



“Domestic policy can only defeat us; foreign policy can kill us.” –President John. F. Kennedy

*Contemporary American Foreign Policy
PS 3307/5316
Spring 2017
Sul Ross State University*

SYLLABUS

Professor: Dr. Tiffiny Vincent
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this class is to teach you about the several aspects of U.S. foreign policy – the history, institutions, and processes that collectively constitute U.S. foreign policymaking. Students will develop skills to analyze critically the events of U.S. foreign policy. We will explore historic events of U.S. foreign policy and relate these events to various sources of decision-making; evaluate critically various contemporary aspects of U.S. foreign policy, and relate various decisions with theoretical models developed in the literature. The same aspects of American government and society that propelled the United States to global primacy have also hampered its orderly and successful conduct of foreign policy. This paradox challenges U.S. leaders to overcome threats to America's world power in the face of fast-moving global developments and political upheavals at home.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The graduating student will be able to:

1. Identify the structures and processes of U.S. foreign policy.
Method of Assessment: Weekly discussion, question creation, and Exam 1
2. Demonstrate the ability to think critically about the American political system and international relations by reading both contemporary and classic materials from a variety of sources that encompasses both objective and opinion-based points of view.
Method of Assessment: Weekly discussion, question creation, and Exam 2
3. Describe the role of diplomacy in international relations.
Method of Assessment: Weekly discussion, question creation, and Exam 2
4. Demonstrate the ability to critically analyze the historic events of U.S. foreign policy.
Method of Assessment: Weekly discussion, question creation, and Exam 3
5. Identify strengths and weaknesses of contemporary U.S. foreign policy using theoretical models relevant to the field.
Method of Assessment: Weekly discussion, question creation, and Exam 4

COURSE FORMAT & EXPECTATIONS: This course is designed to allow for a more peer-led learning vs. instructor-led lecture environment. The role of the instructor will be to guide the students through the process of understanding the course subject matter. The role of the student will be to read the materials **PRIOR** to each session and participate in class discussion. Specifically, it is required that each student:

1. Attend all class meetings, read, and be prepared to discuss the assigned materials.
2. Raise relevant questions and contribute relevant observations to the topic at hand.
3. Fully participate in group activities and discussions in class.
4. Demonstrate appropriate and respectful communication with classmates and the instructor.

CLASSROOM POLICIES: Each class meeting builds the foundation for subsequent class meetings. Without full participation and regular class attendance, students shall find themselves at a severe disadvantage for achieving success in higher education. You are expected to attend and be on time for each lecture. Showing up to lecture late or leaving early, without prior permission from me, will result in a 10 point grade deduction on an upcoming exam. Sul Ross State University does **not** tolerate cheating, plagiarism, or collusion. Procedures for dealing with these acts are outlined in the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy.

CIVILITY STATEMENT: In the classroom environment I hold each of you accountable for both your actions and words. Therefore, you should commit yourself to behave in a manner that recognizes personal respect and demonstrates concern for the personal dignity, rights, and freedoms of every individual in the classroom, including respect for University property and the physical and intellectual property of others. If a student is asked to leave the classroom because of uncivil behavior, the student may not return to that class until he or she arranges a conference with the professor, it is the student's responsibility to arrange for this conference.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: All the functions of all personal electronic devices designed for communication and/or entertainment (cell phones, pagers, beepers, iPods, and similar devices) must be turned off and kept out of sight in the classroom. Any noncompliance with this policy will result in expulsion from class. To prevent student distraction during class, laptops are NOT allowed.

DISABILITY POLICY:

In order to receive accommodations on exams or assignments, proper documentation must first be provided to the Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services. Contact Mary Schwartz (Office: 112 Ferguson Hall) to set up an accommodations meeting, or call (432) 837-8203. Students must then present this documentation to the instructor as soon as possible so that accommodations may be arranged.

TEXTBOOK (Required):

Steven W. Hook, *U.S. Foreign Policy: The Paradox of World Power* (CQ Press, 5th edition, 2017).
ISBN: 9781506321585

GRADING SCALE:

- 60% Exams (4 exams worth 15% each)
- 20% Weekly Discussion Questions
- 20% Individual Report/Presentations
 - 10%- Report
 - 10%- Presentation

*There is NO EXTRA CREDIT for this course, so please do not ask.

This course follows the traditional percentage based grading system below.

- A: 100-90
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59 & below.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

EXAMS- Each student will complete four exams in this course. These exams will consist of a combination of take-home and in-class essays (*each exam is worth 15% of your overall final course grade*) and will be due on the date specified in the course outline below. **Missed exams will result in a grade of zero. Exam deadlines are inflexible and absolute – no excuses.**

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS- Each student will be required to write a weekly report summarizing the reading(s) to be discussed in class that week. Additionally the student will develop a ‘lead discussion question’ targeted at encompassing the main points of the readings and facilitating classroom discussion. These reports will be due at the beginning of class on the week in which you present. This summary report will be handed out to each student in the class. Each report should contain 800 words or about three pages, double-spaced. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. (Report: 10% total course grade; Presentation/discussion lead question: 10% total course grade).

