

PLSC 365: American Foreign Relations
Monday/Wednesday 12:30 – 1:45
Fall Semester 2016

Professor: Gary V. Wood
Office: Buller Hall 128
Hours: M/W 2:00-4:00, T/R 3:30-5:30 or by appointment
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Course Description:

This course examines the major developments in American foreign relations from the colonial era to the present with a close reading of primary sources. Along the way, we will give consideration to the “current themes” of present-day U.S. foreign relations. Mastery of the material covered in this course will enable the student to: understand core motivations for U.S. foreign relations; become familiar with key events, actors, and terms in U.S. foreign affairs; understand the relationship between U.S. political principles and foreign policy; comprehend the impact of U.S. foreign policy abroad.

Required Texts:

Dennis Merrill and Thomas Peterson, eds., *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations*, Concise Edition, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006).

Stephen Hook and John Spanier, *American Foreign Policy Since World War II*, (Los Angeles: Sage, 2016).

Course Requirements:

1. Exams: There will be three exams as indicated in the class schedule. Students will bring a blue book and a pen to the exams. Exams will include short 4-5 sentence identifications and one or two longer essays. The two midterm exams will be worth 50 points each and the final exam will be worth 75 points. The exams are not cumulative.
2. The student is required to write **two** reviews from scholarly journals. Instructions for the article reviews and a list of prominent journals are included at the end of the syllabus. Each review will be worth 50 points.
3. Quizzes. There will be six quizzes worth 10 points each. Since your lowest quiz will not be counted, no make-up quizzes will be given.

4. Class Participation. Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis, to be current in the readings, and to contribute to classroom discussion. The instructor will assume that you have completed reading assignments before class, and will feel free to ask questions of individual students about them. More than four (4) absences will result in the forfeiture of the 25 point participation component, as will excessive tardiness, early departure, un-preparedness, disruption, and inattention. Three “tardies” are the equivalent of one absence.

Grading:

Mid-Term Exams: 2 Exams worth 50 points each.	100 points
Article Reviews: 2 reviews worth 50 points each.	100 points
Quizzes: 5 Quizzes worth 10 points each.	50 points
Final Exam	75 points
Participation	25 points

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 350 points

Grading Scale:

A 93-100%, A- 90-92%, B+ 87-89%, B 83-86%, B- 80-82%, C+ 76-79%, C 70-75%, C- 65-69%, D 55-64%

Missed Exams and Late Assignments:

In fairness to other students, late exams will be given only in the event of documented medical disability or a death in the student’s immediate family. Present such documentation the first time you broach the subject with the teacher. Conflicts with work schedules, school schedules, vacations, or non-emergency family matters are not valid reasons for missed exams. Late papers will be accepted, but penalized one letter grade per day late.

Extra Credit Work:

The student’s time and energy should be devoted to meeting the requirements of this course. For this reason, extra credit assignment will not be offered.

Disability Accommodation:

If you qualify for special assistance under the American Disabilities Act, please see the instructor as soon as possible so that accommodations can be made.

Assignment Schedule

The following is a tentative schedule. Reading assignments and dates may be adjusted, but assigned material should be read prior to class. You will also receive a number of handouts on issues covered in lectures. Please note that some topics will be examined in more detail in lectures that go beyond your reading, some will be presented rather briefly, and others will be left for you to study on your own. If a topic is covered in your reading, even though we do not discuss it in class, that topic may appear on the exam.

Aug. 22: Introduction

24: Merrill & Peterson (hereafter M/P) chp. 2 – The Origins of American Foreign Policy, The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Great Debate of the 1790s, Farewell Address.

29: Colleen Sheehan (handout) – That Virtue May Lead to Ruin: Alexander Hamilton's Teaching on Interest and Morality in International Political Life.

31: M/P chp. 3 – The Louisiana Purchase.

Sept. **05: Labor Day**

07: M/P chp. 4 – The War of 1812, chp. 5 – The Monroe Doctrine

12: M/P chp. 6 - Manifest Destiny.

14: M/P chp. 7 – The Spanish American War.

19: M/P chp. 8 - Woodrow Wilson, World War I, and the League Fight.

21: **Exam #1**

26: M/P chp. 9 - U.S. Entry into World War II.

28: M/P chp. 9 – Continued

Oct. **03: First Article Review Due. Student Presentations**

05: M/P chp. 10 - The Origins of the Cold War. Hook & Spanier (hereafter H/S) chp. 2.

10: **Columbus Day**

12: M/P chp. 11 - Cold War Culture and the Third World. H/S chp. 3

17: M/P chp. 12 - Cuba and the Missile Crises.

19: M/P chp. 13, H/S chp. 4 – The Vietnam War

24: H/S chp. 5 Détente, chp. 6 The Revival of Confrontation
26: M/P chp. 13, H/S chp. 7 - The Cold War Ends.

31: **Exam # 2**

Nov. 02: H/S chp. 8 – Old Tensions in a New
Order

07: H/S chp.9 – Shifting Europe

09: M/P chp.15, H/S chp. 10 - September 11, 2001, and Anti-Americanism in the
Muslim World

14: H/S chp. 11 Afghanistan & Iraq, (handout) -Is Democracy Exportable?

16: H/S chp. 12, 13 – A World of Trouble.U.S.

21: H/S chp. 14 – The Revival of Power Politics

23: Thanksgiving Break

28: **Second Article Review Due. Student Presentations**

30: Course Summary and Review for Final Exam

(Final Exam: Monday, December 5, 1:30-3:30)