

University of Cincinnati

Raymond Walters College

History 231: US and the World I Fall 2005

Instructor:

Dr. John McNay

Office:

Muntz 302:

Office hours:

Monday, 3-5; Tuesday, noon-2.

Or by appointment

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Scope of course:

Welcome. In this course we will study United States foreign policy up to 1850. During this time period, the United States grew from a small republic nestled along the eastern seaboard of central North America to a vast empire that spanned the continent, exerted substantial influence in the Caribbean basin and reached across the Pacific Ocean to the edge of Asia. Accordingly, the central theme of this course is American territorial and commercial expansion. We will comparatively analyze competing visions of expansion advocated by various Americans; explore the domestic economic, intellectual and political wellsprings of expansionism; examine the methods used to extend the nation's borders, commerce and influence, and seek to understand the effect of expansion on the nation's values, institutions and history. Lectures and reading will introduce you to historical controversies and conflicting interpretations, which you will be expected to analyze critically in writing and discussions.

Reading:

The text for the course will be [The American Age](#) by Walter LaFeber; [John Quincy Adams and American Global Empire](#) by William Weeks, and [James Polk and the Expansionist Impulse](#) by Sam Haynes. There will also be some handouts.

Grading:

There will be a midterm and a final exam, both worth 25 percent of your grade for a total of 50 percent. They will include a combination of objective and essay questions. There will be two quizzes based on the books, worth a total of 20 percent of your grade. There will be a paper assignment worth 25 percent of your grade. Attendance and participation will be worth another 5 percent.

Attendance:

It should go without saying that attendance is required. You cannot learn the material and do well in this course if you are not here. More than three unexcused absences will have a negative impact on your grade. If you must miss class for a legitimate reason or have some sort of emergency, talk to me about the situation.

Paper Assignment:

We will talk in more detail about the paper assignment next week. It will be a research paper about some aspect of American foreign policy in the period before 1850. Among the possibilities are the diplomacy or domestic politics surrounding the American Revolution, the Jay-Gardoqui treaty, Federalist or Jeffersonian diplomacy; the diplomacy surrounding the Mexican War or the War of 1812; Manifest Destiny; or the Monroe Doctrine. There are numerous other possibilities.

Academic Misconduct:

Familiarize yourself with The Student Code of Conduct available from Student Affairs. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Out in the real world, you could lose your job and ruin your career for stealing someone else's work. Penalties can range widely from an F on the paper/exam, an F in the course, and the university has sanctions that "permanently prohibit the student from attending the University of Cincinnati."

Plagiarism is a particular problem. The student code defines it as follows:

- Submitting another's published or unpublished work, in whole, in part, or in paraphrase, as one's own without fully and properly crediting the author with footnotes, citations, or bibliographic reference.
- Submitting as one's own, original work, material obtained from an individual or agency without reference to the person or agency as the source of the material.
- Submitting as one's own, original work, material that has been produced through unacknowledged collaboration with others without release in writing from collaborators.

This policy is not an attempt to persecute an accidental missing reference. Plagiarism is easy to avoid. Just do the work yourself.

Honors Contracts:

If you already qualify for the university's Honors Scholars Program talk to me about taking this class for Honors credit. This will entail writing an Honors Contract which means more additional work and reading beyond the regular requirements for the course.

History Club:

The RWC History Club is an informal organization of students who gather several times throughout the semester to talk about issues, books, or view movies. I'm the faculty advisor. Talk to me about the club. It is fun, entertaining, and we manage to learn something too.

Schedule of classes:

Week of

9/26 – Intro and Origins of American Empire, LaFeber, 3-17.

10/3 – Diplomacy of the American Revolution, LaFeber, 18-39.

10/10 – The Confederation, LaFeber, 18-39.

10/17 – Problems of the 1790s and John Adams. LaFeber, 40-58.

10/24 – Jeffersonian Diplomacy. Midterm.

10/31 – Origins and events of the War of 1812. LaFeber, 58-83.

11/7 – James Monroe and the Monroe Doctrine. LaFeber, 84-126. Adams book discussion.

11/14 – Jacksonian Diplomacy

11/21 – Polk and the Mexican War. Polk book discussion.

11/28 – From Sea to Shining Sea. Review.

Final Exam.

The evening class will meet at its same time and place.