

History 245
The United States in World Affairs:
Summer 2008
(5 credits)
Dr. Tim Heinrichs

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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, we will also interpret the post-Cold War revolution in international politics in light of history, and project what U. S. policy should and will be. In other words, 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? You will be encouraged to place facts in meaningful frames of reference and then assess them.

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.

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. Also, try to put together your own logical interpretations of facts and themes. That way, you really get a handle on the topic.

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."

Strategy--

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

1. Explain the significance of key people, facts, and events of the period under study, and develop standards to judge them from a historical-cultural perspective
2. Demonstrate the importance of traditions of thought and ethical values in 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 facts, value judgments, and generalizations

• Differentiating between description and explanation

• Recognizing the role of cause and effect in historical analysis

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Coursework

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.

Be sure to find the "Lectures & Discussions" link on the Home Page. That takes you to the page with the lectures and online readings and assignment for each Discussion. Read the lectures. Access the Discussion Assignment, and follow directions for the listed readings and brief essays.

After doing the reading, you choose one essay question to answer from the Discussion Assignment. Post your essay with the Discussion's Posts icon (not with the Paper assignment, please!). Each essay should be 250-400 words. The deadlines for these fall on Mondays and Thursdays. You don't have to write one every week. During the term you will write and post a total of four brief essays in answer to four Discussion assignments by the deadline given for each. Note: you must do essays from two of Discussions #1-5 and two of #6-#10 (again, by the assigned date for each one you choose). 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 Ayers text is helpful, but don't write a mere summary of what the Ayers 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 do the week's reading anyway and post a response to the essay of another student. Access other students' essays through each Discussion Assignment's Posts icon. Each response should be at least 75 words long and should express agreement, disagreement, and reasons for your view. You will do a total of two responses in Discussions #1-#5 and two in Discussions #6-#9. There is no response for #10; please plan accordingly.

This means that during the term you must post four bulletin essays of your own and four responses to others' essays. Essays are graded on a 25-point scale; responses on a 5-point scale. There is no extra credit with essays or responses. Note: there is no credit for posting a response on a Discussion for which you have already submitted an essay.

The following is this term's schedule of due dates for essays and responses for each Discussion:

AssignmentDue DateAssignmentDue Date

Discussion #1 EssayMonday June 30Discussion #6 EssayMonday July 21
Discussion #1 ResponseThursday July 3Discussion #6 ResponseThursday July

24

Discussion #2 EssayThursday July 3Discussion #7 EssayThursday July 24
Discussion #2 ResponseMonday July 7Discussion #7 ResponseMonday July 28
Discussion #3 EssayMonday July 7Discussion #8 EssayMonday July 28
Discussion #3 ResponseThursday July 10Discussion #8 ResponseThursday July
31
Discussion #4 EssayThursday July 10Discussion #9 EssayThursday July 31
Discussion #4 ResponseMonday July 14Discussion #9 ResponseMonday August 4
Discussion #5 EssayMonday July 14Discussion #10 EssayMonday August 4
Discussion #5 ResponseThursday July 17No #10 Response--

In addition to the brief essays and responses, you will compose a five to six-page paper (due August 1), following a sheet provided under "Assignments."

There will be two exams, each about two hours, on these dates: July 17-18 and August 5-6. You will take them online, and you choose the times to take them on each date. You are responsible for having functioning equipment on test days. The tests will have multiple-choice and essay questions and will be based on the text and the lectures. There will be preparation sheets for each listing possible questions.

NOTE: Copying material in print or on the Internet is forbidden. A zero grade will be assigned to paper or test 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 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--

The following is a breakdown of the final grade by category:

Discussions:25%
Paper25%
First exam25%
Second exam25%

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

93-plus	A	77-79%	C+
90-92%	A-	73-76%	C
87-89%	B+	70-72%	C-
83-86%	B	67-69%	D+
80-82%	B-	60-66%	D

If you're ever not sure you're on top of it all, if you have any

questions about the course, ask questions by WebCT e-mail, or to theinric@bcc.ctc.edu. Or call and leave a message at 425-564-2114.

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.