

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History
Winter/Spring, 1990

HISTORY 398
The History of the United States, 1945-1990

Professor John Sharpless
History Department
263-1800

COURSE CONTENT:

The intent of History 398 is to provide an overview of economic, political and social trends since World War II. Naturally, the course will draw heavily on other social science disciplines (economics, political science and sociology) for much of its material. However, we will attempt to chart cultural and artistic trends as well.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS

Attendance at both lectures and discussion section is required. To "test" for attendance at lectures, there will be occasional surprise quizzes. Although the points allotted to the lecture quizzes are few, they could make the difference at the end of the course. Discussion points will be awarded to students who attend discussion section regularly. There will also be occasional short assignments to encourage reading and discussion on a weekly basis.

There will be an "in class" mid-term examination, and a "take-home" essay examination in addition to the final examination. The contribution of each component in the course will be weighted by the following percentages:

Discussion Section Points	17%
Lecture Quizzes	3%
Mid-term Exam (in class)	25%
Take-Home Essay Problem	25%
Final Examination	30%

REQUIRED READING:

Students should be warned that the reading requirements for the course are considerable. In addition to the books on order at the University Bookstore, there will be a photocopied booklet of material and some reserved readings. The books on order at the bookstore are:

- N. L. Rosenberg & E. S. Rosenberg, In Our Times (Prentice-Hall).
- Steven Ambrose, Rise to Globalism (Penguin).
- Myra MacPherson, Long Time Passing (Signet).
- Sara Evans, Personal Politics (Vintage).
- Elaine T. May, Homeward Bound (Basic Books).

*R. N. Bellah, et. al., Habits of the Heart (Harper Paperback).

*Paul Conkin, Big Daddy From the Pedernales (Twayne).

(* = purchase optional)

I realize that for some students a book list of this size may pose a financial burden. I have requested, therefore, that these books be placed on three (3) hour Reserve at both H. C. White Library and the Historical Society Library.

EXAMINATION AND GRADES:

In order to avoid any confusion over the direction and content of the course, we will be distributing the questions for midterms and the final (in class) on January 29. It should be stressed that these are not simply study questions. They are the examination questions just as they will appear on the examination.

The total number of points possible for all assignments, tests and quizzes is 500. The number of points necessary to attain each grade level are as follows:

Grade	Points Total
A	460-500
A/B	410-459
B	360-409
B/C	310-359
C	250-309
D	220-249
F	0-219

We reserve the right to give the grade of "F" to any student who fails to meet the basic requirements of the course, regardless of their point total. In other words, you are expected to attend all lectures and all sessions of your assigned discussion section. You are expected to complete all assignments on time. You are expected to take the examinations at the prescribed time and the designated place. If you fail to meet these basic expectations, you will receive an "F" for the course even though you may have accumulated more than 220 points by the end of the term.

While exceptions to these basic requirements may (very occasionally) be granted, the student is obligated to request that such an exception be granted three days prior to the due date (for assignments) or one week prior to the examination period (for tests). There will be no "Incompletes" or extensions beyond the end of the term. Please, no exceptions on this score.

PLAGIARISM:

Unfortunately, it appears necessary to comment on plagiarism and cheating. Obviously, it is expected that examinations and assignments will reflect your own original efforts. We do not discourage studying together, however, in the final analysis your essays, assignments and answers to the questions on the examinations must represent your ideas and be written in your own words.

If it is shown that your work in the course does not represent your own efforts, the consequences of can be serious. Cheating could cost you your college career or, at the very least, it could mean an "F" in this course. But equally important, even if you are not caught I believe that cheating is a sign of a serious lack of respect for the people teaching the class, your fellow students and yourself. Enough said. If you make a sincere effort to meet the demands of the course, we will make a sincere effort to help you pass the course. Cheating is quite unnecessary.

OFFICE HOURS:

The Teaching assistants will post their office hours on their office door. Professor Sharpless will hold hours by appointment only His office is 4110 Humanities.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Department of History
Winter/Spring, 1990

HISTORY 398
America, 1945-Present

PROF. JOHN SHARPLESS
4110 Humanities Bldg.
263-1800

LECTURE OUTLINE

- WEEK 1 (Jan. 22) Historical Background: The Great Depression and the Great War
(Jan. 24) Postwar Trends: An Overview
- WEEK 2 (Jan. 29) The Truman Years: Domestic Politics and International Affairs
(Jan. 31) The Emergence of the "Cold War": 1944-1948
- WEEK 3 (Feb. 5) The American Economy; 1945-1958: The expansion of Federalism and the Subsidy of the Middle Class
(Feb. 7) The Fifties: Stability and Promise
- WEEK 4 (Feb. 12) American Foreign Policy in the Eisenhower Years: The Dulles Brothers and America's Destiny
(Feb. 14) Anti-Communism and Joe Mccarthy: "What Evil Lurks in the Hearts of Men?"
- WEEK 5 (Feb. 19) Social Trends, 1945-1958: Family, Home, and Country in the Fifties
(Feb. 21) The Demographics of Social Change: The Baby Boom and Schooling in America
- WEEK 6 (Feb. 26) The Political Economy of Urban America
(Feb. 28) Social Class and Race in Age of Prosperity
- WEEK 7 (Mar. 5-7) The Kennedy Years: A Thousand and One Knights
- WEEK 8 (Mar. 12) It will Never Be The Same Again: 1963, looking back.
(Mar. 14) * * * * * MID-TERM EXAMINATION (IN CLASS) * * * * *
(SPRING RECESS -- MARCH 17-26)
- WEEK 9 (Mar. 26) Civil Rights and Black America, 1945-1955
(Mar. 28) Civil Rights and Black America, 1955-1965

- WEEK 10 (April 2-4) Vietnam: Victory without Honor, Honor without Victory
- WEEK 11 (April 9) Lyndon Johnson's Politics of War
(April 11) Domestic Politics and Policies, 1963-1968
- WEEK 12 (April 16) * * * * * TAKE HOME EXAM DUE IN CLASS * * * * *
(April 16) The Nixon Presidency: A Man Without a Past?!
(April 18) The Nixon Presidency: Domestic and International Policies
- WEEK 13 (April 23) Social Trends, 1968-1984: Down the Road to Hell and Damnation
(April 25) The American Economy, 1957-1988: The Rise and Fall of the "Fine-tuned" Economy
- WEEK 14 (April 30) The Ford-Carter Years: America's Lost Destiny
(May 2) Foreign Policy in the Eighties: "It's better to be dead than ? ? ? ?"
- WEEK 15 (May 7) The Politics of Selfishness: Reagan and the Triumph of Neo-Conservatism
(May 9) Morality and Destiny: The Fate Individualism in American Life
- WEEK 16 (May 14) The Fate of the Cold War: "We Have Seen the Enemy and He is Us!"
(May 16) Is There Life After Nancy?