

History 251
United States Foreign Relations
Tu, Th 9:30-10:50
Fall 2010

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Office Hours:
Tuesdays, 11:00-12:15
Thursdays, 3:00-4:30
(and by appointment)

This course will examine the development and practice of American foreign policy from the 18th to the 21st century. The class will pay particular attention to the ethical and ideological considerations propelling both architects of U.S. foreign policy and critics of those policies. We will examine the evolution of the United States into the leading world power, the use and abuse of state power, the motivation behind wars, and the role of culture, politics, race, and gender in shaping U.S. foreign policy decisions. The course will explore both the key political actors who were crafting foreign policy and the range of critiques of American actions at different historical moments. We will seek throughout to understand the political constraints, ideological views, and cultural and economic trends that influenced foreign policy beliefs. Beginning with continental expansion in North America, we will use a wide range of secondary sources and primary documents—from speeches to policy directives to videos and editorial cartoons—to explore the history and ideological underpinnings of American foreign policy.

The blackboard site for History 251 provides access to all of the readings on the syllabus that are not from the books, the syllabus, the assignments, other online resources, visual resources used in class.

Required Texts

The following texts are required for History 251:

Peter Andreas, [Border Games: Policing the US-Mexico Divide](#)
Andrew Bacevich, [The New American Militarism](#)
Michael Hunt, [Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy](#)
Howard Jones, [The Bay of Pigs](#)
Frank Lambert, [The Barbary Wars: American Independence in the Atlantic World](#)
Melani McAlister, [Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East](#)
Thomas Shoonover, [Uncle Sam's War of 1898 and the Origins of Globalization](#)

All of the required books are on reserve at Mudd Library, and all should be available for purchase at the college bookstore. Readings marked with an asterisk (*) on the syllabus are available on the course blackboard site under the "Course Readings" heading. I highly recommend that you print out the online readings and bring them with you to class.

Besides the required readings, there are two required films for the course (*All Quiet on the Western Front* and *Hearts and Minds*). These films will be shown in the evening—time and place will be determined as a group.

Course Requirements

The main requirements for History 251 are three papers (a 3-page primary source analysis and two 5-6 page readings papers), and a take-home final exam. In addition, grades will also be based on a short group presentation and attendance and participation.

1) Attendance and Participation (15% of total grade)

Your active involvement with the class is extremely important. Attendance and participation are critical to your learning and your success in History 251. Regular class attendance is expected. Excessive unexcused absences will result in a lowering of your final grade or failure of the class. Please come to every class prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that day on the syllabus. I will always ask about the readings during class. If you have trouble speaking in class, please come see me during my office hours so we can develop strategies to help you become a more active participant in class discussion.

2) Reading Discussion Papers (2 papers, each 20% of total grade)

Six of the class sessions have been set aside specifically for the discussion of specific books and the readings for that course section. The dates are:

- September 16: Discussion of The Barbary Wars and readings from Part I
- September 30: Discussion of Uncle Sam's War of 1898 and readings from Part II
- November 4: Discussion of The Bay of Pigs and readings from Part IV
- November 16: Discussion of Epic Encounters and readings from Part V
- November 30: Discussion of Border Games and readings from Part VI
- December 9: Discussion of The New American Militarism and Part VII readings

Each student is required to choose two of these sessions (one week from the first three and one week from the second three) for which to write a paper of no more than 6 pages. You may choose to write for whichever sessions as you wish, as long as your first paper relates to the discussions of 9/16, 9/30 or 11/4, and your second paper relates to the discussions of 11/16, 11/30, or 12/9.

The goal of these papers is to imaginatively bring together, analyze, and explore some or all of the readings assigned for that section of the course or to put the assigned book in conversation with material the class has already covered. More specific guidelines about this assignment are available at the Assignment section of the blackboard site.

Reading papers will be due by noon on the day after the discussion has taken place (for example, if you choose to write a paper about the Sept. 16th readings, the paper is due by noon on Sept. 17th).

3) Primary Source Analysis Paper (15% of total grade)—Due in class, Oct. 19th

For this paper, choose one of the primary sources assigned for class on Oct. 19th and write a 3-page analysis of it. You should use the other readings assigned for that class to help you contextualize and understand your source. More specific guidelines for this paper are available at the Assignment section of the blackboard site. The primary source analysis is due at the beginning of class on October 19th.

4) Group Presentation (5% of total grade)

For each discussion session, a group will be assigned to coordinate and run a supplemental activity or presentation related to that session's readings. These presentations/activities should take up no more than thirty minutes of class time. Students will be assigned to groups based upon their interests early in the semester.

Groups *must* meet with me in advance of their presentation in order to discuss their plans.

5) Take-Home Final Exam (25% of total grade)—Due by 9:00 am, Mon., Dec. 20th

There will be a take-home final exam that will be handed out on December 14, the last day of class. The exam is due back by 9:00 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 20. In the take-home final exam, students will be asked to bring together course readings and lectures to respond to a single question in an approximately 8-page essay.

