

Course Syllabus: Political Science 3307: H01; H02; H03; V01

“Contemporary American Foreign Policy”

Spring 2023: Sul Ross State University-RGC

Dr. Mark Saad Saka

Office: A 120-Garner Road

Email: Msaka@sulross.edu

Office Hours: by arrangement

Required Text:

Joyce Kaufman, A Concise History of American Foreign Policy, Fifth Edition, ISBN # 978-1538151365, Rowman and Littlefield, Publishers, 2021

Course Objectives:

The objective of this course is to examine contemporary American foreign policy with a strong emphasis on American foreign policy from the conclusion of the Second War in 1945 to the present. In addition to the American role in world affairs, we will also examine the impact of the American Empire on the domestic American society, economy, and culture.

Primary Learning Objectives

At the successful conclusion of this course, through performance on short written assignments, papers and a final examination, the student will be able to

- Demonstrate knowledge about the history of the Presidency and its important personalities; the key institutions of the executive branch; the key powers of the executive branch; constitutional issues relating to the Presidency and the exercise of presidential powers; and the role of the executive branch in implementing public and foreign policy
- Exercise critical thinking skills and demonstrate informed judgment in evaluating issues and answering questions relating to the exercise of Presidential power, and the President’s broader role in our constitutional structure.
- Improve and build on writing skills.

Marketable Skills for Political Science • Students can effectively communicate ideas and information verbally, visually, and in writing • Students can distinguish between credible/relevant information and information lacking credibility/relevance • Students can identify critical and common institutions of political decision-making and policymaking across different nation-state settings • Students can engage with social and political problems and use critical thinking to develop logical solutions

Course Policies:

Contacting the Instructor: The instructor's email is the preferred method of contact.

Msaka@sulross.edu. Please contact me only through the Sul-Ross email as I do not respond to private email such as yahoo, gmail, Hotmail, etc. This is for yours and my security.

I do, however, have a backup email, mark.saka@yahoo.com. This is a backup in the event of a malware attack or if for some other reason the system goes down. I rarely check it as I want you to only use my yahoo account for emergencies. I check my Sul Ross email regularly. Please stay in contact if you are ill or cannot make class for a legitimate reason.

Academic Integrity: Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

1. Turning in work as original that was used in whole or par for another course and/or for another course and/or professor.
2. Turning in another persons' work as one's own.
3. Copying from professional works or internet sites without citations.
4. Collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden.

Classroom Climate of Respect:

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing sensitive political issues.

ADA Statement

SRSU Disability Services, SRSU is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans Disability Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Kathy Biddick at (830) 279—3003. The address is 2623 Garner Field Road, Uvalde Texas 78801. Kbiddick@sulross.edu

Library Information: The Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) Libraries at Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass offer access to library spaces and resources. Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde students may also use online resources available through the SWTJC website. <https://library.swtjc.edu>. The SWTJC Libraries serve as pick-up locations for Inter Library Loan (ILL) and Document delivery from the Alpine campus.

SRSU Distance Education Statement: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the

SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based or distance education courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complain are located in the student handbook.

Course Requirement and Grading:

The course requirements are as follows:

1. Attend class. These lectures will be recorded on Blackboard Collaborate so if you do happen to miss a class, you can watch the recordings and get the information presented as well as staying informed of changes that may arise during the semester.
2. You will write five essay exams and the dates will be announced in class. Basically, at the end of each of the five sections presented below, you will be given one week to write your essay exams that will cover the textbook readings as well as the material presented in the lectures. At the end of the week, you will submit your essay-exams through Blackboard.
3. Each of the five exams will be worth 100 points and at the end of the semester I will add up the five exams and divide them by five; 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; 0-59=F
4. Smile, if you take this course with the attitude of who cares about foreign policy? Then you will not enjoy the course or learn the material as well. American foreign policy and the role of the United States in the world is instructive and essential to understanding domestic America, our economy, our society, as well as the role of America in shaping the modern world. Its actually an exciting topic. Approach it as such and it will be a fun and informative learning experience.

Topical Outline for the Course: For each of these sections, I will add readings from the textbook to supplement the material, the chapters will be announced in class.

Section One: World War Two and the Birth of the American Century; 1941-1945

1. We will begin with the shape of the World as a result of the Second World War, the collapse of Europe, and the origins of the Cold War.

Section Two: The Cold War and America's Confrontation with a Rapidly Decolonizing World; 1945-1962

1. We will examine the Cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union, 1945-1960 as well as the impact of the Chinese Communist victory in 1949 and subsequent Cold war in Asia, 1945-1960.
2. We will the examine America's confrontation with a rapidly decolonizing world and revolutionary nationalism spanning Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

3. The growth of the military industrial complex and the national security state will also be covered as major themes as well as the impact of the Cold War on America's domestic race relations and the Civil Rights movements.

Section Three: The Limits of Power and the End of the Post-War Order; 1962-1975

1. The American war in Vietnam 1945-1973 will be covered as well as the American role in confronting the Cuban Revolution 1960-1975; the transformed Middle East 1967-1973, and the continuation of the Cold War tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union.
2. The collapse of Bretton Woods and the deindustrialization of America and the emergence of fiat currency as well as the end of the old-petroleum order and
3. The era in American foreign relations history following the debacle of Vietnam 1975-1991, the dramatic reshaping of global geo-political relations with the opening up of relations between China and the United States, America and the formation of National Security Regimes in Latin America, 1964-1976

Section Four: The Post-War World; the rise of Political Islam, the Era of Détente and the End of the Cold War,

1. The confrontation between the United States and revolutionary-political Islam (the Iranian Revolution), as well as the expanded presence of the United States in the Middle East will be covered as well as American confrontation with the revolutionary upheavals in Central America, 1977-1992.
2. The 1980s and the Reagan years as the beginning of the end of the Cold War 1980-1992 will also address such critical questions as "why"? What economic, political, ideological, and technological forces brought about an end to the Cold War?

Section Five: The post-Cold War Era and the Eclipse of the American Empire; 1991-2023

1. The post-Cold War era 1991-2001 and the emergence of the United States as the world's "Hyper-Power as the United States under the guise of neo-liberalism confronted a rapidly changing world and for a short window, the American domination of the world's geo-political transformation.
2. The changing role of the United States in the Middle East with the First Gulf War (1991-1992) and the origins of the 9-11 attacks as well as the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and the global war on terror will cover the next area of current American history.
3. The rise of China from an impoverished nation in 1978 to its position as a global superpower by the second decade of the 21st century as the United States faces a rapidly changing world will conclude this section.

4. Finally we will examine the current state of affairs since the election of Donald Trump and Joe Biden and the challenges of the 2020s.