



## Department of History

HTST 462.01  
United States Political History  
Fall, 2020

**Instructor:** Dr. Frank Towers

**Email:** [ftowers@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ftowers@ucalgary.ca)

**Office Hours and Method:** Thursday 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

**Course Delivery:** Online

**Originally Scheduled Class Times:** MWF, 12- 12:50 pm.

**Synchronous Class Times:** Students will attend one synchronous—that is live—meeting every Friday from 12-1 pm, and on Wednesday Dec. 9, the last meeting of the term. We will also have two hours of lecture delivered asynchronously—that is, available for viewing at the student's convenience—each week.

**Description:** This course considers the history of American politics in the past half century (1970-2020). This critical period in the recent past of the United States informs the current politics of the country today. The course defines “politics” broadly to include not only elections and government but also public opinion and the larger civil society that influences the distribution and exercise of power in the United States.

### Learning Outcomes

- \* Be able to identify the major terms and themes in the history of U.S. politics since 1974 and their change over time.
- \* Be able to connect themes in recent U.S. political history with other historical processes such as deindustrialization and economic inequality; the interplay of identities based on race, gender, class, and ethnic origin; changing media and digital communication; globalization and international relations.
- \* Be able to explain some of the broad interpretative frameworks of recent U.S. political history
- \* Be able to assess secondary sources to identify argument, structure, evidence, and contribution to their field.
- \* Demonstrate improved critical thinking and analytical skills.

**Required Text for Purchase:** Kevin M. Kruse and Julian E. Zelizer, *Fault Lines: A History of the United States since 1974* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2019).

**Buying books for fall semester.** The University of Calgary Bookstore is Open Online To help protect the health and safety of the campus community, the University of Calgary Bookstore in Mac Hall remains closed to in-person visits until late September. But the store has adapted many of its programs including a robust offering of online services in support of students. For more information and updated access info: <https://www.calgarybookstore.ca>

**Assessment:** All assignments will be submitted electronically via a specific dropbox link posted under “Assessments.”

Assessment Method	Weight	Due Date
Midterm take home exam	30%	Oct. 5
Paper	35%	Nov. 16
Final take home exam	35%	Dec. 16

### Explanation of assignments

**Midterm take home exam:** the midterm take home exam asks students to write an essay on themes related to the course materials presented from the beginning of the course until October 13. A choice of between 2-4 questions will be distributed one week prior to the due date and students will then use that week to write their answers. The essay must be at least 1,200 words in length and no longer than 2,400. Students may use resource materials beyond those assigned for the course but they MUST discuss and engage the assignments for the course as well. In other words, a passing mark on the exam will require students to engage with course materials, not circumvent them.

**Paper:** Students will write a paper of at least 1,500 words and not longer than 2,700 words form a choice of topics detailed in an assignment that will be distributed not later than Oct. 18. The paper will explore question related to the history of US politics since 1974 with an emphasis on events between 1980 and 2000. The paper will mix primary (firsthand) and secondary (after the fact) sources. Each question will include a list of possible sources, but students are encouraged to conduct their own independent research in writing the paper.

**Final take home exam:** the final take home asks students to write an essay on themes related to the course materials presented from Nov. 6 until the end of the course. A choice of between 2-4 questions will be distributed one week prior to the due date and students will then use that week to write their answers. The essay must be at least 1,200 words in length and no longer than 2,400. Students may sue resource materials beyond those assigned for the course but they MUST discuss and engage the assignments for the course as well. In other words, a passing mark on the exam will require students to engage with course materials, not circumvent them.

All assessments are to be submitted to the D2L dropbox.

**On-Line Instruction Statement:** For this course, instruction will be conducted remotely, that is online. Every week, there will be two hours of asynchronous content posted on D2L. Asynchronous means pre-recorded lectures and videos that students may view at their convenience. Every Friday at noon we will have a synchronous meeting for fifty minutes. During that time we will engage in broad discussion of the week's themes, including content from the asynchronous lectures posted earlier in the week and the assigned reading. To succeed in the course, be sure to complete the assigned reading and view the asynchronous material prior to our Friday meetings.

I am also available to discuss course issues during a weekly, open Zoom session every Thursday at 11:00 am until noon. On D2L, I will post a link to the zoom with a passcode at least 30 minutes prior to the session. I am also available via email, phone, and zoom by appointment. If you'd like to schedule an appointment, please email me to set one up.

