

HST 413: Contemporary America

Arizona State University
Spring A 2016 – January 11th through March 1st
Class Number 17339

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Course Design: Dr. Brock Ruggles (On Leave)

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

HST 413 explores United States history since 1945. To study history is to trace, understand, and explain change over time, and in this class we will examine the major changes in the United States since World War II by investigating five major themes: political, economic, social, cultural, and global transformations that shaped the United States and its place in the twenty-first-century world. A firm understanding of the past is an essential tool for thinking critically about the present and future, and this course seeks to provoke thought, discussion, and reflection about the United States and the world. Students will also develop and enhance skills of analysis and evaluation by examining various and conflicting perspectives on the United States since 1945.

REQUIREMENTS:

This Internet course will be delivered via Blackboard, which is available through MyASU at <http://my.asu.edu> or the Blackboard home page at <https://myasucourses.asu.edu>. In addition to a reliable computer and Internet access, you must have an active ASU email account, a web browser (Mozilla Firefox, Apple Safari, etc.), Adobe Acrobat Reader or Preview (free), Adobe Flash Player (free), and Microsoft Word.

Over the seven and a half weeks of this course, you will read a selection of books, examine a variety of primary sources, view lectures and videos, take weekly quizzes, and participate in weekly essay discussion assignments. We move through the readings quickly, so be prepared to dedicate significant time to them. (According to ABOR policy, a three-credit course requires 135 hours of student work, so expect to spend approximately eighteen hours per week working on this seven-and-a-half-week course.) The quizzes and essay discussion assignments are required and graded components of the course that allow each student to demonstrate knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the course materials. All course content except the books will be posted on the course site, and all written work submitted by students will be checked using anti-plagiarism software that returns an originality report.

The syllabus lays out your responsibilities. While we may make adjustments, your basic work duties are those you see here. If you take the class, you agree to follow this document.

REQUIRED READING:

- Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin. *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*, fourth edition (2011). ISBN: 978-0199765065. (The main difference between the third and fourth editions is a revised conclusion in the latter. Try to get the fourth edition, but if cost is prohibitive, you may purchase the third edition and cite it as such.)
- Bruce J. Schulman. *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (2002). ISBN: 0-306-81126-X.
- Peter L. Hahn. *Crisis and Crossfire: The United States and the Middle East since 1945 (Issues in the History of American Foreign Relations)* (2005). ISBN: 978-1-57488-820-1.
- Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson. *Winner-Take-All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer – And Turned Its Back on the Middle Class* (2010). ISBN: 978-1-4165-8870-2.
- Robert Griffith and Paula Baker, editors. *Major Problems in American History since 1945*, third edition (2006). ISBN: 978-0-618-55006-7.

Books are available at the ASU bookstore online and in Tempe, other collegiate bookstores, and many online booksellers. Some students report that they save money, reduce the ecological costs of transportation, and support their local economies by buying their books used from small, local merchants who sell books through sites such as Half.com and Amazon.

Strategic time management and reading skills can help you get the most out of the books. If you have limited time, you can still glean the main ideas presented in the material without reading every word. Focus on chapter introductions and conclusions to identify the main arguments an author is trying to make, and then go back and read the first sentence or more of every paragraph to identify the supporting points and evidence. While strategically browsing the assigned readings, make sure you can identify key terms and questions posed in the study guides and assignments, and take notes as needed. This is an acceptable, worthwhile, and recommended approach.

GRADING:

Quizzes	(6 x 15 points)	90 points (23%)
Essay Discussions	(6 x 50 points)	<u>300 points (77%)</u>
		390 points (100%)

SCALE:

A+ = 97-100%	A = 93-96%	A- = 90-92%	
B+ = 87-89%	B = 83-86%	B- = 80-82%	
C+ = 77-79%	C = 70-76%	D = 60-69%	E = < 60 %

COMMUNICATION:

Since we will not meet face-to-face, we will follow ASU Online's "three before me" policy for student to faculty communications. When questions arise during the course of this class, please remember to check these three sources for an answer before asking me to reply to your individual questions:

1. Course syllabus
2. Announcements in Blackboard
3. The "Hallway Conversations" discussion board

This policy helps you identify answers before I can get back to you and facilitates the answering of common questions.

