

HIST 3469: UNITED STATES FOREIGN RELATIONS



**Fall 2025
Monday and Wednesday 1:05pm – 2:20pm in Chapman 233**

**Dr. Lauren Turek
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Office hours: Thursdays 9am-11am and by appointment**

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this detailed survey of American foreign relations since the late nineteenth century, we will trace the rise of the United States as an international power as we explore the myriad cultural, political, economic, environmental, and military interactions that guided U.S. engagement with the wider world. This course will challenge students to consider American foreign relations history through a number of different interpretive approaches, including gender, race, emotion, and religion as well as national security, corporatism, and power politics, among others. Students will come away from the course with a deeper understanding of how the United States shaped and was shaped by the rest of the world during the twentieth century. Major questions that will animate the course include: How and why did the United States become a major global power? To what extent has ideology driven the objectives of American foreign relations? How have non-governmental organizations and other non-state actors influenced U.S. decision making and relations abroad?

COURSE FORMAT

This course will run as an upper-level seminar-style class with a mix of lecture and discussion of the day's readings. The field of U.S. foreign relations is a lively one, with many great debates and exciting new intellectual developments. Our secondary readings will introduce you to innovative works, both recent and classic, which will inform our understanding of key course themes. We will also examine a variety of primary documents and multimedia resources, including declassified diplomatic cables, speeches, films, songs, artifacts, and firsthand accounts, to immerse ourselves in the debates and developments that shaped U.S. relations abroad. Along with my lectures, these secondary and primary readings will expose you to conflicting and at times controversial interpretations of the historical events under consideration; students are expected to think critically about these divergent interpretations in their written assignments as well in our in-class debates and discussions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have demonstrated the ability to:

- write a sustained academic work with appropriate use of evidence and developed reasoning to support an argument
- improve their writing in response to feedback
- craft prose that conforms to the conventions of the historical discipline

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course requires active participation in discussion and careful engagement with the readings. I expect you to have completed the assigned reading prior to class so that you can come to each meeting ready to explore the day's topic in depth. This class will focus on the exchange of ideas, and it is crucial that students come prepared for active, engaged discussion.

Assignments

Primary Source Close Reads: These short, timed in-class writing assignments will require you to reflect on and analyze our assigned primary sources. It is critical that you come to class having carefully read and annotated your sources.

Policy Brief: Due Monday, October 20. This midterm assignment will give you the opportunity to take on the role of State Department analyst. You will be provided with a packet of documents and (now declassified) top secret reports that pertain to a foreign policy issue that we have not covered in great detail in class. After carefully reading the packet, you will write a 4-5-page policy brief for the president that summarizes the issue (background, key players, U.S. interests) in one to two pages and then offers an analysis of the policy options that the United States can pursue. This analysis should take into account the ideological and cultural dynamics of the historical period about which you are writing and must demonstrate an understanding of the relevant material from our lectures and course readings. You should conclude with a policy recommendation that is grounded in the evidence you have analyzed. I will provide further details on this assignment in class and on the course website.

Class Presentation: Everyone will present their policy brief in class on October 20 or 22. Your presentation should be 5 minutes long and should outline the foreign policy issue that you examined, present the available policy options, and then make an argument for which policy option you believe the United States should pursue. Be prepared for a question-and-answer period afterward, as your classmates and I (acting as president and president's cabinet) discuss the issue you have presented. Your presentation should include a visual aid, such as a PowerPoint, handout, poster, maps, etc. to help us understand the nature of the issue.

Research Project: Due Monday, December 15. The course will culminate with a primary source-based research paper of 12-15 pages on a topic of your choice, developed in consultation with me. The project will be due during exam period, but we will begin working on it at the beginning of September. Start thinking about topics as early as possible and talk to me about your ideas, especially if you are interested in researching something we have not covered in class yet. As part of the research and writing process, you will turn in to me a topic/question, preliminary annotated bibliography, rough draft, and all of your primary sources. We will also have a session at the library to discuss research resources, such as key databases.

Policies for Written Work

Formatting. All written work must:

- be double-spaced in Times New Roman 12-point font with one-inch margins on each side
- include page numbers
- be submitted in .pdf or .doc format on Canvas

If an assignment does not meet these formatting guidelines, I will return it to you and ask you to reformat it and resubmit it. The resubmitted assignment will be subject to a late penalty.

Citations. All sources MUST be cited according to [Chicago Notes-Bibliography](#) style guidelines. Citation guidelines are available on Canvas. You can also consult the 18th edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, available at Coates Library in the reference section and online through the library catalog.

Late Work.

I am very flexible about extensions for major assignments. If you think you might need an extension on an assignment due to your workload, let me know as soon possible; provided you have asked me in advance (at least 24 hours before the due date), I will be happy to accommodate you. If there are extenuating circumstances (illness, accident, family emergency, etc.) let me know as soon as possible and we will work out a new deadline together. Papers turned in after the deadline and without an extension will be considered late. Late papers will be penalized 1 grade per day (e.g., A- to B+, B- to C+).

