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***College Students, Politics, and Protest: Student Activism Since World War II***

History 79375, Spring 2018, Tuesday/Thursday, 12:00 – 1:20 pm, WEH 5312

**Course Description:**

Can college students change the world? We will attempt to answer this question by delving into the history of student activism in the United States and around the world since 1945. The course will use select case studies to: 1) examine the philosophies and tactics of student activists; 2) analyze the relationship between shifting conditions of higher education and student activists’ ideas of political action and; 3) evaluate where student movements have succeeded and failed in achieving their social and political goals. In the spirit of the student activists we study, the course is structured around student agency. Students will lead their own workshops, facilitate in-class activities, and engage in an experiential component alongside the course. Such activities will prompt students to reflect upon their ideas of citizenship and activism. By taking this course, students will develop their own historical interpretations of student activism and the modern university and draw out relevant lessons for today’s world.

**Course Objectives**

Students will:

* Draw out lessons and models of student activism from specific historical cases
* Critique approaches, techniques, and ideas of student activists
* Develop ideas of student citizenship

Students will also develop specific ways of “thinking” historically:

* Identify the strengths and weaknesses of historical sources
* Craft historical arguments via analytical, evidence-based writing
* Communicate your ideas clearly and persuasively via public speaking and other forms of public writing

Questions that will guide our semester journey include:

* How do students reach out to communities?
* How have students learned from members of the community to support their work?
* What strategies have students used to mobilize the campus and community and sustain support?
* How can students best serve a community?
* How is my college education connected to the general public good?
* Can activism be a part of the university?
* What is the relationship between activism, education, and student citizenship?

**Assignments**

The assignments are designed to develop a student’s personal and public voice as writers and citizens. The writing assignments will build upon each other: the journal reflections will prepare you for your editorial response and the editorial response will prepare you for your final paper or project. The goal of each assignment is to demonstrate your learning and growth in the class.

**#1. Participant Observer Journals (5)**

Observe/participate in a student activist organization or local activist group. Regularly attend meetings and events throughout the entire semester. If the group meets irregularly, compensate by doing background work interviewing activists and/or doing research about its past activities by using the campus newspaper. Keep a Journal on your participation which combines observation, analysis and connections to your own learning. You will turn in 5 journal reflections throughout the semester.

A Journal entry is a brief (2 page) to-the-point entry designed to share insights with the class and to let you prepare your contribution to class discussions by putting your ideas in writing. (These journals will be uploaded to the course website). We want to know what you learned, discovered, found intriguing. Elaboration based on specific, telling details is critical. Develop a couple key points and make every word count. Students are encouraged to use “I” and other personal pronouns. The goal is to make the course content and experiences relevant to your lives.

In your journals, try to avoid:

* Long summaries of what you have read or observed
* Fuzzy abstractions and sweeping generalities that “nobody could disagree with.”
* Complaints of specific individuals; it’s important to pull out critiques of strategies or efforts without turning them into personal attacks or disagreements

Grading: Journals can receive a check plus, check, or check minus (2,4,6 points; late grades lowered).

**#2. Student-Led Workshops**

This is not your typical student presentation. The goal of student-led workshops is to develop your sense of leadership. Student groups of 2-3 choose a case study and lead a class discussion/activity (30 min or full class period). These workshops can take many forms: they can be a deep dive into another case study; use a new case study as a challenge to or complement of a case study already covered; they can be a scholarly critique of how a historian or commentator has treated a given example of student activism. The options are endless. These are just some examples of the workshops. The goal of the workshops is to give you agency as a student to explore a topic of interest and develop your own approach to education. Groups will be given a set of readings, or can choose their own. They will meet with D. Busch to develop a lesson/activity around the select case study. See course website for possible other case studies.

Grading: Workshop grades will be based on initial student meetings with D. Busch and post-workshop reflections. Students will receive individual grades of a check plus, check, or check minus (2,4,6 points; late grades lowered), plus feedback.

**#3. Editorial/Response**

This is a short (2-3 page) response to contemporary social commentary on student activism or political issue. The editorial will draw from journal reflections and course content. Articles will be provided or can be your choice. Students are encouraged to send their editorials to the CMU newspaper, *The Pittsburgh Post Gazette, Inside Higher Ed.,* or another national media outlet.