All work will be graded on a 100-point scale. Assignments will be marked down 5 points for every day they are overdue, unless I have given my approval for the assignment to be handed in late *before* the due date. As a general rule, I will approve extensions in the case of illness or emergencies, but not because you have other work due at the same time, so please plan accordingly. Assignments will not be accepted more than 5 days past the original due date. Students must complete all of the assignments in order to pass the class.

All papers should be typed and double-spaced. Citations should be in the form of footnotes or endnotes based on the Chicago citation style (citation guidelines are available on blackboard).

Your grade will be based on the following:

1) Reading Paper #1:	20% of final grade
2) Reading Paper #2:	20% of final grade
3) Primary Source Paper:	15% of final grade
4) Group Presentation:	5% of final grade
5) Take Home Final Exam:	25% of final grade
7) Participation:	15% of final grade

Course Policies

Oberlin Honor Code: All work for this course must be done in compliance with the Oberlin Honor Code. Any cases of plagiarism will be dealt with immediately according to the letter of college policy. Plagiarism is passing the work of others off as your own work. You must acknowledge when you use the ideas of other people (whether that be other students or published materials from websites, books, the media, etc.).

General Courtesy: Please come to class on time, and once you're here, plan on staying for the full class session. If you must arrive late or leave early, please let me know ahead of time. It's a short class so you shouldn't need to leave in the middle except for a medical emergency. I consider it disrespectful to me and rude to the rest of the class when a student walks out once class has started and walks back in a few minutes later. Also, be sure to TURN OFF your cell phone before class starts.

Computers in the Classroom: Students are welcome to take notes on a laptop during class, but students who wish to use a computer must sit in the front of the classroom.

Students with Disabilities: If you require any disability-related accommodations in this course, please let me know.

Extra Help: My door is open if you ever feel you need extra help or direction in any way, or if you would like to discuss the reading or other topics of interest to you. Besides my regularly scheduled office hours, I am available by appointment. The best way to reach me is email. I am also happy to provide feedback on drafts, whether complete drafts of papers or just a topic sentence. If you would me to review draft writings, please get them to me at least **four days** before the paper is due so I will have time to read it and get it back to you for revision.

COURSE AND READING SCHEDULE

September 7: Introduction

Part I: At the Beginning (Book: Frank Lambert, The Barbary Wars)

September 9: Tools of the Trade: Methods in US Foreign Policy History

Secondary: Michael Hunt, Ideology and US Foreign Policy, 1-18
Thomas McCormick, "The World-System, Hegemony, and Decline"*
Laura McEnaney, "Gender Analysis and Foreign Relations"*
Michael Krenn, "The Adaptable Power of Racism"*
J. Garry Clifford, "Bureaucratic Politics and Policy Outcomes"*
Melvyn Leffler, "National Security, Core Values, and Power"*

Please read the Hunt and two of the other readings carefully (you can skim the others). Students whose last name start A-G should read McCormick and McEnaney, H-Q should read Krenn and Clifford, and R-Z should read the Leffler and one other of their choice.

September 14: Foreign Policy in a New Nation

Secondary: Michael Hunt, Ideology and US Foreign Policy, 92-102

Primary: Foreign Policy Powers in the Constitution, 1789*
George Washington, Farewell Address, excerpt (1796)*

September 16: Discussion Session #1

This discussion session will cover The Barbary Wars, as well as other readings from Part I.

Part II: Expansion (Book: Shoonover, Uncle Sam's War of 1898)

September 21: Conquest and Manifest Destiny

Secondary: Michael Hunt, Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy, 19-36, 46-58

Primary: Andrew Jackson's Case for Removal of the Indians*
John O'Sullivan on Manifest Destiny*
Pres. James Polk Lays Claim to Texas and Oregon, 1845*

September 23: Opening Doors: The U.S. in an Age of Empire

Secondary: Michael Hunt, Ideology and US Foreign Policy, 36-45, 58-91

Primary: Alfred Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power Upon History (1890), excerpt*
Frederick Jackson Turner, The Frontier in American History, excerpt*

September 28: Big Sticks and New Powers, 1898-1914

Secondary: Richard Hofstadter, "Cuba, The Philippines and Manifest Destiny," 145-187*
Kristin Hoganson, Fighting for American Manhood, excerpt*
Optional reading: Hunt, Ideology and US Foreign Policy, 106-135

Primary: Teddy Roosevelt, "Raising the Regiment," Rough Riders (1899)*
American Anti-Imperialist League Platform, 1899*

September 30: Discussion Session #2

This discussion session covers the Shoonover book, as well as other readings from Part II

Part III: Becoming a World Power (Film: All Quiet on the Western Front, 1930)

October 5: Woodrow Wilson, World War I, and the Progressive Ideal

Secondary: Gary Gerstle, American Crucible, 81-95*

Primary: Woodrow Wilson's War Message to Congress, Feb. 3, 1917*
U.S. Sedition Act, 1918*
"Four Minute Men: Volunteer Speeches During World War I"*

