COURSE OBJECTIVE: The Great Depression, one of the most cataclysmic events in our history, remains remote to most Americans today. While dimly aware of the more familiar aspects of the period such as unemployment and the Dust Bowl, few are familiar with the era's dynamic social and cultural changes which still resonate eight decades later. This seminar will trace the profound impact of the 1930s on American life, addressing such topics as FDR's New Deal, political challenges from the radical left and right, and the shifting roles of woman and African Americans. We will also examine other significant aspects of everyday life during this era, including Hollywood films, network radio, and popular music.

REQUIRED TEXTS: (available new at Penn Book Center, 130 S. 34th Street or you may look into getting used copies at www.bookfinder.com or similar websites):


Course reader available from University Readers.com

Easy instructions:
Step 1: Visit https://students.universityreaders.com/store/.
Step 2: Create an account, or log into your existing account.
Step 3: Select our school, and my course, and then proceed from there.

REQUIREMENTS: Final grades will be based upon the following:
1. Class participation (25%).
2. Short response paper (25%).
3. Research paper (50%).

Tentative schedule of classes:

NOTE: READINGS TO BE FINALIZED IN JANUARY 2016

**January 13**

**Introduction - What caused the Great Depression?**

*Video: The Crash of 1929*

**January 20**

**Economic collapse and the coming of the New Deal**


*Video: Riding the Rails*

**January 27**

**The New Deal**


Video: *FDR*

**February 3**  
**The New Deal (continued)**

Three interpretations from David Hamilton editor, *The New Deal*.  
Anthony Badger, "The Unanticipated Consequences of New Deal Reform, 36-50.

**February 10**  
**Responses from the Left and the Right**

Donald Warren, *Radio Priest - Charles Coughlin, the Father of Hate Radio*, (chapters 3-6), 40-97, 313-322.

Video: *Huey Long*

**February 17**  
**The New Unions**


Video: *The Great Depression: Volume 3: Striking Back*

**February 24**  
**African American life during the 1930s**


Video: *Scottsboro - An American Tragedy*
March 2  
**Film and American Life during the 1930s**

Thomas Doherty, "This Is Where We Came in: The Audible Screen and the Voluble Audience of Early Sound Cinema, 143-163 in Janet Staiger editor, *The Studio System*.


Video: Representative Hollywood film of the 1930s

March 16  
**Film and American Life during the 1930s (part 2)**


Video: Representative Hollywood film of the 1930s

March 23,30  
**The rise of radio**


Audio: Samples of 1930s radio programming

April 6,13  
**Depression music and popular culture**

Lewis Erenberg, *Swingin' the Dream: Big Band Jazz and the Rebirth of American Culture*.

Video: *Benny Goodman - Adventures in the Kingdom of Swing*.

April 20  
**Women in the Depression**


Ruth Cowan, "Two washes in the morning, and a bridge party at night: The American housewife between the wars," *Women's Studies*, 1976, 147-172.

Video: *Amelia Earhart*

April 27  
**Catch-up and discussion of final papers**