

HIST 151 Crisis of American Civil Liberties  
Saxe - Section 20154, Buckman 204, 1-1:50 MWF  
E-mail - saxer@rhodes.edu; Phone – 843-3249  
Office Hours: 11-12, MF or by appointment, 307 Clough

### Course Description

This course will focus on the development of critical thinking and writing skills through the study of debates over civil liberties in 20<sup>th</sup> Century American history. Students will examine different historical moments where Americans have argued about definitions of acceptable dissent and struggled to interpret the meaning of important terms such as “patriotism” and “consensus.” By entering into these debates, students will be expected to express their own views about both the events being studied, but also the larger questions of civic participation in American democracy. The class will take students through the process of developing effective essays, including peer editing and multiple draft revisions, in order to produce college-level writing and to clearly express your ideas and research. By the end of the course, students will comment on the current state of debates about civil liberties in the United States and suggest future directions these discussions may take.

### Required Texts

Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism*  
Geoffrey Stone, *War and Liberty*

### Course requirements

#### **Essays**

The hard copy of all essays should be typed, double-spaced, and have page numbers. Essays should be affixed with either a clip or staple. They should also have the following at the top of the first page: name, a meaningful title, date, and the word count. Ex:

Robert Saxe

The Tyranny of Professors: A Case Study of History 151

February 1, 2009

680 words

Also, an email copy of your essay must be sent to the professor on the due date. The title of the document should be your last name and the number of the essay. Ex: “Saxe2”

In addition, any use of sources must be cited using Chicago-style footnotes (see [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html) for help or you may ask the instructor). A title page and works cited page are not necessary. At the end of each essay, the Rhodes pledge should be printed and signed.

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a penalty on the essay’s grade.

Essay 1 - 10% of final grade (1000 words)

For your first essay, I would like you to consider the propaganda techniques used by the Committee on Public Information during WWI. For your essay, please identify two or three different pieces of propaganda, either speeches or advertisements or both, used by the American government during WWI to support the war effort. These can be readily found in the Rhodes library or online. I can help if you are having difficulties locating source material, but make every effort to locate them first (a simple Google search may not be enough).

Then, I would like you to construct an essay looking at the techniques used by the government to garner support for the war effort. What are the arguments being made in your evidence? How effective are the techniques being used? Overall, I would like your essay to answer the question: **should the US government have used propaganda techniques to encourage support for the war effort in WWI?**

Deadlines for this essay:

January 22

**Topic for First Essay due in class**

January 25

**Outline for first Essay due in class**

January 27

**First draft of First Essay due in class; Workshop in class**

February 1

**Final draft of First Essay due in class**

Essay 2 - 15% of final grade (1500 words)

For your second essay, I want you to survey all of the reading up to this point and think carefully about the notion of "the state." Using the course readings as evidence, I want you to answer the following question: **what is the responsibility of an American to follow the rules of the American state?** Make sure that you define your terms and provide evidence to support your claims. Please include evidence from at least three of the readings.

Deadlines for this essay:

February 10

**Topic for Second Essay due in class**

February 15

**Outline of Second Essay due in class**

February 17

**First draft of Second Essay due; Workshop in class**

February 24

**Final draft of Second Essay due**

Essay 3 - 20% of final grade (2000 words)

For your third essay, I want you to survey all of the sources in the "Documents" section of the Schrecker book. Identify at least three readings that you feel best exemplify the controversies of the age of McCarthyism (please avoid Hook and Douglas). Use these sources as a guide to evaluate the movie *Good Night and Good Luck*. What do these sources show that the filmmakers got right in the movie? What did they miss? Make sure to answer the following question: **Is *Good Night and Good Luck* a useful resource for students to understand post-WWII anti-communism?**

Deadlines for this essay:

March 31

**Outline for Third Essay due in class**

April 5

**First draft of Third Essay due in class; Workshop in class**

April 9

**Final Draft of Third Essay due in class**

Essay 4 - 25% of final grade (3000-3500 words) This will be a longer research essay. For the final essay of the course, you are to choose a topic on American civil liberties and write a research paper related to the themes of the course. The most difficult challenge of this kind of paper is to decide on a workable topic. A quick survey of the required readings may help to narrow down an area of interest. Another approach is to look at the types of sources that are both available and interesting to the writer and develop a topic from that point. The nature of the topic of this paper is wide open, but it will need to be related to the themes of the course. You may select a particular issue, individual, or theme for your topic. In addition, you will give a presentation on your topic.

Deadlines for this essay:

February 8

**Topic for the Fourth Essay due in class**

March 12

**Bibliography for Fourth Essay due in class**

April 12

**Outline and Intro/Conclusion for Fourth Essay due in class**

April 28

**Final Draft of Fourth Essay due in class**

April 23-28

**Research Presentations**

**Short assignments** – 10% of final grade. There will be a series of short writing assignment throughout the semester.

**Take home final exam** – 10% of final grade.

## **Class Participation**

Active participation in class discussion is the best way to achieve a good class participation grade. Class participation also includes good conduct. Failure to participate in class, neglecting to do the reading for the day, sleeping or leaving during class, playing games on your laptop or doing text messaging during class may all have a negative impact on your grade – 10% of final grade.

### Course Policies:

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed three absences without penalty. Students are required to find out what they missed in class on the day of their absence. If students miss more than three classes, they are required to meet with the professor to discuss their absences. Failure to do so will result in the lowering of a student's final grade by one third grade point for every absence over three. Please consider this policy when planning for extracurricular activities (sports, mock trial, etc.) Absences for extracurricular activities are counted towards the total number of absences.

