

Introduction to US Foreign Policy Political Science 3400 – Spring 2017

Course Objectives

When the Soviet empire collapsed in 1991, the first President Bush proclaimed a “new world order” – a world freed from the threat of nuclear annihilation, a world guided by American ideals and protected by American power. The rapid spread of democratic government seemed to confirm the dawn of a new, more peaceful era. However, not everyone in the world shared this rosy vision or looked to the US for leadership.

While it remained the dominant military power in the world, the US faced serious threats from resurgent authoritarian governments, economic competition, and radical non-state actors. Economic crisis and political dysfunction at home raise serious questions about the the American role in the world. Although it is too early to predict specific policy directions, the election of Donald Trump may mean the most significant change in American foreign policy since the end of World War II.

In this course, we will explore some of the following questions:

- What are US interests?
- What does US power look like to other nations?
- How effective is US foreign policy decision making? What is the role of the executive branch, legislative branch, interest groups, and public opinion in formulating US foreign policy?
- Is American exceptionalism a useful basis for US foreign policy? Is the US “indispensable” to a peaceful world?
- What is the appropriate use of – and what are the limits to – US power in world?
- What are the costs and benefits of various foreign policy tools, and what is the balance between “hard power” and “soft power”?

Class attendance and participation is required to earn full credit.

Office: Old Main 326A

Contact: 797-9742, steve.sharp@usu.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:00-4:00. *I'm happy to meet with you at other times.* Please make arrangements by email.

Final exam: Monday, May 1, 9:30-11:20 am, M326

Textbook & Quizzes: There is no required textbook, but there will be assigned readings every week. Readings will be posted in Canvas. There will be online quizzes and assignments on the readings.

An iClicker is required in every class. If you already have an iClicker for another class, you do not need to purchase another. Either an iClicker or an iClicker2 will work and can be purchased in the bookstore. The iClicker app will not work. You need to register your iClicker (your name and USU A#) at www.iClicker.com. You will need an iClicker in class starting Thursday, September 3, or you will lose points.

Electronic Devices Not Allowed in Class Laptops, netbooks, iPads, smart phones, cell phones, and other similar **electronic devices distract from class discussion. Unfortunately, this means their use is not allowed in class, even for taking notes.**

Grading

Attendance and participation is required. 10% of your grade is earned during class periods. Using the iClicker, you will answer questions related to the reading and pertaining to class discussion. Questions can be at the beginning or end of the class, so being late or leaving early could cause you to lose participation points. Participation points will be logged into Canvas by Friday afternoon each week. You are responsible for monitoring your points on Canvas. If your iClicker is not registering your responses, speak to me immediately after class; otherwise you may lose the credit you deserve. *If you don't come to class, you will miss information vital to the exams. Material covered in class may not be covered in the reading, and terms you may think you know are frequently defined differently in political science. If you do miss class for whatever reason, you are responsible to get notes from a classmate.*

Extra Credit: There is no extra credit in the course. Please do not ask at the end of the semester if there is something you can do to raise your grade. You will be graded on work that every student is assigned during the semester.

Basis of Course Grade:

class participation	10%
online quizzes	20%
midterm exam	20%
paper 1	10%
paper 2	20%
final exam	20%

Grade scale:

A	=	94-100%
A-	=	90-93%
B+	=	87-89%
B	=	84-86%
B-	=	80-83%
C+	=	77-79%
C	=	74-76%
C-	=	70-73%
D+	=	67-69%
D	=	60-66%
F	=	0-59%

Rounding policy:

When it comes to the final grade, simple arithmetic rounding to two decimal places will be used. Grades are crude approximations of your performance. The difference between 89.4% (rounded to 89%) and 89.5% (rounded to 90%) is only 0.1%, but that's the difference between a B+ and A- on your transcript. Unfortunately, the university requires us to draw a line somewhere; appeals that you are "so close" to a better grade will not raise it.

Exams: (A study guide will be available one week before each exam.)

- midterm exam worth 20% of your class grade (The midterm exam will only be given at the regularly scheduled times unless there is prior arrangement with me.)
- final exam worth 20% of your class grade (The final exam will only be given at the regularly scheduled times unless there is prior arrangement with me.)

Online Quizzes are taken on the Canvas system (canvas.usu.edu). Check Canvas after each class for details. The objective of the quizzes is to have you become familiar with the readings. Quizzes are generally due **before midnight** (11:59 pm) on the due date.

Papers: The final paper will require you to detail a US foreign policy strategy. This will be the basis for a group exercise and class presentation. Detailed requirements and deadlines will be posted on Canvas (canvas.usu.edu).

Late Submission of Assignments: Please pay close attention to the deadlines posted in Canvas. Except in the case of documented emergencies, due dates are enforced. Late work is subject to an automatic 30% reduction, so **the best you can expect on a late assignment is a C-**. You may turn in assignments early to avoid last minute problems.

Make-up Exams and Missing Quiz Deadlines: To be fair to all students, make-up exams will not be given, except by prior arrangement, or in documented, extraordinary cases, such as hospitalization or death in the immediate family.

Attendance/Cheating: Attendance is required. Class participation is monitored in part by your feedback on issues using an iClicker. Since this is part of your grade, you may only use your own clicker. Participating with another student's clicker for them is **cheating**. Anyone who does so, or allows another student to use their clicker, will lose all their participation points (10% reduction in points for final grade).

Accommodation for Disabilities: Special accommodation can be made for students with documented disability. Please discuss your needs with me early (preferably during the first week of class). See www.usu.edu/drc for details on USU's accommodation policy and procedures.