

History 434
America and the World since 1902
 (4 credits for all students)

Professor Jeremi Suri
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 (608) 263-1852
 Office hours:
 Mondays 9:45am to 11:45am
 or by appointment

Fall 2007
 Lectures: MWF 8:50-9:40 AM
 3650 Humanities
 Teaching Assistants:
 Jennifer Miller
 David Rodriguez
 Sarina Steinbarth

Course Aims

This is a history course designed to enrich our understanding of America's place in the world since the beginning of the twentieth century. The class follows upon History 433 – American Foreign Relations before the Twentieth Century. Lectures, discussions, and readings will start with the aftermath of the war of 1898 and close with the “war against terrorism” at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

We will define “foreign relations” broadly to explore the ways in which interactions with peoples and places identified as “foreign” transformed the nature of American society. The course will touch on issues of national power, territorial acquisition, market penetration, warfare, racial subjugation, class conflict, and gender subordination. We will study how America's foreign relations helped determine what it means to be “American.” Situating the history of the United States in an international context we will learn how American debates about identity and power reflected and influenced events in distant venues.

This course will also highlight how contemporary assumptions about American society and foreign policy build, for better and for worse, on the past. The history of American foreign relations matters because we live with its consequences every day – at home and abroad. Lectures, readings, and discussions this semester will highlight important historical “legacies.”

Lecture Attendance

The course will meet three times per week for lectures by the professor. These lectures will complement the readings, but they will also present empirical material and interpretive perspectives not available elsewhere. **Students are required to attend all lectures.** The professor will monitor each student's attendance. Unexcused absence from lecture will adversely affect the student's grade.

Weekly Discussion Sections

All students are required to attend weekly discussion sections. Students must complete the assigned readings through the meeting date, **before discussion begins**. The teaching assistants will lead the discussions, with the exception of the Chadbourne section (Discussion 301) that the professor will lead. The professor will also participate in other sections on occasion. We expect all students to attend the weekly sections prepared for a serious and wide-ranging conversation about the issues raised in the assigned readings and the class lectures. Students are encouraged to think creatively and voice individual opinions. We will not look for “right” answers, as much as thoughtful comments. Informed and active participation in discussions should allow each student to receive full credit for this 20% of the course grade.

Book Review Assignment

All students will write a 5 to 6 page book review of H.W. Brands’ text: *Woodrow Wilson*. **A printed copy of each student book review is due at the start of lecture (8:50am) on Monday, October 8**. The book review will constitute 20% of the student grade.

Book reviews should follow this form:

Page 1: Begin your book review with a thesis paragraph that outlines your critique of the book and your assessment of Woodrow Wilson;

Pages 1-2: summarize Brands’ main arguments about Woodrow Wilson’s understanding of politics and foreign policy – how did Wilson’s views and actions change over time?;

Pages 2-3: assess the importance of ideas in the making of foreign policy during the period covered by Brands’ book – which ideas mattered? How did they matter?;

Pages 3-4: critique the strengths and weaknesses of Brands’ book – which parts of the book do you find most and least persuasive? How good is Brands’ evidence? Which issues does he neglect?;

Pages 4-6: offer your own judgment on Woodrow Wilson – were his foreign policies a success or a failure? What is his legacy? Why do we continue to invoke his name and his rhetoric in our contemporary debates?

We expect these papers to reflect polished writing. You should proofread them before submission! Make sure that each paragraph contains a topic sentence and offers evidence to support your point. Make sure that each sentence is clear and facilitates the purpose of the paragraph where it is situated. Avoid passive constructions, clichés, and sloppy sentences. Choose your words carefully. Check your grammar.

Mid-term Examination

On Wednesday, October 31 the professor will distribute two mid-term essay questions in class. Students should write a 1000 word answer to each of the two questions. The essays should make use of material from assigned readings, class lectures, and weekly discussions. Students may consult books and discuss their answers with one another. Each essay, however, should reflect **the original writing of each student**. Students should proofread their essays for clarity, substance, and style (grammatical mistakes, passive voice, and sloppy writing will incur grade deductions.) **The mid-term essays are due at the start of lecture (8:50am) on Friday, November 2. Students should print their essays and bring them to class. We will not accept late submissions.** The mid-term essays will account for 25% of the student grade.

Final Examination

The course will conclude with a take-home final examination. It will cover material from the entire semester. The professor will distribute the final examination questions at the end of class on December 14. **Students must print and submit their final examination answers by Noon on Wednesday, December 19 in 5119 Humanities Building.** We will not accept late submissions. The final examination will account for 35% of each student's grade.

