

## Presentation Assignment: U.S. Foreign Policy since 1945

### Rationale

The purpose of the presentation assignment is to:

- *Vary assessment methods.* This presentation assignment offers an opportunity for alternative assessment, which allows students to demonstrate proficiency beyond essay-writing and multiple-choice testing.
- *Develop ability to analyze historiographical debates in depth.* This presentation assignment requires students to analyze a historiographical debate in depth, using a range of resources including textbooks, monographs, articles, and visual media.
- *Develop transferable skills.* The ability to plan and deliver a case orally, using supporting technology, are not only key skills in the context of history classes but also useful (if not essential) for many jobs.

### Presentation Skills

Students should consider how they can maximize the impact of their presentation:

- *Know the task.* The question is clearly defined, so the presentation must address the salient issues.
- *Produce supporting documentation.* The presentation may be quickly forgotten unless the audience has something to take away that will remind them of the main points that have been covered. [A discussion exercise is required.]
- *Be confident.* Students should not feel intimidated by the experience of giving a paper; everyone else will have to take their turn, so students should not feel that peers will be unduly critical.
- *Be imaginative.* Students should not simply aim to write an essay and then read this out to the rest of the group. In order to make presentations more interesting students could:
  - (a) introduce handouts for the rest of the group to read (your discussion exercise should contain extracts from books and articles that indicate aspects of relevant historiographical debates);
  - (b) ask questions of your audience and invite them to ask you questions;
  - (c) use PowerPoint to show images as well as text;
  - (d) use a film or documentary clip.

Use your study skills guide section 4 “Using the Internet for academic purposes” and section 5 “Preparing and delivering a presentation”.

### Assessment Criteria

The quality of presentations will be assessed in relation to five categories: (a) structure; (b) argument; (c) delivery; (d) visual resources; and (e) written resources. There are 40 points available in each category and a total of 200 points is therefore available for this presentation task, which is weighted at 20%.

## Presentation Topic

Analyze U.S. foreign policy since 1945 towards any ONE of the following regions: (a) Europe; (b) the Middle East; (c) Asia; (d) Africa; (e) Latin America.

## Indicative Content

The presentation should provide an analysis of the following aspects of U.S. foreign policy in relation to the selected region:

- *Influences on policy.* How have economic interests, security considerations, ideological commitments, the policy making apparatus, interest groups and public opinion conditioned U.S. foreign policy towards the selected region?
- *Ways and means.* How has the United States used different methods – such as bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, alliances, economic sanctions, aid and development assistance, intelligence, subversion, and force – in support of its foreign policy objectives in the selected region?
- *Continuity and change.* To what extent has U.S. foreign policy towards the selected region remained stable over time? What explains the degree of continuity or change in U.S. foreign policy towards the selected region? How and why might relations with the selected region change in future?
- *Achievements and limitations.* To what extent has U.S. foreign policy in the selected region been characterized by success or failure? How should this be measured?

Presentations should attempt to provide an overview of relations with the selected region, emphasizing the main themes, rather than focusing narrowly on bilateral relations with particular countries within the selected region.

## Some Suggested Resources

Use the general books on U.S. foreign policy listed below as a starting point by referencing their notes and bibliographies to locate additional reliable sources on the region you have selected. Confer with your instructor and a reference librarian to find reliable resources.

### (a) Books

Stephen E. Ambrose and Douglas Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy Since 1938* (New York: Penguin, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. 2010)

Frank Costigliola and Michael J. Hogan (eds), *America in the World: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations Since 1941* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2013)

Alan P. Dobson and Steve Marsh, *U.S. Foreign Policy Since 1945* (New York: Routledge, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2006)

Martin E. Goldstein, *America's Foreign Policy: Drift or Decision?* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly resources, 1984)

HIS 202 Presentation Assignment: Reynolds (2009), Ch. 13-18 *passim*  
This is also a HIS 354 and POL 401 topic

Peter L. Hahn and Mary Ann Heiss (eds) *Empire and Revolution: The United States and the Third World Since 1945* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2001)

George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1776* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008)

Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Patterson (eds), *Explaining the History of America's Foreign Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2004)

Stephen W. Hook and John Spainer, *American Foreign Policy Since World War II* (Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press, 19<sup>th</sup> ed. 2012)

Stephen W. Hook, *US Foreign Policy: The Paradox of World Power* (Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2013)

Michael Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2009)

Walter LaFeber, *The American Age. U.S. foreign policy at home and abroad, 1750 to the present* (New York: Norton, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1994)

Dennis Merrill and Thomas G. Patterson (eds) *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations Vol. II Since 1914* (Boston, MA: Cengage, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. 2010)

Jurgen Ruland, Eva Manske, and Theodor Hanf (eds) *U.S. Foreign Policy Toward the Third World: A Post-cold War Assessment* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2005)

David Ryan, *US Foreign Policy in World History* (New York: Routledge, 2000)

Robert D. Schulzinger (ed.), *Blackwell Companion to American Foreign Relations* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006)

Robert D. Schulzinger, *U.S. Diplomacy Since 1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. 2008)

Eugene R. Wittkopf, Christopher M. Jones, and Charles W. Kegley, *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process* (Boston, MA: Cengage, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. 2007)

#### (b) Articles

There are thousands of articles on the history of U.S. foreign relations and foreign policy in dozens of academic journals. *Diplomatic History*, the journal of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAHR), is central to the historiography of this field and students are expected to use relevant articles from that journal.

#### (c) Web resources

Council on Foreign Relations, available at: <http://www.cfr.org/>

H-Diplo, available at: <https://networks.h-net.org/h-diplo>

HIS 202 Presentation Assignment: Reynolds (2009), Ch. 13-18 *passim*  
This is also a HIS 354 and POL 401 topic

Royal Institute of International Affairs, available at: <http://www.chathamhouse.org/>

Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, available at: <https://shafr.org/>

U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, available at: <http://history.state.gov/>

Also see relevant web links in the EDU Social Studies Student Community, POL 401 International Relations, "POL 401 General Resources" folder.

Students will need to conduct internet-based research for this assignment, for maps and illustrations as well as bibliographic material. Please refer to the History Study Skills guide section 4, "Using the internet for academic purposes." If students find an electronic source that they wish to use and have any questions about the reliability of the material found online, they should consult their instructor.