

H/SS Elective: U.S. Foreign Relations

FALL, 2025

INSTRUCTOR: Liu Xiang

OFFICE:

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OFFICE HOURS:

LECTURES: Thursday 13:50-16:25

RECITATION:

TEXTBOOK:

TEACHING ASSISTANT:

PREREQUISITE:

Basic Knowledge on history of U.S. and history of modern world.

DESCRIPTION:

As a major power with important influence in contemporary world, United States went through great transformation since its independence. American foreign policies played complicated roles in its process of expansion, which profoundly shaped the history of U.S. and the whole world. This course is designed to provide undergraduate students with a brief introduction to the history of American foreign relations, which begins with American revolutionary war and end with contemporary American foreign affairs.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Through the study of this course, students need to understand the basic context of American foreign relations, be familiar with the important historical facts of the changes of American foreign relations since independence, and have an in-depth understanding of the complex factors behind the history. At the same time, students should learn to master the methods of historical analysis, think about the interaction between the United States and the world and its impact, and manage to comprehend contemporary American foreign affairs based on historical study.

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THIS COURSE:

- 1) Understand basic knowledge on important events in history of U.S. foreign relations
- 2) Master the methods of historical analysis
- 3) Comprehend contemporary U.S. foreign affairs based on historical knowledge

GRADE DETERMINATION:

ATTENDANCE and Discussion: 20%

HOMEWORK: 20%

Group Research and Presentation: 30%

Book Review: 30%

MATERIAL COVERED: The sequence of the sections covered in this class is:

Week	Contents
1 (09/11)	Introduction
2 (09/18)	Revolutionary wars in Atlantic World
3 (09/25)	Westward Expansion
4 (10/02)	Holiday
5 (10/09)	Overseas expansion and the founding of the American Empire
6 (10/16)	the Clashes of Empires and America's Responses (1901-1922)
7 (10/23)	U.S. and the Reconstruction of World Order (1923-1945)
8 (10/30)	Sino-U.S. Relations (1784-1945)
9 (11/06)	U.S. and the Origins of Cold War
10 (11/13)	U.S. and the Cold War in Europe
11 (11/20)	U.S. and the Cold War in East Asia
12 (11/27)	U.S. and the Cold War in the Third World
13 (12/04)	U.S. and the Rise and Fall of Detente
14 (12/11)	U.S. and the End of Cold War
15 (12/18)	U.S. in the Post-Cold War era
16 (12/25)	Group Presentation and Discussion