HIS 305: RECENT HISTORY OF U.S.  
SUMMER 2015  
MEETING THURSDAY 6:00-10:30 P.M.  
With  
DR. BEAHM  


PLEASE READ THE FIRST TWO CHAPTERS OF UNFINISHED JOURNEY: AMERICA SINCE WORLD WAR II FOR THE FIRST NIGHT OF CLASS.  

Office Hours: I will be happy to meet with you on the Doane-Lincoln campus at mutually agreed to times upon request.  
Telephone: 402-975-2155  
E-mail: Donald.Beahm@doane.edu  

Course Description: This course examines selected topics in U.S. history, from the 1950s to present. Students will gain a deeper understanding of Cold War culture, popular culture, gender roles, the modern civil rights movement(s) and other social movements. Particular attention is paid to domestic politics, from the rise of Lyndon B. Johnson’s “Great Society” to Ronald Reagan and the rise of the “New Right.” Students who successfully complete this course also will gain a deeper understanding of the interplay of culture, politics, and society (and the analytical constructs of race, gender, and class), as they study the origins of issues relevant to contemporary society.  

The class will be mostly discussion of the papers you will write and presentations you will make (see below) but will also include a number of videos, websites to view, and lecture.  

Learning Outcomes: Through lectures, reading the text, watching video, the writing of reactions papers and critical discussion, at the end of the class you should:  
1. Gain a fuller understanding of the fundamentals of U.S. history since World War II.  
2. Have developed better skills in evaluating and analyzing the contours of recent U. S. history.  
3. Be able to think critically about theoretical concepts related to recent U. S. history.  

Requirements and Grading: You will be required in this course to read the assignments in the texts as listed on the schedule and write at least six, two to three page reaction papers on the readings (worth 50% of your grade), participate in discussions of the reaction papers in class by listing and asking questions (worth 20% of your grade), and write a five to seven page book critique on a book you have read on recent U.S. history (worth 20% of your grade), and deliver it in class (worth 10% of your grade).  

Reaction Papers: Once you have read each week’s assignment you are expected to write a two to three page reaction paper on a topic related to that reading. When writing your paper do not just regurgitate the text, tell me what you think about what you read in the
text. I encourage you to write in first person. It is fine for you to say “I think that…” Again, I don’t want you to just describe what the author thinks; I want you to tell me your view of what the author has said. Don’t just be descriptive, be analytical. You will be required to turn in six papers over the seven weeks that papers will be presented. There are only two weeks where you do not have to turn in a paper. If you turn in more than six papers I will take the six highest grades to use in averaging your final grade. In other words, I will throw out the lowest grade if you write seven papers.

Book Critique Requirement:
You will also be required to read a book on recent U.S. history of your own choosing and to write a five to seven page book report and present it in class. This can be any academic work on recent U.S. history, including biographies. **All books must be pre-approved by me.** You will receive a grade for the written report and a grade for the oral report. We will start the oral book reports the fourth or fifth week of the session. **The written and oral book reports will be due on the same day.** Oral reports will last between five to ten minutes. Your book critique will be typed, double spaced and at least a full five pages long. It will be graded on how well you summarize, discern the angle of the book, and critique the book. The largest part of your book report will be the critique. The summary should be very short (two or three paragraphs at the most). Your explanation of the angle of the book has to do with the angle the author took in writing the book. Every author has an axe to grind, or a bias to reveal. I want you to tell me what the axe grinding is, or what the author’s bias appears to be. Tell me why you think the author wrote the book.

The main body of your report should be the critique. In this part I want you to tell me what was good and what was bad about the book. This should include any critique that you care to offer, e.g., did the author give a balanced approach? Did s/he address all the areas that you thought were important? What wasn’t said in the book that you thought needed saying? How could the book have been improved? If it was perfect, tell me why it was perfect. Do not tell me the book had too many big words, that it was boring or that it was hard to read. These are not helpful critiques. Help me understand what you thought of the book.

Finally, you should offer your recommendation. Was it good, or was it a waste of your time. Whichever it was, tell me why. You may write in first person when expressing your opinions throughout the report. I want to know what you think of the book. At least half of your paper or more should be the critique. If it is not, this will hurt your grade. Grammar and punctuation should be corrected on the computer as with all typos.

Participation: Participation is also an important part of the class since 20% of your grade will depend on your participation. I will be keeping track of your participation throughout the semester so if you ever want to know how you are doing grade wise, just ask. You should try to participate weekly beyond the paper that you wrote. A good question goes a long way with me in counting participation. **Coming to class late or leaving during class repeatedly will adversely affect your participation grade.** Also, once each class begins you should have your desk free of all electronic devices except for a computer if you use it to take notes. If you are observed texting, surfing on your computer, or otherwise using electronic devices during class you will receive a lower participation grade for that day.
Make-up and Late Papers: All make-up papers and written and oral book reports that are going to be late must be pre-approved by the professor unless you are physically unable to perform the work, or there has been an emergency that would justify your missing the scheduled assignment. If you do not have permission to turn in papers, or written and oral book reports late, there will be a one letter grade deduction for every class they are late.

Attendance: You can't participate if you are not in attendance, and 20% of your grade is dependent on participation. Unexcused absences will lower your participation grade.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty has no place in a learning environment because it betrays the reason for being here. Anyone found cheating will receive a zero (not an F, a zero) for the work they were found to have cheated on. Plagiarism is using the words or thoughts of others as though they were your own. This is a form of cheating and it will not be tolerated. I will use TURNITIN.COM to evaluate your book reports for plagiarism.

Incompletes: Incompletes will only be granted if you are medically unable to finish the course, or there has been a family emergency. Incompletes must be completed at the earliest possible date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>BOOK</th>
<th>CHAPTERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>Chafe</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 4th</td>
<td>Chafe</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 11th</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 18th</td>
<td>Chafe</td>
<td>5-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 25th</td>
<td>Chafe</td>
<td>8-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2nd</td>
<td>Chafe</td>
<td>11-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 9th</td>
<td>Chafe</td>
<td>13-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 16th</td>
<td>Chafe</td>
<td>15-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 23</td>
<td>Chafe</td>
<td>18-19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>