

## SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

**Discipline: History**

**Semester and Year: Fall 2006**

**Course Number and Title: Britain's Empire**

**Faculty Name: Dr. Mark Peterson**

Suggested Pre-requisites:

Introductory History course in world or western civilization during the modern period.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Over the course of three centuries, the British Empire affected the lives of many people around the world, especially in Africa and southern Asia. Britain's developing influence also served as a model for many European and American attempts to dominate affairs in the region; a history of imperialism that still affects international relations to this day. In this class we will look at the development of the British Empire from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> with a focus on how increasing British power had an impact on the societies of Asia and Africa. Among other important topics, we will examine the goals of the British, their techniques for influencing foreign societies, and the reactions of people in those societies. In many cases, we will also be able to examine how the history of British imperialism can still be felt in the places on our itinerary.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This class will show students the major events in the creation of Great Britain as the world superpower with the largest empire and the most powerful military followed by the erosion of that power to the point that today the country has rivals even among other European states. We will also spend some time comparing older forms of imperialism to the types of domination seen in the world now. A major focus of the course, however, will be showing students how to compare the validity of historical explanations by looking at their use of research, evidence, and argument. With these skills, students will work at creating their own arguments to explain historical events and mindsets.

## PAGE 2

### TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE: BRITAIN'S EMPIRE

#### Unit I. England's Growing Strength before 1815

1. Europe & the World in the 17th Century
2. Britain's Maritime Trade  
*Rise & Fall: Part 1, Chapters 2 & 3*
3. A Navy to Defeat the French  
*Rise & Fall: Part 2, Chapters 1 & 2*
4. The Honourable Company  
*Rise & Fall: Part 2, Chapter 6*
5. Ruling the Waves  
*Rise & Fall: Part 2, Chapters 7 & 8*

#### Unit II. British Imperialism in the 19th Century

6. The Far East  
*Rise & Fall: Part 3, Chapters 1 & 5*
7. The Raj  
*Rise & Fall: Part 3, Chapters 2 & 4*
8. Defeating African States  
*Rise & Fall: Part 3, Chapters 6 & 7*
9. The Scramble  
*Rise & Fall: Part 3, Chapters 3 & 8*
10. What Empire Meant for the British  
*Rise & Fall: Part 3, Chapter 9 & 10*
11. MID-TERM EXAM

#### Unit III. The Commonwealth

12. The Great War  
*Rise & Fall: Part 3, Chapter 11; Part 4, Chapter 1*
13. The Middle East  
*Rise & Fall: Part 4, Chapters 3 & 4*
14. Politics in India after the Great War  
*Rise & Fall: Part 4, Chapter 5*
15. 20th Century Imperialism  
*Rise & Fall: Part 4, Chapters 7 & 8*
16. World War II  
*Rise & Fall: Part 4, Chapters 9 & 10*
17. The Effects of War  
*Rise & Fall: Part 4, Chapters 11 & 12*

#### Unit IV. Breaking the Empire

18. Self-Rule  
*Rise & Fall: Part 5, Chapter 2*

19. Israel

*Rise & Fall: Part 5, Chapter 3*

20. Egypt & the Oil States

*Rise & Fall: Part 5, Chapter 4*

21. Post-Colonialism

*Rise & Fall: Part 5, Chapters 5 & 6*

22. FINAL

### PAGE 3

FIELD COMPONENT: Twenty percent of the contact hours for the course is provided by field work ashore. As a portion of your participation grade, you must take part in at least two of Semester at Sea's FDPs that you can report to the class for our discussions of imperialism. The instructor will be leading the following practica, but you can certainly find other trips that would also be valuable for our work in class.

British Hong Kong  
Saigon Tour  
Remnants of the Raj  
The Ottoman Capital  
WWII in the Balkans

### METHODS OF EVALUATION

|               |     |
|---------------|-----|
| Participation | 25% |
| Mid-Term Exam | 25% |
| Paper         | 25% |
| Final Exam    | 25% |

Participation includes things such as attendance, attentiveness in class, preparation (including doing the reading assignments on time), practica reports, punctuality, and involvement in discussion.

For the mid-term and final exams you will be asked to write several paragraphs identifying important terms and their historical significance and then longer essays in response to specific questions.

The paper should be at least 3000 words long and use the mechanics of academic argument, including footnotes and a bibliography. We will spend some class time discussing how to find sources with the limitations that are involved with research on board, but remember that you are encouraged to be creative in finding ways to support your argument with things other than history books: things such as interviews, architecture, and geography. Every paper must include a discussion of how an element of the history of British trade or imperialism shaped things that can be observed today.

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**PAGE 4**

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

**AUTHOR: Lawrence James**  
**TITLE: *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire***  
**PUBLISHER: St. Martin's Press**  
**ISBN #: 0-312-16985-X**  
**DATE/EDITION: 1997**  
**COST: \$19.95**

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**PAGE 5**

RESERVE LIBRARY LIST

**AUTHOR: David Cannadine**  
**TITLE: *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw their Empire***  
**PUBLISHER: Penguin**  
**ISBN #: 0-140-29761-8**  
**DATE/EDITION: 2002**  
**COST: 8.99 pounds**

**AUTHOR: P. J. Cain & Tony Hopkins**  
**TITLE: *British Imperialism: 1688-2000***  
**PUBLISHER: Pearson/Longman**  
**ISBN #: 0-582-47286-5**  
**DATE/EDITION: 2001/Second Edition**  
**COST: 27.99 pounds**