

United States International University
Department of International Relations

Course Outline: Critical Issues in US Foreign Policy
IRL4800 Three Units

Course Description:

Analysis of US role in the international arena in the coming century; the concept of Pax Americana and the New World Order; the US role in maintaining international peace and security, and in promoting a sound economic system on a global scale.

Link to Program Learning Outcomes:

1. Explain concepts and theories in political science
2. Explain and use research methodology in political science
3. Collect, collate, analyze and respond critically to information.
4. Critically analyze the dynamics of world politics and its relation to International Relations.
5. Identify threats and opportunities to national strategic interests, and formulate policies in response.
6. Apply understanding of a global, multi-cultural and complex interconnected world to explain and predict issues in global politics.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Use concepts and theories in International Relations to analyze US foreign policy.
2. Understand and appropriately use research methods in International Relations.
3. Recognize divides in the literature, biases, and ideological persuasions in the sources they read and should be able to critically analyze these sources.
4. Critically analyze the dynamics of world politics and its relation to US foreign policy.
5. Identify threats and opportunities to US national strategic interests, and formulate policies in response.
6. Apply understanding of a global, multi-cultural and complex interconnected world to explain and predict issues in US foreign policy.

Grading:

Reading checks: 8%

First mini-assignment: 2%

Presentation: 10%

Total term paper: 25%

- Introduction and bibliography: 4%
- Draft: 6%
- Final Paper: 15%

Mid-Semester Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 35%

Attendance and Participation:

Students are required to attend all lectures. In case of absence, a student is required to:

1. Notify the lecturer in advance
2. Get notes from a classmate
3. Check email for any announcements

Students should note that **whatever the reason for absence**, five or more absences will automatically warrant failing the entire class. **Except in very rare cases, even if students bring signed doctors notes or other paperwork, their absences will not be erased or excused.**

Students are expected to come to class prepared with questions based on their readings. These should be thoughtful questions and your participation grade is largely based on whether you can demonstrate that you are doing the reading and thinking about it.

Reading Checks:

To encourage you to do your reading in a timely manner, there will be eight reading checks given at the beginning of class on Tuesday on weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 (or the week after your mid-term exam). The quizzes will cover only the chapter(s) of the course text assigned for the previous week. Out of the seven reading checks, I will only count your best four. You will actually have two reading checks on the second week (January 19): one on the course outline and one on Chapter One of the course text.

Assignments:

You have one mini-assignment due the second week:

1. Go to www.turnitin.com
2. Register for turnitin and register for our class
3. You'll need to make a password – write it down in a safe place!!!!
4. Submit (upload) a word document that answers the following questions:
 - Your phone number
 - Do you have any learning disabilities which need special consideration, e.g. extra time on exams?
 - Is there anything about you that you want me to know?

Papers:

Term Paper: 2,500 words

Term paper questions (Pick one):

1. Robert Art proposes six grand strategies for US foreign policy. Do you agree with him that selective engagement is the best way forward for the 21st century?
2. Which event in the past half-century has been the biggest fiasco in US foreign policy? What has the US done, if anything, to recover? Has it worked?
3. Is the US in a period of imperial overstretch? Does that mean that the US is destined to fall from its hegemonic position in the near future?
4. Analyze the foreign policy of the US towards a specific country of your choice. Choose a limited time period to analyze. Find a paradox that needs to be explained, research it, then explain it.

Paper Guidelines:

Introduction: to set up the paper well, you should include the following in your introduction: relevant background information, a clear and appropriate thesis, justification, and organizational overview in your introduction. Although there is no one correct way of writing an introduction, a model (broken down into parts) will be posted on the website.

Main Body: the body of the paper should be broken down into sections which correlate to the organizational overview outlined in your introduction. Each section should relate back to and support your thesis. Towards the beginning of the body, you should review what has already been published on the topic, pointing out any major divides in the literature, including any recognizable ideological camps that the literature may fall into. Claims should be supported with specific examples, and when you use other author's claims, you should evaluate whether you think their claims are valid. Each fact or idea that you use which is not common knowledge and not the sole product of your own analysis or primary research needs a citation. Endnotes, in-text citations, and footnotes are all acceptable choices and should be placed next to the fact/idea that is borrowed.

Conclusion: the conclusion should include no new information, but instead should summarize your main arguments, reiterate their connection with your thesis, evaluate how well you've been able to prove your thesis, and identify any relevant areas needing further research.

Bibliography: in addition to the footnotes, endnotes, or in-text citations, you need to have a bibliography. Any consulted source, including Wikipedia, a TV show you watched, a discussion with a politician, etc. needs to be cited in your bibliography. Several links for citation and bibliography formatting resources will be posted on the website.

