AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY: THEORY, PATTERN AND PROCESS

Scope of the Course

This course is designed as an introduction to the theory, pattern and process of American foreign policy. It attempts to present as wide a variety of theoretical and historical genres and perspectives as possible. It aims to provide students with different theoretical frameworks and important historical backgrounds in their analyses of current foreign policy issues, particularly American foreign policy toward non-Western, developing countries, which have different cultural and religious traditions, with widely shared resentments of colonialism, and in their volatile stages of difficult transition from pre-modern to modern, democratic societies.

In the post-Cold War, post-9/11 world, a most important issue in the study of American foreign policy is how to assess more accurately those non-Western, developing countries’ foreign policy intentions and their peoples’ aspirations, to formulate more productive U.S. foreign policy. To address this highly important issue, this course will study U.S. foreign policy not only from the “inside out,” but also from the “outside in.” To study American foreign policy from the “inside out” is to understand American visions and aspirations, American policies and strategies entirely on their own terms. To understand American foreign policy from the “outside in” is to examine if there are any significant gaps between the American interpretations of other nations’ foreign policy objectives on the one hand, and those nations’ actual intentions on the other.

This course is divided into three parts: Part I will provide a survey of competing theories or conceptual frameworks in the study of American foreign policy concerning how to evaluate other nations’ foreign policy intentions and peoples’ aspirations. In the past two decades, scholars of American foreign policy have increasingly employed major IR theories to study America’s interactions with the rest of the world. There are, however, significant differences between general IR theories and the theories of American foreign policy, as you will study in this course. Part II will test these competing theories through historical case studies, in an attempt to examine which aspects of U.S. foreign policymaking each theory or conceptual framework can explains well, or poorly, and understand why it does. Part III will offer students’ opportunities to test these competing theories / conceptual frameworks through their own researches and class presentations.
**Course Objectives**

- To learn about major competing theoretical paradigms regarding how to assess other nations’ foreign policy intentions.
- To understand the complex nature of U.S. foreign policymaking process.
- To understand the unique characteristics of U.S. foreign policy deeply ingrained in American political culture.
- To learn about the multi-faceted dimensions of nation-state building and turbulent transition from pre-modern to modern societies in the developing world, and compare them with America’s historical, social, and cultural experiences.
- To learn about the ongoing national debates regarding how to encounter the new challenges in the post-Cold War, post-9/11 world, and to reflect on those diverse American strategies.

**Course Requirements:**

There will be a midterm and a final exam based on the materials covered in the lectures and the required readings.

In addition, each student will write a research paper of 20 pages, typed double-space. Students are required to use one of the primary sources specified below, to write on relations between the United States and another country in any specific period from the post-World War II era to the present:

1) *Foreign Relations of the United States* (in the main library).
2) *The Website of National Security Archive at George Washington University* http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/
3) A relevant six months of the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*.

It is important to note that in using primary documents, the key is to locate the primary sources in their specific context of “time” and “space,” that is, their cultural, political and social context at the time when the documents were written. The worst thing a researcher can do to these primary documents is to impose his/her own interpretations onto the mindsets of the authors of those documents, or to distort those primary documents in a way to fit neatly into his/her own pre-conceptions.

On **March 14**, paper topic due (1-2 pages), which should include the following:

1). The topic of your research paper;
2). Your choice of theoretical approach.

On **March 28**, paper proposal due (4-5 pages), which should include the following:
1). A brief summary of recent literature on your research topic: What are other authors’ different arguments over the topic you are going to write about?

2). In the context of the above summary, highlight what is **new** in your research paper, either in terms of research question or theoretical approach.

3). A brief introduction to the primary sources you are going to use to support your key argument in your research paper.

4). An annotated bibliography (at least 20 books and documents, or 30 magazine/website articles).

Finally, each student will be required to present his/her research findings to the class.

**Determinants of Grades**

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation / Discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam:</td>
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**Required Readings:**


Andrew J. Bacevich: *The Limits of Power* (New York, 2009);

*Coursepack*, available at Budget Printers (351-5060).

