

History 59: Modern America OER Syllabus

Kingsborough Community College

Term: Spring 2108

Instructor: Debra L. Schultz

Course Information

HIS 5900 – Modern America: 1920 to present

(3 credits. 3 hours.)

Development of the United States from 1920 to the present. The Jazz Age, the Great Depression, the New Deal, World War II, the Cold War, the Civil Rights Revolution, and the protest movements of the 1960's. Flexible Core: U.S. Experience in Its Diversity (Group B)

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this class, students will be able to:

1. Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
2. Describe key historical struggles, people, organizations and movements that have sought to expand democracy.
3. Evaluate evidence and arguments from primary and secondary sources critically and analytically.
4. Produce well-reasoned written and oral arguments using evidence from primary and secondary sources to support conclusions.
5. Use gender, race, and class as categories of historical analysis.
6. Think in more complex ways about how social change happens, and what choices you have in responding to current social challenges.

Course Requirements:

Required Textbook

We are trying an experiment this semester to save students money. We will use a [free online history textbook](#). You may need to sign up online for a student account. Here is information from the publisher:

Good news: your textbook for this class is available for free online! If you prefer, you can also get a print version at a very low cost. Your book is available in web view and PDF for free. You can also choose to purchase it on iBooks or get a print version from OpenStax on Amazon.com. You can use whichever formats you want. Web view is recommended -- the responsive design works seamlessly on any device. If you buy on Amazon, make sure you use the link on your book page on [openstax.org](#) so you get the official OpenStax print version. (Simple printouts sold by third parties on Amazon are not verifiable and not as high-quality.) [U.S. History](#) from OpenStax.

New York Times. All CUNY students have free digital access to [the New York Times](#).



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Grade Requirements

Reading response homework assignments, quizzes, a midterm and a final exam will test your understanding of weekly readings, key concepts, and issues discussed in class. Participation in class discussions is the most important demonstration of your learning and commitment to this class. Reader reaction homework also demonstrates your new learning. There are no make-ups for missed quizzes or exams. All writing assignments will be evaluated for coherence, ability to link historical and contemporary aspects of the issues represented, and your ability to draw conclusions based on evidence. All longer assignments must be proofread, spell-checked, double-spaced, and brought to class printed out. Do not hand in any written assignment or paper that you have not proofread and electronically spell-checked on your word-processor.

Students will be graded on their performance in class and in all written assignments.

Assignments	Points
Reader Response HW (5 HWs x 2 points each)	10 points
Attendance: (see below)	10 points
Quizzes: (2 quizzes x 5 points each)	10 points
Participation and In-Class Comments (see below)	10 points
Midterm Exam	25 points
Final Exam	35 points

The Grading

You can calculate your final grade yourself, and convert it to a letter grade using simple math and the letter grade allocation from the student handbook, reprinted below:

Number Score	Letter Score
97-100	A+
93-96	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
66-69	D
00-65+	F

Attendance Policy

You are expected to attend every class. If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out from a classmate what you missed and to get class notes. Do not ask your professors if you missed something important. It is all important! At Kingsborough, students who miss more than six classes (15%) of class meetings are considered excessively absent and this may negatively affect your grade. Additionally, lateness may be taken into account when assessing your class participation grade. There is a direct relationship between excellent attendance/class participation and your final grade.

Attendance Policy	2 lates = 1 absence
10 points	3 or fewer absences (and/or equivalent latenesses)
8 points	4 absences (and/or equivalent latenesses)
6 points	5 absences (and/or equivalent latenesses)
4 points	6 absences (and/or equivalent latenesses)
0 points	7 or more absences (and/or equivalent latenesses)

Participation

Participation is the most important way you will learn in this class. Community college is designed to help you practice skills you will need later in life—at the workplace and with people you will meet. Participation in class discussions and activities facilitates this kind of practice.

Participation Policy	The more you participate, the higher your grade
10 points	Makes at least one comment per class
8 points	Makes at least one comment per week
6 points	Makes at least one comment every other week
4 points	Only participates once a month
0 points	Rarely or never participates

Electronic Devices, Classroom Etiquette and Non-Discrimination Policy

All electronic devices—cellphones, laptops, tablets—must be switched OFF and put away during class. Texting and leaving the class to make a phone call are prohibited. If I see a cellphone in class repeatedly, I will deduct 10% of your grade. Research has shown that students who use electronic devices while in class learn less and earn lower grades. Therefore, I do not permit any electronic devices (cell phones, i-pads, or laptops) in my classes. Please make sure you turn OFF all devices and put them away *before* you enter the classroom.

Civility in the classroom and respect for the opinions of others are vital to learning. Therefore, in this classroom, prejudice and disrespect will not be tolerated. In keeping with CUNY policy, all students will be treated equally and fairly, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, ability, veteran status, etc. (See [CUNY's Policies and Procedures on Equal Opportunity, Non-Discrimination, and Against Sexual Harassment.](#))

Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

Whenever you use someone else's words or ideas you must give them credit. You must use direct quotation marks if using the exact words of someone else and also acknowledge your sources with a list of sources at the end of each homework or written essay. Nevertheless, plagiarism – failing to acknowledge sources, copying and pasting off the Internet, or submitting someone else's work as your own – is a serious offense that can jeopardize your college career. A plagiarized paper or test will receive a grade of F and may be reason for disciplinary action.

