

History 245
U. S. in World Affairs
Spring 2012
Syllabus

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TO CONTACT :

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Welcome--

History 245 surveys this nation's foreign policy from its emergence as a world power in the 1890s up to recent times. While evaluating U. S. foreign policies of the past century, **History 245** will stress major themes and interpretations in history. Why did the United States push forward as a great power in the 1890s? Was intervention in World War I a necessary step or the product of Wilson's peculiar vision of the world? What did the growing war clouds of the 1930s mean for U. S. security? Who or what produced the Cold War? How did the Vietnam war affect U. S. relations with other parts of the world? What does history show about a power trying to "go it alone," versus waiting for cooperation? You will be encouraged to place facts in meaningful frames of reference and then assess them.

Certain patterns and issues recur in the story of U. S. foreign policy. One is the reality that, though we are part of a shrinking globe, Americans and their political leaders seem to assume that isolationism is an option, that international relations are not so important. Inevitably, foreign crises and needs intrude uninvited into a President's agenda. But they are not always unwelcome. See how often this scenario has been repeated: an idealistic chief executive is elected on a platform of domestic reform, and like Woodrow Wilson a century ago, he ridicules the notion that foreign affairs will have much relevance to his agenda. Then, two things happen. An international crisis erupts (a regional or world war, a communist invasion, etc.), and the President has no choice but to get involved. Moreover, he finds that doing foreign policy can be fun--certainly not as messy as dealing with the special interests and entrenched Congressional powers that bottle up domestic policy-making. Soon, foreign policy dominates his presidency.

Another theme of U. S. foreign policy-making is the question of what role morality should play in foreign policy. Is it the proper arena for efforts to build a better world idealistic according to our idealism? To promote democracy? If we have the capacity to expend American power to correct injustice, and to devote our resources to combat poverty worldwide, doesn't that come with the moral duty to do so? On the other hand, does the President have the right to assign to other Americans sacrifices based on his moral convictions, not theirs? Was Secretary of State John Quincy Adams accurate when he said that while this country is a friend of the liberty of other countries, it is guardian only of its own?

Americans who care about foreign policy tend to demand more of policy than a self-interested foreign policy. How would this notion rub us: "You bet it's blood for oil. Our economy needs this stuff."

So I hope that **History 245** gets you thinking about basic issues of international relations.

Books--

- Thomas G. Paterson *et al*, [American Foreign Relations](#), Vol. 2 (Houghton-Mifflin, 2005, ISBN: 0-618-37073-0).
- Gary Donaldson, [American Foreign Policy: the Twentieth Century in Documents](#) (Longman, 2003, ISBN: 0-321-10506-0)
- Online readings, available through VISTA in "Lectures and Discussion"

Outcomes--

At the conclusion of this course, successful students will be able to:

1. Explain the significance of key people, facts, and events relating to U. S. foreign policy in the period under study, and develop standards to evaluate them from a historical perspective
2. Demonstrate the importance of traditions of thought and ethical values in the process of historical change
3. Expand their vocabulary
4. Evaluate historical arguments, judging the appropriateness of both logic and content
5. Adapt scholarly processes of analysis, interpretation, and synthesis to articulate their own points of view, demonstrating a command of relevant facts and a framework of logical deduction:

- Drawing inferences from data
- Differentiating between description and explanation
- Differentiating between facts, value judgments, and generalizations
- Recognizing the role of cause and effect in historical analysis

COURSEWORK—

History is absolutely do-able if you think strategically. Think about overall trends. File facts away according to what they mean for major trends. The specific details absorbed in the course material will mean little unless you can do that. The specific details absorbed in the course material will mean little unless you do that. Also, try to put together your own logical interpretations of facts and themes. That way, you really get a handle on the topic.

Just as with a classroom class, this online course is taught through lectures, class discussion, and varied readings. It may be "virtual," printed words on a screen, but we will combine reading and lecturing with discussion. Superior grades will go to students who show a broad, accurate grasp of the facts and an ability to organize material, who participate in class and whose writing makes relevant arguments, backing them with good material.

Be sure to look at the "**Reading Schedule**," located on the "**Assignments**" page (accessible from the Home Page). This will guide your reading through the term for lectures and textbook readings. Also get the "**Lectures & Discussions**" link on the Assignments page. That takes you to the lectures, online readings, and assignment for each Discussion. Read the lectures as laid out by the Reading Schedule. Access the Discussion assignment, and follow directions for the listed readings and brief essays.

During the term you will do all the assigned readings, and **four** Discussion essays of 250-400 words each. You must post **two essays in each half of the course** (Discussions #1-#5, Discussions #6-#10), by the deadline for each (see below). A Discussion essay should be 250-400 words. Each essay assignment is available in the "**Lectures & Discussions**" link for each Discussion, and so is a "**Posts**" icon for submitting your essay. Essays are usually due on Mondays, except on holidays (see table below). Essays are graded on a 25-point scale. For feedback I usually send an email to you with the essay grade and reasons for it.

For more information on how to write these essays well, see "Writing Essays Well" in **Assignments**. I like an essay that comes to grips with the student's chosen question--that tries to answer it logically with details and facts. It is especially desirable to use facts and details from the Discussion (especially online) readings and lectures. The Divine text is helpful for these essays, but don't write a mere summary of what the text says. Don't base your essay on an encyclopedia article (especially that unreliable Wikipedia), though feel free to consult a decent encyclopedia for background. Use paraphrases and quotes from the sources to back your points, not to make them, and avoid both long quotes (more than 40 words) and overly brief ones (less than 10 words). Remember what the assignment says about a purpose statement. Avoid typo's and misspellings.

