

American Studies 228

The Contemporary American: The Global War on Terrorism

Fall Semester 2014 Index 14080
Mondays & Thursdays 10:55 to 12:15
Ruth Adams Building, Room 001
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Complete syllabus is available on American Studies Website:
<http://amerstudies.rutgers.edu>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanStudiesAtRutgersNewBrunswick>
TWITTER: @RUAmerStudies
SITE: <http://amerstudies.rutgers.edu/>

Learning Goals:

Students completing this course should be able to

- Identify relevant factual material concerning world power competition
- Detect bias in data presented in various forms: graphics, tabular, visual, print
- Compare and contrast credibility of differing accounts of the same event
- Identify alternative courses of action & predict likely consequences of each

In satisfying my course learning goals, above, you will fulfill these core goals for Social Analysis and Arts and the Humanities—

(SCL) Understand the bases and development of human and social endeavors across time and place.

(SCL) Understand the different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.

(AH) Analyze arts and/or literature in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, culture, and technologies.

**“We are not fighting so that you will offer us something. We are fighting to eliminate you.”
--Hussein Massawi, former head of the Hezbollah, about the Western world.**

Course Synopsis

The War on Terror, also known as the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) is a term which has been applied to an international military campaign that started after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States. This resulted in an international military campaign to eliminate al-Qaeda and other militant organizations. We will focus on two theaters of operations—Iraq and Afghanistan. By hearing from many different narrators, we will hopefully learn more about American culture in the period under discussion. We will read, watch, and listen to a variety of academic and popular sources in order to ask broader questions about what it means to be an American in today’s world. Moreover, we will do what intellectuals do: talk, think, and write.

Sakai Software for Course Management

Sakai is a free and open source Courseware Management System. It features a set of software tools designed to help instructors, researchers and students collaborate online in support of their work--whether it be course instruction, research or general project collaboration. For coursework, Sakai provides features to supplement and enhance teaching and learning. For collaboration, Sakai has tools to help organize communication and collaborative work on campus and around the world. The Sakai CLE is a free and open source Courseware Management System. It features a set of software tools designed to help instructors, researchers and students collaborate online in support of their work--whether it be course instruction, research or general project collaboration. Many students have Gmail, aol, yahoo, etc. email accounts that you check regularly, but Sakai is set up through their RUID and Eden accounts. If you don't check their Eden emails, you may miss important announcements from me.

Controversial Material

Some of our books and films deal with mature subject matter that may make some people uncomfortable. Some films may contain nudity, sexual situations, violence, profanity, substance abuse and disturbing images. Students who are able to deal with discomfort for the purpose of learning are welcome in this course. Our kind of college work dealing with contemporary matters frequently entails encounters with ideas that some may view as offensive in some way. We have strived to select materials that offer significant learning opportunities. You should strive to overcome whatever discomfort or confusion you might feel in order to learn as much as you can from the experience. Stretching your mind to make it stronger can be compared to stretching a muscle to make it stronger. Some materials have been included in this course not because I necessarily agree with them but because they offer good learning opportunities.

“We can forgive the Arabs for killing our children. We cannot forgive them for forcing us to kill their children. We will only have peace with the Arabs when they love their children more than they hate us.”

--Golda Meir in 1977

Course Requirements and Expectations

This is a reading-intensive course. There are required readings for every class meeting. Specific page numbers are assigned day by day. You are expected to do the reading for a given day before coming to class so as to be prepared to discuss that reading intelligently. Failure to do the readings will most likely lead to failure on exams and papers. Students who find this reading load excessive might want to seek out other academic pursuits. There will be a midterm and a final exam. The exams will test your ability to identify key names, places, and phrases from the texts we have read and the documentary films that we have viewed. Regular attendance will be essential to your success in this course. You are expected to have an active Rutgers email account @eden.rutgers.edu.

