



MERCER
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number	Course Title	Credits
HIS 214	United States History since 1945	3
Hours: Lecture/Lab/Other	Co- or Pre-requisite	Implementation Semester & Year
3	None	Fall 2022

Catalog description:

Intensive study of American history since World War II examines World War II, the Cold War at home and abroad, the Civil Rights movement, Vietnam, social upheavals and new forms of cultural expression during the 1960s, gender and class, technology, and 21st century issues.

General Education Category:
Goal 7: Historical Perspective
Goal 6: Humanities

Course coordinator:
Dr. Craig R. Coenen, x3533, coenenc@mccc.edu

Required texts & Other materials:

Chafe, William. *The Unfinished Journey: The United States Since World War II*. Eighth Ed., Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Boyer, Paul, *Promises to Keep: The United States Since World War II*, Third Edition, NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2005.

Zaretsky, Griffith, Baker, *Major Problems in American History Since 1945*, Fourth Edition, NY: Cengage, 2014.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. to read primary and secondary historical sources critically, with an understanding of their validity, perspective bias, audience, and context. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)
2. to use information technologies in acquiring new knowledge and perspective. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)
3. to construct an historical essay that presents a clear thesis, a persuasive argument, and well-researched supporting data. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)
4. to identify major personalities of American History. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)
5. to describe major movements, trends, and developments of American History. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)

6. to discuss with authority, either in writing or verbally, the historical forces (e.g., religion, economics, politics, social stratification, gender, individual actors, technology, nature, intellectual and aesthetic thought, etc.) behind the major movements, trends, and developments of American History. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)
7. to analyze other time periods and cultures with little or no ethnocentrism, thus displaying a sense of informed perspective and a deeper appreciation of the common threads of human nature. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)

Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):

Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

Institutional Learning Goal 5. Social Science. Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

Institutional Learning Goal 6. Humanities. Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

Institutional Learning Goal 7. History. Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

Institutional Learning Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective: Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples

Institutional Learning Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action. Students will understand ethical frameworks, issues, and situations.

Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy: Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking: Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.

Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:

The units of study listed below do not correspond to chapters in a textbook. Rather, the broad units, and the student learning outcomes associated with each unit, are universal for Mercer’s United States history survey courses.

Introduction to the course and the United States since 1945 [SLO 1-7]

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Describe the cause, course, and effects of the Great Depression and World War II.

Unit I: Cold War America: Abroad and at Home, 1945-1960 [SLO 1-7]

1. World War II and the Atomic Bomb

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Describe how World War II changed the United States both in domestic and foreign affairs.
- Compare and contrast the United States’ role in the world before and after World War II.
- Explain why the Allies were victorious in World War II.
- Compare and contrast American views and treatment of Japanese and Japanese-Americans with Germans and Italians.
- Analyze why minorities and women did not achieve more, lasting improvements from their World War II experiences.
- Assess whether or not the United States should have dropped the Atomic Bomb.
- Analyze the short-and long-term impact of the Atomic Bomb on the United States and the World.
- Support their opinion on the United States’ dropping of the Atomic Bomb.

2. Origins of the Cold War

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Compare and contrast the United States and Soviet Union from a political, economic, and social perspective.
- Explain why the Allies during World War II were not truly friends.
- Evaluate how actions from World War II helped cultivate a hostile post-war climate for the Allies.
- Assess the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences for the differences in foreign policy from Roosevelt to Truman.
- State and analyze how the events after World War II caused the Cold War.
- Describe the position of the rest of the World in this emerging bipolar Cold War.
- Understand how 1949 was a critical year in the evolution of the Cold War.
- Assess why the United States fought in Korea and what was accomplished from the war.

3. Rainbow at Midnight: The American Home Front through McCarthyism

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Explain the problems of returning to a peacetime economy and examine the impact that had on women and minorities.
- Analyze the ideas and impact of unionization in the immediate post-war period.
- Analyze actions taken by business America and corporations to forge a stable economy.
- Assess ways the Cold War caused a growing paranoia against any words or actions that veered off norms.
- Compare and contrast how popular culture portrayed societal norms during World War II with that of the post-war period.
- Explain the origins of HUAC and the McCarthy hearings and evaluate their affect on America and Americans.
- Understand the impact of the Cold War on the United States at home.

