

UNDERSTANDING THE UNITED STATES

Prof. Wassenberg, Birte

Résumé :

The course deals with the role of the United States in International Relations since the end of WWII. It will start by an introduction on the political culture, system and American Identity post-1945 and then explain in a first part US foreign policy in the bipolar world dominated by two superpowers (the Soviet Union and the US) until 1989. In this section, it will focus especially on the transatlantic relationship between the US and the European Community/EU and on the special relationship between the US and the Federal Republic of Germany. In a second part, it will assess the leadership role of the US in international Organizations and in a third part, the shift towards a new International System after the end of the Cold War will be dealt with and in particular the new US position as a world (hyper) power will be examined. The course is also based on a transatlantic approach associating professors from the United States who will give guest lectures on their point of view on US domestic and foreign policy. It will also include a professionalizing element (intercultural task) which will involve simulations on contemporary international problems.

Plan de cours :

I. INTRODUCTION: THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN THE 20th-21st CENTURY

1. Political culture and state system of the US
2. American Identity, values and society post-1945
3. US position in International Relations and basic elements of US foreign policy

II. THE US IN THE BIPOLAR WORLD (1945-1989)

1. US foreign policy post-1945
2. Two superpowers in the Cold War: the US versus the USSR
3. The US and European regional Integration
4. The special relationship between the US and Germany

III. THE US IN MULTILATERAL RELATIONS

1. The US and the UN
2. The US and NATO
3. The US and the WTO
4. The US and the EU

IV. THE US AS THE WORLD POWER INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (1989-today)

1. The US and the new international order after 1989
2. The US facing the Reunification of the European continent
3. The US as the "world police"
4. Post-9/11 US foreign policy and recent reorientations under the Trump residency

V. INSIGHTS FROM US SPECIALISTS

1. William Lasser: Trumps foreign policy (2h)
2. Carrie Manning: US domestic policy (2h)
3. Harold Mock: EU-US relations (2h)
4. Harald Leibrecht: US-German relations (2h)

CONCLUSIONS: WHICH FUTURE FOR THE US AS AN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POLICY ACTOR?

Selective bibliography :

- David Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (2004) - available on google ebooks
- Robert G. Kaiser, *Act of Congress: How America's Essential Institution Works, and How it Doesn't*
- Brendan J. Doherty, *The Rise of the President's Permanent Campaign*
- Charles O. Jones, *The American Presidency: A Very Short Introduction*
- Linda Greenhouse, *The Supreme Court: A Very Short Introduction* and (these "Very Short Introduction" books are also available and would be good background on the U.S. Congress.
- Justin Vaïsse, Pierre Hassner, *Washington et le monde: Dilemmes d'une superpuissance*, Ceri/Autrement, 2003
- Justin Vaïsse, *Le modèle américain*, Armand Colin, 2003
- Arnaud Blin, *Le désarroi de la puissance : Les Etats-Unis vers la « guerre permanente » ?*, Lignes de Repères, 2004.
- Yves-Henry Nouhailhat, *Les Etats-Unis et le monde de 1898 à nos jours*, Armand Colin, 2003
- Eric Nguyen, *La politique étrangère des Etats-Unis depuis 1945, de Yalta à Bagdad*, Studyrama, 2004
- Raymond Aron, *République impériale : les Etats-Unis dans le monde, 1945-1972*, Calmann-Levy, 1973
- Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *De Wilson à Roosevelt. Politique extérieure des Etats-Unis, 1913-1945*, Armand Colin, 1960.
- Alan Dobson, Steve Marsh, *US Foreign Policy since 1945*, Routledge, 2006.
- Jeffrey D. Sachs, *A New Foreign Policy. Beyond American Exceptionalism*, Columbia University Press, 2018.

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