Required Texts

The following books are available at the Cook- Douglass Bookstore on Lipman Drive and at the Rutgers University Bookstore at the Ferren Mall downtown and at New Jersey Books on Somerset Street on the College Avenue Campus:

1. Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam*. New York: Random House, 2004.
ISBN 0-8129-6785-2 paperback
2. Noah Berlatsky, Editor, *Afghanistan*. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2011.
ISBN 13-978-0-7377-5103-7 paperback
3. Tom Lansford, Editor, *The War in Iraq*. Detroit: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009.
ISBN 13-978-0-7337-4163-6 paperback

Absence Policy

Time has meanings that speak loud and clear in any organization. It tells the organization whether you care or not. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Please come up to the front of the room and check in before you take your seat. If you arrive late, be sure to check in after class before you leave. Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website which appears below: <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

Weather Emergency Information

When announcements are made, campus status information will also be available through:

RU-info Channel on RU-tv 3
RU-info Call Center at 732-445-INFO (4636)
Texting "Rutgers" to 66746
Rutgers University Facebook page
Rutgers University Twitter (@RutgersU)

For more information about the university's policy concerning adverse weather conditions, please visit <http://emergency.rutgers.edu/weather.shtml>.

Campus status information will also be available through these radio stations and their websites:

New Jersey 101.5 (FM)
WCTC Radio (1450 AM)
WCBS Radio (880 AM)
The Breeze Radio (107.1 and 99.7 FM)
WRNJ Radio (1510 AM, 104.7 and 92.7 FM)
WRSU Radio (88.7 FM)

Additional weather resources from New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station:
Hurricane and Flood Resources
Disasters and Emergencies

Please be advised that the University is rarely closed except under severe conditions such as hurricane or blizzard. If the University is open, both residents and commuters are expected to attend all scheduled classes and exams. If you are not present when the University is officially open, it will be counted as an UNEXCUSED ABSENCE. Please make your travel plans accordingly.

Office Hours

My office is in the basement of the Ruth Adams Building on the Douglass Campus, Room 024. The departmental telephone is 848.932.9174. My office hours are on Mondays and Thursdays from 2:00 to 3:00 pm, or by appointment. If you cannot reach me at this time, please leave a message on my direct line at 848.932.1630, and I will contact you or you can email me (agillespie@amst.rutgers.edu).

Film Study

We shall be screening one important nonfiction documentary film.. We will discuss the cultural contexts for this film (why it was made and what it tells us about the social concerns of the period) and the theoretical questions they raise, including drawing the line between fiction and

non-fiction. Most importantly, we will ask the question: Is there such a thing as unbiased presentation? Since the quality of your written work will crucially depend upon first-hand knowledge of each film, we encourage you to view the film twice--once in class and later at the media room of the Douglass Library where the films will be placed on reserve after being shown in class. You should always try to view a film twice, since you pick up many subtleties the second time. In most cases, we will prepare a take-home study guide that will be put online. These study guides may prove useful in preparing for the examinations. They will not be turned in or graded, but they should be answered completely.

Grading

There will be a midterm exam halfway through the course which counts for 30% of your grade and a final exam during the exam period, which counts for 50% of your grade. The other 20% of your grade will come from the assessment term paper. However, attendance is also a factor. If you need to be absent from class for a legitimate reason, notify me either in advance or with proper documentation after the fact. Beyond this, however, you miss class at your own risk. Note that "legitimate reasons" include medical problems, family emergencies and the like; they do not include broken vehicles, scheduling problems at work, or late trains. Life sometimes does get in the way of attending class, but if you think you may be absent more than two or three times during the semester then it would be better if you took a different course.

