

HISTORY 271

THE UNITED STATES IN THE WORLD: THE 20th CENTURY

Nature of the Course

In 1898 the United States was on the threshold of great power status. By 2001 it was touted as a “hyperpower” without global peer. This course examines the rise of the United States in the world, primarily through an examination of the history of its foreign relations through the twentieth century.

Course Objectives

The most immediate objective is to familiarize you with the events and trends of American diplomacy for this period. But mastering these “facts” is also essential for the other two, principal course objectives. These are: a) to gain an understanding of how American foreign policy is made, in this or any other period, with special attention to the role of domestic politics in that making, and, b) to learn how to read, write, and think critically and analytically by completing the essay assignments of the course, which require original thought and interpretation on the part of each student. In-class discussions on the essay books will also hone analytical skills, as students are likely to disagree in their analyses of the issues under discussion.

This course fulfills Stony Brook Curriculum requirement “USA” toward graduation.

This course has an advisory pre-requisite of HIS 104.

Course Work

For background reading, use my own (so far) unpublished book manuscript, available only on Blackboard. It will provide background knowledge and context. It is best if you read the text chapters on the time period being covered in lectures. That is, if the instructor is lecturing about the 1920’s, try to read the textbook chapters covering those years.

Unfortunately, the instructor has only completed up through the 1960's. For the later period, please consult any recent survey text of American foreign relations. Examples would be Walter Hixson, American Foreign Relations: A New Diplomatic History, Thomas Paterson and J. Gary Clifford, American Foreign Relations, Vol. 2: Since 1895, Walter LaFeber, The American Century, Howard Jones, Crucible of Power, among others.

There will be four discussion meetings roughly every third week--the exact discussion (and therefore due) date will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard in advance. Each of these

discussions will focus on a particular supplemental book, as indicated on the course schedule below. Readings from these books, which are required, generally run to 200 pages each.

Each student must write two essays during the term. Each essay must not be longer than five pages. Each should be typed and, in any event, must be double spaced and written on only one side of each sheet of paper. Papers not meeting these criteria will be returned ungraded. Each essay will be written on a supplemental book. Questions on each book will be handed out in advance by the instructor. A student may elect to write an essay on one of these questions or, with the advance consent of the instructor, may pose and answer her or his own question. Write to one question only. Each student may select any three supplemental books to write about. Essays are due--in class--before discussion begins on the chosen supplemental book. No late essays will be accepted without a valid excuse cleared in advance of the due time by the instructor.

Each student must also submit four questions to the instructor over the course of the semester. Due dates for these will also be announced in class and posted on Blackboard in advance. These questions should satisfy two requirements: 1) They should ask something about American foreign relations during the appropriate time period that you want the (or least an) answer to. 2) Your question should demonstrate that you have actually done and thought about the text reading for that time period.

Evaluation

Half of your course grade is determined by your performance on the midterm (one-sixth of your total grade) and final (one-third of your total grade) examinations. These two principally will be made up of questions requiring essay-type answers, although both may have other sorts of questions as well.

The other half of your grade depends on your **two** essay papers, meaning each paper counts as one sixth, and **four** questions you ask the instructor to answer during lecture.

I evaluate your essays in terms of three questions: How cogent, compelling, and consistent is the argument of the paper? How well have you employed evidence drawn from the reading to support your argument, and how extensively? (NOTE: By "evidence" I do not mean direct quotes from the reading.) And, how clear and correct is the prose of the essay?

Your questions to the instructor will be evaluated on the basis of the two criteria given above. Only you can address the first of these. The instructor will evaluate the second. Examples: A good question to ask might be, "Recent American interventions in the Middle East have resulted in great instability there and long wars with significant American losses. Why did Eisenhower's intervention in Lebanon in 1958 actually stabilize that country, with zero American casualties?" A rather less good question might be, "Was Eisenhower a good president?" The second (poorer) question does not say much about your reading the material and thinking about it.

Make-ups, Incompletes, other Course Rules

Except under the most unusual circumstances, **no late essays or questions are accepted**. It is possible to make-up a late essay only by having secured the instructor's permission in advance of the due date for that essay. An examination may be made-up only by giving the instructor appropriate and timely evidence of your inability to attend the exam at the proper time.

Incompletes will be given only in the very rarest cases. These are not automatically given to students failing to submit the required course work. They must be requested by the student-- in writing--no later than the commencement of the final exam, and preferably much before that time. They must be accompanied by an excuse the instructor finds valid and acceptable.

