1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

In 1704, the British author James Thompson wrote a poem called “Rule Britannia.”

The poem contains the lines:

When Britain first, at heaven’s command,
Arose from out the azure main;
This was the charter of the land,
And guardian Angels sung this strain:

Rule, Britannia, rule the waves;
Britons never will be slaves.

The nations, not so blest as thee,
Must, in their turns, to tyrants fall:
While thou shalt flourish great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.

Our time in Oxford offers us a unique opportunity to examine three questions that are central to international relations, history and even ethics today. First, what is an empire? As the verse above shows, both America and Britain at one time conceptualized of themselves as special nations endowed by God with a unique mission in the world. Both became powerful engines of change throughout this world, spreading their political and religious ideas, as well as their economic power, far beyond the bounds of one nation. Both, it can be argued, were at one time synonymous with civilization and democracy. And both have come under fire by those who regard the whole enterprise of empire as morally questionable, paternalistic and misguided. Currently, America stands at a unique place – as the world’s remaining superpower. This is a place where Britain once stood as well. Are there any lessons that we, as Americans, can learn from the British experience?

During this class we will ask “What does it mean to be an empire: morally? Ethically? Politically? And culturally? What were the sources of Britain’s power and what are the sources of America’s power? Is power a constant?”

Finally, we will ask: “What parallels are there between Britain’s historic experience of empire and America’s current experience of “empire”? What causes empire and is its demise inevitable? How should the citizens of a mighty nation understand empire and their obligations to others within the world today?”
2. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this course is to develop an understanding of the historic, political, cultural and ethical underpinnings of empire through reliance on firsthand historic documents, secondary theoretical sources and Scripture. We will attempt to draw lessons from the successes and failures of British empire and apply them to the issue of America as a great power today.

3. **OBJECTIVES:**

   A. To define empire and place it within a moral, political, economic and security context.

   B. To compare and contrast the major sources of strength of the British Empire with the major sources of strength of America’s empire.

   C. To present current critiques of empire – being able to describe Orientalism, the language of discourse and cultural and historic sources of power

   D. To describe and evaluate the relationship between mission and empire – in both historic and contemporary situations

4. **COMPETENCIES:**

   A. The student will be able to read and evaluate an historic source, utilizing a critical approach.

   B. The student will apply principles of international relations – including balance of power, realism, rational actor – in evaluating the history and practice of empire.

   C. The student will develop an independent, critical understanding of empire – utilizing political, historic and moral reasoning.

5. **COURSE PROCEDURES:**

**PRIOR TO ARRIVAL:**

Students taking this course will be enrolled in a distance education component in Blackboard which will begin on June 1, 2010. The blackboard course consists of ten modules, each of which requires the completion of approximately 50 pages of reading (available through electronic reserve which links to the course); and a 500 word essay.

The blackboard course does NOT include discussion posts since there will be plenty of time for discussion during our sessions in Oxford. However, there will be casual discussion forums for students to meet and greet online prior to their arrival in Oxford. Students have the option of working at their own pace through the modules, but all work needs to be completed by **August 15, 2010** in order to receive a grade for the course. Students should plan to have completed the first five modules PRIOR to their arrival in Oxford.
In addition to the online component of the course, students will be required to submit two papers: a thoughtful essay of between 5-10 pages which they should complete and bring to Oxford with them (counts as half of participation grade), as well as a twenty page research paper which will be completed within one month AFTER their return from the program. Students will choose the topic based on a meeting with the professor. It will consist of an evaluation of one of the four aspects of empire (economic, political, historic or ethical).

IN OXFORD:
This course will meet for three hours daily during the two-week session in Oxford. Homework will be minimal during the course since you will have been working hard prior to your arrival in Oxford. The lectures listed below correspond to the modules available through Blackboard.

You will have one excursion to the British Museum. Optional excursions (which are not included in the course tuition but are available for a supplemental fee) will include: a walking tour of Oxford led by a local historian, with an emphasis on Oxford’s history during the British Empire (approximately 8 dollars each), and day-trips to the Roman town of Bath or a Roman villa. (Price to be determined. More information about Bath is found at www.romanbaths.co.uk; www.Roman-Britain.org).