4. Consensus and Containment

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Explain the meaning of consensus and how it shaped all aspects of America during the 1950s.
- Analyze how Americans dealt with critics of the consensus.
- Explain the stereotypes regarding gender, race, and class during the 1950s.
- Understand how consensus was linked to Cold-War policies.
- Analyze the effectiveness of containment.
- Explain massive retaliation and its impact in the Cold War.
- Describe the major Cold-War events and actions of the 1950s.
- Assess how well United States foreign policy worked in the 1950s.

5. Outsiders and the Early Civil Rights Movement

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Discuss the origins of the Civil Rights movement.
- Identify Martin Luther King, Jr. and his organization, SCLC.
- Evaluate the successes and setbacks in regard to Civil Rights in the 1950s and early 1960s.
- Evaluate the significance of the Supreme Court in the Civil Rights Movement.
- Compare and contrast the role of the courts with mass action in the Civil Rights Movement.
- Assess the role of the government in desegregating America.
- Define who were the outsiders and what influence they had on society and culture.

Unit II: The Sixties: Counterculture, Vietnam, and the Silent Majority, 1960-1973 [SLO 1-7]

6. Kennedy's Cold War

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Analyze why Kennedy defeated Nixon in the 1960 presidential election.
- Compare and contrast Eisenhower's presidency with American's expectations of John F. Kennedy.
- Describe the New Frontier and Kennedy's vision for the United States.
- Describe the way Khrushchev treated Kennedy and understand the what problems that created.
- Assess Kennedy's actions in regard to Cuba and Castro's regime.
- Discuss the significance of Kennedy's trip to Europe in 1963.
- Analyze Kennedy's policies for Vietnam.
- Explain the importance of Kennedy's assassination for the United States and the world.

7. American Liberalism and the Great Society

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Assess Kennedy's foreign and domestic policy record, especially on Civil Rights.
- Compare and contrast Kennedy's style and successes with that of Lyndon Johnson.
- Describe the various programs that made up Johnson's War on Poverty and Great Society.
- Explain how the Great Society worked in operation.
- Analyze the Great Society's impact on the United States.
- Describe why the Great Society ended.
- Analyze why a strong liberal agenda has had such a difficult time resurfacing as national policy since the 1960s.

8. Civil Rights in the 1960s

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Compare and Contrast the successes and failures of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s with that of the 1950s.
- Assess why the government dragged its feet in regard to Civil Rights until 1964.
- Describe how the March on Washington and other displays of mass action in the 1960s affected national politics and public policy.
- Evaluate the relationship of the Kennedy administration with Civil Rights leaders
- Analyze Johnson's approach to Civil Rights.
- Discuss the growing radicalism and fragmentation of the Civil Rights movement.
- Identify and define Black Power.
- Understand why the Black Panthers were formed, what they did, and their impact on African Americans and mainstream culture..
- Assess the significance of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

9. The New Left and the Counterculture

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Describe the origins of the New Left and for what advocates of the new ideas believed.
- Analyze how mainstream Americans perceived the New Left and the Counterculture and how that perception changed by the early 1970s.
- Evaluate the significance of student groups on campus and what they accomplished.
- Assess the impact of the New Left and anti-war movement on American foreign and domestic policy.
- Explain why the Counterculture found itself very divided and an easy target for those who opposed it.

- Assess the legacy of the counterculture.

10. Vietnam and the Silent Majority

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Explain why the United States entered Vietnam.
- Analyze United States' strategy in fighting the Vietnam War.
- Understand why the United States failed to win the Vietnam War.
- Explain how and why so many people opposed the war.
- Compare and contrast the counterculture with the silent majority.
- Assess 1968 as a turning point in United States' history.
- State and clearly defend how the Vietnam War shaped the United States' role in the world for the next decade.

