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Office hours are online – see Canvas for details

# America and the World

Rutgers University – Newark

21:790:202

Fall 2021

Tuesdays 2:40 – 5:10, BRD 311

Course Description: This course will explore the history and politics of American imperial expansion, past and present, in order to understand America's role in the world. In the course, we will learn about distinct phases in American territorial expansion, as well as other forms of imperialism. Students will be invited to ask questions such as: what constitutes an empire and what is imperialism? Has the US been, and does it continue to be, imperialist? We will seek to answer these questions historically, by looking at the role of the US in multiple parts of the world, including the settler context. We will inquire into how the history of American settler and foreign policy impacts contemporary global politics. Finally, we will study resistances to American imperialism throughout the semester.

*Welcome to class!*

## **Texts:**

You do not need to purchase any textbooks for this class. All readings will be posted online on Canvas. Please make sure you have access to readings during class time.

**Important Dates** (such as add/drop dates) can be found at this website:

<https://registrar.newark.rutgers.edu/office-registrar-fall-academic-calendar>

## Learning Objectives:

- To gain historical knowledge of different phases and forms of American interventionism using grounded case studies
- To promote critical thinking in assessing America's role in the world
- To develop and critically question different conceptual tools that are used to understand America's position in the world
- The ability to interpret course materials and demonstrate creative thinking
- Improvement of reading and writing skills
- Enhancement of time-management skills
- The development of translational skills: taking what you have learned in class and translating and synthesizing that knowledge into different formats, such as multimedia outputs
- To professionalize students and foster forward-thinking in preparation for their future and present careers, including working cooperatively and self-reflexively

## Assessment:

Assessment	Date	Value
Class activities	Throughout the semester	10%
Test 1	Oct 5	20%
Test 2	Nov 2	20%
Test 3 (cumulative)	Nov 23	30%
Group Project on Resistance	Nov 30 & Dec 7	20%

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Class activities:** This component of your grade (10%) will reward you for your active engagement in the class, for example through participation in activities in class or online on the Canvas site for the course. It takes the place of an attendance/participation grade, given that the Covid-19 pandemic may make student attendance more difficult than usual. There will be multiple opportunities to earn this grade throughout the semester.

**Test 1, 2, and 3:** These tests are worth 20%, 20% and 30% (the last test is cumulative). The purpose of these tests is to reward students for making connections between the topics for each week. Tests will be comprised of different assessment types, such as multiple choice, short answer and essay-style questions. Students have the option to submit *group answers* to the test – that is, you may choose to work either individually or in groups (for example, working together in Google Docs). If you choose to work in a group, be aware that all group members are equally responsible for reviewing your test and ensuring there are no issues with academic integrity in all sections of it. More information on this option will be provided prior to the first test.

**Group Project on Resistance Movements:** This assignment will make up 20% of your final grade, and will be broken down into: a group plan (5%), a presentation (10%) and a reflection piece (5%). The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to work in groups to learn more about resistance to American imperialism past and present. Further instructions will be provided in class and on Canvas.

#### **Important information:**

- ❖ Students should be aware of the services of [The Writing Centre](#). The Writing Center offers writing tutoring and writing workshops to all undergraduate students currently enrolled in classes.
  
- ❖ All students are required to be familiar with, and adhere to, the University's Academic Integrity Policy (see the University's [Academic Integrity site](#)). Students who commit plagiarism will be reported to the Academic Integrity Facilitator, and may be subject to sanction. It is your responsibility to be fully familiar with the University's policy on academic integrity.

#### **Access and Basic Needs**

We expect that students in this class have many different physical, mental, sensorial and emotional ways of being in the classroom. As a class, we will collectively attend to and respect all these needs. We encourage you to bring your accessibility needs up with either professor and/or with the class in order to begin a conversation about how we can collectively make the classroom and the course more accessible. If you are a student who registers or would like to register with the [Office of Disability Services](#) (973-353-5300) you may contact that office directly. If you are comfortable, you may also be in touch with either or both professors directly to inform us of ways that we can make your classroom experience more accessible.

## Learning (and teaching) during pandemic times:

Students should familiarize themselves with university policies concerning re-opening and in-person learning. In order to protect the health and well-being of all members of the Rutgers-Newark community, **masks must be worn** by all persons inside campus buildings when in the presence of others, and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common workspaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Masks should securely cover the nose and mouth. Masks must be worn during class meetings. Each day before you arrive on campus or leave your residence hall, you must complete the brief survey on the My Campus Pass symptom checker self-screening app found at: [myRutgers Portal](#).

As your professors we are here to teach you about all kinds of fascinating material – please, let's all do our part so that the professors don't have to be 'cops' in the classroom and we can all focus on our purposes for being here: to teach and to learn.

Because we will be wearing masks in class, eating and drinking in class will not be possible. However, you are welcome to attend to these needs by leaving the class as and when you need for brief periods of time.

