



America
250
LECTURES



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As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, our lecture series with **Dr. Jonah M. Otto** invites students to explore the ideas, events, and individuals that have shaped the **nation's political and historical journey**. These lectures examine pivotal moments in U.S. history and the evolution of **American democracy**, offering students context for how the past continues to influence contemporary politics.



At the DAI or your school!

Please email
programm@dai-nuernberg.de
for more information and booking!

ADAPTABLE FOR
STUDENTS **GRADE 10 & UP**
AND **UNIVERSITY** STUDENTS

Available Topics

- ★ **The United States Abroad: the US State Department & Diplomacy**
This talk explores how the United States evolved from a new republic into a global diplomatic leader. It traces 250 years of U.S. diplomacy, outlines the State Department's role, and examines the challenges ahead.
- ★ **Commander in Chief: the US Presidency**
This talk examines how the presidency has evolved from a constitutionally limited office into one of the world's most powerful roles. It outlines the President's formal powers, the growth of informal influence, and what this evolution reveals about American democracy today.
- ★ **Making Judgments: the US Judiciary & Supreme Court**
This talk explores the Supreme Court's role in 250 years of constitutional interpretation and institutional power. It explains how the federal courts function, why the Court is central to political debate, and how its decisions continue to shape American life and constitutional governance.
- ★ **Submitting the Ballot: the US Voting System & Voting Rights**
This talk traces 250 years of voting rights in the United States—from limited early suffrage to today's complex electoral system. It explains how elections work, who can vote, and how ongoing debates over access and integrity reflect the nation's long struggle over democratic participation.
- ★ **Donating Time & Money: the US Nonprofit Sector, Philanthropy & Volunteerism**
This talk explores how civic engagement and philanthropy grew from early mutual aid traditions into a major pillar of American society. It examines the rise of the nonprofit sector, its economic and social impact, and the challenges it faces in the years ahead.

Available Topics

- ★ **Geographic and Governance Territorialism: US Federalism**
This talk explores how federalism has shaped the United States since its founding, balancing national unity with regional diversity. It examines how power has been divided among federal, state, and local governments over 250 years, and how ongoing debates over states' rights and national authority continue to influence American governance.
- ★ **Transforming Ideas into Laws: the US Legislative Process**
This talk explains how ideas become law through Congress, highlighting the constitutional design of bicameralism and procedure. It traces how the legislative process has evolved, why it is often slow and contentious, and what this reveals about American democracy at 250 years.
- ★ **Ivory Tower Universities and Community Colleges: US Higher Education**
This talk traces the growth of U.S. higher education from a handful of early colleges to a diverse, globally influential system. It examines how universities reflect American values like opportunity and innovation, while addressing ongoing debates over access, affordability, and their role in democracy.
- ★ **Defining and Restricting Power in the Federal Government: US Checks and Balances**
This talk explores the system of checks and balances designed to prevent concentrated power. It explains how the three branches constrain one another, how the system has adapted to crises and polarization, and what this reveals about the strength and fragility of American democracy at 250 years.