Examinations

The midterm covers the first half of the course with a number of objective questions. The final covers the second half of the course. In addition to a number of objective (multiple choice) questions, the final will also give you a chance to write two essays to demonstrate your skill at handling ideas. Attendance at both the midterm and final examinations is mandatory and required. This obligation must have top priority if you expect to receive credit for the course. Be sure to arrange your work schedule and your personal schedule accordingly. If you do not take the exams, you will not get credit for the course. The exams will be given at the scheduled time only. There are no alternate dates or make-ups. You may be excused only for illness that requires hospitalization or a documented death in your immediate family. Unless there is a drastic emergency of this nature that can be substantiated and documented, we expect you to attend and take the exams on schedule.

In the belief that proper crib preparation is indistinguishable from studying, I have institutionalized and legalized the crib sheet for *both the midterm and the final exams* in this course. You are allowed to use a legal crib sheet. My purpose is to reduce exam anxiety and to encourage good study habits. The rules are as follows:

- @ Both sides of a single 8 1/2" X 11" piece of paper may be used.
- @ Cribs must be written by hand--not typed--and signed.
- @ The crib sheet is to be turned in with the exam.

Assessment Term Paper

We are looking for a 1,000 word paper of about four typewritten pages. Papers will be evaluated on their merit--credit is not given merely because papers were completed. Papers must be generated on the computer or typewritten. Use Times New Roman in 12-point type with one-inch margins all around. No cover sheet please. Simply type your name, the course name, the instructor's name, and the date, each item on its own line, single-spaced, in the upper right hand corner of page 1. Double space down to the paper's title. Double space thereafter. Follow either the MLA (Modern Language Association) or Chicago Manual of Style guidelines for the manuscript, citations, and works cited (bibliography). Grading will be based on content, organization, development, style, and correctness. Carefully proofread for spelling, typography, punctuation, and grammar.

First Option: Identify someone who has served overseas in either the Afghanistan or Iraq conflicts from 2001 to the present. This person might be a military veteran, a civilian contractor, a translator, or a diplomat. Here you will try to capture recollections of life experiences and of memorable moments. We are interested not only in the veteran's wartime experiences but also in his or her impressions of the Middle East. How did they tell the good guys from the bad guys? Were there any opportunities to meet the people? To win hearts and minds? Or was the entire experience combat oriented? Would your veteran want to return to that country years later as a tourist if peace were to prevail? For additional questions and hints be sure to visit this website: <http://www.loc.gov/vets/questions.html> In writing this paper, you should refer back to the learning goals stated on the first page of this syllabus.

Second Option: This will be an exercise in counterfactual history, also sometimes referred to as virtual history, is a form of historiography that attempts to answer "what if" questions known as counterfactuals. It seeks to explore history and historical incidents by means of extrapolating a timeline in which certain key historical events did not happen or had an outcome which was different from that which did in fact occur. You have two choices within this option. Try to answer the question: What if the U.S. did not invade Iraq? OR, What if the U.S. did not invade Afghanistan? In writing this paper, you should refer back to the learning goals stated on the first page of this syllabus.

Format. Papers should be word-processed, double spaced, in Times New Roman, 12-point font, and have one-inch margins. Your name and the name of the book you are analyzing should be placed in the upper right-hand corner of your first page. Be sure to place page numbers on each page. Please staple all pages together. Please do not use folders or binders, since they are too bulky.

Writing Guidelines You may wish to consult the American Studies Department website, which has useful information and suggestions on writing essays and term papers in American Studies:

<http://amerstudies.rutgers.edu/students-menu/writing-guidelines>

Sources and Plagiarism. If you use any sources for words or ideas, you must give them full credit in footnotes or endnotes. Plagiarism is a serious offense in this course and according to Rutgers University regulations. If you appropriate another person's ideas or words in any manner whether by restatement or direct quotation without acknowledging your source, you will commit plagiarism. The penalties for plagiarism in this course are as follows: a zero on any plagiarized writing, which may result in failure of the course and a report to the dean.

