

PS 3307 Contemporary American Foreign Policy

Fall 2026

Tuesday and Thursday 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM

LH 201

Instructor: Dr. Yen-Hsin Chen

Office: LH 308

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Office hours:

- Monday & Wednesday: 10 AM-12 PM
- Tuesday & Thursday: 11 AM-12 PM

Course Description

This course involves the study of policies and problems in the foreign relations of the United States since World War II. Included are studies in the politics formulation conduct and consequences of American foreign policy.

Course Learning Objectives

This course aims to provide substantive description of problems, policies, and patterns and their explanations in the foreign policymaking process. Students will know the meaning and significance of foreign policy, understand the foundations of the politics of foreign policymaking, and identify a framework for understating the politics of the U.S. foreign policy.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of significant theoretical approaches of political science through written work and oral communication.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze domestic and international political processes in written work and oral communication.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop arguments about global equity and equality issues in politics through written work and oral communication.

Marketable Skills

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have demonstrated the ability to:

- identify and articulate the major concepts and approaches utilized in one of the social or behavioral sciences.
- evaluate and interpret relevant scientific or textual evidence and formulate conclusions based on that evidence.
- identify and articulate the limitations of the approaches (e.g., theories, models, methodologies) within one of the social or behavioral sciences.

Technology Use in the Classroom

Except for students with university-documented accommodations, electronic devices with screens, cameras, audio recording or audio playback (e.g., phones, laptops, tablets, earbuds, headphones) are not permitted during class, and notes should be taken using non-electronic methods. Because public speaking is a shared responsibility between speakers and audiences, this policy supports focused attention, respectful listening, and a classroom climate of trust that enhances learning and the exchange of ideas.

Assignments and Grading

Attendance and Participation (20% of your grade):

You have decided to attend college, so you are responsible for your education. Students are expected to arrive promptly and actively participate in class discussions. If you are inconsistent in your attendance and participation, it will affect my evaluation of your performance. If you are on the Alpine campus, you need to attend in-person class meetings. If you are on the SRSU International campus, please log in to the virtual meetings on time and turn on your camera. Otherwise, you will be marked as absent. Additionally, I reserve the right to drop students if necessary.

Semester Paper, Presentation, and Peer-Review (30% of your grade):

One semester paper is required for this class, focusing on incorporating current events into in-class learning. One of the most valuable skills you can develop in college is how to find properly sourced information and include it in arguments. This paper will serve as a platform to demonstrate that.

Students will first identify a research question, conduct a literature review, and develop their theory to explain the cause-and-effect relationship between two political phenomena related to U.S. foreign policy. Please note that students must present a clear argument and support it with references to relevant theories. An appropriate citation must back up any argument that rests on a point of fact.

This paper requires at least eight double-spaced pages and no more than 10 pages. A student's paper will be judged not on the length but on the quality of its argument. More specifically, students should present a reasoned, analytically sound, and empirically valid argument in their paper. It is due on November 8th (Sunday). Students will lose 10 points for every calendar day their paper is late. Additionally, students will present their papers in class.

Your paper needs to include the following sections. Students are required to schedule meetings with me to discuss their plans and progress.

1. Identify the issue (5 points): Submission and meeting by September 10th
2. What do we know about the issue (5 points): Submission and meeting by October 8th
3. My theory (5 points): Submission and meeting by October 29th
4. Final manuscript (5 points): Submission by November 8th

Please note that these three meetings are mandatory; you must demonstrate progress. If you do not meet this requirement, I will reject your paper, and you will receive a "0" for this assignment. No exceptions. Further details will be provided in a separate handout.

Exams (50% of your grade):

Two in class closed-book exams will be given during this course. The midterm exam (20% of your grade) will be held on **September 29th**. The final exam (30% of your grade) will be held during the final exam week.

Grade Scale

Your grade will be determined based on the following grading scale:

Points	Letter Grade
100- 90.0	A
89.9-80.0	B
79.9-70.0	C
69.9-60.0	D
59.9 or less	F

Assigned Reading

The required text for this course is:

James M. Scott and Jerel A. Rosati. 2023. The Politics of United States Foreign Policy, 8th Edition
ISBN: 9781071902394 (Paperback) or 9781071902424 (eBook)

Students should read the assigned chapters before class. If a class is canceled due to illness or other unexpected reasons, the material for that session will be covered at the next meeting. All additional readings will be available on Blackboard and the library website.

Classroom Rules

All students must treat the instructor, peers, and the classroom environment with respect. Please arrive on time, stay for the entire class, turn off cell phones and electronic devices during class, and refrain from disruptive activities, such as talking with friends or passing notes. These policies help create a classroom environment that allows all students to focus on the lecture and class discussion. It is also essential to respect alternative opinions and points of view during class discussions. Thus, you should listen when the instructor or a fellow student is speaking to the class and refrain from using insulting language or gestures, no matter how vehemently you disagree with your classmates. Please note that I reserve the right to stop the discussion at any time.

