History 433
American Foreign Relations Before the Twentieth Century

Fall 2002
Professor Jeremi Suri
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(608) 263-1852
Office hours: M 1-3 PM, or by appointment

Lectures: MWF 9:55-10:45 AM – 1641 Humanities
Discussion 301: W 12:05-12:55 – 2637 Humanities
Discussion 302: W 2:25-3:15 – 2653 Humanities
Discussion 304: R 11:AM-11:50 – 2239 Engr Hall

Teaching Assistant: Hiroshi Kitamura

All undergraduates must take this course for 4 credits.

Course Aims

This is a history course designed to enrich our understanding of America’s place in the world since the years before the American Revolution. The course will end at the dawn of the twentieth century. Next semester’s continuation (History 434) will take our story through the twentieth century and up to the present.

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 or 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."

Weekly Discussion Meetings

All students are required to attend weekly discussion meetings. Students must complete the assigned readings through the meeting date, before discussion begins. The teaching assistant – Hiroshi Kitamura – will lead the discussions. I will also participate in discussions on occasion. We expect all students to attend the weekly meetings 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 Lawrence Kaplan’s book: Alexander Hamilton: Ambivalent Anglophile. A printed copy of each student book review is due at the start of class on Friday, October 11. The book review will constitute 20% of the student grade.

Book reviews should follow this form:

Pages 1-2: summarize Kaplan’s main arguments about Hamilton's approach to foreign policy – how did Hamilton's views and actions change over time?
Pages 2-3: discuss the policy differences between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson – what were their main points of disagreement? What were the consequences of their debate for early American foreign relations?

Pages 3-4: evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of Kaplan’s book – what did you find most and least persuasive?

Pages 4-6: provide your own judgment on Hamilton. How did his policies contribute to the realization of a Federalist vision for the United States? Did his ideas and actions contribute to the long-term strength of the United States? Did Hamilton betray the nation’s “republican” ideals? What role did democracy play in Hamilton’s worldview?

I 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 23 I will distribute two mid-term essay questions in class. Students should write a 1000 to 1200 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 9:55 AM (in class) on Friday, October 25. Students should print their essays and bring them to class. I 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. More details will follow later in the semester. The final examination will account for 35% of each student’s grade.

**Grades**

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


Dull, Jonathan. *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*

Ferrer, Ada. *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution 1868-1898*

Kaplan, Lawrence S. *Alexander Hamilton: Ambivalent Anglophile*
(Wilmington, Del.: SR Books, 2002).


Week 1:
9/4 Introduction

9/6 Myths and Hypotheses about American Diplomacy

Week 2:
9/9 The Origins of American Diplomacy: The International System in the 18th Century

9/11 The Origins of American Diplomacy: Ideas and Interests

9/13 The Origins of American Diplomacy: African Slavery and Native Americans

Week 3:
9/16 Yom Kippur – NO CLASS

9/18 The Diplomacy of the American Revolution, Part I
Reading: Dull, *A Diplomatic History of the American Revolution*, 75-174

9/20 The Diplomacy of the American Revolution, Part II

Week 4:
9/23 The Constitution and Early Federalist Diplomacy

9/25 Hamilton and the Constitution

9/27 Hamilton and Washington
Reading, Kaplan: *Alexander Hamilton*, 79-142.

Week 5:
9/30 Jefferson and Revolution
Kaplan, *Alexander Hamilton*, 143-65

10/2 Jefferson and Hamilton
Kaplan, *Alexander Hamilton*, 167-77

10/4 Jefferson and Hamilton’s Legacy for American Diplomacy

Week 6:
10/7 The War of 1812

10/9 The Monroe Doctrine

10/11 The International System in the Early 19th Century

Week 7:
10/14 Manifest Destiny and Nation Building
10/16 Manifest Destiny and Race

10/18 Manifest Destiny and Class

**Week 8:**
10/21 Manifest Destiny and Gender

10/23 Take-home mid-term examination distributed in class

**10/25 Take-home mid-term examination due at 9:55 (start of class)**

**Week 9:**
10/28 The Civil War, Part I
   Reading: Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 92-152

10/30 The Civil War, Part II

11/1 The Civil War, Part III

**Week 10:**
11/4 America’s Indian Diplomacy after the Civil War
   Reading: Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 153-63

11/6 America’s “Second Industrial Revolution”

11/8 Commerce, Imperialism, and Diplomacy after 1865

**Week 11:**
11/11 William Henry Seward and the “New Empire”
   Reading: LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 24-61

11/13 Josiah Strong and “America’s Mission”
   Reading: LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 72-80

11/15 America and China: Early Relations
   Reading: Cohen, *America’s Response to China*, 1-25

**Week 12:**
11/18 America’s Emergence as an East Asian power
   Reading: Cohen, *America’s Response to China*, 26-54

11/20 The Cuban Revolution

11/22 Frederick Jackson Turner and the ”Closing of the American Frontier”
   Reading: LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 63-72

**Week 13:**
11/25 Alfred Thayer Mahan and America’s Emergence as a Global Military Power
   Reading: LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 80-101, 197-283

11/27 Anglo-American Rapprochement

11/29 Thanksgiving Recess: NO CLASS
Week 14:
12/2 The War of 1898
   Reading: LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 284-406

12/4 The Cuba and the War of 1898
   Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 141-69

12/6 The Philippine War
   Reading: Weigley, *The American Way of War*, 167-91

Week 15:
12/9 The Legacy of the War of 1898
   Reading: Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 170-202

12/11 The Legacy of Early American Diplomacy for the Twentieth Century

12/13 Final Examination questions distributed
   Warning: The readings for Week 15 will figure prominently on the final exam

Final Examination Answers due in Hard Copy
Wednesday, December 18 by 4:PM
5119 Humanities Building
I will not accept late exams.