Due dates and times for writing assignments are fixed. All assignments are due in class, not in the professor's mailbox. To avoid last minute printer problems, please print out your paper well before class. Late assignments will receive a failing grade. All of the assignments for this class must be completed. Failure to complete an assignment will result in a failing grade for the class.

The professor supports the Rhodes College Honor Code. To demonstrate commitment to the Code, each student must write "pledged" and sign his/her name on every assignment. If you have questions about plagiarism, please talk to me directly (we will also discuss plagiarism during class).

### Course schedule

Wednesday, January 13

Introduction

Friday, January 15

American Wars and Liberty (Stone, 1-40)

Monday, January 18

MLK Day

Wednesday, January 20

Essay Writing: Argument; Selection of Topic

Friday, January 22

WWI and 100% Americanism (Stone, 41-63)

**Topic for First Essay due in class**

Monday, January 25

Manufacturing Consent – the Committee on Public Information (Bring your ads from WWI)

**Outline for First Essay due in class**

Wednesday, January 27

**First draft of First Essay due in class; Workshop in class**

Friday, January 29

WWI Continued (Randolph Bourne, “War is the Health of the State,” 1918, and Eugene Debs, Canton, Ohio speech, 1918)

Monday, February 1

The Red Scare

(Stanley Cohen, “A Study in Nativism,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 1964 and Abramowitz, “The Press and the Red Scare,” In Edsforth/Bennett, *Popular Culture and Political Change in America*, 1991)

**Final Draft of First Essay due in class**

Wednesday, February 3

The Red Scare Continued (“Account from Centralia,” 1919)

Friday, February 5

Essay Writing: Intro/Conclusion

Monday, February 8

The Immigration Acts of 1917 and 1924 (Debates about the acts)

**Topic for Fourth Essay due in class**

Wednesday, February 10

Mexican “Repatriation” (selections from Balderrama, *Decade of Betrayal*)

**Topic for Second Essay due in class**

Friday, February 12

Scottsboro (selections from Goodman, *Stories of Scottsboro*)

Monday, February 15

Essay writing: Clarity

**Outline of Second Essay due in class**

Wednesday, February 17

**First draft of Second Essay due; Workshop in class**

Friday, February 19

WWII and the Four Freedoms (FDR, “Four Freedoms” speech; selections from Stouffer et. al, *The American Soldier*; Fleeger, “Forget All the Differences,” *Journal of American*

*Ethnic History*, Winter 2008)

Monday, February 22

WWII and Japanese Internment (Stone, 64-84; John Dower, "Race, Language and War in Two Cultures: WWII in Asia," 1996)

Wednesday, February 24

McCarthyism before McCarthy (Schrecker, 20-30; 278-283; Stone, 85-106)

**Final draft of Second Essay due**

Friday, February 26

Anti-Communism and its Varieties (Schrecker, Introduction, 1-19, 31-62, 80-89, 95-103, 110-118, 122-125, 177-187, 221-225, 262-263)

Monday, March 1

Essay Writing: Research

Wednesday, March 3

Civil Liberties and the Media: Communists in Hollywood (Schrecker, 63-79, 89-93, 126-133, 214-16, 226-241, 244-248)

Friday, March 5

Watch *Good Night and Good Luck* (2005)

Monday, March 8

Finish *Good Night and Good Luck*

Wednesday, March 10

Assessing McCarthy's Legacy (Schrecker, 93-95, 104-106, 166-168)

Friday, March 12

Discuss Film

**Bibliography for Fourth Essay due**

Spring Break

Monday, March 22

Essay writing: Evidence and Opinion

Wednesday, March 24

The Cold War and the 60s (JFK's inauguration speech; LBJ's "Great Society" speech; MLK's "I Have a Dream" speech)

Friday, March 26

Anti-War, Anti-America? (Selections from FBI reports on anti-war protest and MLK; Richard Nixon's "Silent Majority" Speech; Stone 107-127)

Monday, March 29  
The War on Terror or War on Liberty? (Stone, 128-165)  
**Topic for Third Essay due in class**

Wednesday, March 31  
Academic Freedom and The War on Terror (selections from Charlie Savage, *Takeover*, 2008; selections from Doumani, *Academic Freedom after September 11*, 2006)  
**Outline for Third Essay due in class**

Friday, April 2  
Easter Break

Monday, April 5  
**First draft of Third Essay due in class; Workshop in class**

Wednesday, April 7  
Torture and The War on Terror (Glen Greenwald, "Torture and the Rule of Law," *Salon*, 2008; Alan Dershowitz, "Tortured Reasoning," *Torture: A Collection*, 2006)

Friday, April 9  
War on Terror Continued  
**Final Draft of Third Essay due in class**

Monday, April 12  
**Outline and Intro/Conclusion of Fourth Essay due, workshop in class**

Wednesday, April 14  
Privacy and the War on Terror (John Solomon and Barton Gellman, "Frequent Errors in FBI's Secret Record Requests," *Washington Post*, 3/9/07)

Friday, April 16  
Effective Research Presentations

Monday, April 19  
Racial Profiling and the War on Terror (Edley, "The New American Dilemma: Racial Profiling Post 9/11," 2003; Charles Krauthammer, "Give Grandma a Pass," *Time*, 2005)

Wednesday, April 21  
The Future of American Civil Liberties (Stone, 166-184)

Friday, April 23  
Research Presentations

Monday, April 26  
Research Presentations

Wednesday, April 28

Research presentations

**Final Draft of Fourth Essay due in class**

**Pick up Take Home Final Exam**

Friday, April 30

URCAS