*
2. Anne Blashke, , “#Metoo is undoing the devil’s bargain of the 1990s.” *Washington Post,* December 7, 2017.

**Topic 4: Globalization**

**Week 14: Growing the Information Economy**

April 10: The Tech Industry

April 12: NAFTA and Free Trade

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Michael Lewis, *The New New Thing,* pp.13-170.

**Week 15: Economic Inequality at Home**

April 17: Boom and Bust

April 19: Discussion of Lewis

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Michael Lewis, *The New New Thing,* pp. 171-346.
2. Selections from WIRED \*\*

**Week 16: The Roots of the War on Terror**

April 24: Domestic Terrorism

April 26: 9/11 and Foreign Policy Challenges in the New Millennium

ASSIGNED READING:

1. Timothy Naftali, “George W. Bush and the ‘War on Terror.’”
2. Jeremi Suri, “How 9/11 triggered democracy’s decline,” *Washington Post,* September 11, 2017.

**Final paper due in Professor Brownell’s mailbox on May 1 at 5PM.**