

**History of the United States of America (from 1945)**

Code: 106198  
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2504216 Contemporary History, Politics and Economics	OB	2	1

## Contact

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## Use of Languages

Principal working language: english (eng)  
Some groups entirely in English: Yes  
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No  
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

## Prerequisites

There is none.

## Objectives and Contextualisation

This course aims at giving an overview of the American Political History from the end of World War II to the present day. The period coincides with the rise of Washington to its status as a world superpower. Therefore, the course is also useful in order to have better understanding of the History of International Relations during the second half of the 20th century. At the same time, aspects of Economic History, Social History and Cultural History will also be covered.

The course will prioritize the study of historical episodes that may be useful for understanding current affairs and for integrating historical knowledge into a global vision of the social sciences.

## Competences

- Assess the social, economic and environmental impact when acting in this field of knowledge.
- Distinguish between and analyse the type of relations that have been established over the last century among the different social, political and economic agents on national, regional and international frameworks.
- Distinguish between governmental decision-making systems in different social and political contexts from the mid-twentieth century to the present day in state-, substate and supstate frameworks.
- Explain and summarise knowledge acquired in English language at an advanced level.
- Identify the role in the present of the different social memories referring to conflictive pasts, differentiating between the concepts of history and memory.
- Manage and apply data to solve problems.
- Recognise and contextualise texts referring to recent contemporary history.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Work cooperatively in multidisciplinary and multicultural teams implementing new projects.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Analysing the various historiographical perspectives in the different periods of history.
2. Applying the necessary abilities in order to assess and spread historical knowledge.
3. Assessing and critically solving the historiographical problems of war studies.
4. Be familiar with the basic bibliography on historical evolution of governmental systems in the countries of reference for the subject.
5. Capacity to continue future learning independently, acquiring further knowledge and exploring new areas of knowledge.
6. Communicating in your mother tongue or other language both in oral and written form by using specific terminology and techniques of Historiography.
7. Demonstrate capacity to adapt to changing environments.
8. Demonstrate initiative and work independently when required.
9. Demonstrate motivation regarding the quality of the work performed and sensitivity regarding the consequences on the environment and society.
10. Developing the ability of historical analysis and synthesis.
11. Distinguishing the relation between historiographical theory and practice.
12. Engaging in debates about historical facts respecting the other participants' opinions.
13. Express an opinion based on the nature, perspective and rigour of texts referring to the course content.
14. Identifying the main and secondary ideas and expressing them with linguistic correctness.
15. Know different cases of memories in conflict between different places in different states.
16. Know different cases of memories in conflict between different places in the same state.
17. Make a brief comparison of national and/or regional cases within the same international framework.
18. Make a critical comparison of the evolution of the large regional areas that are covered in the subject.
19. Make comparisons between the evolution of governmental systems within a supranational regional area.
20. Make comparisons between the levels of regional autonomy within a state.
21. Organise work in relation to good time management and planning.
22. Recognising and implementing the following teamwork skills: commitment to teamwork, habit of cooperation, ability to participate in the problem solving processes.
23. Select and generate the information necessary for each problem, analyse it and take decisions based on that information.
24. Understand regional specificities within states.
25. Value ethical commitment in professional practice.
26. Work in teams respecting all points of view. Use the specific vocabulary of history correctly.

## Content

1. Introduction: From Isolationism to Bretton Woods.
2. The post-war economy and the beginning of the Cold War.
3. Civil rights, Vietnam and the divisions of the 1960s.
4. Oil crises and the rise of neoliberalism.
5. From the end of the Cold War to the Great Recession of 2008.
6. Epilogue: Obama, Trump and the new political polarization.

## Methodology

- Lectures.
- Debates and discussions.
- Reading and understanding academic papers.

- Learning to compile historical information.
- Conducting reviews and drafting analytical papers.
- Individual study.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

## Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures	45	1.8	1, 24, 15, 16, 10, 11, 4, 20, 13, 12, 25
Reading and understanding academic papers	5	0.2	2, 24, 8, 10, 4, 19, 13, 14, 12, 23, 26
Type: Supervised			
Conducting reviews and drafting analytical papers	30	1.2	1, 2, 5, 24, 6, 7, 8, 10, 4, 19, 20, 13, 14, 9, 21, 12, 22, 23, 26, 25
Type: Autonomous			
Individual study	38	1.52	2, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 4, 14, 9, 21, 12, 22, 23, 25

## Assessment

1) Final written exam: 50%. The exam will focus on the required readings of the course. It will be necessary to demonstrate a correct understanding of the content of the readings, as well as one's own personal intellectual judgement when analyzing them.

2) Final work: 40%. The work will be an analysis of a historical episode related to the syllabus, with a maximum length of 10 pages. The diversity of sources used and the analytical and research capacity will be assessed.

