THE 1960s: DECADE OF TRANSFORMATION

Wednesday, 8:00 PM, 640 Mass. Ave

**Course Overview**

“The Times They Are A-Changin’” is the title of a Bob Dylan song from 1964. Perhaps the title itself encapsulates an emerging mood in America during this decade of transformation. The inclusive years of the 1960s begins with the election of John Kennedy as the 35th President of the United States in 1960 and concludes with the end of the Vietnam War on January 27, 1973. This entire period was, in fact, more than a time of change: it was a time of formation. More than 70 million young Americans of the post-war years – “baby boomers” - were coming of age and not liking the direction America was going. Having experienced the conservative and lucrative post-war fifties with the advent of television, rock & roll and super highways, America’s youth generally rejected any association with their parents’ generation. They experimented with new and radical ways of thinking that powerfully challenged the very fabric of American life. To be sure, many of the revolutionary ideas from the sixties are shaping life in the West today. The 1960s was not only a decade of transformation in American history, but an era of formation and influence that would lay the foundation for generations to come.

“The 1960s: Decade of Transformation” is an undergraduate course that will review the political landscape and cultural milieu coming from the Eisenhower post-war era, while examining new and ostensibly radical ideology, protest movements, and counterculture of the period that often united politicians and dissidents in similar causes. By design this course is interdisciplinary, as students will have the opportunity to select themes in political science, the arts (music, entertainment, and media), religion, philosophy and sociology (culture studies) for their semester research paper.

**Instructor**

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Office Hours: MF 11-12 noon; 3-4 PM
**Course Goals**
To provide an intellectual framework and analytical tools for students to discuss, reflect upon, and understand issues that developed during a specific period in American history, and how these ideas are influencing life today.

**Evaluation**
Students are expected to attend lectures, read assigned texts, submit term paper & essays, and participate in discussion, as well as display an ability to absorb, comprehend, and analyze the course material.

**Study Groups**
Depending on class size, study groups (usually four) will be formed to prepare class presentations on 1960's issues. These 15 minute group presentations will take place near the end of the semester.

**Grading Policy**
Final grade for the course will be based on the following:

1. Class Participation/Discussion 10%
2. Analytical Essays 30% (10 X 3)
3. Term Paper 40%
4. Oral Presentation 20%

**Learning Objectives**
The following objectives are built into the pedagogy of this course syllabus:

1. To provide an awareness, knowledge & understanding of the political & social landscape in post-World War II America;
2. To help students understand the cultural, psychological, political & religious/theological foundations that led to the counter-culture movement in the 1960s; and,
3. To provide the building blocks for students to intelligently express their own views on these and other themes

**Disabilities Statement**
If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

**Use of Electronic Devices**
All electronic devices will be turned off at the beginning of class.

**Readings Assignments**
Required readings for each class are listed below, and should be completed before the class period. All others are highly recommended, and may be referred to in class. Shorter articles will be uploaded to Blackboard. Additional websites and recently declassified government documents will be made available in class.
Requirements
1. Readings
2. Three take home exercises
3. Oral Presentation

Textbooks
The following titles will serve as our main texts for the course:

Primary


Secondary (Recommended but not required)

H.W. Brands, *The Foreign Policy of Lyndon Johnson: Beyond Viet Nam* (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University, 1999).


Gale Editor, ed., *The Cuban Missile Crisis* (Farmington, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2010).


A more detailed topical bibliography will be provided.

**Course Outline**

Class Meets on Wednesdays at 8:00 PM

**Week 1 Jan 14**

**America and Foreign Policy in the Post-War Years**


**Week 2: Jan 21**

**John Kennedy and the Promise of Leadership**


Todd Gitlin, “Leftward Kicking and Screaming,” in *TS*, 81-104.


Week 3: Jan 28
The Meaning of National Culture and the Counterculture
First Analytical Essay Distributed
Farber, “Freedom,” in The AGD, 67-89
Michael Wm. Doyle, “Debating the Counter-Culture: Ecstasy and Anxiety Over the Hip Alternative, CGA, 143-156.

Week 4: Feb 4
Vietnam
First Analytical Essay Due
Farber, “Vietnam,” AGDs, 117-137.

Week 5: Feb 11
Lyndon Johnson and a Nation at War
H.W. Brands, The Foreign Policy of Lyndon Johnson: Beyond Viet Nam (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University, 1999). Selections to be distributed/posted on BlackBoard

Week 6: Feb 18
Civil Rights: Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Week 7: Feb 25**

**Religion in the 60s**

*Second Analytical Essay Distributed*


**Week 8: March 4**

**Religion in the 60s, continued**

*Second Analytical Essay Due*


Joane Beckman, “Religion in Post World War II America,”

http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/twenty/tkeyinfo/trelww2.htm


**Spring Break: March 6-15**

**Week 9: March 18**

**Religion in the 60s, continued**

**Liberation Theology & Latin America**

*Crisis of Faith*

*Topics for Final Research Paper Due*


**Week 10: March 25**

**Music in the 60s and Its Effect on the National Psyche**

*Third Analytical Essay Distributed*
Protest Songs
Greil Marcus, LRS, 166-201

Easter Break: April 1-7

Week 11: April 8
Revolution in the Air: the Cultural Revolution
Third Analytical Essay Due
BDP, 103-193

Week 12: April 15
The Cold War: The New Reformers & The New Left
Student Oral Class Presentations
Strategic and International Relations in the Cold War and Post-Cold War, Adelphi Papers, selections will be distributed.
Doug Rossinow, “The New Left: Democratic Reformers or Left-Wing Revolutionaries,” CGA, 91-118
MacKenzie, “Politics & the Liberal Arc,” LH, 38-83
Unger, “The New Left, TWC, 55-92
Gitlin, “Radicals & the Liberal Glow,” TS, 127-170
Faber, “The Liberal dream & Its Nightmare,” AGD, 90-116

Week 13: April 22
A New Direction
Last Class
Student Oral Class Presentations
Farber, CGA, 64
Farber, “Richard Nixon and the Politics of Deception,” AGD, 212-238
Unger, “Election 68,” TWC, 314-345

MAY 1, 2015, 5:00 PM, LAST DAY TO SUBMIT FINAL PAPER

End of Course

This Syllabus may be updated.