Course Description and Format

Designed for Ph.D. students training in United States history, this seminar will attend to movements, politics, and protest in the twentieth century. We will approach these guiding themes capaciously and familiarize ourselves with scholarship that situates “the political” in labor, urban, social, and cultural histories. We will begin our study in the Progressive Era and consider reform efforts, radical visions, labor mobilizations, and reactionary politics in the century’s early decades. Part II will focus on the activism and ferment of the New Deal era, the long civil rights movement and its opposition, and the offensive against left-radical politics in the Cold War years. The third module will zero in on postwar developments and dynamics, with particular attention to urban vs. suburban politics, the promise and limitations of the Great Society, and multiple social movements for liberation. We will conclude by examining mobilizations, dissent, and predicaments in the century’s final quarter, including ones involving white supremacy, immigration, and working people in a neoliberal, postindustrial society.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Deepen knowledge of a vast array of political work and ideologies in modern United States history
2. Understand the aims of and relationships between the grassroots, institutions, and the state
3. Comprehend the evolution of liberalism, conservatism, and radicalism in the United States
4. Grapple with various approaches and methodologies for analyzing movements, politics, and protest
5. Augment skills in critical thinking, reading, historical research, and writing

Course Books (most books are available as e-books via GC library)

1. Shelton Stromquist, Reinventing “The People”: The Progressive Movement, the Class Problem, and Origins of Modern Liberalism (Illinois, 2006).*
5. Elizabeth Gillespie McRae, Mothers of Resistance: White Women and the Politics of White Supremacy (Oxford, 2020).*
6. Max Krochmal, Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era (UNC, 2016).*
10. Johanna Fernández, The Young Lords: A Radical History (UNC, 2020).*


*E-book available at GC library.

**Course Requirements and Evaluation**

1. Our discussion-centered seminar demands ongoing **scholarly engagement and participation**. Students must attend every weekly session and be prepared to participate actively and meaningfully. Students must arrive in seminar with the ability to articulate key argument(s) and aims, conceptual and methodological frameworks, body of evidence, and historiographical issues presented in the readings. A record of class absences and tardiness will negatively affect a student’s participation grade.

2. One **book/oral presentation**: Each class session will begin with an oral presentation (7–10 minutes) based on the book assigned for the week. During the presentation, the student will do the following:

   a. Identify the book’s central argument.
   b. Briefly discuss one concrete example of how the author supports their argument.
   c. Briefly discuss one strength of this historical study.
   d. Identify one limitation or challenge of this historical study.
   e. Identify two open-ended questions for discussion. Email these questions to the instructor by 8:00 a.m. on the day of the presentation.

3. One **short essay** (2–3 pages) based on the monograph selected for the book presentation (see above). This essay should function as a critical review of the book at hand; it should not be a book report. It will be the written, fuller, and more formal counterpart to the book presentation. It should state the book’s aims and argument(s), assess its use of evidence, and weigh its strengths and limitations. It should also consider how the book expands or complicates our understanding of movements, politics, and/or protest in U.S. history.

   This small essay will offer the instructor an opportunity to assess a student’s reading comprehension and provide feedback on their writing. The essay must meet these requirements: 2–3 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman font, and 1-inch margins all around the page. Students will submit one (1) hard copy on **the day of the oral presentation**.

4. A **research plan** that will guide the final research project. The plan will include three parts: 1) an identification of a research question or problem in 1–2 sentences, 2) a preliminary list of 8–10 primary sources with appropriate bibliographic information, and 3) an identification of two (2) secondary sources produced by historians, which will offer historical context and additional evidence. Examples of primary sources include newspaper articles, government reports, pieces of legislation, legal cases, sociological studies, autobiographies, pamphlets, and news programs. The secondary sources may be journal articles and books assigned for class.
Students are encouraged to discuss their research ideas and process with the instructor before submitting the research plan. Students will submit their research plan via Blackboard by **Friday, 28 April 2023 at 11:59 p.m.**

5. One research essay (10–12 pages) based on a historical question/problem of a student’s choice, but informed by the themes of the class. Students may conduct research on an organization, a campaign, a piece of legislation, or a movement, among other topics. Essays must rely on 8–10 primary sources and 2 secondary sources (see above). Students will use material from primary sources to address their research question and to construct and defend a thesis. The task is to persuade and convince the reader of an argument by drawing on examples, episodes, and selections from primary sources and placing the discussion in its historical context.

All research essays must meet these requirements: 10–12 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman font, and 1-inch margins all around the page. Students will submit one (1) electronic copy via Blackboard by **Wednesday, 17 May 2023 at 11:59 p.m.**

6. **Late Work**: Students will have the opportunity to submit late assignments without penalty if they provide documentation to excuse the tardiness. Acceptable forms documentation include a doctor’s note, a court notice, or another official document. All late assignments without documentation to excuse the tardiness will be downgraded by one full letter grade (e.g., B+ to C+) for every business day (Monday thru Saturday) that the assignment is late.

