



Instituto de Relações Internacionais  
Universidade de São Paulo

Av Prof. Lúcio Martins Rodrigues, s/n  
Travessas 4 e 5 - Cidade Universitária  
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## PRI-5064 - US International Relations and Visions of Latin America: a Cultural-Historical Perspective

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This course will explore the connections between culture, U.S. foreign policy, and U.S. Latin American relations. The goal is to raise questions about how contested ideas within the United States about government power, the natural world, intellectualism and the enlightenment, morality and religion, and race have led to a constantly shifting set of approaches to the world in general, and to Latin America in particular. In part, the class aims to provide context for understanding U.S. decision making, and to explore how contemporary global relationships are (or are not) rooted in history.

### Session 1: How to approach the world?, 1776-1850

#### Topics:

Differences between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton on the role of government  
Washington's Farewell Address and its relationship to the Monroe Doctrine  
Manifest Destiny (and its connection to religion and race)  
Debates over the War with Mexico in 1846-1846  
Class goal: To explain conflicts about potential for government to create a better world and conflicts about the appropriateness of international engagement.

Walter LaFeber, "The Constitution and United States Foreign Policy: An Interpretation," *Journal of American History* 74, 3 (December 1987) 695-717.

Patrick R. Anthony, Race and Republicanism in Philadelphia's Aurora: How Anglophobia and Antimonarchism Shaped William Duane's Views on Revolutions in Saint-Domingue and Latin America, 1798-1822," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 141, 1 (January 2017) 31-58.

#### Optional/Additional Reading:

Greg Grandin, "The Liberal Traditions in the Americas: Rights, Sovereignty, and the Origins of Liberal Multilateralism," *American Historical Review* 117, 1 (February 2012) 68-91.

### Session 2: What do the people think about themselves?, 1830-1910

#### Topics:

Intellectualism vs. Anti-Intellectualism (rural vs. urban/regional differences)  
Missionaries, Women, and transforming the world  
Idealism vs. Exemplarism and confidence of Whitman (John Winthrop vs. Josiah Strong)  
The Anti-Imperialist League, War in Cuba, and Intervention in the Caribbean  
Class goal: To explain nineteenth century divisions within the United States about national identity, and to explore the religious and racial context for notions about international exceptionalism.



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#### Readings:

Michel Gobat, "The Invention of Latin America: A Transnational History of Anti-Imperialism, Democracy, and Race," *The American Historical Review* 118, 5 (December 2013) 1345-1375.

Carol Chin, "Beneficent Imperialists: American Women Missionaries in China at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," *Diplomatic History* 27, 3 (June 2003) 327-352.

#### Optional/Additional Reading:

George B. Handley, "On Reading South in the New World: Whitman, Martí, Glissant, and the Hegelian Dialectic," *The Mississippi Quarterly* 56, 4 (Fall 2003) 521-544.

#### Session 3: What do the people think about others?, 1900-1941

##### Topics:

- Civilization as a quest to dominate the natural world (and the primitive other)
- The naturalist movement as an embrace of the natural world (John Muir and T. Roosevelt)
- Capitalism as international power
- The Jazz Age, The Mexican Revolution, and The Good Neighbor Policy
- Class goal: To explain how visions of people in foreign countries (specifically Latin America) were contextualized as uncivilized, and how this contextualization led to specific policy decisions.

#### Readings:

Greg Grandin, "Your Americanism and Mine: Americanism and Anti-Americanism in the Americas," *American Historical Review* 111, 4 (October 2006) 1042-1066.

Fredrick B. Pike, "Latin America and the Inversion of United States Stereotypes in the 1920s and 1930s: The Case of Culture and Nature," *The Americas* 42, 2 (October 1985) 131-162.

#### Optional/Additional Reading:

Michael B. Smith, "The Value of a Tree: Public Debates of John Muir and Gifford Pinchot," *The Historian* 60, 4 (Summer 1998) 757-778.

#### Session 4: Where does ideology come from?, 1910-1965

##### Topics:

- Midwestern and Progressive Isolationists and the World Wars
- The World Wars, the Depression, and the Liberal Consensus (or the lack of Consensus)
- Anti-Communism, secular religion or moral imperative
- Centering a foreign policy around anti-Communism in Latin America (and elsewhere)
- Class goal: To explain that international engagement remained a contested idea, but one in decline as the liberal consensus and anti-communism emerged as dominant philosophies.

#### Readings:

Laura McEnaney, "He-Men and Christian Mothers: The America First Movement and the Gendered Meanings of Patriotism and Isolationism," *Diplomatic History* 18, 1 (Winter 1994) 47-57.



Geoffrey S. Smith, "Isolationism, the Devil, and the Advent of the Second World War: Variations on a Theme," *International History Review* 4, 1 (February 1982) 55-89.

Optional/Additional Reading:

Bear F. Braumoeller, "The Myth of American Isolationism," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 6, 4 (October 2010) 349-371.

#### Session 5: Where does domestic policy end and foreign policy begin?, 1950-1975

Topics:

A foreign policy of mid-century modernism

The Civil Rights Movement, racism, and international engagement

The sprawling Vietnam war

Watergate and Realpolitik, Kissinger and Nixon, and Latin America

Class goal: To explore how domestic conflicts within the United States led to particular kinds of new foreign policies that challenged earlier ideas about global engagement and U.S. power.

Readings:

Tor Egil Førland, "Bringing It All Back Home or Another Side of Bob Dylan: Midwestern Isolationist," *Journal of American Studies* 26, 3 (December 1992) 337-355.

Randall B. Woods, "The Politics of Idealism: Lyndon Johnson, Civil Rights, and Vietnam," *Diplomatic History* 31, 1 (January 2007) 1-18.

Optional/Additional Reading:

Christopher T. Fisher, "'Moral Purpose is the Important Thing': David Lilienthal, Iran, and the Meaning of Development in the US, 1956-63," *International History Review* 33, 3 (September 2011) 431-451.

#### Session 6: What is a moral foreign policy?, 1975-2010

Topics:

Who is moral, Carter or Reagan (Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Nicaragua, etc...)

Reinhold Niebuhr and immoral society

Neoliberalism as a moral philosophy (Milton Friedman vs. Orlando Letelier on freedom)

A dead question? Globalization or the end of the Cold War

Class goal: To explore how national obsessions with morality (and freedom) became the new language for international engagement, and to raise questions about how it operated in a post-Cold War context. The class will also attempt to sum up course themes, ask how much of contemporary policy appears to have historical roots, and explore similarities and differences with other national histories (specifically Brazil).

Readings:

Bethany Moreton, "Why Is There So Much Sex in Christian Conservatism and Why Do So Few Historians Care Anything about It?," *Journal of Southern History* 75, 3 (August 2009) 717-738.

Andrew J. Bacevich, "Prophets and Poseurs: Niebuhr and Our Times," *World Affairs* 170, 3 (Winter 2008) 24-37; and Andrew J. Bacevich, "Tragedy Renewed: William Appleman Williams," *World Affairs* 171, 3 (Winter 2003) 62-72.

Optional/Additional Reading:



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Alexander D. Barder, “American Hegemony Comes Home: The Chilean Laboratory and the Neoliberalization of the United States,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 38, 2 (May 2013) 103-121.

### Grade Assessment

Students are expected to attend all meetings, read the required reading list, and participate in class debates. Participation in the course will be counted as part of the students’ grades. Besides participation, students will have to hand-in a 3,000-word critical assessment of two papers of the reading list. Essays can be written in English or Portuguese. Further instructions will be given in the first class.