Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the study of U.S. foreign policy. Topics include the role of power, interests, and norms within the international system, interplay among the various foreign policy arms of the U.S. government; the role of interest groups, public opinion, and the news media in the making of foreign policy; changing beliefs and ideas regarding the United States and its place in the world; the U.S. role in forming and managing international institutions; and current debates regarding the future of American foreign policy.

The course consists of four parts:

- Part I introduces basic theoretical concepts and examines various structures and processes that impact the making of foreign policy.

- Part II places these concepts and theories in historical context by examining American foreign policy traditions and their impact on policy outcomes.

- Part III examines the U.S. role in establishing and maintaining the post-World War II economic and security order.

- Part IV examines emerging strands of American foreign policy in the post-Cold War era.
Course Goals and Learning Objectives

The course lectures, readings, writing assignment, and examinations are intended to achieve three primary objectives:

1. Introduce students to the basic concepts and theoretical approaches that comprise the study of foreign policy
2. Provide students with a basic understanding of U.S. foreign policy past, present, and future
3. Assist students in developing analytical skills such that they can provide thoughtful and coherent arguments in oral and written form

The first and second objectives are necessary for careers in or continued study of foreign policy, while the third is essential to the idea of a university education. All three help to equip students for work as engaged citizens and public servants.

Course Texts

Most course readings are from the following required books, both available at the USU campus store or on reserve at the university library:


Older editions of these books are not suitable. Other supplemental journal articles, news articles, and book sections are available online or on reserve, as noted in the syllabus. Access to certain websites is available only via a USU login and password. The instructor will distribute detailed instructions for finding online journal articles.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend every lecture, to complete all of the required readings, and to watch or read any additional material that is posted to Canvas each week. When
additional materials are posted, I will note explicitly whether they are required or merely optional for interested students. Note that lectures will sometimes cover material that is not in the readings, and the readings may contain material that is not covered in the lectures. Both are critical to your success on quizzes and exams.

The course consists of the following graded items:

- Reading Quizzes & Class Participation (25%)
- Midterm Examination (25%)
- Policy Memos (25%)
- Final Examination (25%)

**Lectures**

To succeed in the course, it is essential to attend class and participate in the lectures. Lecture slides will also be posted on Canvas. I recommend that you have the slides in front of you while you’re listening to the lecture so that you can take notes and follow the overall outline of the course material.

**Quizzes**

During the first week, students will take a short quiz based on the content of the syllabus. The quiz is required to access course materials on Canvas and students must receive a 80% or higher to get credit for it. Students will have five percentage points subtracted from your final grade if they do not complete it.

In addition, occasional multiple-choice reading quizzes will be posted on Canvas. The quiz will remain available for a 24-hour period. The quizzes are open-book and open-note but no collaboration between students is permitted. Once you begin the quiz, you will have a limited amount of time to complete it (approximately 15 minutes), so one should prepare as if one is taking an in-class quiz.

*Students will be allowed only one attempt to complete each quiz.*

**Midterm and Final Examinations**

Students will complete a take-home midterm and final examination. Both examinations are open-note and will be submitted electronically to Canvass at the designated date and time. For both examinations, students can access notes, readings, and other materials, but they must work independently.
The midterm will cover material from the first half of the course and is designed to be completed in approximately 60 minutes. Students will receive the prompt on Canvass and will have 24 hours to submit their answers.

The final examination will cover material from the second half of the course (i.e., it is not cumulative) and is designed to be completed in two hours. Students will have 24 hours to upload their exam responses electronically to Canvas. The midterm and final exam will each consist of 25% of students’ final grade.

Both exams will follow the same format, including a combination of short- and long-answer essay questions. Unlike in-class examinations which often quiz students on course “trivia” (e.g., people, dates, events, and concepts), the exams in this course will concentrate on analysis and application. They will require students to take a theory, concept, or event from the course and apply it to a contemporary problem, question, or policy.

The instructor will provide a brief study guide for both examinations approximately one week before the exam date.

Policy Memos

Over the course of the semester, students will write four (approx. 1,000 word) policy memos based on a prompt provided by the instructor. Each memo will ask students to concept concepts, theories, and case studies from the course to a contemporary question or issue in U.S. foreign policy.

The policy memos have three purposes. First, it gives students the opportunity to apply your understanding of theory to an important issue in U.S. foreign policy. Second, it allows them to dive into a foreign policy issue that interests you. Third, it will improve students research and writing skills.

Here are some examples of recent topics that would make ideal policy memo prompts:

Should the United States . . .

▶ withdraw its support for NATO’s Article 5 if members do not spend 2% of their GDP on defense?
▶ use the Magnitsky Act to sanction individuals responsible for China’s repression of the Uighur people?
▶ withdraw from the INF treaty? Or work with Russia to extend START II?
▶ continue current funding levels for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. (Trump’s prior budget proposal called for significant reductions.)
▶ reduce its military aid to Nigeria because of the Nigerian military’s repeated human rights violations?
➢ work for regime change in Iran (or another country)?
➢ reconsider its withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord, the TPP, or the Iranian nuclear agreement?

