

HIST 4245
UNITED STATES In The 1960s
GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
Spring 2009

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Office Hrs: 11-12 T/R and by appt.

Course Overview and Objectives

This is an upper-division course on the American experience in the sixties. The course weaves together the political, social, cultural, economic, and international histories of the era. Using primary and secondary sources (including movies and music), it explores the perspectives of liberals, conservatives, and radicals, and men and women of different identities based on race, ethnicity, class, religion, and sexual orientation. Many of the events and personalities will be at least somewhat familiar to students who have taken courses in U.S. history or learned about the period from their own study, appreciation for sixties popular culture, or other personal experience. However, in this course we have the luxury of delving deeper into the period. To further expand our understanding of the sixties, we will explore comparative and transnational perspectives. We will also survey the variety of interpretations of the period offered by its participants and historians at a moment when the historiography of the sixties is undergoing significant change.

Just as American history is not separate from world history, History is not a special or obscure discipline unconnected to others students major in. Instead, it is a way of thinking about life that is relevant to all disciplines, and to citizenship. Students with an interest in business, marketing, and finance, for example, can learn through history important lessons about how economies and international trade change over time. Being “good” at History means being curious about the world and possessing a basic empathy that allows you to relate to people who lived in a world unlike our own. It also means using many of the same critical reading and writing skills that are important in other disciplines.

By the end of this course, students should be able to use primary sources and secondary sources to do the following:

- Produce meaningful interpretations of the major events of the sixties and their long-term consequences for America
- Compare events in American history in the 1960s with those in other countries and identify transnational connections between America and the world
- Demonstrate an understanding of historiography and methods of studying and remembering the sixties

Readings

The following books are **required** and may be purchased at Georgia Bookstore (124 Edgewood Ave NE, 404.659.0959) or on a variety of sites on the Internet:

1. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, eds., *“Takin’ it to the streets”: A Sixties Reader*, Second Edition (Oxford University Press, 2003)
2. Malcolm X and Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

Also, **required** readings from primary sources and scholarly readings are posted on the course website on uLearn. These readings are as important as the books. You will need to read them and be prepared to discuss them in class, and to draw on them for your written work. See the Course Schedule below for specific assignments.

Grading

1. Informal Writing	30%
2. Formal Essay #1	20%
3. Formal Essay #2	25%
4. Formal Essay #3	25%

Note: The weighting of the respective components of your grade is subject to change.

Informal Writing

As part of active course participation, you will often do informal writing in class or in preparation for class. Informal writing will not be graded for spelling, punctuation, grammar or correct usage, but for your degree of engagement with the lectures and readings. It measures and stimulates critical thinking about the course materials, often focusing on specific skills (such as comparing America with other places or distinguishing between competing interpretations of the past).

Note: While attendance is not recorded, missing class will often mean missing informal writing assignments, and these cannot be made up.

Formal Essays

The formal essays will be assessed primarily for the quality of ideas and clarity of expression, though they must also exhibit correct grammar and usage. Each essay will be a focused, 5-to-6 page analytical essay. Guidelines and requirements for the papers will be posted on uLearn and discussed in class well before the due dates. We will discuss some of the basic principles of good interpretation and historical writing, and each essay will develop your skills in these areas. Note: Papers turned in late but within twenty-four hours of the due date will be accepted with a loss of one letter grade. After twenty-four hours, they will not be accepted.

Note: The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Academic Honesty

You should review the University's Academic Honesty Policy. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating on assignments are serious violations of academic integrity. They are never justified and will not be tolerated.

COURSE SCHEDULE

- Readings from the assigned books, as well as those posted on uLearn, are listed below. Those from "*Takin' it to the streets*" are listed as *TS*.
- You should read the assignments prior to class and be prepared to talk (and possibly write) about them in class.
- Note: This schedule is subject to change. Students are responsible for any amendments to it announced in class or posted on uLearn.

Jan. 6 and 8 Introductions and Definitions

Jan. 13 and 15 The Historians' Sixties

- Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, "Past as Prologue': The 1950s as an Introduction to the 1960s," in *TS*, 1-11
- Jeremy Varon, Michael S. Foley, and John McMillian, "Time is an Ocean: The Past and Future of the Sixties," *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics and Culture* 1:1 (June 2008): 1-7
- Mark H. Lytle, "The Cold War on the New Frontier," in *America's Uncivil Wars*

Jan. 20 and 22 JFK and the Cold War

- John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address, 1961
- Che Guevara, "Notes for the Study of the Ideology of the Cuban Revolution," 1960
- Larry Grubbs, "Introduction," and "A Significant Historical Demonstration," in *Secular Missionaries: Americans and African Development in the 1960s* (Forthcoming, University of Massachusetts Press)

Jan. 27 and 29 Civil Rights and the Cold War to 1965

- *TS*, Chapter 1
- Martin Luther King Jr., *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, 1963
- Mary L. Dudziak, "Losing Control in Camelot," in *Cold War Civil Rights*

Feb. 3 and 5 Great Society and the Cold War

- Lyndon B. Johnson, Remarks at the University of Michigan, 1964
- Johnson, "The American Promise," 1965
- Mao Zedong, "American Imperialism is Closely Surrounded by the Peoples of the World," 1964
- Larry Grubbs, "Workshop of a Continent": American Representations of Whiteness and Modernity in 1960s South Africa," *Diplomatic History* 32:3 (June 2008)

Feb. 10 and 12 Student Movement and the New Left

- *TS*, Ch. 2
- **FIRST ESSAY DUE**

Feb. 17 and 19 Sixties Icon: Malcolm X

- *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

Feb. 24 and 26 Black Nationalism, Chicano, Asian and Native American Movements

- *TS*, Ch. 3
- César Chávez, "The Organizer's Tale," 1966
- Chávez, "Address to the Commonwealth Club of California," 1984

March 3 and 5 Spring Break

March 10 and 12 Vietnam War

- *TS*, Ch. 4 pp. 153-74
- Ho Chi Minh, Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, 1945
- George Herring, "On the Tiger's Back: The United States at War, 1965-1967," in *America's Longest War*

March 17 and 19 Antiwar Movement

- *TS*, pp. 174-226
- Adam Mack, "No 'Illusion of Separation': James L. Bevel, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Vietnam War," *Peace and Change* 28:1 (January 2003)

March 24 and 26 Counterculture

- *TS*, Ch. 5
- **SECOND ESSAY DUE**

March 31 and April 2 Conservatism

- *TS*, Ch. 6
- Donald T. Critchlow, "Conservatism Reconsidered: Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism," in *The Conservative Sixties*, eds. David Farber and Jeff Roche

April 7 and 9 1968

- *TS*, Ch. 7
- Robert F. Kennedy, "The Value of Dissent," 1968

April 14 and 16 Feminism, Women's Liberation, Gay Liberation

- *TS*, Ch. 8 and pp. 493-508
- John D'Emilo, "Placing Gay in the Sixties," in *Long Time Gone: Sixties America Then and Now*, ed. Alexander Bloom

April 21 and 23 Sixties Endings and Beginnings

- *TS*, Ch. 9
- Grubbs, "Social Revolutions/Sensory Revolutions: Rethinking the Senses in the Sixties"
- Philip Jenkins, "Mainstreaming the Sixties," in *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America*

Final essay is due Monday, May 4 at 5 P.M.