

Department.: Political Science

Course number : POLS 214W

Title : Writing Seminar in Recent American Diplomacy

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Catalog Copy :

POLS 214W. Writing Seminar in Recent American Diplomacy. Second Semester. 1 Credit.

Co-Requisite: Concurrent registration in POLS217. Prerequisite: ENGL 110 or 111 or 250

Course information:

1.POLS 217 is an established course that examines the history of American foreign relations since 1917, concentrating on such major events as World War I, World War I, the Korean War, Cold War, Vietnam, and events after 9/11. The focus is on the processes, sources, ideologies, personalities, and institutions of American foreign policy. The students become acquainted with the debates and controversies engendered by America's behavior in international affairs. The creation of POLS214W as a 1 credit W section for POLS217 would allow students to explore these topics in greater depth and to gain valuable knowledge about the process of historical research.

2.The large main course is basically lecture, with a textbook, 3 collateral paperback readings, two mid-terms, and a final. Students in the main course have the option of substituting short and longer papers for the mid-terms. The students in the one-credit "W" section must write a research design, annotated bibliography, and a 15-25-page paper on a research topic related to American foreign relations since 1914. The process for writing this research paper involves individual feedback from the instructor and extensive revision in order to produce a final draft (as specified below).

3. We cover the historical record of American foreign policy, including the role of presidents as principal decision-makers, critical debates between internationalists and isolationists, the growing role of the military in the making of foreign policy, anti-war protests, economic influences, Congressional attempts to rein in imperial presidents, alternative voices of critics and peace organizations, the expansion of American culture world-wide, and foreign perceptions of America and its global reach.

W Criteria:

- a. The major research paper required for the "W" section students (who are concurrently registered in both POLS217 and POLS214W) enhances learning the historical record by having each student probe a particular event, policy, or decision in considerable depth, weighing choices, evaluating what other scholars have written pro and con, and grappling with the documentary record that is the basis for historical and political judgments. The research paper will complement the diplomatic events and patterns of the last half century that are covered in the lectures, text, collateral readings, and final exam. The research paper is expected to be 15-25 pages in length and is written in two drafts, with substantial revisions after the first draft. A research design and annotated bibliography will be due by the fourth week and will receive extensive comments and suggestions. The first draft will be due the eighth week; again criticisms and suggestions for revisions will be emphasized in individual meetings with the instructor and via written comments.
- b. The primary modes of instruction include extensive written commentary, and we will also focus in class on how to do research in the library, how to use the Internet, how to interpret documents, how to organize a research paper, how to write clear prose, and how to correctly cite sources. The instructor will have at least two individual meetings with students -- first, to discuss research topics and sources; second, to discuss criticisms of the first draft of each student's paper.
- c. The research paper is expected to be 15-25 pages in length and is written in two drafts, with substantial revisions after the first draft. A research design and annotated bibliography will be due by the fourth week and will receive extensive comments and suggestions. The first draft will be due the eighth week; again criticisms and suggestions for revisions will be emphasized in individual meetings with the instructor and via written comments.
- d. 60% of the student's final grade for POLS214W is based solely on their writing assignments. If the student fails the writing assignments, the student will fail the course and will not receive W credit. The syllabus will clearly state this policy.

Role of Grad Students: The department has not relied on graduate students to teach W courses or sections in the past, nor does it intend to do so in the future.

Supplementary Information: -syllabus:

Syllabus -- Political Science 214W

Writing Seminar in Recent American Diplomacy

Must be Concurrently Registered in POLS217

Garry Clifford

This "W" course will be given concurrently with POLS 217 and it covers the history of American foreign relations from the era of World War I until the present day. The classes will consist of lectures and discussion, with emphasis on the former. Students will be expected to keep abreast of the readings. Unlike POLS 217, students in POLS 214W will be expected to write a short research proposal (2-3 pages), an annotated bibliography, and two drafts of a 15-25 page research paper on a topic relating to American foreign relations since 1914, and an in-class presentation. The student also will be expected to attend at least two individual meetings with the instructor -- first, to discuss research design and appropriate primary and secondary sources; and a second meeting to discuss the first draft of the research paper. Students should know that, as part of an intensive writing class, the final research paper will count 60% of the final grade in this course. Failure to pass the course's writing component means that the student will fail the course. The final exam in this course will count 40%.

