Contemporary America
U.S. History since 1973

Tuesday & Thursday, 12:30 - 1:45 p.m.
Rowe 134

This course offers a survey of American politics, society, and economy from 1973 through the present. Characterized as the “Age of Fracture” by historian Daniel Rodgers, the past four decades of American life have witnessed the fragmentation of racial and gender identities, dramatic fluctuations between prosperity and economic crisis, the intensification of partisanship alongside widespread political apathy, and profound uncertainty over the role of the United States in world affairs. As we examine these turbulent years, we will identify key changes and continuities in the American experience. At the same time, we will consider what it means to think historically about the recent past (and the present).

**Participation** (20% of course grade). Your participation grade will be assessed on the quality and frequency of your contribution to in-class discussion. This, in turn, relies on the careful reading of assigned materials ahead of class meetings.

**Papers** (40%). You have two options for fulfilling this component of the course. Consult the course website for more information (including due dates). You must email Prof. Canedo by Thursday, September 11, 12:30 p.m., to commit to either option #1 or option #2.

- **Option #1**: Write **three short papers** (4-6 pages each) based on assigned course readings. No outside reading is expected. At least one paper must be submitted before the midterm exam.

- **Option #2**: Write **one longer research paper** (10-13 pages) that explores a particular event, individual, organization, or theme related to the course by examining outside sources and scholarship.

**Midterm Exam** (15%). The midterm exam will consist of three short-answer identifications and one lengthier essay question. One week before the exam, you will be given three possible essay questions, of which one will appear on the actual exam. Though you will not have advance notice of possible short-answer IDs, you will be able to select the IDs you wish to write on from a list that appears on the exam.

**Final Exam** (25%). The final exam will follow the same format as the midterm exam, except that there will be four IDs and two essay questions (one of these will be cumulative and the other will cover material from the second half of the term). As with the midterm exam, you will be given possible essay questions one week ahead of the final exam.

**Readings**. The following books are available for purchase at the Co-op bookstore and are on reserve at Babbidge Library:


All additional readings will be available on our HuskyCT course website. These readings are marked with an asterisk (*) in the course schedule below.

**Academic Integrity.** Plagiarism and cheating are the gravest violations of academic conduct. They will be punished to the fullest extent possible, including failure in the course. Plagiarism consists of reproducing or utilizing ideas or text from other sources without proper attribution. For more information, see http://www.plagiarism.org and http://www.community.uconn.edu/student_code.html.

**Accessibility.** To request accommodations for a disability you must first contact the Center for Students with Disabilities (room 204 of the Wilbur Cross Building; http://www.csd.uconn.edu). You must have the appropriate forms from this office before we can arrange accommodations.

**SCHEDULE & READING ASSIGNMENTS**

Note: readings marked with an asterisk (*) are available on the course website.

**WEEK 1**
8/26: America at the Crossroads  
8/28: Watergate

**WEEK 2**
9/2: Busing & Affirmative Action  
9/4: Vietnam Syndrome  

**WEEK 3**
9/9: Feminism & Sexual Liberation  
* Susan Brownmiller, *In Our Time* (1999), excerpt.  
9/11: The Religious Right & the Politics of Family  

**WEEK 4**
9/16: Environmentalism  
9/18: Stagflation & the Tax Revolt  

**WEEK 5**
9/23: Deindustrialization & Urban Crisis  
9/25: Free Enterprise, Free Markets  
WEEK 6
9/30: **MIDTERM EXAM**
10/2: Reagan Revolution

WEEK 7
10/7: Wall Street
10/9: From Hippie to Yuppie

WEEK 8
10/14: War on Crime, War on Drugs
10/16: The AIDS Crisis

WEEK 9
10/21: The End of the Cold War
10/23: New World Order

WEEK 10
10/28: Clinton’s Third Way
10/30: Culture Wars

WEEK 11
11/4: Globalization
11/6: Dot.com Boom & Bust

WEEK 12
11/11: The Election of 2000 to 9/11
11/13: Wars in Afghanistan & Iraq

WEEK 13
11/18: Financial Excess
11/20: Crash & Bailout
11/25: NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK
11/27: NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK 14
12/2: Obama’s Hope & Change

12/4: Latino Immigration

**FINAL EXAM:** Friday, December 12, 10:30 am - 12:30 p.m. (to be confirmed later in the term).