

University of Florida
History Department
Spring 2024

AMH4270: US Since World War II

Dr. Lauren Pearlman

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Office Hours: Thursdays 2:00-3:00pm on Zoom and by appointment

Class Format: HYBRID. Asynchronous Lectures, Thursday Online Discussions 12:50-1:40pm

Course Description: World War II created a new world at home and abroad. The war not only ended the Depression, bringing a larger proportion of the population into the mainstream industrial economy; it also raised questions of integration, equal pay and non-discrimination, full employment, and the right to housing and urban services. These questions would have to be reckoned with under the shadow of a new war, the Cold War, which impacted every facet of American life. This course examines how the Cold War shaped the postwar period and how Americans responded to the changing postwar political, social, and cultural order during the era. We will investigate the origins of the Cold War, the meaning of the Cold War at home, and the moments when the Cold War consensus began to unravel.

We will also look at issues of political economy, civil rights, labor rights, and gender roles that defined postwar America. The fight for racial and gender equality and the politics of identity which they inspired are crucial to the larger story of U.S. history in the second half of the twentieth century. Finally, we will consider how the U.S. has shaped the late-20th century global economic order and, in turn, the impact that the global economy has had on the American economy, work, and social politics. The last half century has been a time of tremendous change, both of astounding economic growth and cultural innovation on the one hand, and wrenching experiences of war and social unrest on the other. We will try to understand the character and meaning of those changes, both as they were experienced by participants and as historians look back on them.

Course Objectives: You are about to learn a lot about U.S. history! Here are some of our goals for the semester:

1. You will not only acquire an understanding of key developments in the history of the US since WWII but also understand *how* they shaped the world in which we live.
2. You will develop the ability to read and analyze primary documents, situate them in historical context, and develop critical interpretations of their significance.
3. You will learn to compare specific historical periods, social movements, and political ideologies of the post-WWII era.

Required Reading: There is one required textbook to purchase. The essays and primary documents in the textbook will serve as the foundation for many of your assignments. In addition, there will be readings, images, and other primary documents available online via Canvas.

- Robert Griffith and Paula Baker, *Major Problems in American History Since 1945* (Fourth Edition, Houghton Mifflin, 2007) **Please make sure you purchase the correct edition.**

Course Delivery: This course will be delivered in a hybrid format. Students will be engaged through a combination of asynchronous lectures and online discussions. Lectures will introduce core knowledge of the week's topic and ensure timely achievement of course objectives. Thursday discussions led by the professor will build on lecture content, while homework assignments will offer additional personal engagement with the class materials.

Course Assignments and Grading:

- Please have your syllabus on hand to help keep up with all of the reading and writing deadlines.
- **Section Grade:** You are expected to read the assigned readings prior to section and show up to discussion with questions, comments, and opinions about what you have read. You will want to read carefully, critically, and identify questions, problems, contradictions, and critiques about what you have read. Bring those issues to discussion and be prepared to respond to the questions, problems, contradictions, and critiques that your classmates have also brought forth for the day. With that kind of active reading and participation, you will have productive discussions that will help you not only to come to terms with the topics discussed, but in a broader way to develop your own voice as a scholar!
- Note: A big component of active learning is also active listening. For shy students who are often careful listeners, I would encourage you to challenge yourself to come out of your shell at least once per class and engage with a question or problem that I or another student has posed. For the more gregarious students, however, I would coach you to practice active listening, and to engage directly with comments that other students have made, in order to make sure you are not dominating the discussion with all your own ideas.
- **Lecture and Reading Assignments:** Over the course of the semester, you will have a variety of writing assignments based on the week's lectures and reading. At the beginning of the semester, I will assign you to a group and you will be responsible for producing one (1) assignment per week (lecture reflection, reading response, primary source analysis). At the end of the semester, you will have submitted four (4) lecture reflections, four (4) reading responses, and four (4) primary source analyses in total. Assignments are due **Wednesdays at 11:59pm**. Further guidance on each assignment is on Canvas.
- A one thousand (1000) word paper analyzing a Cold War film of your choice (made during or after the Cold War and directly related to Cold War themes) is due before Spring Break, by **March 7 at 11:59pm**, though you may submit it at any time before the break. Further instructions regarding format and content is on Canvas.
- A one thousand (1000) word paper analyzing a presidential campaign of your choice from the Living Room Candidate website (<http://www.livingroomcandidate.org>) is due

on the last day of class, **April 23 at 11:59pm**, though you may submit it at any time during the semester. Further instructions regarding format and content is on Canvas.