**Learning Technologies Requirements:** In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students in this course will need reliable access to the following technology: A computer with a supported operating system; a current and updated web browser; a webcam (built-in or external); a microphone and speaker (built-in or external or headset); current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled; broadband internet connection.

**Guidelines for Synchronous Sessions and office hours:** Zoom is a video conferencing program that will allow us to meet at specific times for a "live" video conference, so that we can have the opportunity to meet each other virtually and discuss relevant course topics as a learning community. To help ensure Zoom sessions are private, do not share the Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are only intended for students registered in the course. Zoom recordings and materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed or published without the instructor's permission. The use of video conferencing programs relies on participants to act ethically, honestly and with integrity; and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith, and respect (as per the Code of Conduct). When entering Zoom or other video conferencing sessions (such as MS Teams), you play a role in helping create an effective, safe and respectful learning environment. Please be mindful of how your behaviour in these sessions may affect others. Participants are required to use names officially associated with their UCID (legal or preferred names listed in the Student Centre) when engaging in these activities. Instructors/moderators can remove those whose names do not appear on class rosters. Non-compliance may be investigated under relevant University of Calgary conduct policies (e.g Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy). If participants have difficulties complying with this requirement, they should email the instructor of the class explaining why, so the instructor may consider whether to grant an exception, and on what terms. For more information on how to get the most out of your zoom sessions visit: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/guidelines-for-zoom/>.

Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that will allow you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. Students will be advised by their instructor when they

are expected to turn on their webcam (for group work, presentations, etc.).

### Schedule

Date	Topic & Reading	Assignments/Due Dates
Week1, Sept 8-11	Introduction: time, place and topic, American democracy since 1974. Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 1-6	Synchronous meeting Friday, Sept. 11
Week 2, Sept 14 – 18	Watergate: Dawn of a new era Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 7-25; Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, “40 Years after Watergate, Nixon Was far Worse than We Thought,” Washington Post, June 8, 2012. <b>Posted on D2L.</b> Video: PBS Newshour, “ <a href="#">A Look Back at the Senate Watergate Hearings</a> ,”	Synchronous meeting Friday, Sept. 18
Week 3, Sept 21– Sept 25	The Unseen Revolutions of the 1970s Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 26-43; “The Politics of Organized Combat,” in Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, <i>Winner Take All Politics</i> (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010), 116-136. <b>Posted on D2L.</b> Video: Jimmy Carter, “ <a href="#">A Crisis of Confidence</a> ,” (1979).	Synchronous meeting Friday, Sept. 25
Week 4, Sept 28 – Oct 2	Struggles for Equality Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 44-87 88-112. Phyllis Schlafly, “ <a href="#">What’s Wrong with Equal Rights for Women?</a> ” (1972)	Synchronous meeting Friday, Oct. 2
Week 5, Oct 5-9	The New Right and the Reagan era Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 88-134; Matthew D. Lassiter, “Big Government and Family Values: Political Culture in the Metropolitan Sunbelt,” in <i>Sunbelt Rising</i> ed. by Michelle Nickerson and Darren Dochuk (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 83-109. <b>Posted on D2L.</b> Video: Ronald Reagan “ <a href="#">Q&amp;A with reporters on Air Traffic Controllers</a> ” (1981).	<b>Midterm take home exam, due Oct. 5</b> Synchronous meeting Friday, Oct. 9
Week 6, Oct 13-16	The End of the Cold War Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 160-179. Ronald Reagan, “ <a href="#">Evil Empire Speech</a> ”	Synchronous meeting Friday, Oct. 16

