What is Contemporary History?

This seminar—which may be taken for reading, research, or public history credit—interrogates the field of contemporary history, considering conceptual, periodization, pedagogical, and methodological issues pertinent to historians today. Looking at the 1960s to present, the course cuts across a range of subfields including but not limited to race, gender, sexuality, politics, place, social movements, globalization, legal culture, and the economy. We will use the anniversary of the 1977 National Women’s Conference held in Houston as a point of departure; conference delegates dealt with these same issues 40 years ago. We are hosting a national academic symposium in November that will launch a digital public history project, commemorating the conference and its larger context. Students in the course will play a role in the conference, but major assignments will be focused on individual research interests.

For more information contact us at nyoung@central.uh.edu or lrzarnow@central.uh.edu