Each prompt will present a particular policy issue (e.g., “Should the United States sign the ICC?) and ask students to relate it to more general concepts, theories, and case from the course (e.g., lecture on U.S. foreign policy and human rights treaties.)

In response, the students will write a brief policy memo consisting of four parts:

➢ **Describe the Problem (1 paragraph):** What is the issue and why is it important to the United States?

➢ **Recommendation (3–4 paragraphs):** Describe policy recommendation by drawing on concepts and theories from the course. What does the policy entail? Be specific. Then defend it. Detail why a theorist would recommend this policy given their assumptions about international politics. Be sure to link your theoretical discussion to the issue that you are addressing.

➢ **Critique (2–3 paragraphs):** Describe how the competing theoretical perspective would critique your recommendation: on what basis would realists/liberals disagree, and why? Again, be specific and directly link this discussion to the issue that you are addressing.

➢ **Retort (2–3 paragraphs):** Defend your recommendation against this critique.

Remember that there are always value trade-offs: every policy has advantages and disadvantages. Do not treat your memo as if it were a lawyer’s brief. Recognize the complexity and competing interests in the design of U.S. foreign policy.

Sometimes applying foreign policy theory to public policy is straightforward (e.g., nuclear deterrence), but oftentimes it is not. Your job is not to recommend the “correct” theoretical position (as often there is not one). Instead, it is to propose and defend a particular policy in theoretical terms. Some proponents of your theory might view the issue differently and that’s perfectly okay. The instructor will assess your memo based on how well you develop and defend a particular theoretical perspective.

Your policy memo should be about 1,000 words, not including citations (please use footnotes). Memos must be submitted in a serif font (e.g., Times New Roman) of size 12 with 1” margins on all sides and page numbers. The filename of the electronic version must include the name of the student submitting it (e.g., Knuppe-policy-memo.PDF). Your memo must be well written and carefully edited (and will be assessed on content and style). An indispensable guide is Strunk & White’s *Elements of Style*. You might also consult the [USU Writing Center](#).

The general topics and due dates of the memos are as follows:
> **Policy Memo I** will present a question relating to theories of foreign policy analysis and/or international relations (including the levels of analysis).

> **Policy Memo II** will present a question related to organizational culture, the role of bureaucracies, interest groups, or public opinion.

> **Policy Memo III** will present a current issue and ask students to draw parallels or lessons from the history of U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War (1945–1990).

> **Policy Memo IV** will pose a question relating to the rise, zenith, and fall of U.S. hegemony and/or the role of international institutions.

**Extra Credit: Book or Film Review**

Students often find themselves a percentage point or two shy from their desired final grade (e.g., a 89% but they want to earn an A- for their final grade). To address these concerns—and mitigate any panicked emails at the end of the semester—I offer an optional extra credit assignment that can boost a student’s final grade **up to 1% point**.

To receive extra credit, students may select a recent book or film addressing a topic relevant to U.S. foreign policy and write a 1,000 word review (approximately 4 double-spaced pages). A high-quality review does more than describe a text or film’s argument or theme. Rather, students should seek to address one or more of the following components:

> engage a relevant question or puzzle covered in the course
> introduce new or relevant information to the discussion
> reference specific course material in one’s analysis (a reading, lecture, etc.)
> provide a substantive rebuttal or challenge to the author’s primary argument, theme, or method

Book or film selections must be pre-approved by the instructor prior to submission. Reviews are due on Canvass by 5 PM MDT on the last full day of class (Thursday, December 9th).

**Course Policies**

**Attendance Policy**

I have no formal attendance policy, but active participation in the lectures is an integral component of students’ participation grade. Class attendance will also help students prepare for the midterm and final examinations, as well as the policy memo.
Communication and Office Hours

I primarily use emails and announcements on Canvas to communicate with students. Please check Canvas frequently throughout the semester.

You should feel free to email me with any specific questions about course materials or logistics. Please treat your email as a professional correspondence and be as clear and specific as possible, and please include “PS 3400” somewhere in the subject line. Because of the high enrollments and format of this course, I receive many emails and can only respond effectively if I understand your inquiry. I will hold weekly office hours in Old Main Hall, as indicated at the top of the syllabus. If you are unavailable during this time period, feel free to email me to schedule a separate appointment.

Collaboration With Other Students

In completing the assignments, you are encouraged to interact with your instructor and student colleagues. However, sharing answers to the assignments, including online reading quizzes or exams, is strictly prohibited. If assignments are submitted that look suspiciously similar, they will be investigated for academic misconduct (see below).

Late Assignments

Late assignments will not be accepted, unless a prior extension has been granted by the instructor (Canvas will not accept assignments after the listed deadline). For this reason, you are strongly encouraged to start working on your assignments early, and to attend class and office hours to have questions answered promptly.

