

## History 231: Recent American History

Fall 2012

HIS 231-01: TTh, 11:00am-12:15pm

Belk 5102

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**Office hours:** T, 5-6pm; W, 11-5pm; Th, 5-6pm; if these times do not work for you, email me to set up another meeting time

**Course Summary:** This course is a study of American society from the post-Depression era to the present. Topics include World War II, the Cold War, social unrest, the Vietnam War, the Great Society, and current political trends. Upon completion, students should be able to analyze significant political, socioeconomic, and cultural developments in recent America. This course is intended for all associate degree programs.

**Note: This course is reading- and writing-intensive.** It would be wise for you to work on and improve these skills before taking this class. I will do my best to provide assistance with assignments, but you should take necessary coursework before taking this class.

### Requirements and Expectations:

**Goals:** This course is designed to help students: 1) gain a basic factual knowledge of this historical period; 2) develop the ability to assess and think critically about historical issues and about how people interpret those issues; 3) develop skills in analyzing historical data, especially primary sources, and reaching informed conclusions about those data; and 4) develop skills to express thoughts and conclusions in a competent and insightful manner, including discussion and writing skills.

**Core Competencies:** In support of the Learning College initiative, four core competencies have been identified as critical to the success of CPCC graduates (Communication, Critical Thinking, Personal Growth and Responsibility, Information Technology and Quantitative Literacy). The History Department formally applies the following Core Competency to each of its classes/sections:

**Critical Thinking: the ability to think using analysis, synthesis, evaluation, problem solving, judgment, and the creative process.**

Key Indicators:

- Thinks critically and creatively
- Formulates and re-evaluates position based on available evidence
- Asks appropriate questions that challenge assumptions and conventional wisdom

- Integrates ideas and values from different disciplines and contexts
- Uses reflection as a way to monitor and adjust thinking
- Understands and applies principles of learning and learning styles to own education
- Applies knowledge in practical ways
- Analyzes and evaluates data, ideas, patterns, principles, and perspectives
- Recognizes own biases and suspends judgmental thinking
- Employs values and standards of judgments from different discipline
- Uses problem solving strategies in a wide variety of professional situations

While this course will focus on critical thinking, it is my hope that you will hone skills in all of the core areas.

**Success in this course will depend on your consistent and thoughtful effort.** This course is text-centered, entailing your close and critical reading of the assigned texts, viewing of films, and examination of other sources in the course. You will be given numerous venues to exhibit your thoughts about the texts, but the most important (and graded) will be in-class discussions. You can succeed in this course if you come willing and prepared to discuss the assigned texts. The only way to earn high marks for discussion is to complete each day's required reading BEFORE class, and to bring to class specific questions and issues for discussion.

A small class, such as this, is an opportunity for teacher and students to share ideas and interpretations in a more informal and conversational way than the large lecture. As a result, there is a much higher expectation for your input and ideas than in the traditional history course. My role in this course is as a facilitator. I provide the texts and sources for your examination. I will also ask questions and provide venues for you to express your thoughts, interpretations, and ideas. At times, I will jump in to spur conversation, to guide discussion in fruitful directions, and to correct factual mistakes. I will also lecture in the traditional sense, although I will try to include points of discussion. I will always emphasize and guide discussion towards central questions, themes, and data.

**You need to purchase two books for the course:**

**1. William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since WWII*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Oxford UP, 2010); ISBN: 9780199760251**

**2. Richard Yates,**

***Revolutionary Road*  
(Random House); ISBN: 9780099518624**

These texts can be purchased at the CPCC Bookstore in the first floor of Hall Building, 1112 Charlottetowne Avenue, through the bookstore website, or elsewhere online.

Additional texts will be provided online through the course Blackboard site. Check the daily folder in Blackboard for assignments, both textbook and online.

**Tips for successful preparation and discussion:**

1. When reading a text (or watching a film, etc.), take notes or highlight particular ideas or passages that interest you, or those that are provocative, confusing, or with which you agree or disagree. Share these with the class.
2. Look for recurring themes or questions that run through the course. Share these with the class.
3. Listen to the ideas and questions of others and respond in insightful or helpful ways.
4. Be open to sharing your ideas, particularly if you are unsure or confused about them.
5. Be open to the ideas of others.
6. Use this class and its particular assignments as means to explore particular themes or ideas in more depth.
7. Think of history as a puzzle. Every text and assignment is meant as an opportunity for you to understand one more piece of the history of postwar U.S. history. The puzzle may never be complete, but you will hopefully gain insight into the larger pieces and how they fit together.