Twenty-five percent of the course grade will be based on participation/presentations in class.

6. EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Grades are based on the following activities:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-line Essays</td>
<td>7@14</td>
<td>33 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>33 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation and Short Paper</td>
<td>10@10</td>
<td>33 percent</td>
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7. REQUIRED TEXTS

Books for Oxford Course on Empire.
Note: All are required. All are available in paperback. Used is fine.

- AMY CHUA. *DAY OF EMPIRE*. ANCHOR BOOKS. ISBN: 978-1-4000-7741-0 (PBK.)
- CULLEN MURPHY. *ARE WE ROME?* HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. ISBN: 978-0-547-05210-6 (PBK.)
- Joerg Rieger, Christ and Empire: From Paul to Postcolonial Times
Required but Student’s Choice:
Please choose ONE of the following novels to read. You MUST have this novel read PRIOR to the commencement of the course in Oxford, since you need to write a 1000 word essay about it to present at Oxford. (If you so desire, you may, of course, read MORE than one of these novels. You may also wish to bring these novels with you to Oxford, and to swap them amongst yourselves.) You can buy these books used or new at Amazon or elsewhere.

- Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (You may ALSO choose to see the movie – BUT, seeing the movie does NOT substitute for reading the book.)
- Richard Jefferies, *After London*
- James Howard Kunstler, *World Made by Hand*
- Laura Kasischke, *In a Perfect World*
- William R. Forstchen, *One Second After*

Please bring these books to Oxford with you as we will be referring to them.

9. Course Modules: Available on-line with corresponding lectures/discussions to be held at Oxford

**WEEK ONE**

**Session One: SCOPE AND DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- Munkler, Chapter One through Three (1-65)

**Essay:** Do you agree with what Munkler says about imperial cycles – in relation to the American empire? Would you characterize the US as an empire or merely a hegemonic regime?

**Session Two: Are Empires Destined to Fall? Two arguments**

- Chua, Preface, Introduction, Chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-125)

**Lecture:** Imperial Overstretch

**Essay:** Compare and contrast Ferguson and Chua’s arguments regarding the decline of empire. What are Ferguson’s independent and dependent variables?
What are Chua’s? What are their levels of analysis? Who is a realist? A liberal? A constructivist? Which argument do you find most compelling and least compelling and why?

Session Three: Roman Britain


Lecture: Roman Britain

Essay: Did the British want to be Roman? How do you understand the concept of “Romanization”? Is Romanization a form of soft power? Is it the same or different as the role played by American culture in the world today?

Session Four: Imperial Wars

- BoerWar.pdf


- Britain’s Vietnam


Lecture: Imperial Wars

Essay: Describe at least three ethical arguments AGAINST empire and three ethical arguments FOR empire. Which arguments do you find most convincing and least convincing and why? What policy should a CHRISTIAN adopt regarding empire?
Session Five: Antiquity and Cultural Patrimony

- LISTEN to NPR story linked on blackboard
- READ:
  - IN John Henry Merryman, ed., Imperialism, Art and Restitution
    - William St. Clair, “Imperial Appropriations of the Parthenon”
    - ALSO:
      - Introduction by James Cuno, Who Owns Antiquity
      - Response by Kwame Opoku, “Robbing the Cradle”
        (http://forums.yaleglobal.yale.edu/thread.jspa?messageID=3153)
      - Finally, please read: on looting of Baghdad’s Libraries and relics of Ur
        http://www.tomdispatch.com/dialogs/print/?id=4710

Also, please visit the website: elginism.org
Lecture: Loot and the question of cultural property
Essay: Write a persuasive essay arguing EITHER that the Elgin Marbles should be returned to Greece, or that they should not.