Technical Problems

It is your responsibility to ensure that you can view lecture videos and other material posted to Canvas, and that you can use the Canvas site to take quizzes and exams, submit papers, etc. We cannot troubleshoot technical problems for all of our students, so you should consult the online Service Desk or contact their phone number at (435)-797-HELP or email servicedesk@usu.edu. If you are having a problem with Canvas, a good first step is to try a different internet browser or computer.
Academic Integrity

The University expects that students and faculty alike maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University (Student Conduct) addresses academic integrity and honesty and notes the following:

Academic Integrity

Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the University by not participating in or facilitating others’ participation in any act of academic dishonesty and by reporting all violations or suspected violations of the Academic Integrity Standard to their instructors.

The Honor Pledge

To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: “I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity.” Violations of the Academic Integrity Standard (academic violations) include, but are not limited to cheating, falsification, and plagiarism.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism includes knowingly “representing by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.” The penalties for plagiarism are severe. They include warning or reprimand, grade adjustment, probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, denial or revocation of degrees, and referral to psychological counseling.

Students with Disabilities

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn #101, 435-797-2444, drc@usu.edu). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.
Mental Health

Mental health is critically important for the success of USU students. As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Utah State University provides free services for students to assist them with addressing these and other concerns. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).

Students are also encouraged to download the SafeUT App to their smartphones. The SafeUT application is a 24/7 statewide crisis text and tip service that provides real-time crisis intervention to students through texting and a confidential tip program that can help anyone with emotional crises, bullying, relationship problems, mental health, or suicide related issues.

Sexual Harassment

Utah State University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. Title IX and USU Policy 339 address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting.

The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU’s Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity (AA/EO) Office for available options and resources or clarification. The university has established a complaint procedure to handle all types of discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment (USU Policy 305), and has designated the AA/EO Director/Title IX Coordinator as the official responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment.

Course Schedule and Readings

Please note the page numbers listed below, as only selected pages of certain articles or book sections are assigned.

Part I: Structures and Processes

Tuesday, August 31st Course Introduction
Thursday, September 2nd

**Foreign Policy Analysis as Applied Social Science**


▶ Complete syllabus quiz

Tuesday, September 7th

**International Relations Theory and Levels of Analysis**


Thursday, September 9th

**The International System as Policy Constraint**


Tuesday, September 14th

**Domestic Systems as Policy Constraints**


Thursday, September 16th

**Constitutional Powers of the President and the Congress**
Tuesday, September 21st  

**Presidency, the Congress, and the Making of Foreign Policy**


- Constitution of the United States of America. 1787. Read Article I, Section 7-8 and Article II, Section 2-3.

Thursday, September 23rd  

**Executive Branch and the Making of Foreign Policy**


- “Guantanamo Litigation – History,” *Lawfare*.

Tuesday, September 28th  

**Organizational Culture and Bureaucratic Decision-making**


Thursday, September 30th  

**Intelligence Collection and Analysis**


**Tuesday, October 5th**  
**Interest Groups and the Making of Foreign Economic Policy**


**Thursday, October 7th**  
**Interest Groups and the Making of Foreign Security Policy**


**Tuesday, October 12th**  
**Public Opinion as Domestic Constraint**

- **Policy Memo II (by 11:59 PM MDT)**

**Thursday, October 14th**  
**The Impact of the News Media**

Tuesday, October 19th

Midterm Examination (submit online by 11:59 PM MDT)

▷ Study guide provided by instructor

Part II: Traditions and Ideals

Thursday, October 21st

American Exceptionalism


▷ Declaration of Independence. 1776.

Tuesday, October 26th

Unilateralism and Isolationism


▷ Washington, George. 1796. “Farewell Address.”

Thursday, October 28th

Continental Expansion and Hemispheric Defense


▷ Monroe, James. 1823. “Annual Message to Congress.”

Tuesday, November 2nd

Progressive Imperialism


McKinley, William. 1898. “War Message.”

Thursday, November 4th

Liberal Internationalism


Wilson, Woodrow. 1917. “War Message.”

Wilson, Woodrow. 1918. “Fourteen Points.”

Part III: Global Power and International Order

Tuesday, November 9th

The U.N. Charter and the Postwar Security Order


Charter of the United Nations. 1945. Read Chapters I–VII.

Thursday, November 11th

Origins of the Cold War


Tuesday, November 16th

The Containment Order

Thursday, November 18th  
**Beyond Containment to Anti-Communism and Roll Back**


Tuesday, November 23rd  
**From Détente to Soviet Decline**

- **Policy Memo III (by 11:59 PM MDT)**

Thursday, November 25th  
**Thanksgiving Break – No Class**

Part IV: The Future of U.S. Foreign Policy

Tuesday, November 30th  
**Post-Cold War U.S. Hegemony**


Thursday, December 2nd  
**The Role of International Institutions in U.S. Foreign Policy**


Tuesday, December 7th

The End of U.S. Hegemony?


Policy Memo IV (by 11:59 PM MDT)

Thursday, December 9th

Challenges for the Next Administration (2021–?)

Please choose two of the following:


Tuesday, December 16th

Final Examination (online take-home due at 11:59 PM MDT)

Study guide provided by instructor

Complete online course evaluation to access final grade