Grading: Editorial responses will be based on clarity of argument (clearly-stated opinion) and the use of course evidence and experience to support the opinion. Students will receive a check plus, check, or check minus (2,4,6 points; late grades lowered), plus feedback.

**#4. Final Paper or Final Project**

For the final project, students have a choice of either a traditional academic paper, or a project of their choosing.

*Community Forum and Reflection:* One possible alternative is for a group project (2-3 students). Students plan and run a community forum on campus around a topic of political interest. If you go this route, students will be expected to write a longer reflection on the success and failure of the forum

*Student Manifesto:* Another option is to write a student manifesto for today. Working together or alone, students draw on earlier student ideas of activism and citizenship and compose a manifesto relevant to students today.

*Dialogue:* Bring 4-5 student activists (historical actors) together for a dialogue about activism, democracy, or another topic. What would they agree upon? Where would they disagree and why? What would the exchange tell us about student activism and/or the idea of the university?

*Academic Paper:* Students can also go the traditional route and write an academic paper that makes a historical argument about student activism. Some questions to consider:

1. Using the case studies from class, how has student activism shifted and/or remained stable since World War II? Be sure to highlight differences and similarities between the different student movements.
2. Using the case studies from class, how have student movements been successful/unsuccessful? Why? Is there a common theme in the limits of student activism?
3. Using the case studies from class, what lessons can be drawn from the history of student activism?

Grading: Student final reflections, manifestos, or academic papers will be 5-7 pages in length, present a clear argument or problem, and use evidence from readings and experiences to support the main claims. Students will be given a writing rubric and will be graded on an A,B,C,D, F grading scale.

**#5. Class Participation**

I believe we all learn best in a supportive environment, in which you are listening actively, not only to me but also to your fellow students. In addition to the above assignments, class discussion and activities will be a crucial component of this course. The success of the course relies upon students’ engagement with activities and content. Excellent class participation involves raising thoughtful questions, building on the ideas of others, and synthesizing ideas across readings and discussions. Use the in-class activities as an opportunity to express your ideas and concerns. What did you find compelling or confusing? With what did you most strongly agree or disagree? What were the most important passages or arguments and why? Think deeply, ask questions, and challenge ideas. The best learning is when we learn from each other.

Grading: Class participation will be based on a variety of factors, including: active listening (e.g. asking clarifying questions), speaking up and sharing ideas during discussion and activities, taking notes, and sharing post-class reflections with D. Busch (via email). Students will have the opportunity to give input on their participation grades at mid-semester and end of the semester. For class participation, students will receive a check plus, check, or check minus (2,4,6 points; late grades lowered).

**Learning Activities and Evaluation**

**20%** Class Participation

**20%** Participant Observation and Journal Reflections

**20%** Editorial

**20%** Student-Led Workshops

**20%** Final Paper or Project

**Communicating with Me**

I encourage you to communicate with me throughout the course over email or during office hours. No question is too small or too large.

**Community, Ethics, and Etiquette**

One of the goals of this course is to create community through shared experiences. It is useful to set some parameters for us in order to be successful in building an effective, accountable, and honest community.

*Attendance:* A strong community starts with commitment and showing up to class. Attendance is thus crucial to this course. Chronic tardiness or multiple unexcused absences affects the growth of community and will be reflected in your participation grade.

*Technology:* Community is also built through face-to-face interactions. While some class activities will encourage the use of laptops and other forms of technology, I find that the over-use of technology in the classroom can inhibit learning and community building. I greatly prefer for students to take notes with pen and paper rather than with laptops. My experience is that laptops disrupt the ability of students to participate in class discussion. Smart phones and other electronic devices are equally distracting. Please turn them off before entering class. If you need to use a laptop to take notes, please see me individually.

*Assignments:* Community is dependent upon accountability and honesty. **All assignments must be submitted on the day they are due.** An assignment will be considered late otherwise. If late, your grade for an assignment will be lowered by a full letter grade. Requests for extra time due to legitimate conflicts (illness, family tragedy, etc.) must be made in advance and must be documented. It is each student’s responsibility to be familiar with the University’s policies on plagiarism, cheating, and academic integrity. You can review these policies via the following link: http://www.cmu.edu/policies/documents/Cheating.html

**Disability Accommodations**

If a student needs to request an accommodation due to a disability, it is the student’s responsibility to communicate such a request to me as soon as possible. For more information, contact the Office of Disability Resources at access@andrew.cmu.edu or by phone at 412-268-6121.