3) Participation in class: 10%. The student will be able to choose a compulsory reading in order to do an oral and group presentation. Contributions to the debates after these presentations will also be assessed.

### Related matters

Students will obtain a "Not assessed/Not submitted" course grade unless they have submitted more than 30% of the assessment items.

On carrying out each evaluation activity, lecturers will inform students of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place.

In order to participate in the supplementary exam, the student must have been previously evaluated in a set of activities whose weight is equivalent to a minimum of 2/3 of the total grade and must have obtained, at least, a 3.5 in the final grade.

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

## Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Final work	40%	22	0.88	1, 2, 3, 5, 18, 17, 24, 6, 15, 16, 7, 8, 10, 11, 4, 19, 20, 13, 14, 9, 21, 12, 23, 25
Final written exam	50%	2	0.08	1, 2, 5, 15, 10, 11, 14, 21, 23
Participation in class	10%	8	0.32	2, 6, 11, 12, 22, 26

## Bibliography

### COMPULSORY READINGS

Eric FONER, "Why Is There No Socialism in the United States?", *History Workshop*, No. 17 (Spring, 1984), pp. 57-80.

Alan BRINKLEY, *Liberalism and its discontents*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998, pp. 79-93.

Emily S. ROSENBERG, "Consuming Women: Images of Americanization in the "American Century"", *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Summer 1999), pp. 479-497.

Robert A. DIVINE, "The Cold War and the Election of 1948", *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (Jun., 1972), pp. 90-110

Elaine Tyler MAY, "Cold War-Warm Hearth: Politics and the Family in Postwar America", in Steve FRASER and Gary GERSTLE, *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989, pp. 153-181.

Adam ROME, "The Genius of Earth Day", *Environmental History*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (April 2010), pp. 194-205.

Greg GRANDIN, "Your Americanism and Mine: Americanism and Anti-Americanism in the Americas", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 111, No. 4 (October 2006), pp. 1042-1066.

Judith STEIN, *Pivotal decade: how the United States traded factories for finance in the seventies*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011, pp. 101-129.

Gary GERSTLE, *The rise and fall of the neoliberal order: America and the world in the free market era*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2022, pp. 189-229.

Michael KAZIN, "Trump and American Populism: Old Whine, New Bottles", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 95, No. 6 (November/December 2016), pp. 17-24.

### GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aurora BOSCH, *Historia de los Estados Unidos*, Barcelona: Crítica, 2010.

Mike DAVIS, *Prisoners of the American dream: politics and economy in the history of the US working class*, New York: Verso Books, 2018.

Roxanne DUNBAR-ORTIZ, *La historia indígena de Estados Unidos*, Madrid: Capitán Swing, 2018.

Barry EICHENGREEN, *Hall of Mirrors. The Great Depression, the Great Recession, and the uses -and misuses- of history*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Eric FONER, *La Historia de la libertad en EE. UU.*, Barcelona: Península, 2010.

Richard HOFSTADTER, *La tradición política norteamericana y los hombres que la formaron*, México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1984.

Maurice ISSERMAN and Michael KAZIN, *America divided: the civil war of the 1960s*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.

Michael KAZIN, *American dreamers: how the Left changed a nation*, New York: Vintage, 2012.

Gabriel KOLKO, *El siglo de las guerras: política, conflictos y sociedad desde 1914*, Barcelona: Paidós Ibérica, 2005.

Melvyn P LEFFLER, *Safeguarding democratic capitalism: U.S. foreign policy and national security, 1920-2015*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020.

Jill LEPORE, *The story of America: essays on origins*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.

James T. PATTERSON, *El gigante inquieto: Estados Unidos de Nixon a G.W. Bush*, Barcelona: Crítica, 2006.

David MACIEL, Juan GÓMEZ-QUIÑONES y Richard GRISWOLD DEL CASTILLO (coordinadores), *La creación de la nación chicana: perspectivas historiográficas*, Ciudad de México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 2018.

Amy C. OFFNER, *Sorting out the mixed economy: the rise and fall of welfare and developmental states in the Americas*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021.

W. J. RORABAUGH, *Kennedy y el sueño de los sesenta*, Barcelona: Paidós, 2005.

Daniel J SARGENT, *A superpower transformed: the remaking of American foreign relations in the 1970s*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Thomas J. SUGRUE, *Not Even Past: Barack Obama and the Burden of Race*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 2010.

John A. THOMPSON, *A Sense of Power: The Roots of America's Global Role*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016.

Wyatt C WELLS, *American capitalism, 1945-2000: continuity and change from mass production to the information society*, Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2003.

Odd Arne WESTAD, *La Guerra Fría*, Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg, 2018.

## Software

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