

### **American Foreign Relations: 1914-2008**

**Description:** This course examines the range of public and private interactions between the United States and the world, from World War I to the War on Terror, with particular emphasis on the linguistic construction of American foreign relations.

**Required texts:**

*Major Problems in American Foreign Relations*, vol 2: to 1920 edited by D. Merrill and T. Paterson

*American Foreign Relations: A History*, vol 2, to 1920 by T. Paterson, et al

**Grading:** Your grade will be composed of four components:

--mid-term essay: 30%

--final essay: 30%

--weekly assignment notes: 30%

--class grade (attendance, preparation, participation, decorum): 10%

**Weekly Assignments:** This class requires that you write 750-1000 words of comment, summary, criticism and/or analysis in response to each week's reading assignment. Make two copies of your assignment: one to hand in at class on Monday and one to keep in a separate folder and bring to class daily. Assignments will be collected and graded along with the final paper.

**Proposed Method:** The course proposes to be a mutual exploration of the history of American foreign relations via a dialogue between the students, the teacher, the historical sources we examine, and the World Outside the Walls. After absorbing a range of perspectives on American foreign relations each student is expected to articulate their own interpretation of the subject matter.

**Informal Pre-requisite:** All that you have learned until now. You must apply this prior knowledge in order to do well in this class.

**Underlying Assumption on which Everything Else is Based:** That human beings can, by diligent study, make tentative sense of the sum total of human experience (known as History) and understand its relationship to the present and future, at least enough to make the whole thing worth doing. This is the secular faith of the Historian.

**Classroom decorum:** As civil society is a necessary pre-condition for true freedom, so is a civil classroom a necessary pre-condition for learning. Accordingly, please adopt a civil attitude while in class. Please refrain from chatting, sleeping, eating, doing work from other classes, or anything not directly related to our class. Such activities are disrespectful of the class, your classmates, and your professor. Leaving during class (except for restroom emergencies) without notifying me in advance is highly disruptive and therefore prohibited. Electronic devices of any sort (phones, pagers, ipods, laptops, etc.) must be turned off for the duration of the class. Thanks you!

**Course Outline:**

**Week 1: Approaches to Modern American Foreign Relations**

Readings: *Problems*, chapter 1;

- a. Course Introduction
- b. Approaches to American Foreign Relations
- c. Approaches to American Foreign Relations (II)

**Week 2: Woodrow Wilson and World War One**

Readings: *Problems*, chapter 2; text chapter 3

- a. Illusive Neutrality
- b. "Safe for Democracy"
- c. The War to End All Peace

**Week 3: The Interwar Years**

Readings: *Problems*, chapter 3,4; text chapter 4, 5

- a. MLK Holiday
- b. The Myth of "Isolationism"
- c. Pearl Harbor: Surprise Attack?

**Week 4: Hot War/Cold War**

Readings: *Problems*, chapter 5, 6; text chapter 6

- a. Defeating the Axis
- b. Planning the Peace
- c. The Origins of the Cold War

**Week 5: The Cold War in Asia**

Readings: *Problems*, chapter 7; text chapter 7, 8

- a. The Meaning of Containment
- b. Policing Korea
- c. Sideshow: Iran and Guatemala (first mid-term paper due in class)

**Week 6: The Nuclear Genie and the Culture of the Cold War**

Readings: *Problems*, chapter 8,9;

- a. Ike and the Arms Race
- b. The Culture of the Cold War
- c. America and the "Third World"

**Week 7: Kennedy, Castro and Cuba**

Readings: *Problems*, chapter 10; text chapter 9

- a. President's Day Holiday
- b. Kennedy and The Bay of Pigs
- c. The Missile Crisis

**Week 8: Victory in Vietnam**

Readings: *Problems*, chapter 11, 12;

- a. The US in Vietnam: 1946-1964
- b. The Gulf of Tonkin Charade
- c. "Peace with Honor"

**Week 9: Victory in the Cold War**

Readings: *Problems*, chapter 13; text chapter 10, 11

- a. Nixon, Kissinger and Detente
- b. Reagan and the Evil Empire
- c. Sideshow: The Contra War

**Week 10: Origins of the Terror War**

Readings: *Problems*, chapter 14; text, chapter 12

- a. The Road to 9/11
- b. The Bush Doctrine
- c. Review

Final papers due in class at time of final examination.