GRADING

The final course grade will be determined as follows:

Primary Source Analyses:	10%	Participation:	20%
Policy Brief:	20%	Presentation:	10%
Research Project:	40%		

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

All students are covered by a policy that prohibits dishonesty in academic work. Under the Honor Code, a faculty member will (or a student may) report an alleged violation to the Academic Honor Council. It is the task of the Council to investigate, adjudicate, and assign a punishment within certain guidelines if a violation has been verified. **Students are required to pledge all written work that is submitted for a grade: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this work” and their signature. The pledge may be abbreviated “pledged” with a signature.**

http://www.trinity.edu/departments/academic_affairs/honor_code/index.htm.

All assignments submitted for this course should reflect your own thinking and work. **Any use of generative AI, such as but not limited to Chat GPT, will be considered “unauthorized assistance” and a violation of academic integrity and of the Trinity University Honor Code.** If you have any doubt about whether an action violates the Honor Code, please email me before submitting your assignments. If you are struggling, overwhelmed, or confused please contact me! I am here to help you with the course and guide you through the material. I understand that personal circumstances or unforeseen events can sometimes interfere with your academic work; I will keep any concerns confidential and work with you to ensure your best possible performance in the course.

TITLE IX/SEXUAL MISCONDUCT REPORTING

As a faculty member, I am designated as a Responsible Employee. As such, I am required to report any instances of sexual misconduct or sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator when: 1) I witness or receive information in the course and scope of my employment, 2) this information is about the occurrence of an incident that I reasonably believe is Sexual Harassment or Sexual Misconduct, and 3) the incident is committed by or against someone who was a Trinity university student, employee, or contractor at the time of the incident. This reporting responsibility applies regardless of where the incident occurred (on- or off-campus) and regardless of whether the individual(s) are still affiliated with Trinity.

If you share information with me about any incidents that implicate the [Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#), I am required to report this to the Title IX Coordinator to make sure you have information about support resources and complaint resolution options. My report does not initiate the complaint process, and you are in control over how you choose to engage with our Title IX Coordinator. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, I encourage you to share this information directly with the Title IX Coordinator or one of the individuals who has been designated as a confidential resource on campus. [The reporting form is available here](#) and information about supportive resources is available [here](#).

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Students With Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and will need accommodations in this class, please submit your accommodation letter to me early in the semester so we can discuss how I can best meet

your needs. All discussions will remain confidential. If you have not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact the office at X8528 or SAS@trinity.edu. You must be registered with SAS before I can provide accommodation.

Excused Absences

If you are ill, please email me to let me know so I can excuse your absence. If you experience a family emergency or serious injury or illness, please contact Dr. Kyle Gillette, who will provide help and will contact all of your professors for you.

Electronic Recordings of Classroom Instruction

Please be aware that all classroom instruction, including student participation in classroom activities, is subject to recording and dissemination on the University's secure course management systems (Canvas). The recordings will be made available only to students enrolled in the course to facilitate online learning and review. Students are expressly prohibited from capturing or copying classroom recordings by any means; violations will be subject to disciplinary action. Instructors who wish to use a recording outside of class must obtain the written consent of any students who are personally identifiable in the recording.

ASSIGNED READINGS

All assigned books will be available in the bookstore as well as from online retailers. Articles, films, and primary documents marked with an asterisk (*) in the schedule of weekly meetings below can be accessed electronically through the Canvas course website.

Required Books

Herring, George C. *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1776*. NY: Oxford University press, 2011. [NOTE: If you prefer, you can listen to this book in audiobook format instead]

Suri, Jeremi. *American Foreign Relations Since 1898: A Documentary Reader*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY MEETINGS

Week One: Preludes	
M 8/25	Course Introduction and Major Themes in U.S. Foreign Policy
W 8/27	Prelude to American Imperialism Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eric T. L. Love, "Santo Domingo" <i>Race Over Empire</i>* Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future Secretary of State William H. Seward Dreams of Hemispheric Empire (1860)*• President Ulysses S. Grant Urges Annexation of the Dominican Republic (1870)*• Queen Lili'oukalani Protests U.S. Intervention in Hawai'i (1893, 1897)*

Week Two: Regional Hegemony and the New Empire	
M 9/1	*** NO CLASS – LABOR DAY ***
W 9/3	The Spanish-American-Cuban-Philippine War Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herring, Chapter 8 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suri, Chapter 1, Documents #3, #4 • William McKinley, Message to Congress Requesting a Declaration of War With Spain (11 April 1898)*
Week Three: Internationalism and its Discontents	
M 9/8	The Open Door and the Big Stick Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herring, Chapter 9 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suri, Chapter 1, Documents #1, #2, #5
W 9/10	The U.S. Entry into World War I Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herring, Chapter 10 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suri, Chapter 2, Documents #1, #2, #3
Week Four: Arsenal of Democracy	
M 9/15	The League Fight and Interwar Internationalism Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herring, Chapter 11 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suri, Chapter 2, Documents #4, #6
W 9/17	The U.S. Entry into World War II Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herring, Chapter 12 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suri, Chapter 3, Documents #3, #5 • Japan's Diplomatic Proposals to the United States and the U.S. response, 1941* • Franklin D. Roosevelt's War Message to Congress, 1941*