For plagiarism policy you can refer to Academic Integrity at Rutgers:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers>

Classroom Etiquette

You should be considerate of your instructors and classmates. For your own benefit you should try to arrive on time for each class. If you are unavoidably late, please enter by the rear door so as not to disrupt everyone else's viewing. Again for your own benefit you should stay for the complete screening of each film. If something comes up such that you must leave early, speak to me about the situation beforehand, and leave by the rear entrance. Please turn off all cell phones, watch alarms and pagers and put them away during class. Please do not use cell phones to send or receive text messages during class. The use of laptop computers during class is only for taking notes in this course. If you wish to use a laptop, *you must first get permission from me*. Then you must agree not to use your laptop to work on other courses, check your email, or engage in other distracting activities. I reserve the right to forbid laptop usage if it is abused or if it distracts me or other students.

Advising

I will do my best to keep an eye on you and to call you out if I think you look like you need help, but there are a lot of you and just one of me. It is therefore really up to you to come to me if you need help--on anything. I come to class early not just to take attendance but also to be available to talk. I have brief office hours during the break, but we can set up appointments then for longer meetings at mutually convenient times. If you have course conflicts, I can arrange alternate meeting times, just ask. I am happy to help you with course materials, paper and exam preparation, with planning your future, internships, picking a graduate school, and with navigating the Rutgers bureaucracy. Perhaps, most important, I'm a fairly good listener if you need someone safe to talk to, and I can help you find help if you need it.

Disability Services

All special accommodation requests must be brought to my attention during the first two weeks of class. You may contact the Office of Disability Services and ask to speak with a Coordinator (848-445-6800 or dsoffice@echo.rutgers.edu) to discuss accommodations.

Course Schedule

Thr Sept 04	Course Introduction and Review of Geography Introduction to the Middle East Part One, PP Lecture by AKG
Mon Sept 08	Introduction to the Middle East Part Two, PP Lecture by AKG Complete and fill in outline map of the Middle East before class. Read <i>The Crisis of Islam</i> , maps, introduction, pp. 3-63 before class.
Thr Sept 11	History of the Modern Middle East Part One, PP Lecture by AKG Read <i>The Crisis of Islam</i> , pp. 64-112 before class.
Mon Sept 15	History of the Modern Middle East Part Two, PP Lecture by AKG Read <i>The Crisis of Islam</i> , pp. 113-169 before class.
Thr Sept 18	Islamic Fundamentalism Part One, Lecture by AKG
Mon Sept 22	Guest Lecture: Professor Laura Browder, University of Richmond Author: "When Janey Comes Marching Home"
Thr Sept 25	Islamic Fundamentalism, Part Two, Lecture by AKG
Mon Sept 29	Understanding Iraq, Part One, PP Lecture by AKG Read <i>The War in Iraq</i> , Chapter 1 The Iraq War & International Relations
Thr Oct 2	Understanding Iraq, Part Two, PP Lecture by AKG Read <i>The War in Iraq</i> , Chapter 2 The Iraq War & the Arab-Israeli Conflict
Mon Oct 6	Understanding Iraq, Part Three, PP Lecture by AKG Read <i>The War in Iraq</i> , Chapter 3 The Iraq War & International Terrorism
Thr Oct 9	Understanding Iraq, Part Four, PP Lecture by AKG Read <i>The War in Iraq</i> , Chapter 4 The Iraq War & Democracy
Mon Oct 13	Understanding Iraq, Part Five, PP Lecture by AKG
Thr Oct 16	Understanding Iraq, Part Six, PP Lecture by AKG Review for Midterm Examination
Mon Oct 20	MIDTERM EXAMINATION
Thr Oct 23	Understanding Afghanistan, Part One, PP Lecture by AKG Read "The Taliban are Winning," p. 21 ff Read "The Taliban are not Winning," p. 27 ff