WEEKLY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS- Each student is required to submit 2 questions related to the reading(s) for that week. The questions should be analytical (theoretical) over the topic at hand and/or an attempt to develop a closely related line of inquiry. The purpose of these questions is to generate productive classroom discussion and demonstrate critical thinking ability with regard to the assigned reading(s). These questions are to be submitted electronically via Blackboard on Sundays @ 11:55 p.m. Students are permitted two ‘bye’ weeks (excluding week 1) in which they are not required to submit any questions. At the end of the semester I will take the average of your grade on these submissions and that grade will be worth 20% of your overall final course grade.

Class Schedule

WEEK	ASSIGNED READINGS
SECTION 1 THEME: The Setting of U.S. Foreign Policy	
Week 1 (1/17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction and Course Syllabus
Week 2 (1/24)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 1: The U.S. in a Turbulent World• Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “How U.S. Foreign Policy is Made” http://www.fpa.org/features/index.cfm?act=feature&announcement_id=45&show_sidebar=0• Brooks, S. G., Ikenberry, G. J., & Wohlforth, W. C. (2013). Lean Forward. <i>Foreign Affairs</i>, 92(1), 130.
Week 3 (1/31)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 2: The Expansion of U.S. Power• Nye, J. S. (2016). Limits of American Power. <i>Political Science Quarterly (Wiley-Blackwell)</i>, 131(2), 267-283.• Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “What’s So Great About American World Leadership?” http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/11/trump-world-order-foreign-policy/508547/
Week 4 (2/7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 3: Dynamics of Decision Making• Levy, J. (1994). Learning and Foreign Policy: Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield. <i>International Organization</i>, 48(2), 279-312.
Week 5 (2/14)	EXAM 1 in class, and take home due
SECTION 2 THEME: Internal Government Sources of Foreign Policy	

Week 6 (2/21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4: Presidential Power • Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Potential Conflicts Around the Globe for Trump, the Businessman President” http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/26/us/politics/donald-trump-international-business.html? r=0 • Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “U.S. Allies and Rivals Digest Trump’s Victory” http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/11/11/u.s.-allies-and-rivals-digest-trump-s-victory-pub-65117
Week 7 (2/28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5: Congress beyond the ‘Water’s Edge’ • Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “What a President Trump means for foreign policy” https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/11/09/what-a-president-trump-means-for-foreign-policy/?utm_term=.6e8e4b51fd21
Week 8 (3/7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6: The Foreign Policy Bureaucracy • Carter, D. P. (2016). Clouds or Clocks. <i>Military Review</i>, 96(2), 36. • Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “Defense Acquisitions: How and Where DOD Spends and Reports Its Contracting Dollars” https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44010.pdf • Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “The Pentagon’s \$125 Billion Cover-up” http://fpif.org/pentagons-125-billion-cover/
Week 9 (3/14)	SPRING BREAK—NO ASSIGNMENTS DUE
SECTION 3 THEME: External Sources of Foreign Policy	
Week 10 (3/21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam 2 Take Home Due • Chapter 7: Public Opinion at Home and Abroad • Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “The Relationships Between Mass Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis” https://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/mbaum/documents/BaumPotter_AnnualReview2008.pdf
Week 11 (3/28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 8: The Impact of Mass Communications • Slaughter, Anne-Marie. (2016). How to Succeed in the networked World. <i>Foreign Affairs</i>, 95(6), 76. • Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “The internet is the new geography: Nation0states beware, netizens are the citizens of the future” http://tech.firstpost.com/news-analysis/the-internet-is-the-new-geography-nation-states-beware-netizens-are-the-citizens-of-the-future-354872.html

Week 12 (4/4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9: Social Movements and Interest Groups • Olesen, T. t. (2005). The Uses and Misuses of Globalization in the Study of Social Movements. <i>Social Movement Studies</i>, 4(1), 49-63. • Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “How Corporate Lobbyists Conquered American Democracy” http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/04/how-corporate-lobbyists-conquered-american-democracy/390822/
Week 13 (4/11)	EXAM 3 in class, and take home due
SECTION 4 THEME: Policy Domains	
Week 14 (4/18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10: National Security and Defense Policy • Chapter 11: Economic Statecraft • NEAG, M. M. (2013). SECURITY SYSTEM IN THE GLOBALIZATION ERA. <i>Revista Academiei Fortelor Terestre</i>, 18(3), 246-252. • Robertson, R. B., & Ulmer, J. M. (2014). The Globalization of Manufacturing and its Impact on the US Economy. <i>Franklin Business & Law Journal</i>, 2014(1), 75-82.
Week 15 (4/25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12: Transnational Policy Problems • Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “What are the 10 biggest global challenges?” https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/what-are-the-10-biggest-global-challenges/ • Click on the link below (or cut and paste it into your web browser), and read the article titled, “2017—A Thunderous Clash of Politics, Economies and Policies” http://www.globalissues.org/news/2017/01/02/22768
Week 16 (5/2)	EXAM 4 in class, and take home due

***NOTE:** This schedule is tentative and therefore subject to change at my discretion.