

HTS 2013: MODERN AMERICA: WORLD WAR II AND AFTER
Fall 2015, Georgia Institute of Technology
Dr. Todd M. Michney

Meeting Place/Time: Architecture (East) 207
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TR 1:35-2:55pm
M 10am-12pm, T 3-4pm,
or by appt.

Core Area/Attribute: E – Social Studies

The internationalism the United States pursued following its involvement in the Second World War (1941-1945) ensured that domestic and foreign policy affairs would more intimately connected than ever before. While leading the struggle against Communism amid decolonization in the so-called Third World, the U.S. became a mass-consumption society, with attendant expectations of upward mobility, popularly known as the “American Dream.” At the same time, economically and politically disenfranchised groups, starting with African Americans, increasingly challenged America to extend freedom and opportunity to all citizens regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation. America since World War II has been a fractious place, with anxieties relating to the threat of nuclear annihilation, changing gender and sexual norms, and demands for equal rights sparking sociopolitical disagreements – including a mounting conservative backlash against the liberal consensus of the early postwar decades.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will learn how social, political, and economic forces influence social behavior through an examination key themes and events in postwar American history, both domestic and international. Students will demonstrate that they have met the Area E learning outcome through a combination of response papers, group presentations, and a final take-home essay exam.

Learning Accommodations:

Classroom accommodations will be made for students with disabilities. These accommodations must be arranged in advance and in accordance with the ADAPTS office; see

<http://www.adapts.gatech.edu>

Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to comply with the Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code, including the provisions regarding plagiarism (see below), and the Student Code of Conduct, available online at:

<http://www.honor.gatech.edu/content/2/the-honor-code>
<http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/code-conduct>

Required Text:

William H. Chafe, Harvard Sitkoff, and Beth Bailey, eds., *A History of Our Time: Readings on Postwar America*, 8th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). ISBN: 978-0-10-976364-1

Weekly Class Schedule and Readings

Week 1

Aug. 18 – INTRODUCTION

Aug. 20 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 1-12

Lecture: World War II and the American Century

Week 2

Aug. 25 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 13-37

Aug. 27 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 38-51

Lectures: The Cold War and Politics of Anticommunism
Atomic Frontiers: Eisenhower and Kennedy

Week 3

Sep. 1 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 53-63

Sep. 3 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 64-72

Lecture: Domesticity, Suburbia, and Consumption

Week 4

Sep. 8 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 73-92

Sep. 10 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 93-102

Lectures: Liberalism at High Tide? LBJ's Great Society and Beyond
Freedom Struggles, North and South

Week 5

Sep. 15 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 103-116

Sep. 17 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 117-131

Lecture: Black Power and the Turn toward Identity Politics

Week 6

Sep. 22 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 133-148

Sep. 24 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 149-161

Lecture: The Vietnam War: An American Tragedy

Week 7

Sep. 29 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 162-169

Oct. 1 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 171-172, 178-187

Week 8

Oct. 6 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 173-177, 188-194

Oct. 8 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 195-208

Lecture: Youth Culture and the New Left

Week 9

Oct. 13 – NO CLASS; FALL BREAK

Oct. 15 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 209-225

Lecture: Women's and Gay Liberation Movements

Week 10

Oct. 20 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 226-241

Oct. 22 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 242-259

Week 11

Oct. 27 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 261-272

Oct. 29 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 273-282

Lecture: Lean Years: The 1970s

Week 12

Nov. 3 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 283-298

Nov. 5 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 299-315

Lecture: Ronald Reagan and the New Right

Week 13

Nov. 10 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 316-335

Nov. 12 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 336-348

Lecture: Culture Wars through the 1990s

Week 14

Nov. 17 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 349-368

Nov. 19 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 369-380

Lecture: New World Orders, 9/11, and the Imperial Presidency

Week 15

Nov. 24 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 381-399

Week 15 (cont.)

Nov. 26 – NO CLASS; THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 16

Dec. 1 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 401-414

Dec. 3 – *Read/Discuss*: Chafe, Sitkoff, & Bailey, eds., *Our Time*, 415-430

Lecture: America into the 21st Century

FINAL EXAM: due TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 4:00 P.M. (collected in regular classroom)

Grade Breakdown:

Class Participation	10%
Group Work: Lead weekly discussion + presentation	20%
Analysis Papers (2)	40% (20% each)
Final Exam (take-home)	30%

Readings: This is a survey course, for which the reading load averages 25 pages per week. It is imperative that you do the required readings beforehand, since they will form the basis of our class discussions, writing assignments, and final exam. Also, please be sure to bring the textbook with you to facilitate class discussion. I may also distribute additional readings to supplement the textbook as I see fit, made available on T-Square.

Class Attendance and Participation: You should come to class prepared to participate verbally; successful class discussions depend on it, and I will take your participation over the course of the term into account in formulating your final grade (10%). For this component, one contribution per week would translate into an average passing grade (“C”). Discussion will center mainly around the assigned readings and supplementary audiovisual content.

Lectures (interspersed throughout the term, subject to change at my discretion) will supply you with information to help contextualize the readings and for the final exam, so be sure to take good notes. NOTE: *Laptop use is not allowed in class.* Research has demonstrated that handwritten notes are far more effective than typed as a means of retaining information. If you have a documented disability that requires you to take notes on a laptop, please request permission in advance in order to use your computer in class.