THOUGHTFUL ESSAY TO BRING TO OXFORD: Parameters of Assignment
For this assignment, you need to COMPLETE your reading of ONE of the novels listed on page one. As you read, think about the following questions:
A. Does the author regard American ‘civilization’ as having vanished? How does s/he define ‘civilization’? Give at least three specific examples of objects or events that relate to the concept of civilization.
B. What factors does the author describe as having lead to ‘the fall of America’? in the longterm? In the short term?
C. Does the author see it as inevitable or could it have been prevented somehow?
D. How likely do you find the author’s scenario? Is there a ‘grain of truth’ in it?
E. Are the characters in the book still ‘Americans’? Is the place where the action takes place still ‘America’? Why or why not?
NOTE: If you read “After London,” please substitute the words ‘British’ for American throughout this assignment.

Please write up to 1000 words responding to these questions. (If you want to read more than one novel, you may write an essay in which you respond to this question for BOTH novels, comparing and contrasting in your answers to these questions.)
**Session Six: Postcolonial Critiques**

**READ:**

- Herbert Kohl, “Should we Burn Babar?”
- Ariel Dorfman, “The Empire’s Old Clothes.”

**Essay:** In what ways has the idea of ‘civilization’ enriched the international system, and in what ways has it been harmful? Do you think there is a convincing parallel between Britain’s desire to spread civilization and America’s desire to spread democracy? How do you think America’s desire might be read and evaluated one hundred years from now?

**Session Seven:**

**The Enemies of Empire:**

- Rieger, Chapter Five, “Christology and Colonization” *Christ and Empire*

No Essay for this assignment:

**Session Eight: The Ideology of Empire: Civilization and its Critics**

- Rieger, Chapter two, “the Creeds of the Empire”

**NO Essay for this assignment:**

**Session Nine: Economics of Empire**


Essay: Do you think that America’s international presence since World War Two has ENRICHED or IMPOVERISHED the United States – economically? (Do not talk about other kinds of enrichment, like spiritual or cultural enrichment). Would the US be wealthier or poorer today if it had taken a more isolationist economic approach? Give at least three examples to support your argument. (You may use counterfactuals.)

Session Ten: The Future of Empire
❖ Munkler, Chapter 6 (pp. 139-161)
❖ Rieger, Chapter Seven, “Christology in a Post-Colonial Empire”

Essay: No essay for this assignment.

10. GRADERS
Grades are based on the following activities:

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11. ATTENDANCE

Attendance at all sessions is mandatory. You need to have done the reading and be prepared for each session.

12. FINAL PAPER

In addition to the online component of the course, students will be required to submit two papers: a thoughtful essay of between 5-10 pages which they should complete and bring to Oxford with them (counts as half of participation grade), as well as a twenty page research paper which will be completed within one month AFTER their return from the program. Students will choose the topic based on a meeting with the professor. It will consist of an evaluation of one of the four aspects of empire (economic, political, historic or ethical).
13. **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Students shall abide by the highest standards of academic honesty. All students should review the discussion of “Academic Integrity” in the University Catalog. In the event the professor determines that a student has either cheated or plagiarized on a class assignment or exam, the professor shall determine what effect this academic dishonesty shall have on the student's grade. The professor has the discretion to assign an “F” grade to the student's assignment, exam, or for the course. Any further disciplinary actions shall be determined by the law school administration.

14. **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

An incomplete grade "I" may be given only for legitimate deficiencies due to serious illness, for extreme emergencies, or for similar reasons acceptable to the professor, and not because of neglect on the student's part. Current regulations governing the administration of incomplete grades appear in the University catalog.

15. **STUDENT FEEDBACK**

At the end of each course, students are given an opportunity to comment on the course and the professor's teaching on a written evaluation form. Students are encouraged to meet with the professor at any time throughout the semester.

16. **BIBLICAL INTEGRATION**

We will look specifically at empire from a Christian perspective, utilizing the text Christ and Empire. We will discuss the relationship between missionary work and empire-building, and will read works which are both supportive and critical of this trend.

17. **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

All work must be submitted by August 15, 2010 in order to receive credit for the course. After this time, the online components will be unavailable.

18. **OFFICE DATA**

Office location: Room 318 Robertson Hall
Office phone: 352-4138
E-mail: mmanjikian@regent.edu
Office hours: M, W, F: 9-noon