We will all be doing our best in the current challenging circumstances, including possible technological, health, work, or family challenges. If you experience significant barriers to participating in the class, please reach out to us if you have the capacity to do so, and we will do our best to make this class work for everyone! In other words, this class will be guided by an *ethos of compassion* for each other.

Please do not come to class if you are feeling unwell – you will not be punished for keeping yourself and others safe.

## Fairness Policy:

To ensure fairness, students are expected to take tests and submit their assignments on time. To ensure that the class is fair and functional, there will be **no make-up tests and no late assignments will be accepted**. If you face exceptional circumstances such as a major illness, accident, or death of a family member, please contact Professor Gambino ([rg711@scarletmail.rutgers.edu](mailto:rg711@scarletmail.rutgers.edu)) as soon as possible and we will find a way to make the course work in the face of such exceptional circumstances. Please do reach out: we can't help you if you don't communicate with us!

Fairness is a two-way street, and so students can expect the following: that we will be available for office hours by appointment, that the course will be run in an orderly and productive way,

that we will respond to your emails within 3 days (feel free to follow-up if you have not received a response), that the class website will be up-to-date, and that you will generally get your test results back within a week. For students having difficulties with time-management or facing other challenges, we can work together to create a plan to get you on-track.

In sum, please let us know as soon as possible if you are facing any difficulties and we will work together to have a fun and productive semester!

### **Anti-Oppression Practice**

This classroom is an anti-oppressive space. Collectively, we will not tolerate racism, sexism, ageism, classism, ableism or queer or trans-phobia and we will work together to create an open, welcoming space that encourages teaching and learning. There are no universal principles for creating a perfectly anti-oppressive space, so we'll commit to working towards that goal by learning from and respecting each other. Here are some ways that you can contribute to creating and fostering this anti-oppressive space:

- First and foremost, we will take an anti-hierarchal approach to creating an anti-oppressive space. As the professor, I commit to helping to create a safer, accessible space for all students. I also commit to learn from you, as much as I teach, about what makes an anti-oppressive, safer, accessible space.
- Recognize that each one of us is approaching this from a different position. We all have the right to 'not know' and to make mistakes.
- Do not use ableist, sanist, sexist, racist, ageist, queer-phobic, and/or trans-phobic language, jokes, or remarks. If you are not sure about this, please ask.
- Use content notices when showing or discussing something that could potentially make another feel unsafe and/or deals with violent themes (this includes the portrayal of racism, ableism, etc., even if physical violence is not portrayed).
- Recognize the way we take up space. Think about: how much are we talking? how much are others in the room talking? how much are we listening? what are some of the ways we can facilitate everyone to participate in ways that are comfortable to them?

Everyone in the class (students, professors, and guests) have the right:

- To be respected, to have their culture respected, and to have their opinion respected (and also challenged);
- To feel safer in the classroom by the terms they define;
- Be called by their gender pronoun;
- To ask questions and to be challenged;
- To have their confidentiality respected;

- Not to be treated as an ‘informant’; as much as we encourage asking questions, please do not expect that your classmates want to answer on behalf of their gender, ethnicity, disability, community, culture, family, etc. Questions along the lines of, ‘what does it feel like to be you’ tend not to be appropriate. Feel free to ask the professors any questions you may have;
- To make mistakes.

Let’s compassionately hold one another - as well as ourselves - accountable.

### **SCHEDULE OF TOPICS**

**\*All readings and materials will be posted on the course Canvas website.\*** Readings will be diverse, including: academic articles, newspaper articles, illustrated histories, and primary (historical) documents.

**Week 1 [Sept 7]:** Introductory Class

**Week 2 [Sept 14]:** Key Concepts for Studying America and the World

**Week 3 [Sept 21]:** Settler Colonialism, Indigeneity and American Imperialism

**Week 4 [Sept 28]:** American Imperialism, Legacies of Enslavement and Revolution

**Week 5 [Oct 5]:** TEST 1 – ONLINE ON CANVAS

**Week 6 [Oct 12]:** America in the Pacific (Hawaii Case Study)

**Week 7 [Oct 19]:** Spanish-American War and Puerto Rico

**Week 8 [Oct 26]:** America as a Nuclear Power

**Week 9 [Nov 2]:** TEST 2 – ONLINE ON CANVAS

**Week 10 [Nov 9]:** America in the Middle East, Covert Operations and Occupation

**Week 11 [Nov 16]:** Contemporary Imperialism? America’s Global Network of Military Bases

**Week 12 [Nov 23]:** TEST 3 – ONLINE ON CANVAS

**Week 13 [Nov 30]:** Group work on Resistance Movements Project

**Week 14 [Dec 7]:** Group Presentations

This course has received an 'Open and Affordable Textbooks' (OAT) Program award from the Rutgers University Libraries. The OAT Program supports textbook affordability at Rutgers by encouraging courses to adopt educational materials that are freely available, available at a low cost (compared to similar courses), or part of the Rutgers University Libraries' electronic collections, and thereby free of charge to Rutgers University students. As a student in this course, you will be asked to provide feedback on this initiative at the end of the semester.