

HIST 358 US Foreign Affairs since 1890

Saxe - Section #27134, Palmer 205, 2-3:15 TR

E-mail - saxer@rhodes.edu; Phone – 843-3249

Office Hours – 9-10 MWF or by appointment, 307 Clough

The United States and the World since 1890

Course Description:

This course will survey the United States' relationship with the world from 1890 to the present and will approach historical issues from a variety of perspectives. The assigned texts focus largely on economic and political developments, but there will also be readings and lectures discussing social and cultural changes that have had an impact on the United States and its interactions with other nations and peoples. The first third of the class will focus on the United States and the world through World War II. Students will learn about the United States' move to imperialism, pacifistic and isolationist sentiments held by many Americans, and the country's eventual decisions to enter two world wars. The next section of the class will deal with the US and the Cold War, examining the tensions between the US and the Soviet Union and how this conflict played out in different areas in the world, as well as back home in America. Finally, the last third of the course will look at different post-Cold War issues in American foreign affairs and will ask students to come to their own conclusions about the United States' role in the 21st century world.

Required Texts:

Justus D. Doenecke and John E. Wilz, *From Isolation to War, 1931-1941*

Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*

Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*

Robert J. McMahon, *Origins of the Cold War*, 4/e

Thomas G. Paterson et. al. - *American Foreign Relations, A History Since 1895* (sixth edition)

Avi Shlaim, *War and Peace in the Middle East, A Concise History; Revised and Updated*

Course Requirements:

Exams

First Exam, in class, February 13 - 15% of final grade.

Second Exam, in class, March 27 - 15% of final grade

Final Exam, in class, April 26 - 20% of final grade

Essays

First Essay, due in class February 20 - 20%

Second Essay, due during finals week - 20%

Class Participation

Active participation in class discussion and willingness to engage the course material; completion of short writing assignments and participation of one of two class debates – 10% of final grade.

Course Policies:

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed two unexcused absences without penalty. Students are required to find out what they missed in class on the day of their absence. If students miss more than two classes, they are required to meet with the professor to discuss their absences. Failure to do so will result in the lowering of a student's final grade by one-third grade point for every absence over two. Please consider this policy when planning for extracurricular activities (sports, mock trial, etc.)

Due dates and times for writing assignments and tests are fixed. All assignments are due in class, not in the professor's mailbox. Late assignments will receive a failing grade. All assignments must be turned in to the professor. Failure to complete an assignment will result in a failing grade for the class.

The professor supports the Rhodes College Honor Code. To demonstrate commitment to the Code, each student must write "pledged" and sign his/her name on every assignment. If you have questions about plagiarism, please talk to me directly.

Course Calendar:

January 11

Introduction

January 16, 18

The Beginnings of American Empire (Paterson, Ch. 1, 2; Hoganson, all)

The U.S. in 1890; "Remember the *Maine*" - The Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War

January 23, February 25

Wilsonianism and the War to End All Wars (Paterson, Ch. 3)

Woodrow Wilson and World War I; The Fight for Ratification

January 30, February 1

America in "Isolation"; Depression and The Failure of Peace (Paterson, Ch. 4, 5, pg. 172-186; Doenecke and Wilz, all)

Interwar Peace Efforts The Rise of Fascism and FDR's Challenge; America Enters the War

February 6, 8

World War II (Paterson, pg. 186-213, 221-227; Greer handout)

The Diplomacy of War

February 8: **Debate – The Greer Incident**

February 13

First Exam

February 15

The Cold War Begins (Paterson, Ch. 7)

The Iron Curtain Descends; “Who lost China?”

February 20, 22

Ike’s New Look; Latin America and the Legacy of the Cold War (Paterson, pg. Ch. 8; pg. 337-342)

Korea Brinkmanship; The Cuban Missile Crisis; The CIA in Guatemala and Chile

February 20: First Paper due

February 27, March 1

The Limits of a Superpower: The Vietnam War (Paterson, Ch. 9, 10)

LBJ and Quagmire; Nixon and the Failure of Vietnamization

March 6, 8

Realpolitik or War Crimes: Hard Questions in US Foreign Affairs (Hitchens, handout)

March 6: **Debate - Should Henry Kissinger be put on trial for war crimes?**

March 13, March 15

Spring break

March 20, March 22

War’s End (Paterson, Ch. 11)

Jimmy Carter and Morality; Ronald Reagan and the Evil Empire; Fall of the Soviet Union

March 27

Second Exam

March 29

The US and the Middle East (Shlaim, all)

Origins of Conflict; Religion, Oil, and Diplomacy; Cultural Conflict

April 3

Middle East (cont.) (Paterson, pg. 491-496)

Lebanon and Iran - The US as Paper Tiger?; Iraq and the United Nations; The Origins of 9/11

April 5
Easter Break

April 10, 12
Economics and Consumption in a Corporate World (Friedman, all)
Globalization; The Global Cultural Exchange

April 17, 19
Genocide, the War on Terrorism, and the New World Order (Paterson, Ch. 12)
Kosovo, Rwanda, and America's Duty; The Bush Doctrine; SIDS, AIDS and the Politics
of Disease

April 24
Final Thoughts

April 26
Final

Second Paper due during finals week