

## The United States and Europe Since World War II

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### Summary

This course addresses relations between the United States and Europe from the end of World War II to the present. We will first discuss the most important events and processes which have shaped US/European relations during this period in the political, economic, military, social and cultural arenas. We will then examine the new challenges the Transatlantic relationship faces in the 21st century. Some of the themes we will focus on are:

- The preoccupation with developing a geopolitical strategy to confront Communism and its foremost proponent, the Soviet Union.
- The attempt to form a stable “Atlantic Community” and promote European integration.
- The shifting balance between cooperation and conflict in US/European relations.
- The consequences of the collapse of the bipolar system and post Cold War relations.
- Contemporary challenges such as globalization, trade, immigration, the environment, terrorism, etc.

### Evaluation

- **Dossier:** In groups of four, students will complete a briefing dossier with a maximum of five pages of text and ten pages overall (including table of contents, maps, graphs and pictures). We will discuss possible topics and format in class.

### Course outline

#### **Class 1 - Historical overview: From colony to competitor.**

Overview of relations from the colonial period to the end of WWII. How and in what ways did the United States gradually assert itself in its relations with Europe?

#### **Class 2 - US/European Values Gap.**

How do values differ between Europeans and US citizens with regards to politics, society, culture, international issues, etc? How do these differing values impact US/European relations? How have they evolved over the years?

#### **Class 3 - The Postwar Challenge**

How and why did the United States evolve in its attitude and policies towards Europe in the postwar period? How much support/opposition was there regarding how US/European

relations should evolve? What policies and institutions were put in place in the postwar period and how did they result in a new balance of power?

#### **Class 4 - The Cold War and European integration I**

How did relations between the United States and Europe evolve during the early Cold War period (1950's and 1960's)? To what extent did the United States support the European project?

#### **Class 5 - The Cold War and European integration II**

How did relations between the United States and Europe evolve during the late Cold War period (1970's and 1980's)? What new challenges arose in US/European relations? How did the United States react to growing European independence and integration?

#### **Class 6 - Post Cold War Relations**

How have relations between the United States and Europe evolved since the end of the Cold War? What events and/or processes seem to have most affected US/European relations? How could one characterize these relations today?

#### **Class 7 - Current and future cooperation 1**

To what extent can/should Europe and the United States cooperate today and in the future? This week we will focus on security and defense issues.

#### **Class 8 - Current and future cooperation 2**

To what extent can/should Europe and the United States cooperate today and in the future? This week we will focus on economic and trade issues.

#### **Class 9 - Current and future cooperation 3**

This week we will focus on environmental and human rights issues.

**NB. All homework materials will be posted on the class website. They will include readings and video/audio documents to be studied prior to each class. There will be an emphasis on interactive learning with discussions and debates. This class will not be an extended dictation.**