

HIS 305 Recent History of the United States

Instructor: Larry Hadfield

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: An in-depth analysis of selected 20th century personalities, problems, and trends significant in the shaping of the current domestic and foreign contexts of American life.

The period 1945-2000 includes an era of social and political change unprecedented in US history. Students will gain an understanding of the Cold War, The Civil Rights Movement, political protest movements of the '70s, the emergence of the United States as the world's only super power, and the implications and impact of that status.

TEXT: In Our Times, Rosenberg & Rosenberg, 7th ed., Prentice Hal, 2002.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, students will:

- 1) Be able to chart the emergence of the United States as a world power.
- 2) Understand the factors that gave rise to the Civil Rights Movement and its subsequent impact on political and social issues.
- 3) Be able to relate the events of the last fifty-five years to current political and social issues.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Students are required to complete assigned readings in the text at the times noted in the syllabus. Supplementary readings will be distributed at least one week before required. Final grade will be based on two exams to be completed during the fourth and eighth weeks.

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is expected and required. Student involvement in class discussions is a critical component of learning and will be considered as a factor in the evaluation of student performance.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

WEEK #1:

No reading assignment
Course introduction and expectations
Overview:
1. US in the early 20th century
2. From isolation to involvement
3. The New Deal to the Fair Deal

WEEK #2:

Reading: Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Post War USA
Rise of the US economy
Eisenhower and life in the 50s

WEEK #3:

Reading: Chapters 5 and 6
The “initials” of the 60s – JFK, LBJ, MLK
The polarization of US politics
The search for equity

WEEK #4:

Reading: As assigned
The politics of division
Vietnam and Foreign Policy
The new left
EXAM

WEEK #5:

Reading: Chapters 7 and 8
Domestic politics – from Watergate to resignation
China, South America, and the Middle East

WEEK #6:

Reading: As assigned
The economy – from growth to malaise
Energy, ecology, and equality
A conservative turn

WEEK #7

Reading: Chapter #9
The politics of fairness
The “new cold war”
The Middle East and the Persian Gulf

WEEK #8:

Reading: Chapter #10
“New Democrats,” “New Economy,” and
“New Americans.”
Post Cold War foreign policy
The 2000 Election
Final Exam Due