

The Watergate Crisis

**AMH 4930 (Senior Seminar)
William A. Link
KF 117
Periods 8-10, TUESDAYS (3:00-6:00)**

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Office hours: T, 2-3, or by
appointment

On June 17, 1972, five men were arrested in a bungled burglary at the Watergate, a Washington, D.C., complex housing the Democratic National Committee. Although the extent of involvement by the Richard Nixon reelection campaign remained unclear for months, eventually the break-in, and the attempt to cover it up, brought down the Nixon presidency.

This seminar examines the crisis through general reading and by exposing students to the rich primary sources that document it.

Required Readings

(for purchase)

Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, *All the President's Men*
Rick Perlstein, *The Invisible Bridge*
Stanley I. Kutler, *The Wars of Watergate*

(in electronic format)

Watergate, Season 1 of *Slow Burn*, available on itunes podcasts.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. read and analyze works of history, with particular attention to argument, methodology, and use of evidence;
2. improve their ability to communicate clearly and concisely, verbally and in writing;
3. understand how to locate and use primary sources in a library;
4. understand how to organize and assemble primary sources into a coherent research paper.

Grading/evaluation

Discussion and discussion leaders, 15 percent; 3 primary source exercises, 15 percent; 2 analytical essays, 10 percent; preliminary research exercises, 15 percent; first draft, 10 percent; revision strategy, 5 percent; peer review of draft, 5 percent; final draft, 25 percent.

Grading Scale

94-100% = A	73.3-76.6% = C
90-93.9% = A-	70-73.2% = C-
86.7-89.9% = B+	66.7-69.9% = D+
83.3-86.6% = B	63.3-66.6% = D
80-83.2% = B-	60-63.2% = D-
76.7-79.9% = C+	Below 60 = E

Course Assignments

1. **For all papers, I require that students submit their writing assignments to me via elearning (<https://lss.at.ufl.edu>). Papers must be submitted to Canvas by noon of the day of class.**

*Please note that this course is in Canvas, so login under that option.) I will only accept papers that are submitted in **Microsoft Word**. All papers are due no later than the beginning of class.*

2. **Discussion grade** (15 percent): This grade includes: 1) general participation in classroom discussion and 2) discussion team. Beginning January 29th, each student will participate as part of a discussion team of 4-5 people during the class session in which we are considering readings. I will make assignments early in the semester. Students should collaboratively prepare a list of

questions, a bibliography of relevant secondary works, and survey the primary sources.

3. **Three primary source assignments (15 percent total; 5 percent each)**, due January 22, 29, and February 5.
4. **Two short analytical essays (10 percent), due February 19 and March 19.** These will be in response to the reading, based on a prompt supplied below. I am looking for well organized, clear, concise, and assertive writing, based on a thoughtful reading of the material.
5. **Preliminary research exercises (15 percent):** As part of your research project, I expect you to complete the following research exercises:
 - a. **Topic presentation (2 points):** this is your opportunity to pitch your topic, in no more than 10 minutes. Your presentation should include 1) a brief description of your topic, 2) what questions you are raising, 3) what other historians have said about topic. **Due Feb 5th.** The instructor must approve all topics.
 - b. **2 pp. prospectus (2 points):** a written version of your topic presentation. I will either approve the topic, or require that you reconsider and rewrite it. **Due February 12th; revised prospectus due February 26th.**
 - c. **Preliminary bibliography (2 points):** must include at least 10 primary sources and 10 secondary sources. **Due March 12th; revised bibliography, March 19th.**
 - d. **3 pp. detailed outline of your paper (4 points): due March 19th.**
 - e. **Draft of Introduction (5 points), due March 26th.**
6. **First draft (10 percent), due April 2nd.** Approximately 2,000 words.
7. **Peer review of classmate, due April 16th (5 percent):** each student will be responsible for a written review (500 words) of another student. I will make assignments early in class. The peer reviewer will lead discussion about the drafts.
8. **Revision strategy (5 percent) due April 23rd;** approximately 500 words. This should outline what the main suggestions were for revision from me and the class, and how students intends to revise their papers.
9. **Final draft, research paper (25 percent), due April 30th.** Approximately 4,000 words.



Other Matters...