**Recommended Readings:**

Zbigniew Brzezinski and Brent Scowcroft: *America and the World: Conversations on the Future of American Foreign Policy* (New York, Basic
Instructional Model

There are two important ways I get to know you as a student and a scholar. First, I expect to speak with you individually when you are working on your papers, and I make myself available for that purpose with regular office hours, extra office hours, and appointments. Second, there will be honors seminars offered in conjunction with this course. All students are invited to join this discussion group.
Topics and Assignments

January 10  Introduction

**** PART ONE ****

Competing Theories

January 12  The Realist Tradition in American Foreign Policy

Required Readings:


January 19  The Liberal Internationalist Tradition in American Foreign Policy

Required Readings:


“Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples,” Algiers, 4 July 1976; in coursepack;.
“African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (Preamble and Part I),
Banjul, 26 June 1981; in coursepack;

William F. Felice: Richard Falk’s Foreword to Taking Suffering Seriously:
The Importance of Collective Human Rights, in coursepack;

Charles Kegley and Eugene Wittkopf: chapter 7 (“The World Political
Economy in Transition: Opportunities and Constraints in an
Interdependent World”);

Clare Short (the British Secretary of State for International Development)
Interview: “A Third Way for the Third World?” December 10, 2000, The
Observer, London; in coursepack;

Kenneth F. Scheve and Matthew J. Slaughter: “A New Deal for
Globalization,” In Foreign Affairs, July/August 2007, in coursepack.

January 24 The Approach of Domestic Determinants to the Study of American
Foreign Policy

Required Readings:

Charles Kegley and Eugene Wittkopf: Part V (“Governmental Sources of
American Foreign Policy”), and Part VI (“Roles as Sources of American
Foreign Policy Making”).

January 26 The Approach of the World System Theory to the Study of American
Foreign Policy

Required Readings:

Bruce Cumings: “Recollections on Method and A Theory of American
Foreign Policy,” in The Origins of the Korean War, Vol. II (Princeton, NJ:

January 31 The Cognitive Psychological Approach to the Study of American Foreign
Policy (I)

Required Reading:

Ronald Steel: “Pictures in Their Heads,” Walter Lippmann and the
American Century, an Atlantic Monthly Book, in coursepack;

Edward Said: “Introduction” and “Islam as News,” in Covering Islam, on
Angel, under “Lessons.”

February 2 The Cognitive Psychological Approach to the Study of American Foreign
Policy (II)

Required Readings:


February 7 The Cultural Approach to the Study of American Foreign Policy (I)

Required Readings:

Michael Hunt: chapter 1 (“Coming to Terms with Ideology”);

Charles Kegley and Eugene Wittkopf: chapter 8 (“Americans’ Values, Beliefs, and References: Political Culture and Public Opinion in American Foreign Policy”), and chapter 9 (“The Transmission of Values, Beliefs, and Preferences: Interest Groups, the Mass Media, and Presidential Elections”);


February 9 The Cultural Approach to the Study of American Foreign Policy (II)

Required Readings:


February 14 The Clinton Doctrine

Required Readings:


February 16  
The Bush Doctrine

**Required Readings:**


PBS: “Interview with Richard Perle,” in coursepack;

PBS: “Interview with William Kristol,” in coursepack;


Yi, Hyunhwee (South Korea): “War as Calling,” in coursepack and on Angel under “Lessons;”


**Recommended Reading:**


February 21  
An Obama Doctrine? Competing Perspectives

**Required Readings:**


http://blogs.aljazeera.net/imperium/2010/05/30/obama-doctrine-rehabilitates-empire

PBS Frontline: “Obama’s War”
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/obamaswar/

February 23  Class Debates on Competing Theories of US Foreign Policy

February 28  **Midterm Exam (Bluebooks are Required):**
To ensure fairness in grading, NO make-up exam will be given without a doctor’s note.

