IR 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, and there are many other perspectives as well.

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 “agreed perspective” and the seminar is designed to encourage a lively interchange of views.

Requirements:

A) Reading: Assignments are on the attached list.

B) Short Paper: A five-page paper will be due October 4. This paper is to explore potential topics for the major paper.


D) Exam: There will be a Mid-Term Exam on October 25 but no Final Exam.

E) Class Participation: Each student will be expected to participate fully in class discussion.
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**What is an Empire?**

1. **Different Types of Empires:**  
   Sept. 13
   - J. Fairbank  *The Chinese World Order*, 1-14
   - N. Ferguson  *Empire: The Rise & Demise of the British World Order*, Chpts. 1,6, Conclusion
   - P. Kennedy  *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, Chpts. 1,2

2. **U.S. Behavior as an Empire:**  
   Sept. 20
   - C. Krauthammer  "The Unipolar Moment Revisited," *National Interest*, Winter 2002/03, 5-17

3. **1790-1865: The U.S. Vulnerable to Other Empires:**  
   Sept. 27
   - D. Merrill and T. Paterson  *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations: Vol. 1*,  
     Chapt. 3  "The Great Debate of the 1790s"
     Chapt. 6  "The Monroe Doctrine"
     Chapt. 8  "Manifest Destiny"
Four Opportunities for Empire:

4. 1898:
   Oct. 4
   - Chapt. 11 "Becoming a World Power"
   - Chapt. 12 "The Spanish American War"
   - Chapt. 13 "The Open Door Policy to China"

5. 1919:
   Oct. 11
   M. Macmillan, *Paris - 1919*, Chapts. 1,2,4,6,30
   - Chapt. 2 "W. Wilson & the League of Nations"
   - Chapt. 3 "The 1920s"

6. 1945:
   Oct. 18

7. Mid-Term Exam
   Oct. 25

8. Post-1991:
   Nov. 1
   S. Hook and J. Spanier, *American Foreign Policy Since World War II*, Chapts. 9-14
   A. Bacevich, *American Empire*, Chaps. 5,6
   *National Interest*, Spring 2003, 17-28
American Dominance:

9. Cultural: Nov. 8

J. Nye  The Paradox of American Power, Chapt. 1

J. Kurth  "Migration and the Dynamics of Empire," National Interest, Spring 2003, 5-16

S. Huntington  "The Hispanic Challenge," Foreign Policy, March / April 2004, 30-45

10. Diplomatic: Nov. 15

F. Zakaria  The Future of Freedom, Chapt. 1, 2, 4

B. Lewis  What Went Wrong? Chapt. 1-3

11. Economic: Nov. 22


N. Ferguson & L. Kotlikoff  "Going Critical," National Interest, Fall 2003, 22-3


12. Military: Nov. 29


S. Hersh  "Selective Intelligence," The New Yorker, May 12, 2003, 44-50


13. Presentation of Papers: Dec. 6, 13