**Grading: Course grades will be calculated as follows:**

Assignment	Date due	Percent of course grade
Class participation	Graded every class	30%
Reading Journal	Graded 4x/course	40%
Short Paper	To Be Determined	10%
Final Paper	Last Day of Class	20%

**Letter Grades for assignments and final grade:** A=100-90; B=89-80; C=79-70; D=69-60; F=59 and lower

All grades will be posted in the Blackboard Grade Center so you can see your status throughout the semester.

**Unit grading: Journals will be graded cumulatively per unit, four times during the course.**

**Class Participation:** Class discussion will be graded daily using a grade scale of ten (10) points per day. Participation will be graded according to quality of participation and engagement

with the issues and sources. Original insights, willingness to ask questions, and willingness to respond to the comments of others will be highly valued in discussion and particularly beneficial to your grade. Total points will be weighted to equal 30% of your total grade.

**Attendance:** You must attend class to do well. Attendance is taken during every class. Unexcused absences will hurt your grade. You will be given a zero for class participation for that day and you will miss material that will show up on quizzes and paper assignments.

**After four absences, a full letter grade will be deducted from your final course grade for every additional absence.**

**You can only be excused for absences due to medical or family emergencies. You must explain your absence to me.**

**Late Policy.** You should be on time for every class. You can be late up to 10 minutes only 2 times for the semester. While excused, it will still negatively affect your participation for that day. If you exceed the number of excused late days, I will ask you to leave the class. No exceptions. If you refuse, I will call security.

Please note: Regular class attendance is required to remain eligible for financial aid and veterans' benefits. Faculty members are required to report irregular attendance to the College which may result in the loss of benefits.

Failure to attend class and/or withdrawal from class may impact your financial assistance.

For more information go to: [http://www.cpcc.edu/financial\\_aid/fyi/withdrawal](http://www.cpcc.edu/financial_aid/fyi/withdrawal)

**Journal Requirement:** Each student is required to complete journal assignments on the course readings. Course Instructor will assign topics for journal entries on selected days online within Blackboard. Check within weekly Topics and Assignments folders to see if a journal assignment is due that week. Actual journal entries should be entered in the Blackboard journal space. Responses to other class members will be required on selected days. Suggested content: comments, questions, summary of important passages, comparisons to former readings or other documents from the course, critical analysis, and connections to ongoing themes in the course. Journal postings will be graded for content and level of engagement with texts and course themes 4 times during the semester. 100 points will be possible during each grading period, cumulatively weighted to 40% of your final grade.

**Short Paper Assignment:** One short paper assignment will be assigned approximately halfway through the semester. The primary goals of this assignment are to work on historical analysis and writing skills. I will provide feedback on this assignment so you can improve for the final paper assignment.

**Final Paper:** There is a final full-length paper for this class, due at the end of the course. This will be assigned and explained in class with ample time for completion. The final paper will build upon the progress you made in the short paper and journal assignments throughout the semester.

**Policies:**

**Technology policy.** Cell phones, ipods, etc. can not be seen or used in class. They must be put away in your purse, bag, or pocket. If you are expecting a phone call regarding an emergency situation, put your phone on vibrate, and answer the call in the hallway outside of class. Laptops can be used in class to take notes, but no other applications can be open on the desktop of your computer. If it is discovered that you are breaking any of these rules, then you will be asked to leave class and you will receive a zero for that day's discussion. If you break the rules a second time, you will no longer be welcome in the class and you will receive an F for the course.

**Academic Integrity.** As a student you are responsible for upholding standards of academic integrity. All cheating and plagiarism is forbidden. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. The purpose of the CPCC Code of Student Academic Integrity (see CPCC Student Handbook) is to support the continued growth and development of a strong academic community based on the principles of academic honesty and integrity. Any student who violates the CPCC Code of Student Academic Integrity is subject to academic disciplinary action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, entry of the incident in the records of the Office of Student Development; reduced grades; and dismissal from college classes, programs, and activities.

For additional information, please visit: <http://www.cpcc.edu/administration/policies-and-procedures/7-10-student-academic-integrity>

No outside information, sources, or websites can be used for assignments in this course without the express direction and permission of the instructor. If you are asked a question or given an assignment, consult the sources and information provided by the instructor. Trust yourself. You can answer questions using the materials provided for the course and provide your own thoughts on the materials.