March 2  Workshop on Research Papers

**** PART II ****

**Historical Case Studies**

March 14  U.S. - Congo Relations (Africa)

Required Readings:

Warren I. Cohen, pp. 117-119, 202-205;

BBC World News: “Who Killed Lumumba?” October 21, 2000; in *coursepack*;


*Paper Topic Due (1-2 pages) in Class*
March 16  U.S. – Iran – Iraqi Relations (I): Historical Backgrounds

Required Readings:

Warren I. Cohen, pp.105-116, 210-214, 227-228;

Rashid Khalidi: “Introduction: The Perils of Ignoring History,” and “The Legacy of the Western Encounter with the Middle East,” in coursepack;

Barry Rubin: Paved with Good Intentions: The American Experience and Iran, “Preface” and Chapter V., in coursepack;


Robin Wright & Shaul Bakhash: “The U.S. and Iran: An Offer They Can’t Refuse?” Foreign Policy, fall 1997, in coursepack;


BBC News: “Profile: Mahmoud Ahmadinejad” (the new president in Iran), in coursepack;


Kenneth Pollack and Ray Takeyh: “Taking on Tehran,” Foreign Affairs, March/April, 2005; in coursepack;


Rashid Khalidi: “Raising the Ghosts of Empire,” in Resurrecting Empire: Western Footprints and America’s Perilous Path in the Middle East, in coursepack;


John kemp: ‘Reflection on Iran,” *Reuters*, June 26, 2009; on Angel;

Reese Erlich: “It is not a Twitter Revolution in Iran,” June 26, 2009; on Angel;

Andrew J. Bacevich: *The Limits of Power*, Chapter 3;


March 23  The Vietnam War in Retrospect (Asia)

**Required Readings:**


Time Archives: “The Vietnam War” (A collection of opposing views on Vietnam War during the War and afterwards), in *coursepack*;

“Was John Kennedy planning to pull out of Vietnam?” A passage from an oral history interview with Robert Kennedy in April, 1964 by the John F. Kennedy Library; in *coursepack*.

March 28  From the Bay of Pigs to the Cuban Missile Crisis (the Caribbean and Latin America)

**Required Readings:**

Warren I. Cohen, pp. 104-105, 121-146;
David Halberstam: *Fifties*, section 46, in *coursepack*;


The National Security Archive: “Robert F. Kennedy Urged Lifting Travel Ban to Cuba in ’63,” The National Security Archive, the George Washington University; http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/index.html


Earlham College “Two Perspectives on the Cuba/U.S. Conflict”, in *coursepack*.

Soraya M. Castro Mariño: “The Possibility of Détente before the Third Millennium,” ISLA website (Information Services of Latin America), in *coursepack*.

**Paper Proposal Due (4-5 pages).**

**March 30**

The Marshall Plan, NATO, and U.S.–Russia - EU Relations in the post-9/11 World (Europe and Russia)

**Required Readings:**

Warren I. Cohen, Chapters 2, 7, and 8;

Javier Solana: “The Transatlantic Rift: US Leadership After September 11,” in *coursepac*;


Staff Writers (Moscow): “Russian--US Relations Will Continue Deteriorating,” *Space Daily*, Nov. 9, 2006; in *coursepack*;

Staff Writers (Moscow): “Use of Force Dominating International Relations, Says Putin”, in *coursepack*;
Vincent Gagnon Lefebvre: “Obama’s Foreign Policy Challenges toward Russia,” Jan 25, 2009; on Angel under “Lessons;”

The White House Office of the Press Secretary: “Remarks by President Obama and President Medvedev of Russia at New START Treaty Signing Ceremony and Press Conference,” April 8, 2010; on Angel;

John Kerry: “the merits of a Russian relationship,” June 22, 2010; on Angel under “Lessons;”

Mustafa Kutlay and Lukas Linsi: “Whither EU-US Relations?” *Turkish Weekly*, July 21, 2010
http://www.turkishweekly.net/columnist/3366/whither-eu-us-relations.html

April 4 Workshop on Writing Research Papers

**** PART THREE ****

Research Paper Presentations

April 6 – April 20: Research Paper Presentations

**** COURSE SUMMARY ****

April 25 & April 27 Course Summary

Required Readings:

Charles Kegley and Eugene Wittkopf: chapter 15: “At the Dawn of a New Millennium: the Future of American Foreign Policy”

April 22 (F): 4:30 pm Research Paper Due

May 3 (Tuesday): 3:00-5:00 pm Final Exam (Bluebooks are Required):

To ensure fairness in grading, NO make-up exam will be given without a doctor’s note.