Tentative Course Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule of topics and reading assignments for the course. Thus, items on this syllabus are subject to change at the instructor's discretion. If I deem it necessary to make changes to the schedule, I will announce them in class.

Week 1 (8/24): Introduction to the Course

- Chapters 1

Week 2 (8/31): What to Do and Why

- Chapters 2 and 3

Week 3 (9/7): The Policy Making Process, Part I

- Chapters 4 and 5
- First submission and meeting by 9/10 (Thursday)

Week 4 (9/14): The Policy Making Process, Part II

- Chapters 6 and 7

Week 5 (9/21): Our Foreign Economic Policies

- Chapters 8 and 9

Week 6 (9/28): Midterm Exam Week

- Midterm Exam on 9/29

Week 7 (10/5): Explanations

- Chapter 10
- Second submission and meeting by 10/8 (Thursday)

Week 8 (10/12): Domestic and International Politics

- Chapter 11

Week 9 (10/19): Political Participation and Foreign Policy

- Chapter 12

Week 10 (10/26): Media and Foreign Policy

- Chapter 13
- Third submission and meeting by 10/29 (Thursday)

Week 11 (11/2): Catch-up Week

- This week is for catching up on previously missed topics/class meetings.
- Semester paper due on 11/8 (Sunday)

Week 12 (11/9): Student Presentation, Week 1

- Students will present their papers in class.

Week 13 (11/16): Student Presentation, Week 2

- Students will present their papers in class.

Week 14 (11/23): Thanksgiving Holiday**Week 15 (11/30): Catch-Up Week****Week 16 (12/7): Final Exam Week**

- Final Exam during the final exam week

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ADA Statement

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. To help protect confidentiality, students seeking accessibility/accommodation(s) services must submit the [Accommodation Request Form](#) located on our [website](#). Students are welcome to call the Office of Accessibility Services at 432-837-8203 or stop by Ferguson Hall Room 112 if they have any additional questions regarding the process. Our mailing address is PO Box C-122; Alpine, TX; 79832.

Statement Regarding Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The University does not recommend or endorse any specific AI tools or resources. Students should be aware that many generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot) store user input and may use this data to train future models. For this reason, students should never upload or share personal, confidential, or identifiable information—such as names, ID numbers, health data, or assignment submissions containing such details—into any generative AI platform. When using AI tools, students should verify whether the tool complies with student privacy standards as indicated by the University. Faculty may recommend specific tools that better align with institutional data privacy policies, but ultimate responsibility for data protection rests with users. Students are encouraged to use faculty-recommended platforms when engaging in coursework involving generative AI. The University is not liable for any adverse experience or impact when students interact with these tools. Here are some recommended statements faculty might adapt for their syllabi: <https://ctl.utexas.edu/chatgpt-and-generative-ai-tools-sample-syllabus-policy-statements>. Review the entire [AI Policy](#) [here](#).

Student Responsibilities

All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the [Student Handbook](#) and the [Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog](#) and for abiding by the [University rules and regulations](#). Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize him/herself with the requirements of such laws.

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 a secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based 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 complaint are located in the student handbook.

Counseling

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/365 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](https://timelycare.com/SRSU). The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

Libraries

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu/. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LobolD and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu. Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty, and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL), ScanIt, and Direct Mail to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Students should also avoid using open AI sources *unless permission is expressly given* for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

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 help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all 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 politically sensitive issues.

Supportive Statement

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports various perspectives and experiences. I understand that the recent pandemic, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events may impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create a supportive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

Tutoring Center

[The Lobo Den Tutoring Center](#) offers FREE tutoring support to help you excel in your courses. Whether you need assistance in Writing, Math, Science, or other subjects, we're here to help!

Important Information:

- **Drop-in and Scheduled Appointments:** Flexible options to fit your needs.
- **Hours of Operation:** Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- **Workshops:** Attend our regularly hosted academic workshops on STEM topics and professional development, often in collaboration with specialized faculty.
- **Location:** BWML Room 128.
- **Contact Us:** For more information or to book an appointment, email tutoring@sulross.edu or call (432) 837-8726.

Looking for additional support?

- Tutor.com offers FREE 24/7 online tutoring in over 200 subjects, including specialized support for ESL and ELL learners with native Spanish-speaking tutors.
- Access Tutor.com via Blackboard: Log in to your Blackboard account to get started anytime, anywhere.

Take advantage of these valuable resources to boost your confidence and performance in your classes. We look forward to helping you succeed!