Attendance is mandatory, and more than FIVE unexcused absences will result in the *total forfeiture* of this portion of your grade; missing more than NINE classes will result in automatic failure of the class. NOTE: *my definition of “absent” includes, but is not limited to, the following: failure to bring the textbook to class; chronic tardiness without explanation of a special circumstance or documented disability; disruptions, texting/phone-calling, and, of course, sleeping during class.*

Georgia Tech students are required to follow instructors’ stated attendance policies, with absences excusable only in a handful of situations (for example participation in athletics). In such non-ordinary cases I may ask you to provide official documentation. For details, see:

<http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4b.php>

Group Work: As part of your grade (20%), you are charged with the responsibility of leading one week's class discussion by means of collaboration in a small group (four individuals), which will also include a short (10 minute) presentation on a Post-1945 U.S. History topic of your choosing, relevant to that week's readings. There are ten out of the sixteen weeks in which you can complete this requirement (Weeks 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16), so I will be circulating a sign-up sheet on the first day of class. Please exchange contact information with your fellow group members and begin planning your presentation well in advance; I am available for consultation to advise you on possible presentation topics, if you wish.

Paper Assignments: For this course, you will write two mid-length papers on the assigned course readings. Each of these two "analysis papers" is to be a 5-6 page long reflection on a given week's assigned readings, in which you raise probing questions about the material and analyze the content *in detail*, using the lectures and other supplementary content to help interpret these. The idea here is to grasp the major ideas in the assigned readings, to draw connections and raise critical questions about the period or topic covered. NOTE: You can write one of these papers for any week, but it is highly recommended to do so on one of the group-led discussion weeks (again, Weeks 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16) in which there will be more material to work with. In fact, it would make sense to write one of your papers on the week during which you lead discussion, since you will be especially prepared on that week.

These papers are due in hard copy AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS, ON THE THURSDAY OF THE FOLLOWING WEEK. For example, if you chose to write on the Week 2 readings (August 25-27), your paper would be due on Thursday of Week 3 (September 3). You can choose which weeks to write on, although YOU MUST DO AT LEAST ONE PAPER BY WEEK 5 (that is, due by September 24), so that I can submit an accurate midterm progress report for you as required by the Registrar for 2000-level courses such as this one.

The papers should be typewritten, in a 12-point font, double-spaced (or 1.5), with 1-inch margins. Be sure to spell-check your papers. THERE IS TO BE NO SUBMISSION OF PAPER ASSIGNMENTS VIA E-MAIL WITHOUT MY EXPLICIT AND PRIOR APPROVAL.

Final Exam: Worth 30% of your grade, the final exam will be comprehensive and will rely on information from the lectures and readings. It will consist of two essays; I will distribute the possible essay questions one week in advance, and it will be take-home, to be turned in during our officially scheduled final exam slot: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, AT 4:00 P.M., in our regularly scheduled classroom. I will give you more details as the date approaches, but would expect you to write approximately 8-10 typed pages for this take-home final.

Contractions: The use of contractions (such as can't, won't, I've, didn't) is inappropriate in formal writing, as is the use of most abbreviations (especially "etc.") and colloquial expressions (slang). Instead substitute the full wording ("cannot" for can't, "will not" for won't, "I have" for I've, "did not" for didn't, and so on). If you should happen to use a contraction in a paper, I will draw this to your attention. If you subsequently persist in using such, I may refuse to grade your paper or will assess a penalty of up to 5 percent on the assignment in question.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's ideas or verbiage without proper citation; it is a direct violation of the Georgia Tech Honor Code and is completely unacceptable; plagiarism includes lifting as few as three words verbatim, or even paraphrasing without crediting the source. It falls under the category of cheating; any offender will receive a "0" on the assignment in question, or else fail the course outright, at my discretion. For more details on plagiarism, see:

<http://www.plagiarism.org/>

THE OFFICIAL POLICY AT GEORGIA TECH IS THAT ALL INCIDENTS OF PLAGIARISM MUST BE REPORTED TO THE OFFICE OF STUDENT INTEGRITY (<http://osi.gatech.edu/>). For an overview of the process that follows upon the reporting of such an incident of academic misconduct, see:

<http://www.osi.gatech.edu/content/15/academic-misconduct>

Writing Assistance: For assistance in preparing the assigned papers, you can make an appointment with the Communication Center (Clough Learning Commons, Suite 447); for more information see

<http://www.communicationcenter.gatech.edu/content/frequently-asked-questions>

I would also be glad to glance over rough drafts of papers, provided you submit these at least four days in advance. I may not have time to provide you with detailed feedback if you allow me less time to do so than that.

Grades: By my standards, "A" quality work demonstrates a mastery of the materials covered in the course; "B" work is characterized by a full understanding of the materials, but a less thorough evaluation of them; and "C" work shows a satisfactory understanding, but an even less-thorough evaluation. Work not showing an understanding of the course materials or a highly inadequate evaluation will earn either a "D" or an "F." On all assignments, you will receive letter grades along with a numerical score on the following scale: A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=59 and below. NOTE: If you are taking this class Pass/Fail, a "C" is the minimum grade required to pass.

Disturbances during Class: Laptops, tablets, cell phones and similar electronic devices must be silenced or turned off during class; repeated texting or phone ringing may result in your class participation grade being lowered (see above). Verbal disruptions or any other inappropriate conduct during class may also be penalized. Discussion and debate on the content and over how to interpret U.S. History since 1945 will doubtless be contentious at certain points, but you should take care to maintain the proper respect for your fellow classmates and the instructor at all times.

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DISCUSSION/GROUP PRESENTATION SIGNUP

Week 2 (Aug. 25, 27)

Week 10 (Oct. 20, 22)

Week 4 (Sep. 8, 10)

Week 12 (Nov. 3, 5)

Week 5 (Sep. 15, 17)

Week 13 (Nov. 10, 12)

Week 6 (Sep. 22, 24)

Week 14 (Nov. 17, 19)

Week 8 (Oct. 6, 8)

Week 16 (Dec. 1, 3)
