

Prof. David B.H. Denoon

Office Hours: (none in person)
Arrange phone call via email

Spring 2021

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POL 796

IR HONORS SEMINAR: AMERICAN EMPIRE?

The purpose of this course is to provide a broad survey of the debate about American power and influence in international affairs, and to provide sufficient background for students to do a major research paper on the topic. Some view the American role today as creating an empire, while others view U.S. influence as just a reflection of the wealth and military might that Americans command. There are many other thoughtful perspectives as well.

In this seminar, there is a substantial amount of reading necessary; and, since much of this is in recent articles, there is no single text for the course. The course will be taught, to the maximum extent possible, in seminar fashion, so you must do the reading before coming to class. We will be covering a broad range of controversial topics which involve a combination of factual and ideological questions. There are also obvious moral considerations in many of the topics. This course will not focus on any one perspective and the seminar is designed to encourage a lively interchange of views. Articles and most book chapters are available through *NYU Classes*; entire books, underlined in the syllabus, are available through Bobst Library Reserve.

This is an advanced, honors course designed to help students do research. In the major paper, each student will be expected to explore a theoretical issue, develop a testable hypothesis, and decide what kinds of evidence and methods to use in evaluating the proposition. For many, the course can be an early effort at preparing for the Senior Thesis. The seminar will be limited to 20 students who have a GPA of 3.65 or higher.

Requirements:

- A) Reading: Assignments are on the attached list.
- B) Short Paper: A **five-page paper** will be due **March 1**. This paper is to explore potential topics for the major paper.
- C) Major Paper: A **15-20 page paper** will be due **May 10**. A format sheet will be available for this paper.
- D) Exam: There will be a take-home **Mid-Term Exam** on **March 15** but no Final Exam.
- E) Class Participation: Each student will be expected to make presentations on assigned reading and participate fully in class discussion.
- F) Grading: Short paper 5%, Class discussion 20%, Mid-Term Exam 25%, Final Paper 50%

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What is an Empire?

1. Different Types of Empires:
February 01

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| J. Fairbank | <u>The Chinese World Order</u> , 1-14 |
| N. Ferguson | <u>Empire: The Rise & Demise of the British World Order</u> , Chapt. 1,6, Conclusion |
| P. Kennedy | <u>The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers</u> , Chapt. 1,2 |
| H. James | <u>The Roman Predicament</u> , 1-38 |

2. U.S. Behavior as an Empire:
February 08

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| C. Krauthammer | "The Unipolar Moment Revisited," <u>National Interest</u> , Winter 2002/03, 5-17
https://nationalinterest.org/article/the-unipolar-moment-revisited-391 |
| N. Barma et.al. | "A World Without the West," <u>National Interest</u> , July/August 2007, 23-30
https://nationalinterest.org/article/report-and-retort-a-world-without-the-west-1658 |
| G. Allison | "The Myth of the Liberal Order," <u>Foreign Affairs</u> , July/August 2018, 124-133
https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-06-14/myth-liberal-order |
| E. Colby &
A. Mitchell | "The Age of Great-Power Competition..." <u>Foreign Affairs</u> , Jan/Feb 2020,
118-130 |

3. 1790-1865: U.S. Vulnerability to Other Empires:

February 15 President's Day: No Class. February 18 Thursday Make Up Class

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| D. Merrill and
T. Paterson | <u>Major Problems in American Foreign Relations: Vol. 1</u>
(7 th ed., 2010)
Chapt. 3 "The Great Debate of the 1790s"
Chapt. 6 "The Monroe Doctrine"
Chapt. 8 "Manifest Destiny" |
|-------------------------------|---|

Four Opportunities for Empire: What Changed After 1991?

4. 1898:

February 22

Merrill & Paterson Major Problems in American Foreign Relations: Vol. 1
 Chapt. 11 "Becoming a World Power"
 Chapt. 12 "The Spanish American War"
 Chapt. 13 "The Open Door Policy to China"

5. 1919:

March 01

M. Macmillan Paris - 1919, Chapt. 1,2,30

Merrill & Paterson Major Problems in American Foreign Relations: Vol. 2 (7th ed., 2010)
 Chapt. 2 "W. Wilson & the League of Nations"
 Chapt. 3 "The 1920s"

6. 1945:

March 08

S. Hook & J. Spanier American Foreign Policy Since World War II, (19th ed.) Chapt. 2,3

G. Kennan "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," Foreign Affairs, (The "X" Article),
 July 1947, Vol. XXV, No. 4
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/1947-07-01/sources-soviet-conduct>

7. Mid-Term Take Home Exam

March 15

8. Post-1991:

March 22

S. Hook and J. Spanier American Foreign Policy Since World War II, Chapt. 9-14

A. Bacevich American Empire, Chapt. 5,6

P. Zelikow "The Transformation of National Security," National Interest,
 Spring 2003,17-28
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/42895592.pdf>

B. Milanovic "The Clash of Capitalisms," Foreign Affairs, Jan/Feb 2020,
 10-21

American Dominance?

9. Cultural: **March 29**

- D. Denoon “Chapter 1: Alternative Views of Central Asia’s Future” in D. Denoon ed., *China, The US, and the Future of Central Asia* (New York & London: New York University Press, 2015)
- C.E. Zeigler “International dimensions of electoral processes: Russia, the USA, and the 2016 elections,” International Politics Vol. 55, 2018, 557-574
- R. Niblett “Liberalism in Retreat,” Foreign Affairs, Jan/Feb 2017
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2016-12-12/liberalism-retreat>

10. Diplomatic: **April 05**

- Pew Research Center “Global Publics Back U.S. on Fighting ISIS, but Are Critical of Post-9/11 Torture,” June 2015
<http://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/06/Balance-of-Power-Report-FINAL-June-23-2015.pdf>
- R. Solomon & N. Quinney American Negotiating Behavior (2010), Chapt. 2
- R. Sharma “The Comeback Nation...” *Foreign Affairs*, May / June 2020,
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-03-31/comeback-nation>

11. Economic: **April 12**

- I.M.F. World Economic Outlook, October 2020
- D. Denoon The Economic and Strategic Rise of China and India, Chapt. 1,5,6
- R. Sharma “The Broken BRICs,” Foreign Affairs, Nov. / Dec. 2012
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/brazil/2012-10-22/broken-brics>
- M. Pei “China’s Coming Upheaval:...” *Foreign Affairs*, May / June 2020, pp. 82-95

12. Military:**April 19 Spring Break No Class****April 26**A. Friedberg A Contest for Supremacy, Preface, Introduction, Chapt. 9.Wu, Y. “Recognizing and Resisting China’s Sharp Power,” *American Journal of Chinese Studies*, 2019, Vol. 26, Issue 2, pp. 129-153K. Campbell & “The China Reckoning,” Foreign Affairs, Mar. / Apr. 2018, 60-70
E. Ratner <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2018-02-13/china-reckoning>The White House. United States Strategic Approach to the PRC (Washington, D.C.,
May 26, 2020)13. 14. Presentation of Papers:**May 03, May 10**