

THE U.S. SINCE 1945

Course Details

MWF 9:30 - 10:30 am

Room: Sullivan 106

This is a 3 credit course*

LASC: USW + WAC + DAC

History majors / minors: counts as an American elective

Instructor Info

Taught by Dr. Tona Hangen

Email: thangen@worcester.edu

Phone: 508-929-8688

Office: Sullivan 327D

Office hours: MW 10:30 - 11:30,
Th 1 - 2:30, and by appt

Email is my preferred mode of contact, though be patient on nights / weekends if I don't respond right away.

Accommodations

If you have a documented disability (learning or otherwise) and need a reasonable accommodation, please consult with me immediately so we can design a solution to help you be successful in this class.

* see course website for the university definition of a credit hour



Course Description & Objectives

In this course you will study American history and culture from the end of the Second World War to the present. Topics to be discussed include postwar American life, the Cold War, liberal consensus politics, conflicts in Korea, Vietnam and the Middle East, the civil rights and other rights movements, and such themes as the rise of political and religious conservatism, post-industrialism, globalization, multiculturalism, and contemporary American culture. We also explore how American governance in Congress does (or doesn't) work. My aim is to educate broadly about this period and include a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. One of my main teaching goals is to destabilize the notion that there is one single American story. This course **covers** the period of US history since 1945. It also **uncovers** how historians think about and approach the history of the recent past. I combine lecture, seminar-style discussion, historical simulation, and hands-on research to introduce you to key sources, themes, and problems from the past seven decades of American history.



Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

By the end of this course, you should be able to...

- Identify and explain major developments and events from the recent American past
- Distinguish between and appropriately analyze primary and secondary historical sources
- Deftly switch gears into historical thinking, employing concepts such as chronology, contingency, causality, pastness, sourcing, and empathy
- Create your own living sense of the past and connect it to your own experience, i.e. to locate yourself in the web of history
- Decipher and join ongoing scholarly arguments about the past

See the course website for full details about HI 203's course SLOs

Course Requirements

This course involves extensive reading, writing and discussion. You will be expected to read 50-100 pages a week (sometimes more) and to write approximately 20 pages over the course of the term. You will need to put in consistent effort during the whole semester. You'll need basic computer and library research skills and will use the standard conventions of historical writing (see "Writing in History" on Blackboard for help).

Your learning will be assessed along multiple dimensions. There are a lot of moving parts, so please pay attention to deadlines and expectations.

- **Attendance and participation in class A&P (25%).** I take attendance in each class session. You should be prompt, present, and ready for discussion each day. I expect class discussion to be lively, respectful and substantive. There may be periodic unannounced quizzes or informal writing at the beginnings or ends of class, which will be factored into your A&P grade.
- **Exams (30%).** We will have 4 closed-book hour-long tests. The last test will take place during finals but will be the equivalent of the other three exams. Your lowest test score gets dropped; **there are no makeup exams.** Exams are held Feb 3, March 4, April 1, and May 9.
- **Research Essay (15%).** You will research and write one paper (6 pages) representing original research that begins with a defined set of primary sources. Topic / first source due March 7, draft due for peer review April 4. Final paper due April 8.
- **Congressional Simulation (15%).** Throughout the semester, we will take frequent breaks from lecture/discussion to run a simulation of Congress. You will receive an assignment to work in committees similar to those in Congress. Your simulation grade comes from the preparation and participation that you put into each Congress Day.
- **Committee Wiki (10%).** Each committee receives a page on the course Congressional Wiki (<http://us45-16.wikispaces.com>) The page can contain news, links, discussions, plans, legislation in progress — whatever committee business you deem important. It will be periodically assessed to make sure you're keeping it current after each Congress day. This is a GROUP grade; everyone on the committee receives the same grade, unless there are truly extenuating circumstances. The group is responsible for dividing the work fairly.
- **Congressional Paper (5%).** At the end of the term, you'll write a 4-page paper considering your committee's work and reflecting on the project as a way to learn about recent US history. Due on or before the last exam day.

Required Books

George Donelson Moss, *Moving On: The American People Since 1945*, 5e (Pearson Longman, 2009) ISBN 978-0205880768

Abbreviated MO on the syllabus. Unless otherwise instructed, this book does not need to come to class with you.

William Chafe, Harvard Sitkoff and Beth Bailey, *A History of Our Time: Readings on Postwar America*, 8e (Oxford UP, 2011) ISBN 978-0199763641

Abbreviated HOT on the syllabus. You should bring this book to class whenever its chapters are assigned.