If you cannot find an answer to your question, please first post your question to the "Hallway Conversations" discussion board. Here your question can be answered to the benefit of all by other students who may know the answer, the teaching assistant(s), or the professor. In order to help provide timely assistance to other students, you are encouraged to answer questions in the discussion forum when you know the answer.

If you need grading comments clarified, please email your teaching assistant and copy your professor. To appeal a grade or ask a question of a personal nature that needs to be communicated privately, please email your professor. Please note that your professor and teaching assistant teach several sections of multiple classes to hundreds of students; thus, **when emailing, it is very important to indicate which class, section, and group you are in.** Messages that *include this information* and *employ a collegial tone* will *receive highest priority*. Please allow the professor and grader at least one business day to reply to your email if you do not have a previous appointment.

CLASS POLICIES:

1. Academic integrity: **Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions for violations include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification, and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.**

We will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism, and we strictly follow the university's procedures for handling these nefarious crimes:

- a. Cheating: Any student who cheats on any assignment will automatically fail the course and be subject to punishment through proper university channels.
- b. Plagiarism: Representing someone else's work as your own will be considered plagiarism. If you borrow material from a book, article, or website be sure to acknowledge the source with some type of citation and quote any phrases or sentences borrowed word for word from any author. This policy includes the assigned readings. For clear comparisons of successful paraphrasing versus plagiarized passages, see http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_paraphrase.html. Any student who plagiarizes on any assignment will receive a grade of 0 for the assignment and may be issued a failing course grade for academic dishonesty. Any student who plagiarizes a second time will automatically fail the course. Any student who plagiarizes will be subject to punishment through proper university channels.

2. The online class environment: I believe in and deeply respect freedom of expression, a fundamental human right and core American principle. Please exercise it with reasoned and logical arguments and use evidence to support your positions. We will necessarily talk frankly about conflicts between groups, and I expect students to exercise the utmost courtesy in these dialogues. Personal attacks are never appropriate, and I will insist on a collegial atmosphere online. Inappropriate behavior, such as posting inflammatory rhetoric, gaslighting other students during discussions, sending inappropriate emails, or using the discussion forums for anything other than focusing on the questions asked, will lead to an immediate request for you to leave the class.

3. Late assignments:

- Quizzes must be taken by their due date. No make-up quizzes will be given. If a quiz is due Sunday night, we recommend taking it by Friday night in case you have technical trouble accessing the quiz and need to take it over the weekend. In other words, it is your responsibility to plan ahead to avoid potential last-minute quiz issues.
- Written work will be reduced one full letter grade (10%) for each day late. Accordingly, work submitted ten days past a due date is not worth any points. If you submit late work within the nine days following its due date, it is your responsibility to email your grader (*cc professor*) and request grading. Assignments turned in after the last day of class will not be graded.

4. Make-up work: There is no make-up work except in cases of legitimate, well-documented emergencies.

5. Grade complaints: None can be made until 48 hours after you receive a grade, nor more than one week after it. Within these boundaries, you may submit a written appeal that utilizes the grading rubric to demonstrate why you believe you should have earned more points.

6. Extra credit: There is no extra credit work for this course.

7. Important university deadlines: <http://www.asu.edu/calendar/academic.html>. You are responsible for all important university deadlines including the course withdrawal deadline.

8. Incompletes: I have never given an Incomplete and will not do so without *overwhelmingly* compelling, extremely well documented justification.

9. Disabilities: If you need disability accommodations in this class, please register with the ASU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform me as soon as possible. Accommodations will be made for all students registered with the DRC. Information regarding disability is confidential.

10. Religious holidays, extracurricular events, etc.: Please inform me in advance if you will be unavailable on any religious holidays. I will honor all university-sanctioned events but must be provided documentation well ahead of time.

COURSE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Week 1: Monday 1/11 through Sunday 1/17

Introduction to the Course

Gain command of the syllabus and course site organization.
Acquire course books immediately and begin reading for next week.
Consult materials posted on course page for this week.
Introduce yourself to your discussion group ASAP.
Reply to at least one of your group members ASAP.
Take Syllabus Quiz by 11:59 PM Friday night.