- Mon Oct 27 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Two, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “The U.S. Must Increase its Military Presence,” p. 32 ff
 Read “The U.S. Should not Send More Troops,” p 43 ff
- Thr Oct 30 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Three, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “Afghan Security Forces Must be Made Read,” p. 57 ff
 Read, “Afghan Security Forces Will Not Soon be Ready,” p. 67 ff
- Mon Nov Understanding Afghanistan, Part Four, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “The U.S. Makes Little Effort to Prevent Casualties,” p. 81 ff
 Read “It is Difficult for the U.S. to Limit Casualties,” p. 88 ff
- Thr Nov 6 Screening: “Rethink Afghanistan” by Robert Greenwald
 Read “The U.S. Must Stay in Afghanistan,” p. 95 ff
 Read “The U.S. Presence in Afghanistan Does Little,” p. 100 ff
- Mon Nov 10 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Five, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “Freedom of the Press is Improving,” p. 107 ff
 Read “Freedom of the Press is not Improving,” p. 114 ff
- Thr Nov 13 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Six, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “The Afghan People Want Democracy,” p. 123
 Read “Afghanistan is Not Ready for Democracy,” p. 128
- Mon Nov 17 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Seven, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “Hamid Karzai is a Legitimate Afghan President,” p. 134 ff
 Read “Hamid Karzai’s Regime is Illegitimate,” p. 140 ff
- Thr Nov 20 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Eight, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “Important Gains Can Be Made,” p. 146 ff
 Read “Important Gains Cannot be Made,” p. 159 ff
- Mon Nov 24 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Nine, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “The Taliban Rely on Drug Money,” p. 170 ff
 Read “Drug Money does Not Go Primarily to the Taliban,” p. 184 ff
- Tues Nov 25 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Ten, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “The U.S. Must Eradicate Poppy Crops,” p. 193 ff
 Read “The U.S. Should Concentrate on Interdiction,” p. 199 ff
- Mon Dec 1 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Eleven, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “Neither Eradication nor Interdiction,” p. 205 ff
- Thr Dec 4 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Twelve, PP Lecture by AKG
 Read “Poppies Should be Legalized in Afghanistan,” p. 21

Mon Dec 8 Understanding Afghanistan, Part Thirteen, PP Lecture by AKG
Conclusion and Review
Summing Things Up: Where do we go from here? Final Lecture by AKG
Assessment Term Papers Due at the Beginning of Class
Papers to be turned in hard copy without binders
Email submissions are not acceptable.
Papers will be graded and returned following the Final Examination.

Final Examination is on Monday, December 22nd, from 9:00 to 11:00 am.
There are no alternate dates or makeups. Exam must be taken at the scheduled time.

Fall Semester Advisory

It is characteristic of life at Rutgers that there are many competing demands for your time and attention. However, you should bear in mind that you and you alone are responsible for keeping up with the assigned work in this course. When the semester ends with the final examination, work for this course is *complete*. Therefore, please be advised that once the course has ended, there will be absolutely, positively no further opportunities for “make up” exams or “extra credit” work to improve your grade. You may not rewrite your papers or take an exam over. Such after-the-fact activities are manifestly unfair to those in the course who have done the work all along. The time to work on this course is *now*, not after the class has been brought to a conclusion.

Traditional Iraqi Legend

Death Speaks:

There was a merchant in Baghdad who sent his servant to market to buy provisions and in a little while the servant came back, white and trembling, and said, Master, just now when I was in the marketplace I was jostled by a woman in the crowd and when I turned I saw it was Death that jostled me. She looked at me and made a threatening gesture, now, lend me your horse, and I will ride away from this city and avoid my fate. I will go to Samarra and there Death will not find me. The merchant lent him his horse, and the servant mounted it, and he dug his spurs in its flanks and as fast as the horse could gallop he went. Then the merchant went down to the marketplace and he saw me standing in the crowd and he came to me and said, “Why did you make a threatening gesture to my servant when you saw him this morning?” Death replied, “That was not a threatening gesture, I said, it was only a start of surprise. I was astonished to see him in Baghdad, for I had an appointment with him tonight in Samarra.”