A Word about the Research Paper

Research in history involves locating and analyzing evidence from the past to create something new. Sometimes this involves crafting a new narrative, a fresh understanding of what happened; sometimes it's generating a new answer to an old question; sometimes it's asking entirely new questions about the past in light of recent scholarship. As you write a concise and original 6-page research paper due in April, you'll wrestle with and write from (at least) three pieces of historical evidence:

- one primary source from the Chafe documents reader
- one primary source you find on your own through reliable research methods
- one example of relevant, high-quality historical scholarship (i.e. a book or peer-reviewed journal article)



Fine Print & Reminders

Technology policy: We will be busy in every class section, and we don't need any technological distractions. Silence your cell phones during class. If you choose to bring a laptop to class, make sure you're using it only to take notes, access course documents, or as a resource during group work or Congress days. Stay on task; don't use your laptop in class to surf the internet, check email, update your Facebook status, etc.

Regarding plagiarism: On papers and exams, doing your own work is absolutely essential. In ALL papers you must cite the sources of any information, quotations or ideas which are not your own work, using Chicago Style footnotes. Let me be very clear. You cannot cut & paste text from the internet into your own papers and pass it off as your own writing. You cannot turn in a paper from another class, or that someone else has written, or that you have bought online. Plagiarized work or exam cheating will mean an automatic zero on the assignment and may cause you to fail the class, at my discretion. **I take such violations very seriously.** Please familiarize yourself with and follow the university policy on Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.



Syllabus & Course Schedule

Date	#	Topic / Reading
W 1/20	1	Course Intro
F 1/22	2	The U.S. in 1945 / MO 1
M 1/25	3	The Atomic Age / HOT 1
W 1/27	4	Wars Cold, Hot and Political / MO 2-3
F 1/29	5	Congress Day #1 (Committee Assignments)
M 2/1	6	The Affluent Society / MO 4 + HOT 2
W 2/3	7	Exam #1 (MO 1-4 and HOT 1-2)
F 2/5	8	Congress Day #2
M 2/8	9	Consumer Culture / MO 5
W 2/10	10	1950s Men & Women / Evans, "Cold War and Feminine Mystique" (PDF)
F 2/14	11	Congress Day #3
M 2/15		No Class, President's Day holiday
W 2/17	12	Age of Consensus / MO 6
F 2/19	13	Age of Consensus: What, Are You Kidding Me? / HOT 3
M 2/22	14	New Frontiers and Great Society / MO 7-8 up to p. 133
W 2/24	15	Vietnam / MO rest of 8 + HOT 4
F 2/26	16	Congress Day #4
M 2/29	17	Rebellion and Counterculture / MO 9 + HOT 5
W 3/2	18	The 1960s in Review
F 3/4	19	Exam #2 (MO 5-9 and HOT 3-5)
M 3/7	20	America under Nixon; Watergate / MO 10 + HOT 6 **PAPER TOPIC DUE
W 3/9	21	Nixon and the World / MO 11
F 3/11	22	Congress Day #5
M 3/14	23	Era of Limits; Interpreting the 1970s / MO 12 + HOT 7
W 3/16	24	LIBRARY DAY
F 3/18	25	Congress Day #6
3/21 - 3/26		Spring Break

Date	#	Topic / Reading
M 3/28	26	Social and Cultural Transformations of the 1970s / MO 13
W 3/30	27	The Reagan Years, New Conservatism (MO 14 + HOT 8)
F 4/1	28	Exam #3 (MO 10-14 and HOT 6-8)
M 4/4	29	Peer Review Day - Bring ** Research Paper Draft to Class (printed)
W 4/6	30	Right, Left, Liberal, Conservative / Reading TBA
F 4/8	31	Film Day: The Eyes of Tammy Faye. ** RESEARCH PAPER DUE
M 4/11	32	1980s Foreign Policy / MO 15
W 4/13	33	Social Tensions and Culture Wars / MO 16
F 4/15	34	Congress Day #7
M 4/18		No Class, Patriot's Day holiday
W 4/20	35	Congress Bill Workshop Day ** YOUR BILL IS DUE
F 4/22	36	Congress Day #8
M 4/25	37	Post-Cold War America and the World / MO 17 + HOT 9
W 4/27	38	America and Americans in the New Millennium / MO 18 + HOT 10
F 4/29	39	Congress Day #9
M 5/2	40	Epilogue: History in Our Time / MO 19 - Bring document to class to discuss
M 5/9		Exam #4 at 8:30 am (MO 15-19 and HOT 9-10) - Congress Paper DUE

Grading Scale	
Attendance and Participation (A&P)	25%
Exams (lowest is dropped) 2/3, 3/4, 4/1, 5/9 @ 10% each	30%
Research paper: Topic 3/7, Draft 4/4, Final Draft 4/8	15%
Congressional Simulation - Preparation & Participation	15%
Committee Wiki (GROUP grade)	10%
Congressional Paper / Course Reflection - due 5/9	5%
TOTAL	100%