Course Objectives:

The course will examine the question of who killed John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963 in Dallas, Texas. Both the Warren Commission conclusion that a single gunman killed Kennedy, and a variety of conspiracy theories will be critically evaluated.

The single most important objective of the course will be to sharpen students’ analytical skills in the context of evaluating competing theories, with particular emphasis on critical evaluation of evidence, and theorizing in the face of conflicting data.

Texts:

Jim Marrs, *Crossfire* (Carrol & Graf)
Robert Groden, *The Killing of a President* (Viking) – No reading assignments, bring to class. This is very difficult to find, but well worth getting if you can find it.

Requirements:

Attendance is optional, although it will be extremely difficult to achieve a good grade without regular attendance. All readings are required. All are available on library reserve. Most will be made available in a packet supplied to students at cost. Students will be required to view the movie “JFK.” This can be done in an optional evening session, or the student may do it at his or her convenience and submit a three-page reaction paper by Monday, January 25. All papers are to be submitted in 12 point Times Roman type, double spaced, with one-inch margins all around.

Grading:
Exams (two): 20% each  
Final 25%  
Critical Book Report 15%  
Research Project 20%

Exams will consist of essays, some of which will be one-half to one page in length, and some which will be longer. A study guide will be distributed in advance of each exam and the final. The research project will examine a particular, fairly narrow issue concerning the assassination (example: “Was Frank Sturgis on the Grassy Knoll”) in light of the evidence. All research papers should be discussed with the instructor by mid-term. Papers are due at 4:00 p.m. Friday, April 23rd. (Some extensions will be given for students who have difficulty getting sources.) Length will typically be five to seven pages, but longer with some kinds of projects. Research projects should use primary sources. There is an option to count this as a “writing development” course. If interested, see the instructor. The book report should be seven to nine pages, should critically evaluate the book, and is due February 17th. A list of suggested books for reports will be distributed. All books for reports must be cleared by the instructor by February 8th. There will be a penalty for late book reports and research projects, or for failure to discuss research projects or clear a book for a book report with the instructor by the assigned date.

Course Outline:

Video Assignment: Oliver Stone’s JFK

I. Shooting in Dealey Plaza – Witnesses Testimony.

  WCR, Chapter II (“The Assassination”) and Chapter III (“The Shots from the Texas School Book Depository”).
  Marrs, Pages 1-89, 313-333, 361-378, 435-458
  HSCA Report, pp. 41-58.
  David Perry, “Rambler Man” (reserve)
  HSCA - XII, pp. 1-32

  Classroom Videos: “Two Men in Dallas”
  “Four Days in November”

Testimony / Affidavits of:

  Howard Brennan     Lee Bowers     Emmett Hudson
  Roger Craig        Jean Hill
  Julia Ann Mercer   Phil Willis
John Connally                   Nellie Connally

II. Medical & Scientific Evidence

John K. Lattimer and Paul Heneghan, "Experimental Duplication of the
Important Physical Evidence . . .," *Journal of the American College of
Dale K. Myers, “Badge Man,” Secrets of a Homicide,
HSCA Report, pp. 65-93.

Classroom Videos:  “Nova - Who Shot President Kennedy”

**Mid-Term Exam: Wednesday March 10.**

III. Tippit Shooting & Arrest

WCR, portion of Chapter IV, “The Killing of Patrolman J.D. Tippit”
Marrs, pp. 340-360

Documents and Testimony:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helen Markham</th>
<th>Julia Postal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Johnny Calvin Brewer</td>
<td>William Scoggins</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

IV. Oswald

WCR, Chapters IV, VII, Appendix XIII, Appendix XIV.
Mark Zaid, “Oswald & VD: An Intelligence Connection?” in *The Third
Marrs, pp. 539-554
HSCA IX, pp. 103-115
“Another Oswald Sighting Allegations of Lee Harvey Oswald in Alice,
Texas,” online at: http://www.jfk-online.com/alicelho.html

V. Alleged Conspirators – “The Usual Suspects”

CIA / FBI / Military / KGB / Anti-Castro Cubans / Mafia

Marrs, pp. 90-312, 333-340
HSCA Report, pp. 95-225
VI. Ruby: Coconspirator?

Exam Two: Monday, April 26.

VII. People with “Inside Knowledge”

Joseph Milteer  Rose Cheramie
Fletcher Prouty  Marita Lorenz
Richard Case Nagell  Judyth Baker

David Perry, “Much Ado About Nothing” (reserve)
HSCA - X, pp. 197-205
HSCA VI, pp. 242-273.

VIII. Confessed Coconspirators – “But we don’t know which one”

The Corsican Connection  Robert Morrow  James Files
Chauncey Holt  Roscoe White

Ray & Mary La Fontaine, “Evidence on Oswald Photo, Arrested ‘Bums’,” *The Houston Post*, February 9, 1992

IX. Suspicious Deaths

David Perry, “Now it Can Be Told” (reserve)
Gerald Posner, *Case Closed*, pp. 483-499
Marrs, pp. 555-566