

U.S. as a World Power

We shall divert through our own Country a branch of commerce which the European States have thought worthy of the most important struggles and sacrifices, and in the event of peace on terms which have been contemplated by some powers we shall form to the American union a barrier against the dangerous extension of the British Province of Canada and add to the Empire of liberty an extensive and fertile Country thereby converting dangerous Enemies into valuable friends.

- Thomas Jefferson to George Rogers Clark, December 25, 1780.

Of all the enemies to public liberty war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other. War is the parent of armies; from these proceed debts and taxes; and armies, and debts, and taxes are the known instruments for bringing the many under the domination of the few. In war, too, the discretionary power of the Executive is extended; its influence in dealing out offices, honors, and emoluments is multiplied; and all the means of seducing the minds, are added to those of subduing the force, of the people. The same malignant aspect in republicanism may be traced in the inequality of fortunes, and the opportunities of fraud, growing out of a state of war, and in the degeneracy of manners and of morals engendered by both. No nation could preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare.

- James Madison, Political Observations, Apr. 20, 1795 in *Letters and Other Writings of James Madison*, vol. 4, p. 491 (1865).

Course Description

This is a course about United States foreign relations in the 20th century. It will address such questions and issues as how the U.S. became a world power; the relationship between domestic and foreign policy; the fundamental needs, goals, and assumptions of the U.S. as an actor on the world stage; the role of great foreign policy decision makers, of public opinion, and of the media in foreign policy making; the consequences and implications for itself and other nations of America's exercise of world power; and America's position in the post-Cold War world and the 21st century.

Objectives:

1. to teach students major issues and events in the relationship between the United States and the rest of the world in the 20th Century
2. to acquaint students with major scholarly interpretations of historiographical issues
3. to provide students with an understanding of the historical framework of contemporary American relations with the world.

Student Learning Outcomes: Students should

1. master content area of this time period [meets NJ standards 6.1,6.2,6.3,6.4, 6.5,6.6]
2. become acquainted with major historiographical issues of this time period [meets NJ standards 6.1,6.4]
3. use online databases to research historiographical interpretations of 20th-Century U.S. foreign policy [meets NJ standards 6.1,6.4]
4. become acquainted with recent approaches and techniques to permit new perspectives on this time period [meets NJ standards 6.1,6.4]
5. analyze primary sources in relation to larger historical themes [meets standard 6.1]
6. understand the main historical changes that occurred between the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War and the Iraq War [meets NJ standards 6.1,6.2,6.4,6.5,6.6]
7. understand relations between the United States and the world in the 20th Century [meets NJ standards 6.1,6.3,6.4,6.6]
8. be able to read the required material, demonstrate (in both written and oral form) that they have understood it , and use the material to answer questions [meets NJ standard 6.1]

History 3270 will be conducted online during the Winter 2021 session. We will read selectively in the literature in the field to gain some historical and historiographical perspective.

Readings

Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* (NY: Henry Holt, 2006)

Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009)

Andrew Bacevich, *America's War for the Greater Middle East: A Military History* (NY: Random House, 2016)

You can order copies from: www.amazon.com or www.powells.com/ or www.bn.com or your local bookstore. Other readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Requirements

“Class time” will consist of daily discussion through Blackboard. You should familiarize yourself with Blackboard, if you do not know the software already. We will mostly use the “Discussion Board” section. Questions about technical aspects of using Blackboard should be directed to the [IT HELP desk](#).

We will be doing fifteen weeks’ worth of work in three weeks. Expect to read and write every day. Feel free to e-mail me with any problem or concern you might have related to the course or your further work in History.

DISCUSSION BOARD:

Each student will contribute substantially to the class discussion for each section. We will cover one topic every couple of days using the books and readings I have posted in the “Course Documents” section of the Blackboard site. We will discuss the material, focusing our discussion around the readings. You will raise questions, answer questions, debate each other and me, and so on. I expect active participation from each of you every day of the course.

The discussions are meant to be informal. This means: you do not have to footnote your comments; you do not even have to worry too much about spelling and punctuation (so long as we can understand you). Your thoughts do not even have to be fully developed. This is the place where we work our ideas through, test them on each other, wrestle with the issues raised by the historical material, and try to bring evidence to support our assertions.

You should log on and contribute to discussion daily with questions or comments on that day’s reading. You should respond to both my questions and comments and your fellow students’ postings. The quality as well as the frequency of your participation counts toward your final grade. I will post some general questions on each section to guide you in your reading. I expect a couple hundred words per discussion forum from each of you, but you don't have to post all those words at once. You may log on several times a day to monitor and contribute to the discussion.

You do not have to post your comments to the discussion board right away. BUT: if you don't post on the first day, then you MUST respond to the comments posted since I first raised the general questions. You cannot simply repeat what others have said. That way our conversation can build throughout the section. I do not want to read a bunch of summaries of the reading each day.

ESSAY:

There will be a final essay (8-10 pages) based upon the course readings. This paper will sum up your learning from the course by applying it to current issues. It will not require further historical research.

We will also carry on daily discussion on the student papers-in-progress on the Discussion Board. Students will present their work to the rest of the class and discuss each other's work.

PLAGIARISM:

A word on **plagiarism**: it is absolutely not acceptable for you to use someone else's words or ideas as your own. In the discussions, you should feel free to bring in material from outside sources, but you must make clear that you are doing so. To present someone else's work as your own is cheating, and will result in **failure of the course**. It is okay, even good, to use someone else's work; just be sure to give credit. One of your tasks as a student – especially in the discipline of history – is to demonstrate your ability to understand and assimilate other people's ideas. You should WANT to properly credit your sources; it shows you are participating in the scholarly exchange that is essential to the academic mission.

Defined briefly, plagiarism consists of the unacknowledged use of another person's words or ideas. If you plagiarize you will fail the course. Please read the WPU Academic Integrity Policy at <http://www.wpunj.edu/cte/wpu-academic-integrity-policy.dot>.

OTHER INFORMATION:

For help with academics, check out the homepage of the Academic Support Center @ <http://www.wpunj.edu/academicsupport/index.dot>.

Students who need help with their writing should go to the [Writing Center](#) at Atrium 128, online at <http://www.wpunj.edu/writing-center/>.

Late work will be accepted, but marked down. I will not give any Incomplete grades for the course.

Please note that the course requirements might change as we go along. I want this course to respond to the interests and needs of the students, so be prepared to adapt.

Grading

Discussion 10 x 8% = 80%

Final Paper 20%

Course Schedule

All readings listed under *Course Readings* on Blackboard

Dec 28 – intro to US as a World Power

Dec 30 – Kinzer, Part One: The Imperial Era

Jan 2 – Craig & Logevall, Introduction-Chapter 3

Jan 4 – Craig & Logevall, Chapter 4-6

Jan 6 – Kinzer, Part Two: Covert Action

Jan 8 – Craig & Logevall, Chapter 7-Conclusion

Jan 10 – Kinzer, Part Three: Invasions

Jan 12 – Bacevich, Part I

Jan 14 – Bacevich, Part II

Jan 16 – Bacevich, Part III

Jan 17 – FINAL PAPER due by 11:59pm