**Your Health and Happiness (some helpful thoughts from Student Affairs)**

Take care of yourself.  Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress.

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful.

If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is here to help: call 412-268-2922 and visit their website at <http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/>. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty or family member you trust for help getting connected to the support that can help.

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal or in danger of self-harm or if you suspect

you or someone you know has been assaulted, call someone immediately, day or night:

* CaPS: 412-268-2922
* Re:solve Crisis Network: 888-796-8226
* Jess Klein, Coordinator of Sexual Violence Prevention at CMU: [412-268-2237](tel:(412)%20268-2237)
* PAAR (Pittsburgh Action Against Rape) has an anonymous hotline for help: [866-363-7273](tel:(866)%20363-7273) (PAAR) --  or [888-772-7227](tel:(888)%20772-7227) (PA Hotline)
* If the situation is life threatening, call the police: On campus: CMU Police: [412-268-2323](tel:(412)%20268-2323) or Off campus: 911

**Schedule:**

**WEEK 1: The Student and the Activist**

January 16: The Student

January 18: The Activist

*Readings:* The first week of readings introduces you to a range of questions and debates that have concerned scholars and (concomitantly) student activists. Julie Reuben is a historian of education that has turned the “triumph” of the modern university into a tragedy. For class: What does she see being marginalized in the university? How do other scholars grapple with this question? What is a “liberal education”? What common ground do you see between these scholars? What would a university look like if “morality” was central to its scholarly and educational activities?

* William Cronon, “Only Connect” (1998)
* Bell Hooks, “Spiritual Matters in the Classroom
* Julie Rueben, “The University and Its Discontents” (pp. 73-80)
* Brandon Byrd, “The Black Intellectual Tradition”
* Craig Wilder, excerpt from *Ebony and Ivy,* and, first 7 minutes of interview

*Email:* D. Busch with questions/comments on the readings. These questions will be used for discussion in the course. *(Due Sunday, January 21 @ 3 pm, email* [*dbusch@andrew.cmu.edu)*](mailto:dbusch@andrew.cmu.edu))

**WEEK 2: The Idea of Education and the Modern University**

January 23: The Idea of Education

January 25: The Modern University

*Readings:* The end of World War II presented American life and higher education with a range of questions concerning education, democracy, and the role of the institution. Both the Truman Report and the report by Vannevar Bush looked optimistically to the potential of the university, while Richard Hofstadter, Ralph Bunche, and Harold Taylor raised important questions about the university and its role in society. What themes stand out to you? What issue(s) does historian Ethan Shrum identity as inhibiting policy makers and educators from coming to a shared understanding? Do you agree?

* Excerpts from the Truman Report, preface and Ch. 1
* Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life,* Introduction, p. 1-7, 24-25
* Excerpt from Vannevar Bush, “Science, the Endless Frontier: A Report to the President”, Introduction
* Ralph Bunche, “The Role of the University in the Political Orientation of Negro Youth”
* Harold Taylor, “The Future of American Education”
* Ethan Schrum, “Establishing a Democratic Religion: Metaphysics and Democracy in the Debates over the President’s Commission on Higher Education,” *History of Education Quarterly,* Vol. 47, No. 3 (August 2007), pp. 277-30

*Writing: Journal #1 (Due Sunday, January 28 @ 12pm, email D. Busch)*

*Email*: D. Busch with the student group or local organization you plan to participate in throughout the semester. *(Due Sunday, January 28 @ 12pm)*

**WEEK 3: The Spark and Vision(s) of the 1960s**

January 30: The Sit In

February 1: Visions

*Readings:* The sit-ins in the United States and decolonization struggles around the world broadly shaped student ideas of politics and education. Read in full the student manifestos that we looked at in class. Pay attention to the key ideas. What values do they share? How do they grapple with the key themes of the university? What challenges did they pose for their peers and the university? Do you agree or disagree with the students? Why?

* Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Recommendations, “Founding Statement,” and Recruitment Pamphlet
* Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), “The Port Huron Statement”
* Young Americans for Freedom, “The Sharon Statement”
* “The Cordoba Manifesto”

**WEEK 4: Learning Democracy**

February 6: Grassroots Organizing

February 8: The Freedom Summer

*Readings:* This week’s readings dive more deeply into the ways SNCC laid the groundwork for other student movements in the 1960s. How did SNCC’s grassroots focus move into other student movements in the 1960s? What issues arose after the Freedom Summer? Do you think the Freedom Summer should be considered a success or a failure? Does SNCC’s efforts have any relevancy for student activism today?

* Explore SNCC Legacy Project
* Wesley Hogan, “Freedom Now: SNCC Galvanizes the New Left” in Cohen/Snyder, *Rebellion in Black and White*

*Writing*: *Journal #2 (Due Sunday, February 11 @ 12pm, email D. Busch)*

**WEEK 5: Spreading Activism**

February 13: The Teach-In and Anti-War

February 15: Women’s Liberation and Consciousness Raising

*Readings:* This week’s readings allow you to look more closely at the ways students defined and remembered their political experiences in the 1960s. What are key themes that stand out for students’ reflections in Howard Brick’s edited volume? What do you think is the most important lesson to take from SDS, SNCC, and other student movements in the U.S.?

* Choose two selections from Howard Brick, “A New Insurgency”

*Meetings*

Groups 1-3 meet with D. Busch

**WEEK 6: Transnational Connections**

February 20: A Global Student Movement

February 22: Students and the Sexual Revolution

*Meetings*

Groups 1-3 meet with D. Busch

*Writing: Journal #3 (Due Sunday, February 25 @ 12 pm, email D. Busch)*

**WEEK 7: Student-Led**

February 27: Student-Led Workshop: Group #1

March 1: Student-Led Workshop: Group #2

*Readings:*

* See “Student Workshops” on course website (to be updated)

**WEEK 8:**

March 6: Student-Led Workshop: Group #3

March 8: NO CLASS

**WEEK 9:**

*March 12 – 16: SPRING BREAK*

**WEEK 10: Moral Politics of Divestment**

March 20: Remembering Soweto

March 22: Divestment

*Readings:* This week’s readings are a short introduction to anti-apartheid activism through the lens of Steve Biko. Historian Megan Healy-Clancy’s short article contextualizes Biko’s ideas and their meaning in the context of the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. What is similar about his ideas and the movements studied earlier in the semester? What is new/different?

* Steve Biko, “Black Consciousness”
* Megan Healy-Clancy, “The Everyday Politics of Being a Student in South Africa: A History”

*Meetings*

Groups 4-6 meet with D. Busch

**WEEK 11: Pro-Democracy in China**

March 27: The Origins of the 1989 Student Movement

March 29: Democracy Salon

*Writing: Journal #4 (Due Sunday, April 1 @12 pm, email D. Busch)*

*Meetings*

Groups 4-6 meet with D. Busch

**WEEK 12: Student-Led**

April 3: Student-led Workshop: Group #4

April 5: Student-Led Workshop: Group #5

*Readings*

* See “Student Workshops” on course website (to be updated)

**WEEK 13: The New (Corporate?) University**

April 10: The Unmaking of the Public University and Global Academia

April 12: Editorial Writing Workshop

*Readings*

* See “Student Workshops” on course website (to be updated)

*Email:* D. Busch with your final project plan.

**WEEK 14: Reflections**

April 17: (Focus Group) TBD

April 19: No Class

*Readings:*

* “Students as Moral Teachers”
* Jeffrey Sachs, “What is a Moral University in the 21st Century?”
* “Black Study, Black Struggle”
* Malcolm Gladwell, “The Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted”

*Writing: Editorial due Wednesday, April 18 @ 10 pm*

**WEEK 15: The New Student Activism**

April 24: Black Lives Matter on Campus

April 26: Dreamers and the Freedom University

*Readings:*

* Journal reflections of your peers on the course website

*Writing*:

Participant Journal #5 (Due Sunday, April 29 @ 12 pm, email D. Busch)

**WEEK 16:**

May 1: Wiring Meetings

May 3: Writing Meetings

*Writing: Final Paper due Thursday, May 10 @ 10 pm*