Please read the attached statement on plagiarism. Note that the first offense of plagiarism, even if unintentional, will result in a failing grade for the course, and possibly worse. If you are in doubt, consult the instructor before submitting "doubtful" work. Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/>

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures.

At the instructor's discretion, any student failing to submit on time any component of the course's requirements may be given a grade of "F."

Any students in this course with a physical, psychiatric/emotional, medical or learning disability that may affect course performance should contact the Disabled Student Services office. That office will determine procedures appropriate for this course. All information in this regard is confidential.

Office Hours

The instructor will hold office hours (to be posted on Blackboard) and by appointment. Room: N-321 in the Melville (Social & Behavioral Sciences) Building.

Course Schedule and Assignments

UNIT ONE: ENTERING THE WORLD STAGE

Big Questions:

- Why did the United States intervene in the Cuban rebellion?
- Why did the United States annex territory never meant to become a state?
- How did the United States react to the Mexican Revolution?
- Why did the United States enter the First World War?
- Why did the United States fail to enter the League of Nations?

DISCUSSION: Arthur Link, Woodrow Wilson: Revolution, War, and Peace

UNIT TWO: FROM WAR TO WAR

Big Questions:

- How different was the Republican vision for America's role in the world after the First World War?
- Did the United States have a special approach toward China and Japan after that war?
- What was the impact of the Great Depression on America's place in the world?
- Why didn't the United States oppose the rise of Hitler and Mussolini earlier and more forcefully?

DISCUSSION: David Reynolds, From Munich to Pearl Harbor

UNIT THREE: THE COLD WAR BEGINS

Big Questions:

- [**You** ask these. Your questions for this period--1945 to 1950--will be due to the instructor by the date announced on Blackboard.]

MIDTERM EXAM

UNIT FOUR: FROM THE DEEPEST FREEZE TO DÉTENTE AND BACK

Big Questions:

- [**You** ask these. Your questions for this period--1950 to 1975--will be due to the instructor by the date announced on Blackboard.]

DISCUSSION: Walter LaFeber, The Deadly Bet

UNIT FIVE: FROM THE SECOND COLD WAR TO 9/11

Big Questions:

--[**You** ask these. Your questions for this period--1975 to 2001--will be due to the instructor by the date announced on Blackboard.]

DISCUSSION: Suzanna Reiss, We Sell Drugs

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism occurs when the student submitting a paper for a course:

1. Does not properly attribute words or ideas to a source. That is, even if you're not quoting directly from a book you've read on "Macbeth"—a book that's helped you formulate ideas for your paper—you should nevertheless footnote that book at the point in the text where that other author's ideas helped shape your own essay. It is also important, if you've had a conversation with a peer or a professor who has helped you substantially in establishing your ideas on a given text, that you cite that conversation at the appropriate point in your essay. (e.g. "My ideas about Macbeth derive in part from a conversation with Professor Jones." The citation can be more specific than this, depending on the level of detailed assistance you received.)

2. Quotes from another author's writing without citing that author's work. This, of course, includes failing to cite material you take from the World Wide Web, as well as copying material from library books or your peer's papers.

3. Cites, with quotation marks, portions of another author's work, but uses more of that work without quotation marks and without attribution. Note that if you're taking material from a source and rehashing it slightly, but not giving a citation for that rephrased material, you're still plagiarizing the work you're representing as your own, since the ideas, the argument derive in fact from another's writing. If you cite and surround with quotation marks only some of the words you've taken from a source, you also commit plagiarism, since you're taking words from another without fully acknowledging the extent of your borrowing.

Turning to an electronic rather than a printed source does not change the rules of citation and acknowledgement when you are submitting an essay for a course.

4. Takes a paper, in whole or in part, from a site on the Web or a "library" of already-written papers.

5. Steals a paper from another student and then submits that paper as coursework.

6. Submits the same paper twice for two different assignments.

7. Takes the results of another's research and attempts to pass those results off as his or her own work. This includes "citing" material from sources that have been gathered by another author. You can, of course, cite materials that you have found in another published text, but you need to make it quite clear that you

are availing yourself of another author's research: your citation should specify where you found the material, rather than simply giving that material's original source.

If you are caught plagiarizing:

- a. You will fail the assignment and the course.
- b. Your case will be forwarded, with an explanatory letter and all pertinent materials, to the Committee on Academic Dishonesty.