

COURSE OUTLINE

HIST-221

American History Since 1945

3 Semester Hours

HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Description

The student will study the major political, economic, social and cultural trends from the end of World War II to the present. In particular, students will focus on the origins, implementation, and the end of our Cold War foreign policies as well as study changes on the recent domestic scene such as the imperial Presidency, the welfare state, the technetronic economy, the Black Revolution, Women's Liberation and the evolving of social, cultural, and moral landscape. Prerequisite: ENGL-121. (3 hours weekly)

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Explain how America's participation in World War II and the Cold War brought about a shift in America's foreign policy from one of political isolationism to one of political internationalism.
2. Explain the military and/or political reasons which lay behind President Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb on Japan in August of 1945.
3. Compare and contrast the (1) traditional, (2) revisionist and (3) realist points of view concerning the origins, development, and ending of the Civil War.
4. Explain the shifting currents of our foreign policy of "containment" against Communist expansionism from Presidents Truman through Bush.
5. Discuss the involvement of the United States in the Korean War (1950-1953) from both the traditional and revisionist points of view.
6. Discuss United States/Cuban relations from 1898 to the present as background to the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962. Examine whether President Kennedy exercised a restrained use of Presidential power or whether he overreacted and unnecessarily brought America to the verge of Nuclear War?
7. Examine the events from the Truman administration in 1945 through the Nixon/Ford years (1969-1975) leading to both our involvement and withdrawal from Vietnam.
8. Explain how the events of the 1930's Depression and World War II and the Cold War brought about a "welfare state" where affluence and inflation replaced poverty and unemployment as the major problems of middle-class Americans.
9. Examine the second Red Scare and the McCarthy movement.
10. Critically examine the (1) legal, (2) non-violent (3) black power and (4) assimilation/voluntary separatist phases of the Black Revolution from 1941 to the present.
11. Critically evaluate the short and long-term effects of the 1960's student protest and counterculture movements on the values of American society.

12. Critically evaluate changes which have taken place in men, women, and the American family between World War II and the present.
13. Examine the rise and growth of the Women's Movement since the late 1960's.
14. Rank and critically examine the Presidents from Truman through Bush as regards the following Presidential roles: (a) Commander of Chief of State; (b) Chief Administrator; (c) Chief of Party; (d) Chief Legislator; (e) Commander-in-Chief; (f) Chief Diplomat

Major Topics

- I. American Foreign Policy - 1945 to the Present
 - a. Shift from Isolationism to Internationalism during World War II.
 - b. Decision to Drop Atomic Bomb and Origins of Arms Race.
 - c. Origins of Cold War.
 - d. "Containment" policy against Communism.
 - e. Korean War.
 - f. Cuban Missile Crisis.
 - g. Vietnam War.
 - h. Ending the Cold War and the Arms Race.
- II. The Welfare State At Home Since 1945
 - a. Prosperity and Inflation.
 - b. Second Red Scare and McCarthyism.
 - c. Civil Rights Revolution.
 - d. Student Protest and Counterculture Movements in the 1960's.
 - e. Women's Liberation.
 - f. The New American Family.
- III. Summary of Course
 - a. Rank Presidents from Truman through Bush according to criteria developed by historians/political scientists.

Course Requirements

Grading/Exams: Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member.

Writing

Specific writing assignments will be determined by the individual faculty member but will require at least 2,500 words of formal writing. The papers required are intended to communicate with a specific audience and meet the minimum standards of proficiency. At least three exams will be required. Periodically students will use writing in class as a means to learn, to integrate information, to review what they have learned, to integrate information, to review what they have learned, and to clarify their responses to assigned works.

Other Course Information

This course is a Social Science elective and an Arts and Science elective.

This course fulfills the cultural diversity requirement.