On most occasions when you don't post an essay, you will post a **response** to the essay of another student. Responses are usually due three days after the Discussion essays. As with the essays, you will post four Discussion responses in all, two in Weeks #1-#5, two for #6-#9. **Please note: there will be no response for #10.** Each response should be at least 75 words long and should express agreement, disagreement, and reasons for your view. Don't simply say, "I liked your essay" without explaining why, and be sure to evaluate its content instead of just its grammar.

Responses are graded on a 5-point scale. **Note: this is true no matter what the grading column says.** I haven't been able to change the fact that it reports all grades as "out of 25," so I am counting on you to keep a level head when you find a response grade of 5 "out of 25." That actually is a good grade for a response.

Note: You write responses to only those Discussions for which you did **NOT** submit an essay. **There is no credit for posting a response on a Discussion for which you have already submitted an essay.** For example, if you turned in an essay in answer to a question from Discussion #6, you ***will not*** get credit for a response to someone else's essay from #6. This means that during the term, essays and responses must be submitted for **eight different Discussions**, total.

The term's schedule of due dates for essays and responses for each Discussion is in "Assignments" (look for "Overall Schedule"). Note that nothing is due on an official holiday.

NOTE: No response for #10, so please get your last one in with #9, by June 7.

In addition to the brief essays and responses, you will compose a six- or seven-page research paper (due May 28), following a sheet provided under "Assignments." This is described in "Assignment."

There will be two exams, each about two hours, on these dates: April 28 and June 5. You will take them online, and you may choose the times to take them on those dates. They will have both identification and essay questions. There will be preparation sheets for each in "Testing."

NOTE: Copying material without attribution on essays and tests is plagiarism and is forbidden. A zero grade will be assigned to any paper or exam in which plagiarized material appears, or if on a Discussion essay, the entire Discussions grade (25% of the total term grade).

A note on late work--

Normally, late discussion essays are accepted but with a penalty of **.5/25** per day (up to a total of 3.5/25). If they are more than three days late, they must be sent to me by Vista email. *Late essay responses are not accepted.*

Late papers are assessed 2.5% per day (up to a total of 10%). This can be avoided if you obtain permission for an extension in advance of the due date.

If you miss the midterm or final exam for some legitimate reason, all is not lost. However, if you don't contact me and take the test right away, you will lose 10% right away and another 10% after a week.

Grading--

Here is how things are weighted:

- Discussions 25%*
- Midterm exam 25%*
- Research paper 25%*
- Final exam 25%*

All items will be assigned percentage grades, whose average will be translated into a letter grade according to the following:

- 95-100% A 76-79% C+*
- 90-94% A- 73-75% C*
- 86-89% B+ 70-72% C-*
- 83-85% B 65-69% D+*
- 80-82% B- 60-64% D*

I trust that History 245 will help you develop background both in current events and for further study of U. S. foreign policy. Let me know if you have any questions.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE DIVISION (Revised Fall 2003)

Cheating, Stealing and Plagiarizing*

“Cheating, stealing and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one’s own without crediting the source) and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue Community College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to: talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of

Student Services for possible probation or suspension from Bellevue Community College. Specific student rights, responsibilities and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct, available in the office of the Dean of Student Services.”

Incomplete*

If a student fails to complete the majority of the work for a course due to unforeseen circumstances, an instructor may or may not assign the grade of Incomplete (I). The student must complete the coursework by the end of the next quarter, or receive the assigned letter grade (usually an “F”).

F Grade*

Students who fail a course will receive a letter grade of “F.”

Final Examination Schedule

The Social Science Division will adhere to the final examination schedule as stated in the BCC Schedule. Final examinations will be held at the end of each quarter at fixed times. Instructors will not give examinations in advance of the regular schedule. A student who is absent from any examination held at any time during the quarter may forfeit the right to make up the examination. If, for illness or some other circumstance beyond the student's control, the student is unable to be present at any scheduled examination and has contacted the instructor on a timely basis, the student may be permitted to take such examination at a time designated by the instructor.

Withdrawal From Class

College policy states that students must formally withdraw from a class by the date posted in the quarterly schedule. If a student has not withdrawn by that date, an appropriate letter grade will be assigned for the course.

Hardship Withdrawal

Instructors may assign the grade of “HW” (hardship withdrawal) at their discretion in the event that a student cannot complete the coursework due to extreme and exceptional circumstances. Students may also contact the Enrollment Services office BEFORE grades are assigned in cases of hardship.

Disabled Students

Students with a disability requiring special accommodation from the College and/or the instructor are required to discuss their specific needs with both the Office of Disabled Students (B233) and the instructor. If you require accommodation based on a documented disability, emergency medical information to share, or need special arrangements in case of emergency evacuation, please make an appointment with your instructor as soon as possible.

If you would like to inquire about becoming a DSS student you may call 564-2498 or go in person to the DSS (Disability Support Services) reception area in the Student Services Building.

Distribution of Grades

Grades will not be posted in the Social Science Division or in faculty offices, and secretaries will not give out grades. Students should access their grades through the BCC Web site.

Return of Papers and Tests

Paper and/or Scantron score sheet returns will be arranged in the following ways ONLY: by mail, if student supplies the instructor with stamped, self-addressed envelope (with appropriate postage); or by the instructor designating a time and place whereby the student may retrieve his/her papers. Unclaimed papers and/or Scantron score sheets must be kept by the instructor for a minimum of one year and one quarter following the end of the registered quarter.

* If you are accused of cheating, stealing exams and/or plagiarism, there is a Bellevue Community College Student Discipline and Appeals Procedure (the right to due process) which you may pursue. Contact the office of Division Chair (D110C), the Dean of Student Services (B231A) or the Associated Student Body (C212) for information regarding the appeals process.