- **Final Project:** The final project, due **May 1 at 12:00pm**, asks students to identify a 21st century issue/topic and explore how to situate it in the context of the course. Class lectures, readings, and discussions should prepare you to succeed in this assignment. The final project may be completed individually or in groups of up to three students who are working on the same issue. Ideas for the final project include song, dance, art, photography, poster presentations, public policy papers, museum exhibits, and podcasts, among others. Note: all creative projects must be accompanied by a well-researched written component. Further instructions regarding format and content is on Canvas.

Grades: Your grade in this class will be determined largely by your performance on a variety of written assignments. These exercises will allow you to hone your critical thinking and writing skills and allow you to reflect thoughtfully on key themes related to the course.

Your grade for this class will be determined as follows:

Section Grade/Participation	10%
Lecture Reflections	15%
Reading Responses	15%
Primary Source Analyses	15%
Cold War Film Analysis	15%
Living Room Candidate Paper	15%
Final Project	15%

UF Grading Scale

A100-94, A-: 90-93	C+: 77-79, C: 74-76, C-: 70-73
B+: 87-89, B: 84-86, B-: 80-83	D+: 67-69, D: 64-66, D-: 60-64 F: below 64

More information on UF's grading policies is available at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Essays: Generally speaking, I will look for the following in your papers:

1. Analysis. Does the paper make a convincing and coherent argument?
2. Evidence. Is the argument well supported by evidence? Is evidence used effectively?
3. Organization. Is the paper structured in logical way?
4. Content and originality. Does the paper make an original contribution or insight? Does the author's own opinion and voice come through?
5. Mechanics and style. Is the paper free of spelling and grammar errors? Is it clearly written?

Attendance Policy

- Attendance on Thursdays (online) is required, expected, and central to your learning experience. Class will begin and end on time each week. Please make sure to arrive on

time. In general, please be considerate of your classmates and avoid disrupting their learning experience.

- Participation in discussion is an important part of your role as a member of this class. You are encouraged to ask for feedback at any point in the semester.
- If you will be absent, please contact me as soon as possible to make arrangements to turn in work before class and provide dated documentation of illness or other university-approved absences. You are responsible for getting the information and material missed in class. A student with 3 unexcused absences will have their grade reduced a full letter grade. I will not contact students during the semester to apprise them of their attendance status; it is the responsibility of the students to check this regularly.
- Religious holidays, UF athletic travel conflicts, and written explanations from a certified health professional are eligible for an excused absence when cleared with the instructor ahead of time. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Late Work and Make-up Policy

- Assignments are due on Canvas on the due date and time. Unless stated otherwise, late assignments will be penalized one-third-letter grade. If you find yourself in a difficult situation, please email me to discuss an extension. It's always preferred that you do this ahead of time, but I recognize that sometimes issues arise last minute.
- Missed exams typically cannot be made up unless you have a university excused absence that you notify your professor of beforehand. If you have an unforeseen emergency, please contact me as soon as possible after your absence.

Guidelines for Discussion

Please keep in mind that course material can stir up strong emotions. A great deal of this results from the environment of mistrust and misunderstanding that exists in the wider society. I start from the assumption that those of you that have chosen to take this class have come with an open mind, ready not only to share your points of view but to try to understand the perspectives of others. Thoughtful, insightful, honest, and diverse points of view are needed in order to help us all learn to communicate more effectively and openly about course material. So that everyone feels respected in the classroom, use tact and understanding when presenting your ideas. Personal attacks, disparaging remarks, or attempts to dominate the conversation will not be tolerated. Remember as well that individuals in the classroom may have been personally affected by the issues that we are discussing; and to show respect to your peers and the educational process.

Note: This course adheres to UF's Policy on Academic Freedom and Responsibility. Consistent with the exercise of academic responsibility, an instructor of record must have freedom in the classroom to discuss academic subjects. The university student must likewise have the opportunity to study and articulate a full spectrum of ideas, opinions, and beliefs.

Correspondence

I will send important course announcements and other correspondence to you via Canvas and your UF email account so please make sure that you check your email regularly!