	(1983).	
Week 7, Oct 19-23	From Geo. H.W. Bush to Clinton Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 180-202. Heather Ann Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History," <i>Journal of American History</i> 97, no. 3 (2010), 703-734. <b>Posted on D2L.</b>	Synchronous meeting Friday, Oct. 23
Week 8, Oct 26-30	The New Democrats and the 1990s Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 202-242. William J. Clinton, " <a href="#">Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union</a> ," Jan. 23, 1996. Video, Newt Gingrich remarks on " <a href="#">The Contract with America</a> ," (1994).	Synchronous meeting Friday, Oct. 30
Week 9, Nov 2-6	The election of 2000 and the Politics of 9/11 Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 243-270. Jack M. Balkin, "Legitimacy and the 2000 Election," in <i>Bush vs. Gore: The Question of Legitimacy</i> , ed. by Bruce Ackerman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 210-228 (posted on D2L); Peter Beinart, " <a href="#">A Fighting Faith</a> ," <i>The New Republic</i> (Dec. 2004).	Synchronous meeting Friday, Nov. 6
Nov 9-13	Reading Week – No Classes	
Week 10, Nov 16-20	G.W. Bush and Conservative Economics Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 271-288. Larry M. Bartels, <i>Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age</i> (New York, 2010), 283-303, posted on D2L.	Synchronous meeting Friday, Nov. 20 <b>Paper due Nov 16.</b>
Week 11, Nov 23-27	The Obama Era Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 289-319. Te Nehisi Coates, " <a href="#">My President Was Black: A history of the first African American White House—and of what came next</a> ," <i>The Atlantic</i> (2017). Text available at link.	Synchronous meeting Friday, Nov. 27
Week 12, Nov 30-Dec 4	2016: Global Reckoning Assigned reading: Kruse and Zelizer, <i>Fault Lines</i> , 320-358. David Remnick, "Trump vs. The Times: Inside an Off the Record Meeting," <i>The New Yorker</i> , July 30, 2018. Posted on D2L.	Synchronous meeting Friday, Dec. 4
Week 13, Dec 7-9	Broken or Mending? American Politics in 2020 Assigned reading: TBA	Synchronous meeting Friday, Dec. 9
Dec 16		<b>3<sup>rd</sup> take home exam due Dec. 16</b>

### Departmental Grading System

The following percentage-to-letter grade conversion scheme is used in all Canadian Studies, History, and Latin American Studies courses, except for HTST 200.

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Description
90-100	A+	4.00	Outstanding performance
85-89	A	4.00	Excellent performance
80-84	A-	3.70	Approaching excellent performance
77-79	B+	3.30	Exceeding good performance
73-76	B	3.00	Good performance
70-72	B-	2.70	Approaching good performance
67-69	C+	2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance
63-66	C	2.00	Satisfactory performance
60-62	C-	1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance.
56-59	D+	1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject
50-55	D	1.00	Minimal Pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
0-49	F	0	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.

### Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

- For program advising in the Faculty of Arts, contact the Arts Students Centre (ASC). For information on how to reach the ASC team please see <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/current-students/undergraduate/academic-advising>
- For Enrolment Services advising (such as admissions, student awards, course registration support, financial aid and student fees) or registration issues, contact the Office of the Registrar. For information on how to reach their team please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/contact-us/enrolment-services-advising>
- For information on Registration Changes and Exemption Requests please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals>

**Attention history majors:** *History 300 is a required course for all history majors. You should normally take it in your second year.*

**Writing:**

All written assignments and written exam responses are assessed partly on writing skills. Writing skills include surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) and general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented according to the format described in the History Student's Handbook.

D2L: Throughout the course, important material such as lecture outlines and study guides will be regularly posted on D2L. Students are advised to check this regularly.

**Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism occurs when one submits or presents one's work in a course, or ideas and/or passages in a written piece of work, as if it were one's own work done expressly for that particular course, when, in fact, it is not. Please see [The History Student's Handbook](#).

Plagiarism may take several forms:

- Failing to cite sources properly
- Submitting borrowed, purchased, and/or ghostwritten papers
- Submitting one's own work for more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s) involved
- Extensive paraphrasing of one or a few sources, even when referenced properly, unless the essay is a critical analysis of those works

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence, and written work that appears to contain plagiarized passages will not be graded. All such work will be reported to the Faculty of Art's associate deans of students who will apply the penalties specified in the *University of Calgary Calendar, Section K: Integrity and Conduct*, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

**Academic Accommodations:**

Students needing an accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should contact Student Accessibility Services (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy](https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy).

Students needing an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should contact, preferably in writing, the course instructor.

**Copyright:**

The University of Calgary has opted out of the Access Copyright Interim Tariff proposed by the Copyright Board. Therefore, instructors in all University of Calgary courses will strictly adhere to Copyright Act regulations and the educational exceptions permitted by the Act for both print and digital course material. No copyrighted reading material may be placed on course D2L or web sites without the prior permission of the copyright holders. In some

cases, this may mean that instructors will require you to purchase a print course pack from the University of Calgary bookstore or consult books on reserve at the library. For more information on the University of Calgary's copyright policy, see <http://library.ucalgary.ca/copyright>.

### **Sexual Violence Policy**

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/sexual-violence-policy.pdf>

### **Other Useful Information:**

Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for information on:

- Wellness and Mental Health
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Campus Security and Safewalk (220-5333)

**Department Twitter @ucalgaryhist**

*Fall 2020*