Week 2: Monday 1/18 through Sunday 1/24

“A Change is Gonna Come”¹ – U.S. Society after the Second World War

Discussion: The Civil Rights Movement, 1945-1980
Read Isserman and Kazin with attention to civil rights, specifically chapters 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, and 14.
Read Schulman chapter 2.
Browse documents in Griffith and Baker, eds., chapters 5 and 12.
Consult materials posted on course page for this week.
Complete initial response to discussion prompt by Wednesday at 11:59 PM.
Complete reply to discussion group member by Friday at 11:59 PM.
Take quiz by 11:59 PM Sunday night.

Week 3: Monday 1/25 through Sunday 1/31

“I Feel Like I’m Fixin’ to Die”² – The U.S. and the World during the Cold War

Discussion: The Vietnam War, 1945-1975
Read Isserman and Kazin with attention to the Cold War and Vietnam, specifically chapters 1, 4-7, 9-10, 12, and 14.
Browse documents in Griffith and Baker, eds., chapters 2, 4, and 9.
Consult materials posted on course page for this week.
Complete initial response to discussion prompt by Wednesday at 11:59 PM.
Complete reply to discussion group member by Friday at 11:59 PM.
Take quiz by 11:59 PM Sunday night.

¹ Sam Cooke, “A Change is Gonna Come,” *Ain’t That Good News*, LP, 1964.

² Country Joe and the Fish, “I-Feel-Like-I’m-Fixin’-To-Die-Rag,” *Rag Baby: Songs of Opposition*, 7” EP, 1965.

Week 4: Monday 2/01 through Sunday 2/07

“The Youth Are Getting Restless”³ – Postwar Culture and its Discontents

Discussion: Voices of Protest

Read Isserman and Kazin chapters 8 and 13.

Read Schulman chapters 3, 6, and 7.

Browse documents in Griffith and Baker, eds., chapters 7 and 8.

Consult materials posted on course page for this week.

Complete initial response to discussion prompt by Wednesday at 11:59 PM.

Complete reply to discussion group member by Friday at 11:59 PM.

Take quiz by 11:59 PM Sunday night.

Week 5: Monday 2/08 through Sunday 2/14

“A Place Where Even Squares Can Have a Ball”⁴ –

U.S. Political Transformations since 1945

Discussion: From Liberal Dominance to Conservative Ascendancy

Read Isserman and Kazin with attention to politics, specifically chapters 3, 6, and 9-14.

Read Schulman chapters 1, 4-5, and 8-9.

Browse documents in Griffith and Baker, eds., chapters 6-7, 10, and 13.

Consult materials posted on course page for this week.

Complete initial response to discussion prompt by Wednesday at 11:59 PM.

Complete reply to discussion group member by Friday at 11:59 PM.

Take quiz by 11:59 PM Sunday night.

Week 6: Monday 2/15 through Sunday 2/21

“A New World Order”⁵ – The U.S. in the Global Age

Discussion: The U.S. and the Middle East

Read Hahn.

Browse documents in Griffith and Baker, eds., chapter 14.

Consult materials posted on course page for this week.

Complete initial response to discussion prompt by Wednesday at 11:59 PM.

Complete reply to discussion group member by Friday at 11:59 PM.

Take quiz by 11:59 PM Sunday night.

³ Bad Brains, *The Youth Are Getting Restless*, LP, 1987.

⁴ Merle Haggard, “Okie from Muskogee,” 7” single, 1969.

⁵ President George H.W. Bush, speech to U.S. Congress, 6 March 1991.

Week 7: Monday 2/22 through Sunday 2/28

“It’s the Economy!”⁶ – The U.S. Economy from WWII to the New Gilded Age

Discussion: The Rise and Fall of the American Middle Class

Read Hacker and Pierson.

Browse documents in Griffith and Baker, eds., chapter 3 and 11.

Consult materials posted on course page for this week.

Complete initial response to discussion prompt by Wednesday at 11:59 PM.

Complete reply to discussion group member by Friday at 11:59 PM.

There is no quiz this week.

Week 8: Monday 2/29 through Tuesday 3/01

There is no quiz this week.

There is no required discussion this week.

Any coursework still eligible for credit (see class policy on late assignments) must be received by the last day of class at 11:59 PM in order to be graded. We have very limited time to complete grading and post final course grades, so assignments will not be accepted after this deadline. No exceptions!

⁶ This is a slight variation on the phrase, “It’s the economy, stupid,” attributed to political strategist James Carville during the 1992 U.S. presidential campaign.