How to get in touch with your professor

- Come to office hours. I truly enjoy getting to know more about students outside of the classroom. You are encouraged to drop in with any questions that you may have about assignments, readings, your major, going grad school, or other pertinent topics.
- “But Dr. Pearlman, what if I can’t meet with you during those hours?” Great question! I would be happy to schedule an appointment to meet with you at another time.
- Email me at lpearlman@ufl.edu. I will typically get back to you within 24 hours, though my response will be slower over the weekend and holidays.

Students with Disabilities

Please do not hesitate to contact me during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodations should register with the Dean of Students Office (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting an accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester. Note: I know firsthand that this process can be very onerous and time consuming. Please email me so we can set up a time to discuss what would best help you succeed in the class regardless of when your documentation is provided.

Academic Honesty

The University, as well as your instructor, values and expects academic integrity. Ethical violations include cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and academic misconduct (including turning in the work of others as your own, reusing old assignments, or using AI services). These will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic failing grade in the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

To avoid plagiarism, you must not copy the words, phrases, arguments, ideas, or conclusions of another person or source (including Internet sources) without properly crediting the person or source with both quotation marks and a footnote. Make sure that you properly cite direct quotations, paraphrased information, and facts that are not widely known. I will provide you with guidelines for proper citations and formatting prior to your submission of all written work, but you may contact me at any time for clarification. For more information on UF's honesty policy, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>. For more information on how UF's Judicial Affairs processes cases of plagiarism, see <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php>.

Student Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on

how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>.

U Matter, We Care

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Food Insecurity: The Hitchcock Field and Fork Pantry is a free resource for all members of the University of Florida community. For more information see <https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>

Course Schedule

Please Note: the schedule may be changed as needed by the instructor. If any changes are made, you will have ample notice. Deadlines will never be moved earlier than stated here.

***Lecture reflections, reading responses, and primary source analyses are always due Wednesdays at 11:59pm.**

Week One: Jan 9-11

The Origins of the Post-World War II Era

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 1

Week Two: Jan 16-18

The Cold War

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 1

Group A: Lecture Reflection

Group B: Reading Response

Group C: Primary Source Analysis

Week Three: Jan 23-25

The Consumer's Republic

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 2

Group A: Primary Source Analysis

Group B: Lecture Reflection

Group C: Reading Response

Week Four: Jan 30-Feb 1

To the Brink

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 3

Group A: Reading Response

Group B: Primary Source Analysis

Group C: Lecture Reflection

Week Five: Feb 6-8

The Civil Rights Revolution

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 4

Group A: Lecture Reflection

Group B: Reading Response

Group C: Primary Source Analysis

Week Six: Feb 13-15

The Great Society

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 5

Group A: Primary Source Analysis

Group B: Lecture Reflection

Group C: Reading Response

Week Seven: Feb 20-22

The New Radicalism

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 6

Group A: Reading Response

Group B: Primary Source Analysis

Group C: Lecture Reflection

Week Eight: Feb 27-29

Feminist Politics in the 1960s and 1970s

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 7

Group A: Lecture Reflection

Group B: Reading Response

Group C: Primary Source Analysis

Week Nine: March 5-7

Vietnam and the Crisis of American Power

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 8

Group A: Primary Source Analysis

Group B: Lecture Reflection

Group C: Reading Response

March 7: Last day to turn in Cold War Film Analysis

Week Ten: March 12-14

Spring Break

Week Eleven: March 19-21

The 1970s

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 9

Group A: Reading Response

Group B: Primary Source Analysis

Group C: Lecture Reflection

Week Twelve: March 26-28

The Reagan Revolution at Home and Abroad

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 10

Group A: Lecture Reflection

Group B: Reading Response

Group C: Primary Source Analysis

Week Thirteen: April 2-4

The 1990s and the Search for Post-Cold War Priorities

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 12

Group A: Primary Source Analysis

Group B: Lecture Reflection

Group C: Reading Response

Week Fourteen: April 9-11

The New Jim Crow

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 13

Group A: Reading Response

Group B: Primary Source Analysis

Group C: Lecture Reflection

Week Fifteen: April 16-18

The US in the World since 9/11

Read: Griffith and Baker, Major Problems, Chapter 14.

Week Sixteen: April 23

Conclusions

Read: None

April 23: Last day to turn in Living Room Candidate Paper

FINAL PROJECTS DUE May 1 at 12:00pm.