



## The 1960's



Code Apogée  
5LISM31



Composante(s)  
UFR Langues et  
Civilisations



Période de  
l'année  
Semestre 5

### En bref

- > **Mobilité d'études:** Oui
- > **Accessible à distance:** Non

## Présentation

### Objectifs

The Sixties is a puzzling concept in many respects. The idea of a historical decade is anything but self-evident. As far as historical thinking goes it is a very recent approach: the 1920s was arguably the first decade elevated to the status of a meaningful historical concept in as early as the 1930s, essentially because of the blatant economic contrast between the two periods ('Roaring Twenties' vs. Depression); by mid-century the apparently flawless 10-year spans of the Twenties and Thirties (1919-1929, 1929-1939) added another touch of legitimacy to their status as intellectually satisfactory historical concepts. However, a ten-year span is a chronological notion only based on astronomical determination—it hardly ever matches a historical period: who can claim there is any "historical" consistency to the time bracket beginning on January 1, 1960 and ending on December 31, 1969? Such a question challenges the literal definition of the word 'decade' and invites us to think in broader terms instead.

The very use of the word 'Sixties' makes it possible to move beyond both the chronological limits of 1960-1969 and the

purely temporal framing of the term. It is more significant to lodge the period within a longer time-frame spanning almost twenty years from the start of the Civil Rights movement (Montgomery bus boycott in December 1955) to the end of the Vietnam War (fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975). But these two major historical signposts, however significant, have no definitive value—the Sixties may just as legitimately be inserted in a period defined as stretching 'from Elvis to Nixon'...

The 'long' Sixties appears as a meaningful era of transition between the mid-1950s, a time in which the United States enjoyed the status of first economic and military power on a global scale after having initiated the Cold War, and the mid-1970s, when the country was faced with dramatic challenges to its global leadership ambitions (oil crisis, gradual erosion of the Communist bloc leading to a redefinition of global power balances). As any historical period the Sixties may be defined in international and domestic terms, but also according to geopolitical, political, economic, social, and cultural change. Like all its prestigious albeit not decade-defined predecessors (« the Jacksonian era » or « the Gilded Age » in the US, « la Belle Epoque » in France) it was an era but also a *zeitgeist*, a time of specific social and cultural effervescence. All these aspects will be addressed in this course so as to develop a nuanced knowledge of this key period of US history. Among the topics addressed will be the counterculture, social activism, feminism, and the rises of a New Left and a New Right.

### Contrôle des connaissances

**Cours évalué en contrôle continu pour les étudiants assidus.** Une ou plusieurs séances de TD seront consacrées à des exercices pris en compte dans le contrôle continu.



## Session 1

**Étudiants dispensés seulement** : épreuve écrite de 3 heures en anglais. Ouvrage *en version papier seulement* autorisé pendant l'épreuve (un exemplaire par personne, pas d'exemplaires partagés).

## Session 2 (« rattrapage »)

**Étudiants assidus et dispensés** : épreuve orale de 15 minutes en anglais après préparation de 30 minutes. Ouvrage *en version papier seulement* autorisé pendant l'épreuve (un exemplaire par personne, pas d'exemplaires partagés).

## Informations complémentaires

### Organisation des enseignements

1 heure hebdomadaire de CM sur 12 semaines.

1h30 hebdomadaire de TD sur 12 semaines.

## Bibliographie

### Compulsory reading

**Christopher B. Strain. *The Long Sixties: America, 1955-1973* (Wiley Blackwell, 2017). ISBN: 9780470673638.**

(L'acquisition et la lecture approfondie de cet ouvrage sont obligatoires. Le CM ne fera l'objet d'aucune diffusion de notes de cours, chacune des séances portant sur des chapitres ou parties de chapitres de l'ouvrage de Strain)

### Additional bibliography

#### Historiography

- \* Heale, M. J. "The Sixties as History: A Review of the Political Historiography." *Reviews in American History* 33.1 (March 2005): 133–52. Available in JSTOR.

- \* Hunt, Andrew. "When Did The Sixties Happen?" Searching For New Directions." *Journal of Social History* 33.1 (Fall 1999): 147-61. Available on JSTOR.
- \* Perlstein, Rick. "Who Owns The Sixties? The Opening of a Scholarly Generation Gap." *Lingua Franca* 6.4 (May/June 1996). URL : <http://linguafranca.mirror.theinfo.org/9605/sixties.html>.

#### General accounts and readers

- \* Anderson, Terry H. *The Movement and The Sixties* (Oxford University Press, 1996). ISBN: 0195104579.
- \* Bertrand, Claude-Jean (dir.). *Les années soixante (1961-1974)* [Histoire documentaire des Etats-Unis vol. 9] (Nancy : PU de Nancy, 1989). ISBN : 2864802570.
- \* Bloom, Alexander, ed. *Long Time Gone : Sixties America Then and Now* (Oxford University Press, 1996). ISBN: 0195125150.
- \* Bloom, Alexander & Wini Breines, eds. *"Takin' it to the streets": A Sixties Reader* 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2002). ISBN: 0195142907.
- \* Gitlin, Todd. *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* rev. ed. (1989 ; Bantam, 1993). ISBN: 0553372122. [The classic account of the decade from the viewpoint of a former New Left leader]
- \* Granjon, Marie-Christine. *L'Amérique de la contestation. Les années 60 aux Etats-Unis* (Paris : Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1985). ISBN : 2724605144.
- \* Levy, Peter B. (ed.), *America in the Sixties--Right, Left, and Center: A Documentary History* (Praeger Paperback, 1998). ISBN: 0275955168.
- \* Lytle, Mark Hamilton. *America's Uncivil Wars : The Sixties Era from Elvis to the Fall of Richard Nixon* (Oxford University Press, 1996). ISBN: 0195174976.

#### Culture

- \* Anthony, Gene. *The Summer of Love: Haight-Ashbury at its Height* (San Francisco, CA : Last Gasp, 1995).
- \* Braunstein, Peter & Michael William Doyle, eds. *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960's and 70's* (Routledge, 2001). ISBN: 0415930405.
- \* Dickstein, Morris. *Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties* (1977; Harvard University Press, 1997). ISBN: 0674341554.



- \* Hoberman, J. *The Dream Life: Movies, Media, and the Mythology of the Sixties* (New Press, 2003). ISBN: 1565847636.
- \* Rosenkranz, Patrick. *Rebel Visions: the Underground Comix Revolution 1963-1975* (Seattle, WA: Fantagraphics Books, 2002). ISBN: 1560974648.
- \* Weiner, Rex and Deanne Stillman. *Woodstock Census: The Nationwide Survey of the Sixties Generation* (Viking Press, 1979). ISBN : 0670782068.
- \* Wolfe, Tom. *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1968; Bantam, 1999). ISBN : 0553380648.