

SYLLABUS

SEE '00

HI305⁵⁰ Contemporary America
June 14-30 - 5:30-9:40

Phy

Instructor: Don Wilson

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Text: Miller, Douglas T. On Our Own: Americans in the Sixties,
Lexington, Mass. D.C. Heath & Co., 1996.

Description: The course attempts an in depth investigation into a period in American History, wherein fundamental changes occurred in domestic and foreign policies that still define, in many instances, the America of today. It focuses on the Cold War, the supposedly "comfortable" 50's, the civil rights movement, the Viet-Nam War, and the student & counter-culture movements of the 60's.

Objectives: It will be the purpose of the course to approach an understanding of, what are considered, the profound alterations to America during the period under study, and the influences that produced them. Whereupon, in pursuit of these goals, a further objective is that the student will gain an appreciation of how events, in general, create change, with a view to provide a basis for judging whether the changes were worth the destruction of the past's foundations, that frequently were their result.

Course Requirements:

Research Papers: Three short (2 to 3 typed double spaced pages) papers, answering the questions/topics listed in the lecture schedule. Due on the dates indicated therein.

Book Review: One book review of approximately 4 double spaced typewritten pages, of a book used for one of the research papers. Due on the last day of the course.

Final Examination: The final will be an objective exam, consisting of multiple choice and true/false questions. They will be based on the reading, and the materials presented in class. A list of terms will be given the week prior to the final.

Class Format: Depending on the background and size of the class, a combination of lectures and discussions. Visual aids such as historical videos and films will be utilized where applicable. Students are encouraged to raise questions, or make comments at any time.

Grading: Grading will be based on a point system, as follows:

Research Papers 35 pts/ea...105pts	Letter Grade: 200-180=A
Book Review..... 45	179-160=B
Final Examination..... 50	159-140=C
Total.....200	139-120=D
	119- 0=F

HI305-Lecture Topics/Reading Assignments

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reading Assignments</u>
Jun 14	Introduction - The Cold War & the 50's	Text: Chap 1
16	The 50's, Trends towards protest.	Text: Chap 2
17	Kennedy and the New Frontier - idealism at home containment abroad.	Text Chap 3
19	Civil Rights. (1st paper due)	Text: Chap 4
21	The Great Society,	Text: Chap 5
23	Viet-Nam	Text: Chap 6 ■ HOS Primary Sources.
24	The Movement - (2d Paper Due)	Text: Chap 7
26	The Conservative Reaction	Text: Chap 8 & 9
28	The Twilight & Legacy of the Movement	Text: Chap 10 & 11, Epilogue.
30	Final Examination (3d paper due) Book Review due.	

Essay Questions

Jun 14&16: Could Eisenhower have ended the cold war? If so, what policies should he have followed? If not, why not?

The Eisenhower years appear to be a period of stability and prosperity. Assess what events, if any, would indicate the turmoil that was to occur in the next decade?

17: Analyze the impact of John F. Kennedy on the major issues that dominated the 60's. In what way can he be identified as the catalyst that brought them about? Does he deserve the credit he has received for idealism that is attributed to him? What of his decisions could be construed to indicate an other than idealistic character?

19: What were the goals of the Civil Rights movement that began with the lunch counter sit ins? Was the movement successful reaching these goals? Who were the leaders, and what events contributed to whatever success that was accomplished? Why didn't its results prove to be enough?

What were the attitudes of Presidents Kennedy&Johnson towards Afro-American civil rights? To what degree were their attitudes the result of political expediency, and how much can be attributed to personal idealism?

21: How realistic were the goals of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society? What did his programs accomplish, and what were its failures? Other than Viet-Nam, what other problems did the great society encounter? What were the attitudes of Afro-Americans towards it?

23&24: What were the events and attitudes that pushed the United States into the Viet-Nam War? Was it justified as necessary to contain Communism, and/or protect the South from aggression in accordance with the United Nations charter?

How did the policies of Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson result in the Viet-Nam war?

What were the effects of the Viet-Nam war on American Society? Were there positive results? How did it contribute to the "Movement"?

What were the conditions that thwarted American military efforts in Viet-Nam?

26: In 1968 a series of events significantly affected the the course of America's domestic and foreign policies. Identify these events, and asses their impact.

26: The election of Richard Nixon represented a reaction to liberal policies, and an attempt to establish conservative government. What were the main reasons for his election in 1968 & 72?

28: How did the social and cultural ideas of the 60's affect the 70's? What caused the counter-culture to enter the twilight, or has it?