Grades

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|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Book Review: | 20% |
| Mid-term Examination: | 25% |
| Final Examination: | 35% |
| Participation in Weekly Discussions: | 20% |

Assigned Books

Available in new and used editions at the **University Bookstore**

711 State Street

Tel. (608) 257-3784

- Brands, H. W. *Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Times Books, 2003). Hardcover.
- Gaddis, John Lewis. *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War, Revised and Expanded Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). Paperback.
- Ricks, Thomas E. *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin, 2007). Paperback.
- Rosenberg, Emily S. *Spreading the American Dream* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982). Paperback.
- Suri, Jeremi. *Henry Kissinger and the American Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007). Hardcover.
- Weigley, Russell F. *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977, originally published by Macmillan in 1973). Paperback.
- Williams, William Appleman. *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972, originally published in 1959). Paperback.

Week 1:

9/5 Introduction

9/7 America's Emergence as a Global Military Power

Reading: Weigley, *The American Way of War*, xvii-xxiii, 167-91.

Week 2:

9/10 The Open Door and American Imperialism

Reading: Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 18-57.

9/12 The Limits of American Imperialism at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century

Reading: Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 3-37.

9/14 Theodore Roosevelt and Latin America

Reading: Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 38-62.

Week 3:

9/17 Theodore Roosevelt and the International Balance of Power

Reading: Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 58-89.

9/19 William Howard Taft and the World at a Crossroad

Reading: Brands, *Woodrow Wilson*, 1-40.

9/21 Woodrow Wilson and the "New Freedom"

Reading: Brands, *Woodrow Wilson*, 41-72.

Week 4:

9/24 The Origins of World War I

Reading: Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 63-107.

9/26 The U.S. Entry into World War I

Reading: Brands, *Woodrow Wilson*, 73-98.

9/28 Fighting World War I

Reading: Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 192-222.

Week 5:

10/1 The Paris Peace Conference

Reading: Brands, *Woodrow Wilson*, 99-140.

10/3 Wilson versus Lenin

Reading: Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 90-161.

10/5 The Myth of American Isolation

Reading: Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 108-60.

Week 6:

10/8 Fascism and New Deal Diplomacy

Reading: Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 223-65.

Book reviews due at 8:50am in lecture

10/10 The Origins of the Second World War

Reading: Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 162-201;

Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*, 161-201.

10/12 The Diplomacy and Fighting of the Second World War, Part 1

Reading: Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 269-359.

Week 7:

10/15 The Diplomacy and Fighting of the Second World War, Part 2

Finish readings from Week 6.

10/17 Democracy and Society after the Second World War

Reading: Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, 1-51.

10/19 Transatlantic Identity after the Second World War

Reading: Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, 52-91.

Week 8:

10/22 The Atomic Revolution and the Origins of the Cold War

Reading: Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 363-81.

10/24 The International System and the Origins of the Cold War

Reading: Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 3-23.

10/26 George F. Kennan and the American Doctrine of Containment

Reading: Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 24-86.

Week 9:

10/29 The American Occupation of Japan

10/31 Review for mid-term examination

Take-home mid-term examination questions distributed at the end of lecture

11/2 The Occupation of Western Germany

Mid-term examination essays due at 8:50am in lecture

Week 10:

- 11/5 The Chinese Communist Revolution and the Korean War
Reading: Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 87-124.
- 11/7 Eisenhower and the “New Look”
Reading: Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 125-96.
- 11/9 “The Cold War University”
Reading: Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, 92-137.

Week 11:

- 11/12 John F. Kennedy and the “New Frontier”
Reading: Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 197-234.
- 11/14 Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Limits of the “New Frontier”
Reading: Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, 138-96.
- 11/16 Decolonization, Race and “Third World” Nationalism
Reading: Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 235-271.

Week 12:

- 11/19 The U.S. and the Vietnam War, Part 1
Reading: Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 441-77;
Williams, *The Tragedy of American Empire*, 306-12.
- 11/21 The U.S. and the Vietnam War, Part 2
- 11/23 THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS

Week 13:

- 11/26 The Global Disruption of 1968 and the Origins of Détente
Reading: Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, 197-248.
- 11/28 The Politics and Diplomacy of Détente
Reading: Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 272-341.
- 11/30 Reagan, Gorbachev, and the Collapse of Communism
Reading: Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 342-79.

Week 14:

12/3 The Legacies of the Cold War

Reading: Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, 249-74.
Ricks, *Fiasco*, 3-111.

12/5 The Rise of Global Terrorism

Reading: Ricks, *Fiasco*, 115-202.

12/7 The War in Iraq, Part 1

Reading: Ricks, *Fiasco*, 270-97.

Week 15:

12/10 The War in Iraq, Part 2

Reading: Ricks, *Fiasco*, 301-73.

12/12 The Future of the “American Century”

12/14 Review for final examination

Take-home final examination questions distributed at the end of lecture

Take-home final examinations are due by Noon on Wednesday, December 19.

Submit them in Professor Suri’s Office – 5119 Humanities.

We will not accept late exams, no exceptions!