Unit III: From Crisis in Confidence to America Resurgent, 1973-present [SLO 1-7]

11. Crisis in Confidence

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Explain Watergate and its impact on American politics.
- Identify Détente and its significance on the United States abroad and at home.
- Evaluate why there were so many foreign and domestic problems during the 1970s and what our leaders did to try fixing them.
- Assess the pros and cons of the unique Carter presidency
- Understand why the New Right emerged in the 1970s and how it came to influence government at its highest levels.
- Address the meaning of the “Me Generation” and analyze how it differed from the youth culture of the 1960s.
- Describe the social and economic impact of the rust belt.
- Analyze the impact of our growing dependency on foreign oil.
- Understand the issues and actions in the Middle East and assess the significance of those events on Americans.

12. The Reagan Revolution?

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Compare and contrast Détente with Reagan's foreign policy.
- Examine the influence of the New Right on Reagan's ideas and political power.
- Assess Reaganomics for how it helped America and hurt Americans.
- Describe the Greedy 1980s and analyze it as either a product of national policy or an extension of the me generation.
- State how Reagan's foreign policy shaped the United States' role in the world during the 1980s and influenced relations with the Soviet Union.
- Compare and contrast Reagan's style in his first and second terms.
- Evaluate the significance of the Iran-Contra affair.

13. America at the Crossroads: Making Sense of our Place in a Post-Cold War World

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Understand how and why the Cold War ended.
- Evaluate how in a post-Cold War world the United States has played a role as an international policeman.
- Analyze the Persian Gulf War for its successes and failures.
- Assess how the Cold War's end opened many old domestic issues.

- Compare and contrast the national mood in 1988 and 1992 to state and explain why George H.W. Bush won the presidency in one year and lost it in the other.

14. Coming Apart at the Seams: Domestic Issues and Politics of the 1990s and 2000s

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Discuss why there has been such a surge in partisan politics over the past decade
- Explain the lingering problems in America concerning race and minorities
- Describe how technology has improved the lives of many Americans and hurt others.
- Assess conservatism in the United States in the 1990s and beyond.
- Compare and contrast the political agenda for the major parties.
- Analyze the impact of popular culture and the media on fragmenting the United States.
- Evaluate the significance of political scandals on the United States.

15. The United States, Terrorism, and the World

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- State how and why terrorism grew in the last decade.
- Assess what was done by the United States and the world to curb terrorism in the last decade.
- Analyze the impact terrorism has had on individuals and nations.
- Understand why terrorists attack and how to, not only prevent further attacks, but change their minds.
- Discuss how much liberty we should surrender in exchange for security.
- Defend their opinion on what path the United States should take as it moves into an uncertain future.
- Analyze the United States' place in the world into the 21st century.

Evaluation of student learning:

Examinations and Required Work. Describe general guidelines for course work, assignments, tests. Explain how assignments (quizzes, tests, essays, projects, portfolios, practicums, etc.) are designed to evaluate the course objectives.

Instructors have some discretion in determining the format and content of required work. However, written and verbal assignments in any history course should be designed to help students develop the General Education skills (historical perspective, critical thinking, information literacy, writing, and public speaking) listed above. Instructors should emphasize these goals in their assignments and should state them in their written and verbal instructions to the students.

History courses must, therefore, utilize essay examinations, written reports and oral presentations as standard methods of assessing student learning. Below are the parameters within which instructors may operate:

Reading Assignments

- ♦ Textbook as well as primary documents should be clearly assigned to the students

Exams & Quizzes

- ♦ At least two (2), one-hour exams
- ♦ A Final Exam
- ♦ Exams must include an essay component.

Writing Assignments (to assess discipline specific knowledge, communication skills, and critical thinking skills). Students are expected to develop the ability to construct narratives—written or verbal or both—that clearly present their own thesis based on solid evidence that has been thoroughly and

critically evaluated. Students are directed in developing competencies in accumulating evidence from a variety of sources, assessing the validity of the evidence, and extracting substantive generalizations from what they have discovered (Information Literacy).

- ♦ At least two (2), but preferably three (3), writing assignments
- ♦ At least one (1) essay should concentrate on the primary documents
- ♦ At least one (1) one assignment should incorporate library or internet research or both; this assignment may be a term paper or group presentation or some other type of project
- ♦ Length of the essays may be determined by the instructor; short (e.g., two-page) essays are acceptable

Course content related assessments should comprise at least 50% of graded assignments.