October 7: Reconsidering America's Place: The Interwar Years

Secondary: Frank Costigliola, "U.S. Cultural Expansion in an Era of Systematic Upheaval"*
Susan Zeiger, "Finding a Cure for War: Women's Politics and the Peace Movement in the 1920s," Journal of Social History (Fall 1990), pp. 69-86*

Primary: The Fourteen Points (1918)*

October 12: The Road to War: The United States and International Affairs in the 1930s

Secondary: Stephen Ambrose, "Just Dumb Luck: U.S. Entry Into World War II"*
Hunt, Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy, pp. 139-150

Primary Franklin Roosevelt, "Arsenal of Democracy Speech" (1940)*
Charles Lindbergh, video, Speech to the America First Committee, 1941*

October 14: World War II—Mobilizing the State for Total War

Secondary: Richard Overly, "The Successes of American Mobilization"*
John Dower, "Race, Language, and War in Two Cultures: World War II in Asia"

Primary: "Rationing on the US Homefront During World War II," 4 website pages,
<http://www.ameshistoricalsociety.org/exhibits/events/rationing.htm>*

Part IV: Superpower (Book: Jones, The Bay of Pigs)

October 19: The Origins of the Cold War (Primary source analysis due at beginning of class)

Secondary: John Gaddis, "Conclusion: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War"*
Arnold Offner, "Provincialism and Confrontation: Truman's Responsibility"*

Primary: George Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," excerpt (1947)*
The Truman Doctrine (1947)*
National Security Council Paper No. 68 (NSC-68) excerpt (1950)*
Video, "He May Be a Communist," Armed Forces Propaganda Film*

October 21: Colonialism and the Cold War

Secondary: Cary Fraser, "An American Dilemma: Race and Realpolitik in the American Response to the Bandung Conference, 1955"*

Primary: "We Charge Genocide," Civil Rights Congress, 1951, excerpt*
President John F. Kennedy Launches the Peace Corps"*

November 2: The Cold War Arms Race

Secondary: H.W. Brands, "The Age of Vulnerability: Eisenhower and the National Insecurity State"*
Elaine Tyler May, "Explosive Issues: Sex, Women, and the Bomb"*

Primary: "Duck and Cover," 1951 Civil Defense Video*

November 4: Discussion Session #3

This discussion session covers the Jones book, as well as other readings from Part IV

Part V: The Cold War in Asia & the Mideast (Book: McAlister, Epic Encounters)

November 9: Vietnam

Secondary: James C. Thomson, "How Could Vietnam Happen: An Autopsy?"
Leslie Gelb, "Vietnam: The System Worked"

Primary: "Hearts and Minds" (Film Viewing Time TBA)

November 11: US in the Middle East

Primary: "The Position of the United States with Respect to Palestine," Feb. 17, 1948*

November 16: Discussion Session #4

This discussion session covers the McAlister book, as well as other Secondary from Part V.

Part VI: Unipower—Beyond the Cold War (Book: Peter Andreas, Border Games)

November 18: Détente and Containment: Foreign Policy in the 1970s and 80s

Secondary: Michael Hunt, Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy, pp. 182-189

Primary: Zbigniew Brzezinski, "US Foreign Policy: The Search for Focus," *Foreign Affairs*, July 1, 1973*

November 23: Reagan's America and The End of the Cold War

Secondary: Greg Grandin, "Iraq is Not Arabic for Nicaragua: Central America and the Rise of the New Right"*

Primary: Ronald Reagan, "The Evil Empire," Speech at the House of Commons, June 8, 1982*
Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of Great Powers, 1987, excerpt*

November 30: Discussion Session #5

This discussion session covers the Andreas book, as well as other readings from Part VI.

Part VII: 9-11 and Beyond (Book: Bacevich, The New American Militarism)

December 2: After the Cold War—The Search for New Directions

Secondary: Samantha Power, "Bystanders to Genocide," *The Atlantic*, September 2001*

Primary: George Bush, "Address to Congress on Persian Gulf Crisis," Sept. 11, 1990*
Pres. Clinton Warns Against New Isolationism, Oct. 6, 1995*

December 7: Wars on Terror: American Policy and Position since 9-11

Secondary: Catherine Scott, "Rescue in the Age of Empire," *Children, Masculinity, and the War on Terror*, in *(En)Gendering the War on Terror*, 97-117*

Primary: President George W. Bush Address to Congress, Sept. 20, 2001*
"The National Security Strategy of the United States," Sept. 2002*

December 9: Discussion Session #6

This discussion session covers the Bacevich book, as well as other readings from Part VII.

December 14: Conclusions—The Future of American Foreign Policy

Secondary: Michael Hunt, Ideology and US Foreign Policy, 171-182*
Robert Pape, "Empire Falls," *The National Interest Online*, Jan. 22, 2009*
J. Martin Rochester, U.S. Foreign Policy in the 21st Century, 9-18*

Monday, December 20th: Take-Home Final Exam due by 9:00 a.m.