General Tips:

- Reading widely will help you:
 - Avoid over-reliance on any one author,
 - Get a full and accurate picture,
 - Evaluate and group authors/arguments, and
 - Have the ability to provide your own high-quality analysis.
- One way to do this is by finding one relevant author, noting which authors s/he criticizes, then locating and reading those criticized authors.
- Try to find a balance between analysis and supporting material. It can be tempting to write history papers full of relevant factual detail, but that is not our goal.
- Try to think of any themes, concepts or theories in international relations that your thesis and sub-arguments relate to. Determine whether bringing in these themes, concepts or theories helps your paper, and if so, overtly explain the connection or relevance.
- **NOTE THAT ACCORDING TO UNIVERSITY POLICY, PLAGIARIZED ASSIGNMENTS COUNT AS CHEATING AND MAY WARRANT FAILING THE ENTIRE COURSE.**

Presentation:

Make groups (**no more than five people**) and choose one of the recommended readings in the Course Schedule to present on. Presentations should take 15 minutes and should present the material in an organized fashion. The presenter should convey and evaluate the author's arguments and relate the article to any relevant themes of the course. Creativity and visual aids are encouraged. You must reserve articles in advance **by emailing the instructor. Include names and ID numbers of group members and article to be presented on.**

Readings:

The course text is Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. There are enough copies for everyone.

We will also use JSTOR articles as recommended reading. You can access these in two ways. You can download them from USIU computers (**computers outside USIU can't use JSTOR**). You can also bring a flash disk to my office during office hours and I'll copy them onto your flash for you. These articles are essential for doing well in the course.

Schedule:

Week One:

- Tuesday: Introduction to Course

Assigned Readings:

- Course Outline
- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapter One**

Recommended Reading:

- Dutter, Lee. "The Seventy-Five Years' War, 1914-1989: Some Observations on the Psychology of American Foreign Policy-Making during the 20th Century." *Political Psychology*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Sep., 1991), pp. 523-553.

Week Two:

Assigned Readings:

- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapters Two and Three**

Recommended Reading:

- Glad, Betty. "Black-and-White Thinking: Ronald Reagan's Approach to Foreign Policy." *Political Psychology*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Mar., 1983), pp. 33-76

Week Three:

Assigned Readings:

- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapters Four and Five**

Recommended Reading:

- Garrison, Jean. "Framing Foreign Policy Alternatives in the Inner Circle: President Carter, His Advisors, and the Struggle for the Arms Control Agenda." *Political Psychology*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (Dec., 2001), pp. 775-807

Week Four:

Assigned Readings:

- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapters Six and Seven**

Recommended Reading:

- Wright, Robin and Shaul Bakhash. "The U. S. and Iran: An Offer They Can't Refuse?" *Foreign Policy*, No. 108 (Autumn, 1997), pp. 124-137.

Week Five:

Assigned Readings:

- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapter Eight**

Recommended Reading:

- Voeten, Erik and Paul Brewer. "Public Opinion, the War in Iraq, and Presidential Accountability." *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 50, No. 6 (Dec., 2006), pp. 809-830

Week Six:

No assigned readings. Review for the exam.

Week Seven: Mid-Semester Exam

- How to write papers and avoid plagiarism

Assigned Readings:

- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapter Nine**

Recommended Reading:

- Purkitt, Helen and James W. Dyson. "The Role of Cognition in U.S. Foreign Policy toward Southern Africa." *Political Psychology*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (Sep., 1986), pp. 507-532

Week Eight:

- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapter Ten**

Recommended Reading:

- Caruson, Kiki and Victoria A. Farrar-Myers. "Promoting the President's Foreign Policy Agenda: Presidential Use of Executive Agreements." *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (Dec., 2007), pp. 631-644
- Rosenberg, Philipp. "Presidential Beliefs and Foreign Policy Decision-Making: Continuity during the Cold War Era." *Political Psychology*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Dec., 1986), pp. 733-751

Week Nine:

Assigned Readings:

- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapters Eleven and Twelve**

Recommended Reading:

- Souva, Mark and David Rohde. "Elite Opinion Differences and Partisanship in Congressional Foreign Policy, 1975-1996." *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (Mar., 2007), pp. 113-123

Week Ten:

Assigned Readings:

- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapter Thirteen**

Recommended Reading:

- N. "Our Much Abused State Department." *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Jul., 1927), pp. 567-578
- Gingrich, Newt. "Rogue State Department." *Foreign Policy*, No. 137 (Jul. - Aug., 2003), pp. 42-48

Week Eleven:

Assigned Reading:

- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapter Fourteen**

Recommended Reading:

- Miller, Linda. "The Clinton Years: Reinventing US Foreign Policy?" *International Affairs*. Vol. 70, No. 4 (Oct., 1994), pp. 621-634

Week Twelve:

Assigned Reading:

- Wittkopf, Eugene and Christopher Jones. *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*. **Chapter Fifteen**

Recommended Reading:

- Deibel, Terry. "Bush's Foreign Policy: Mastery and Inaction." *Foreign Policy*, No. 84 (Autumn, 1991), pp. 3-23

Thirteen:

No Assigned Readings: Review for Exam

Final Exam