**All sources of information in this course must be cited.** When answering a question or providing information, you must provide the source of information for your answer, including the author, title, and page number. Using or quoting someone else's ideas without proper citations is plagiarism. If you are caught plagiarizing in this course, you will earn a zero on the assignment, possible failure in the course, as well as possible further action at the college level.

**Inclement Weather.** The course may be affected by inclement weather. If the college is open, the course will meet. To check for college closings, go the college website. If the college does close because of inclement weather, that day's assignments, debates, or other due-dates will be bumped to the next class meeting. In the case of multiple lost days, I will send out instructions via email.

**Excused absences.** Absence from class will only be excused in the case of medical reasons or family emergencies. Even in these cases, you must make every attempt to notify me before missing class of your situation. Medical reasons must be documented with a doctor's note.

**Make-up Assignments.** There are no make-up assignments for this class. Late assignments will not be accepted. If for any family or medical reason you find it absolutely necessary to miss a class, you must contact the instructor before the class to obtain his consent to your absence if you wish to be given the opportunity to make up assignments.

**Students with Disabilities.** Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the term if you require any disability-related accommodations. Students who have a documented disability or think they may have a learning problem may contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities at 704-330-6556. I will be happy to provide the necessary accommodations upon the advice of the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities.

For additional information, please visit: <http://www.cpcc.edu/disabilities>

**Religious Observances.** Students will not be penalized because of observances of religious beliefs, but rather shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment missed due to individual participation in religious observances. Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the term if you are going to miss any assignments due to religious observances by personally handing him a written notification of the projected absence within two days of the start of the term.

**Disputing Grades.** If you believe one of your assignments was graded unfairly, please follow these steps: 1) Do not try to speak with me about your grade at the end of the class period in which the assignment was handed back; take at least 24 hours to read and think about the comments and grade. But do not wait more than a few days to follow the steps 2-4; 2) Reread the assignment; 3) Write down the reason or reasons why you think the grade is inappropriate; 4) Arrange a time to meet with me to discuss your concerns.

**Withdrawals and Incompletes.** While withdrawing from a course is sometimes necessary, it is advisable to discuss this with the instructor before withdrawing. For those experiencing academic difficulty, CPCC's Academic Learning Center offers free individualized and small group tutoring, computer tutorials, and strategies for improving learning skills. Additionally, before withdrawing, consider whether this course is a prerequisite for another course; whether the course will be offered again in the future; whether withdrawing will delay plans to transfer graduation; or whether withdrawing will affect eligibility for honors designation, health insurance benefits, or other financial arrangements. When a student determines that he/she will be unable to complete courses in which he/she is currently enrolled, it is the student's responsibility to initiate procedures leading to a formal withdrawal ("W") in order to avoid a failing ("F") grade.

For additional information, go to the following link: <http://www.cpcc.edu/administration/policies-and-procedures/5-09-withdrawal-from-classes>

A student who for any reason cannot complete a course must take the responsibility to formally withdraw (W) in order to avoid a failing grade. To receive a W grade, a student must withdraw prior to the 35% date of the class.

**The last day to withdraw from this class is Sept. 24th.**

The request for official withdrawal must be presented to the Registration Center. The instructor may also assign a W at the end of the term when circumstances warrant such action (See Note Below). A W will remain on the transcript. A W will not count as credit hours attempted. To receive credit, a student who received a W must re-register and pay for the course in a subsequent term. Withdrawals may affect student financial aid.

Note: I DO NOT have to grant a withdrawal to a requesting student after the 35% date. I only grant withdrawals for serious personal, family, or medical problems. I DO NOT grant withdrawals to students just because a student has done badly in my course. If you have questions about your grade or the withdrawal process, please ask.

CPCC Letter Grading and GPA policies: <http://www.cpcc.edu/administration/policies-and-procedures/5-10-grading-policy>

**Student Code of Conduct.** Students are required to follow the Student Code of Conduct. Detailed information can be found at [http://www.cpcc.edu/student\\_handbook/conduct](http://www.cpcc.edu/student_handbook/conduct)

**Rules for Classroom and Online Behavior.** These rules are non-negotiable.

Respect other students, instructor, the school, and the educational process.

Adopt a spirit of kindness and helpfulness to others.

No discrimination or harassment of any kind.

Use good listening skills: Listen to what others are saying, then respond respectfully and thoughtfully.

Speak in turn.

Save personal problems, issues, and grade questions for after class.

Do not use cellphones or other technology in class, except under instructor's direction.

Think for yourself.

Cite your sources.

Do not cheat or plagiarize.

Be on time.

Do your work.