Attendance: Attendance at all classes is absolutely essential, and your attendance in class is mandatory. **You will lose one letter grade from your discussion grade for each unexcused absence.** I will accept no excuses except medical or family emergencies, and these must be well-documented.

Deadlines: You must submit your work on time. Any unexcused late work will be penalized by one letter grade a day.

Plagiarism: I will enforce a policy of **zero tolerance** toward plagiarism of any kind, and I will be especially severe with anyone guilty of it. That means that anyone discovered cheating in any fashion will be given a failing course grade. It is your responsibility to be familiar with what cheating and especially plagiarism are. The University's rules on Academic Honesty and the statement on Academic Honesty are in the Undergraduate Catalog and at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx#honesty>.

The Department of History's statement on Academic Honesty, contained in the Department's Manual on Policies and Procedures, covers plagiarism, attribution, citation, multiple submission of papers, etc. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please consult the University and Departmental guidelines, or ask me for clarification.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. For more information, consult the following website: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>. Ideally, I would like to have the Disabilities Resources Center (DRC) paperwork early in the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 January 8: Course introduction

Distribute syllabus; review course requirements

WEEK 2 January 15: The Watergate Crisis, an overview

Slow Burn: episode 1, "Martha"

Kutler, *Wars of Watergate*, pp. 1-56

WEEK 3 January 22: The Rise of Richard Nixon

Using sources and posing questions

Primary source assignment: In a 250-word essay, examine how either the *Washington Post* or *New York Times* covered Richard Nixon and his "secret" plan to end the Vietnam War in October 1968. Examine any follow-up over the years as well.

Slow Burn: episodes 2, "The Defeat of Wright Patman"

Kutler, *Wars of Watergate*, pp. 57-101

WEEK 4 January 29: Break-In

Slow Burn: episode 3, "A Very Successful Coverup"

Kutler, *Wars of Watergate*, 102-186

Primary source assignment (250 words): In 1975, the Church Committee held hearings (<https://archive.org/details/Church-Committee-Hearings-Volume2-Huston-Plan/page/n9>) examining what was known as the Huston Plan. What were the implications of this plan?

WEEK 5 February 5: The Campaign of 1972

All the President's Men, chs. 1-8

Kutler, *Wars of Watergate*, pp. 187-241

Slow Burn: episode 4, "Lie Detectors"

Primary source assignment (250 words): How did a major national newspaper of your choosing cover the Watergate issue during the campaign of 1972?

Topic presentations

WEEK 6 February 12: The Cover-up

All the President's Men, chs. 9-13

Kutler, *Wars of Watergate*, pp. 242-322

Slow Burn: episode 5, "True Believers"

2 pp. prospectus due: All students should email me a 2-page prospectus that addresses how you intend to frame your discussion, what questions you will ask, etc., whether necessary primary sources exist. Be prepared to defend your topic.

WEEK 7 February 19: Independent study/no class

Kutler, *Wars of Watergate*, pp. 323-414

All the President's Men, chs. 14-17, and Afterword

Slow Burn: episode 6, "Rabbit Holes"

Short analytical essay #1 (1000 words): How do Woodward and Bernstein depict the Watergate affair? In retrospect, how accurate is their analysis?

WEEK 8 February 26: Tapes

Kutler, *Wars of Watergate*, pp. 415-470

Slow Burn: episode 7, "Saturday Night"

Revised prospectus due; topics and approach need my approval

March 5: Spring Break

WEEK 9 March 12: Saturday Night Massacre

Slow Burn: episode 8, "Going South"

Preliminary bibliographies due

WEEK 10 March 19: Impeachment

Kutler, *Wars of Watergate*, pp. 471-552

Revised bibliographies due, 2-3 pp. outline of your paper due.

Short analytical essay # 2 (1000 words): How does Kutler's account differ from that of Woodward and Bernstein?

WEEK 11 March 26: Resignation, pardon, aftermath

Kutler, *Wars of Watergate*, pp. 553-622

Introductions due

WEEK 12 April 2: NO CLASS

1st drafts due

WEEK 13 April 9: NO CLASS

Read papers; prepare peer reviews.

WEEK 14 April 16: Paper workshop

In this class, we will spend time discussing each paper, with peer reviewers presenting their classmates' papers.

WEEK 15: April 23: Independent study

Revision strategy due

Final papers are due no later than 5:00 pm, Tuesday, APRIL 30th.