The substantive purpose of this course, aside from the "W" component, will be to examine the major problems and developments in American foreign policy in the past century beginning with World War I. The focus will be on the foreign policy process, particularly the role of the president as principal statesman and decision-maker. The domestic sources of foreign policy will receive more scrutiny than will the details of events abroad. Intervention in two world wars will be compared. The major foreign policy debates at critical junctures, especially before the two world wars and during the Vietnam conflict, will receive close attention. Bureaucratic politics, the growing role of the armed forces, pressure groups, economic factors, peace movements, nuclear weapons, decolonization, globalization, America's cultural impact abroad -- all will be covered. We will be examining the historical record of American foreign

relations with the purpose of better understanding the ongoing processes and institutions. We will be critical, while at the same time maintaining a sense of humor.

The following required books should be purchased at the UConn COOP: Paterson, Clifford, Hagan, Kisatsky , Maddock : AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS: A HISTORY SINCE 1895 (6th ed. rev.); Link, WILSON ; Herring, AMERICA'S LONGEST WAR ; Maddock , THE NUCLEAR AGE .

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS : By the third week of the course students should have chosen a research topic; by the fifth week they should have written a short research proposal with the main questions to be addressed, along with a tentative bibliography. During this period the student should meet with the instructor to consult about his/her topic and get guidance on sources and research strategies. By the ninth week students should have completed a first draft of their paper. A second meeting with the instructor should occur after the student receives a detailed critique of the first draft. Final drafts of the research paper will be due during the last two weeks when students will give short presentations of their papers in-class.

Regarding research topics, the instructor will make available an extensive list of discrete events, individual actors, diplomatic controversies, treaty negotiations, conferences, bilateral relations, institutional puzzles, diplomatic successes and fiascos, scholarly debates -- in short a substantial number of topics that would make appropriate and do-able research papers. Students may choose a topic that is not on the list, but only after consultation with the instructor.

PRESENTATIONS : The last two classes will be devoted to in-class presentations based on individual research papers. Each class will have five students give a short 5-6 minute presentation of his/her paper, to be followed by a 2-3 critique by a second student. Each student will either present or offer a critique in these last two classes. The instructor will choose who presents and who does the critiques.

PAPER GRADE CALCULATIONS : Each stage of the research paper will be graded (research design and bibliography, first draft, and second draft) but it will be the grade on the final draft of the paper that will count. The earlier grades will give each student a clear sense of what needs to be done to improve the grade on the final draft.

SCHEDULE OF THE WRITING COMPONENT CLASSES

Week 1 -- Introduction to the literature and sources of American Foreign Relations since 1914. Lecture.

Week 2 -- Library Tour. Where are the primary and secondary sources? Finding foreign sources.

Week 3 -- How to use the Internet for the history American foreign relations?

Week 4 -- How to evaluate memoirs and biographies against the documentary record?

Week 5 -- How to interpret diplomatic documents? In-class exercise comparing Robert Kennedy's and Anatoly Dobrynin's differing accounts of their discussions during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Week 6 -- How to organize a research paper. The importance of a clear introduction and conclusion. Samples of what NOT to do.

Week 7 -- Grammar, syntax, and style. When and how to quote primary documents. When and how to quote secondary scholars and when NOT to quote them.

Week 8 -- How to find more sources by culling the most recent bibliographies and footnotes. Key historiographical essays and collections.

Week 9 -- In-class discussion of first drafts. What needs to be done to improve. Individual meetings with the instructor during office hours.

Week 10 -- How the process of editing and revising works. Samples of peer refereeing of book and journal article manuscripts.

Week 11 -- Using film, photography, art, popular media as sources for American foreign relations.

Week 12 -- Finding the sources for recent American foreign relations since 1980? Declassified Documents and the National Security Archive.

Week 13 -- In-class presentations and critiques.

Week 14 -- In-class presentations and critiques.

FINAL EXAM -- TBA