History 370/550: American Foreign Relations, 1900–Present
Towson University
Spring 2006

Elizabeth Kelly Gray (egray@towson.edu) M W, 11 a.m.–12:15 p.m.
Linthicum 217 Linthicum 209
Office hours: Mon., 12:30–2 p.m.
Wed., 12:30–2 p.m.
and by appointment
Office: 410-704-2917

Books available for purchase:
Gary R. Hess, *The United States at War, 1941–1945* (Harlan Davidson, 2000)

An additional packet of required sources is available for purchase at the University Store.

Learning objectives:
The United States was rising to international prominence in 1900. In the 20th century, internationalists won out over those who called for restricted American involvement in global affairs. The country fought and helped win two world wars, then fought two more—in Korea and Vietnam—as part of the Cold War effort to prevent the spread of communism. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the United States became the world’s lone superpower. But the Cold War’s simplistic dichotomy (“us versus them”) gave way to a more complicated world, and the attacks of September 11, 2001, have led to a War on Terror. And in the 21st century, the debate continues as to whether the United States should chart its own path or work in concert with other nations.

The history of American foreign relations is undeniably a political story, but it is also an economic, social, and cultural one. Throughout the era under review and to this day, American foreign policy is strongly influenced by the business community’s quest for markets, raw materials, and cheap labor. Wars require the commitment of American soldiers to fight and (usually) public willingness to make homefront sacrifices. When that support wanes, public protests can affect prosecution of war. And American culture strongly influences foreign policy, whether in Americans’ perceptions of their nation’s role in the world, news media presentations of international stories, or popular public perceptions of foreign nations, regions, and peoples.

This course will explore all these aspects of American foreign policy since 1900.

Grading:
1. **Class participation.** Students are expected to attend every class and to arrive prepared.
   “Class participation” comprises posting comments on the Blackboard website and participating in class discussions. 20%
   - By 10 a.m. on each class day, each student will post to the Blackboard website (http://bbweb.towson.edu) a comment or question that the readings raised—the more perceptive, the better. These posts will help form the basis of class discussions. If you cannot post your comment to Blackboard, call my office number (410-704-2917) and leave your comment on my voicemail.
   - Participation in a seminar class is crucial, so I look forward to everybody contributing to class discussions.

2. **Midterm exam.** The midterm exam will be an in-class exam on Wednesday, March 15. 20%

3. **Research paper.** Each student will write a 10–15 page research paper on a topic of some aspect of American foreign relations from 1898 to the present. Students will turn in topics and annotated bibliographies on Monday, March 6, and final drafts on Monday, May 1. 30%
4. **Final exam.** The final exam is scheduled for Friday, May 19, from 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. It will mainly—if not exclusively—cover material from the second half of the course. **30%**

5. **Attendance.** Each student’s final grade will be reduced by one step (e.g., from a B- to a C+) for every three unexcused absences.

Grades on all assignments will be numeric, but your final grade will be a letter grade, and I will include pluses and minuses.

- 93–100 = A
- 90–92 = A–
- 87–89 = B+
- 83–86 = B
- 80–82 = B–
- 77–79 = C+
- 70–76 = C
- 67–69 = D+
- 60–66 = D
- Below 59.5 = F

To ascertain the numeric value of the letter grade to calculate your GPA (i.e., on the 4.0 scale), see the conversion chart on page 25 in the “Academic Regulations” section of the 2005–2006 Undergraduate Catalog.

**Plagiarism and Cheating Policy:**

It is crucial that students do their own work. In order for you to benefit from the course—and to be fair to all students—I will not tolerate academic dishonesty, whether it is in the form of cheating, plagiarism, or other dishonest behaviors. If you lift material from the Internet and paste it into your paper without giving credit to the source, that is a form of plagiarism. If I believe that you have cheated or borrowed another person’s work for an assignment, I will confront you on the matter. If I am not satisfied with your explanation, you will fail the assignment and you may fail the course due to that single infraction.

If you are unclear as to what the different violations are, it is your responsibility to find out. If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, please feel free to see me. I will be happy to explain. Additional information is available at: http://wwwnew.towson.edu/provost/facultyhandbook, ch. 7, pgs. 7-22–7-23.

**The Daily Schedule:**

**Mon., Jan. 30: Introduction**

**Wed., Feb. 1: The Imperial Leap**

**Mon., Feb. 6: American Expansion, Public and Private**

**Wed., Feb. 8: Prelude to World War I**

**Mon., Feb. 13: World War I and the League of Nations**

**Wed., Feb. 15: “Between the Acts”**
Mon., Feb. 20: The 1920s

Wed., Feb. 22: Setting the Stage for World War II

Mon., Feb. 27: World War II

Wed., March 1: World War II

Mon., March 6: Planning the Postwar World
PAPER TOPIC STATEMENT AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Wed., March 8: World War II Ends

Mon., March 13: Reflecting on World War II

Wed., March 15: MIDTERM EXAM
MARCH 19–26: SPRING BREAK

Mon., March 27: Anticommunism

Wed., March 29: The Korean War and Eisenhower

Mon., April 3: The “Third World” and Foreign Aid

Wed., April 5: Vietnam

**Mon., April 10: Choosing War**

**Wed., April 12: Dissent and Vietnam**
“George Kennan Chastises the Student Left” (1968), pgs. 444–47.

**Mon., April 17: Race and Vietnam**

**Wed., April 19: Nixon and Kissinger**
Tom Grace, *From Camelot to Kent State*, pgs. 329–35.
President James L. Fisher, Towson State College Senate document, May 12, 1970.

**Mon., April 24: Carter and the Olympics**

**Wed., April 26: The Age of Rambo**

**Mon, May 1: After the Cold War**
RESEARCH PAPERS DUE IN CLASS

**Wed., May 3: “Between the Acts”**

**Mon., May 8: The War on Terror in Historical Context**

**Wed., May 10: The War on Terror in Historical Context**

**Mon., May 15: Sept. 11 and Beyond**

The final exam is scheduled for Friday, May 19, from 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.