CUNY has very strict policies defining cheating and plagiarism—copying material without crediting the source of the information in your writing. These are serious breaches of conduct that may endanger your grades in the course and your academic career at KCC and beyond.

Accessibility

CUNY provides accommodations for those with disabilities and/or special needs. Access-Ability Services (AAS) serves as a liaison and resource to the KCC community regarding disability issues, promotes equal access to all KCC programs and activities, and makes every reasonable effort to provide appropriate accommodations and assistance to students with disabilities. Your professors will make the accommodations you need once you provide documentation from KCC's Access-Ability Services in Room D 205. Please contact them immediately for assistance.

Get Free Help!

Tutorial Services, Library 605, 718-368-5118 provides individual and small group tutoring for most courses. The Reading and Writing Center, Library 219, provides free walk-in and scheduled one-on-one tutoring in reading and writing. Please be proactive in making use of these services

Topical Course Outline

Syllabus and schedule subject to change

Weeks/ topics	Homework and required reading	Guiding questions/ Learning objectives
<p>Week 1: Introductions Week of Monday, March 5th</p>	<p>Get your textbook online for free. Tell me immediately if you have any problem accessing it.</p> <p>Read: Writing the Next Chapter of History</p>	<p>How and why should we study history?</p> <p>What are the similarities and differences between 20th century history and issues we see in society today?</p>
<p>Week #2: How did the 1920s set the stage for major issues of 20th Century U.S. history?</p>	<p>Read Chapter 24 in the online textbook.</p> <p>Read the online report, "The Legacy of Lynching: Confronting Racial Terror in America"</p> <p>And watch Community Remembrance Project.</p> <p>Homework #1 due on Blackboard by Sunday, evening, 3/11</p>	<p>What did it take for women to get the vote?</p> <p>Why did 6 million African Americans move out of the South throughout the early 20th century?</p>
<p>Week #3: What was nativism?</p>	<p>Review Chapter 24</p> <p>Homework #2 due on Blackboard by Sunday evening, 3/18</p>	<p>How did immigration policy change in the 1920s?</p> <p>How do those changes relate to current debates over immigration reform?</p>
<p>Week #4: How did the great depression and the new deal impact the country?</p>	<p>Read Online Textbook Chapters 25 and 26.</p> <p>Wednesday, March 28th Q #1 on all previous classroom lectures/discussions and Chapters 24, 25, 26.</p>	<p>What were the causes and consequences of the Great Depression?</p> <p>How did the New Deal's response transform the role of government?</p>

<p>Week 5: Why did the U.S. enter World War II?</p>	<p>Read Online Textbook Chapter 27.</p> <p>Homework #3: Read the Supreme Court judges decision on the Korematsu case.</p> <p>Homework #3 due on Blackboard by Midnight, Sunday, April 8th before this week’s class.</p>	<p>How and why did the U.S. enter World War II?</p> <p>What were the social consequences of the war for different groups of citizens?</p>
<p>Week 6: Did national security justify the Japanese American internment and use of the atomic bomb?</p>	<p>Do homework #4: Reflection on the documentary “Cats of Mirikitani” and the ethics of dropping the atomic bomb.</p> <p>Homework #4 is due online through Blackboard no later than Sunday, April 15th so I can review it and make sure you are ready for the in-class debate on Thursday, October 19th. You will be randomly assigned a team so be prepared to argue either side of the question.</p>	<p>Why did the U.S. create the Japanese American internment camps and what are the legacies of that decision?</p> <p>Should the U.S. have dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?</p>
<p>Week 7: How were the 1950s a decade of both conformity and change?</p>	<p>Read Online Chapter 28</p> <p>Midterm</p>	<p>What was “McCarthyism?”</p> <p>How did women break new ground in early feminist thinking and in the civil rights movement of the 1950s?</p>
<p>Week 8: What motivated different kinds of people to get involved in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960S?</p>	<p>Read Introduction and Chapter One of Debra L. Schultz, Going South.</p> <p>HW #5 due on Blackboard by midnight, Sunday, April 29th before this week’s class.</p>	<p>What role did WWII veterans play in the 1950s civil rights movement?</p> <p>What were the key campaigns of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and early 60s?</p> <p>What new forms of leadership did groups such as SNCC introduce?</p>

<p>Week 9: Why was 1963 such a pivotal year in U.S. history?</p>	<p>Read Online Chapter 29</p>	<p>What was JFK's New Frontier?</p> <p>Why did Dr. King involve children in the Birmingham campaign?</p> <p>What were the consequences of moving ahead on civil rights?</p>
<p>Week 10: How did LBJ lead as president?</p>	<p>Read Online Chapter 30</p> <p>Quiz #2 on all previous classroom lectures/discussions and Chapters 27, 28, 29, and 30.</p>	<p>How did LBJ handle domestic and foreign policy?</p> <p>Why did the Vietnam War divide the country politically?</p>
<p>Week #11: Why did Richard Nixon's presidency signal a turning point in 20th century U.S. history?</p>	<p>Read Online Chapter 31</p>	<p>What were President Nixon's domestic and foreign policy achievements?</p> <p>What was Watergate and its legacy for today?</p>
<p>Week #12: Review for final exam</p>		