7. **Final grades** will be determined as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement and participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>05%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small Essay</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Plan</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Essay</td>
<td>45%</td>
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**COURSE POLICIES**

**Email & Blackboard**

Students must check their Graduate Center email on a regular basis. They should also ensure their Blackboard account links to an active email address. Emails will keep students updated on matters related to assignments and schedule changes. Students will also use Blackboard to check their progress in the course.

**Laptop Computers, Cell Phones, and Other Gadgets**

Students may use laptop computers, iPads, and tablets for educational purposes only. In other words, students may use these devices to take notes and access class readings.

Please respect our academic endeavor. Do not text, browse the internet, and engage in any activities unrelated to our course when our class is in session. Disregard for this policy will lower a student’s participation grade. Audio and/or video recording of class meetings using any device is prohibited.
Students who ignore this policy will receive a first-time warning. Students who ignore this policy a second time will receive an automatic “D” for class participation during the term, and lose the privilege of using laptops/tablets for reading and note taking. Continued disregard of the policy will result in an “F” for participation during the term.

**Respect, Safety, and Classroom Behavior**

The classroom is a safe and professional space. The instructor will not tolerate personal attacks, use of derogatory language, and unprofessional or aggressive behavior that detracts from a productive and safe learning environment. Students must not engage in any activity that disrupts class: texting, snoring, walking in and out of the classroom, and any other unprofessional behavior.

**Communication with Instructor**

We are entering into a professional relationship. Students should interact and communicate with faculty members in a professional manner. Email messages must be written in basic English; please do not use textspeak. The instructor will typically respond to email messages within 24 hours on weekdays and within 48 hours on weekends. Please plan accordingly whenever questions or concerns present themselves.

**Discussing Your Performance**

The instructor is happy to discuss ways to improve class performance and grades. However, he is not in the business of haggling over grades. Grades in the course are products of careful deliberation and are non-negotiable. Students should present all queries about grading with courtesy and a desire to improve the quality of their work.

**INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES**

**Academic Honesty and CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity**

“The Graduate Center of the City University of New York is committed to the highest standards of academic honesty. Acts of academic dishonesty include—but are not limited to—plagiarism (in drafts, outlines, and examinations, as well as final papers), cheating, bribery, academic fraud, sabotage of research materials, the sale of academic papers, and the falsification of records. An individual who engages in these or related activities or who knowingly aids another who engages in them is acting in an academically dishonest manner and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the bylaws and procedures of The Graduate Center and of the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York.”

For more information on GC standards and procedures, as well as the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity, see: [https://www.gc.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/2021-07/AvoidingPlagiarism.pdf](https://www.gc.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/2021-07/AvoidingPlagiarism.pdf)
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

It is Graduate Center and CUNY policy to provide appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities. Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class is advised to speak directly to the manager of Student Disability Services, located in Student Affairs, room 7301, or call 212-817-7400 as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential.

For more information about Student Disability Services, visit: https://www.gc.cuny.edu/student-disability-services

Policy on Sexual Misconduct

In compliance with CUNY’s Policy on Sexual Misconduct, “the Graduate Center seeks to create and maintain a safe environment in which all members of our campus community —students, faculty, and staff—can learn and work free from fear of sexual assault and other forms of violence. The City University of New York and The Graduate Center prohibit gender-based harassment of any kind, by students, faculty, and staff. Harassment is unwelcome conduct that may include sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Harassing conduct, also implicated by sexual assault, domestic and intimate partner violence, or stalking on any CUNY campus, creates a “hostile environment” which, when sufficiently severe or pervasive, may limit or interfere with a student’s ability to participate in educational activities, or an employee’s ability to perform his or her job.”


SCHEDULE

Week 1 (25 Jan.)  Introduction to the Course

Week 2 (01 Feb.)  S. Stromquist, Reinventing “The People”: The Progressive Movement, the Class Problem, and Origins of Modern Liberalism (Illinois, 2006).*

Week 3 (08 Feb.)  A. White, Under the Iron Heel: The Wobblies and the Capitalist War on Radical Workers (California, 2022).


Week 5 (22 Feb.)  L. Cohen, Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919–1939 (Cambridge, 1990).*

Week 7 (08 March)  M. Krochmal, *Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era* (UNC, 2016).*


Week 10 (29 March)  F. Enke, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism* (Duke, 2007).*

Week 11 (19 April)  J. Fernández, *The Young Lords: A Radical History* (UNC, 2020).*


Week 13 (03 May)  S. Coleman, *The Walls Within: The Politics of Immigration in Modern America* (Princeton, 2021).*