Week Five: From World War to Cold War	
M 9/22	The U.S. at War and Planning the Peace Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Herring, Chapter 13 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suri, Chapter 4, Documents #1, #2, #3, #4
W 9/24	Origins of the Cold War Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herring, Parts I-III of Chapter 14 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suri, Chapter 5, Documents #1, #2 • <i>Operation Vittles</i> (1948) [watch the short film; the historical context on website is optional to read] <u>***TOPIC/HISTORICAL QUESTIONS FOR RESEARCH PROJECT DUE BY CLASS TIME***</u>
Week Six: Cold Wars, Hot Wars	
M 9/29	** LIBRARY SESSION – Visit to Library and Special Collections ** Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Dudziak, “Josephine Baker, Racial Protest, and the Cold War”
10/1	The Korean War Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herring, Part IV of Chapter 14 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suri, Chapter 5, Documents #3 and #5
Week Seven: Decolonization and Revolutionary Nationalism	
M 10/6	Eisenhower’s “New Look” and Covert Ops in Latin America Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herring, Part IV of Chapter 15 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suri, Chapter 5, Documents #6

W 10/8	Decolonization and Cold War Black Internationalism Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brenda Gayle Plummer, "A New Era," from <i>Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960</i> * Philip E. Muehlenbeck, "The Cold War in Sub-Saharan Africa," <i>A Companion to U.S. Foreign Relations, Volume II</i> * Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suri, Chapter 6, Document #1
Week Eight: Cold War Flashpoints	
M 10/13	The Suez Canal Crisis Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herring, Part III of Chapter 15 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suez Canal Documents Packet
W 10/15	The Cuban Missile Crisis Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herring, Parts I, II, III of Chapter 16 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suri, Chapter 6, Document #6
Week Nine: POLICY BRIEF PRESENTATIONS	
M 10/20	***ALL Policy Briefs Due by Class Time*** Policy Brief Presentations In class: Group 1 Presentations
W 10/22	Policy Brief Presentations In class: Group 2 Presentations
Week Ten: Escalating Crises	
M 10/27	JFK, Johnson, and the War in Vietnam Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herring, Parts IV, V, VI, VII of Chapter 16 Watch the film <i>The Fog of War</i> Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suri, Chapter 6, Documents #7, #9, #10 ***PRELIMINARY ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE***

W 10/29	The Nixon Doctrine Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herring, Parts I and II of Chapter 17 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nixon Doctrine*
Week Eleven: Détente and Its Challengers	
M 11/3	Nixon, Kissinger, and Détente Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herring, Parts III, IV, and V of Chapter 17 Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suri, Chapter 7, Documents #1, #2
W 11/5	Helsinki and the International Human Rights Movement Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herring, Chapter 18, Parts I, II, III, IV Barbara Keys, “Congress, Kissinger, and the Origins of Human Rights Diplomacy,” <i>Diplomatic History</i>* Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suri, Chapter 7, Documents #3, #4, #5
Week Twelve: The Collapse of Détente	
M 11/10	Crises in the Middle East Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melanie McAlister, “Iran, Islam, and the Terrorist Threat, 1979-1989,” in <i>Epic Encounters</i>* Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video clips of Ayatollah Khomeini’s first speech after returning from exile, the hostage crisis rescue mission, and the Camp David Settlement* Carter’s Remarks on Iran and Afghanistan (28 December 1979)*
W 11/12	From Godless Communism to <i>Glasnost</i> Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herring, Chapter 19, Parts I, III, III, and IV Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suri, Chapter 7, Document #6

Week Thirteen: Changing Order	
M 11/17	The End of the Cold War Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suri, Chapter 8, Documents #1, #2, #3, #4 <u>***FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE***</u>
W 11/19	The Gulf War Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herring, Chapter 19, Part V James Mann, <i>Rise of the Vulcans</i>, 179-97* Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suri, Chapter 9, Document #1
Week Fourteen: THANKSGIVING BREAK	
M 11/24	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK
W 11/26	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK
Week Fifteen: New Threats	
M 12/1	The Clinton Years: The Challenges of Globalization Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herring, Chapter 20, Parts I, II Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> President William J. Clinton Applauds America's Globalism and Warns Against a New Isolationism (1995)*
W 12/3	Confronting Genocide in the Balkans, Somalia, and Rwanda Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Bolton, "Wrong Turn in Somalia," <i>Foreign Affairs</i>* Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst, "Somalia and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention," <i>Foreign Affairs</i>* Suri, Chapter 9, Documents #2, #3

Week Sixteen: The War on Terror and Beyond	
M 12/8	9/11 and the “War on Terror” Secondary Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herring, Chapter 20, Parts III, IV • Bob Brigham, “Lessons and Legacies of the War in Iraq”* Primary Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suri, Chapter 10, Documents #3, #5 • Li Chen and Odd Arne Westad, “Can Cold War History Prevent U.S.-Chinese Calamity?”* • Mary E. Sarotte, “I’m a Cold War Historian. We’re in A Frightening New Era”*
Finals Week: Final Draft of Research Paper Due	
M 12/15	<u>***Research Paper Due By 5pm***</u>