

American Foreign Policy

Political Science 1511
Spring 2010, Term "2104"
Monday, 6-8:30 p.m.
Crawford Hall 169

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Office Hours: Monday, 2-4 p.m. (and by appointment) in 4433 Posvar

Course Description and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the politics behind U.S. foreign policy. This course is neither a history course nor a current events course; the class examines the politics of how foreign policy decisions are made, and also looks at the political consequences of such actions. There are no prerequisites for this course. However, it is an upper-level political science course, and therefore assumes a certain degree of interest in the topic and knowledge of political events and institutions.

The course is basically divided in three sections. The first section examines U.S. foreign policy since the Second World War in its historical context. The second section focuses on the institutions behind the policy-making. The third section looks at a series of current issues in U.S. foreign policy.

By the end of the course each student should be able to:

- Understand important events and actors in U.S. foreign policy, particularly since the Second World War
- Understand the institutions that create and execute U.S. foreign policy
- Understand in an in-depth manner several current issues in U.S. foreign policy, in the context of both history and institutions

Required Reading

Hook, Steven W., and John Spanier. 2010. *American Foreign Policy Since World War II*. 18th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Rosati, Jerel A., and James M. Scott. 2007. *The Politics of United States Foreign Policy*. 4th ed.

Articles as assigned.

Additionally, throughout the course, students should pay attention to national and international news. This is crucial for class discussions. The New York Times (nytimes.com) and The Washington Post (washpost.com) offer some of the most comprehensive and accessible analyses of foreign policy, but there are many others.

Grading

Grading scale:

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62

Course grade distribution:

Participation and Attendance: 5%

Reading Quizzes: 10%

News summary and analysis: 10%

Midterm (Feb. 22): 30%

Short paper (April 5): 15%

Final (April 26): 30%

Participation is an important part of this class, and I will take note of both the quantity and quality of comments. I take attendance. An absence will be excused only with a formal written excuse (official doctor's note, with phone number, regarding illness, etc.), and attendance is important to understanding the topics of the course. Lecture slides will not be distributed to students, regardless of whether the absence is excused. Ask another student for his or her notes.

Short **reading quizzes** will frequently be given. They should be easy for anyone who has done the reading. Students who miss a quiz due to being late or unexcused absence will not get a chance to make it up. Each student's lowest quiz will be dropped.

At the beginning of each class, several students will each **summarize and analyze a current news article** of his or her choice in 3-5 minutes. This presentation should include a summary, a list of the important actors, and discuss the relevance of the article to assigned reading or previous class topics. The day before class (Sunday), each presenter should email the other presenters and the instructor with the title and source of the article he or she intends to present. This is to avoid duplicate presentations.

The **midterm** and **final** are in-class, with multiple choice and short essay questions.

Students will write a **short paper** after watching the movie *Thirteen Days*. Details about this assignment will be provided in a separate document.

Academic Integrity

Cheating will not be tolerated. Cheating is roughly defined as passing another person's work off as your own, but a more complete explanation is available at the university's Academic Integrity page: <http://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policy/integrity.html>. A student caught cheating will fail the assignment or exam, and possibly the entire course.

Special Considerations

If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please inform me. Additionally, if you have not yet done so, contact Disability Resources Services, 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 or 412-383-7355 (TTY).

Course Schedule and Readings

IMPORTANT DATES:

Feb. 22 Midterm
April 5 Short paper due
April 26 Final

SCHEDULE:

Monday, Jan. 11 Course Introduction
No reading required.

Monday, Jan. 18 No class; Martin Luther King Day

SECTION ONE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Monday, Jan. 25 Cold War Containment
Hook and Spanier chapters 2, 3 and 4 until page 91

Monday, Feb. 1 1970s Détente
Hook and Spanier chapters 4 (from page 91) and 5

Monday, Feb. 8 1980s Cold War Escalates, Ends
Hook and Spanier chapters 6 and 7

Monday, Feb. 15 Post Cold War
Hook and Spanier chapters 8 (skim), 9, 11 and 12 (start on 299)

Monday, Feb. 22 Midterm

SECTION TWO: INSTITUTIONS

Monday, March 1 President and Congress
Rosati and Scott chapters 4 and 11; skim chapter 10

Monday, March 8 No class, Spring Break

Monday, March 15 National Security Council and State Department
Rosati and Scott chapters 5 and 6

Monday, March 22 Defense and Intelligence
Rosati and Scott chapters 7 and 8

Monday, March 29 Film
Hook and Spanier 88-91 (review)
Rosati and Scott Chapter 10 (review)

SECTION THREE: CURRENT TOPICS

Note: these readings are subject to change, due to the current-events nature of the topics. Changes will be announced in class and on Courseweb.

- Monday, April 5** **(short paper due)**
War in Afghanistan
Baker, Peter. "How Obama Came to Plan for 'Surge' in Afghanistan." *New York Times*. Dec. 5, 2009.
Filkins, Dexter. "Right At the Edge." *New York Times Magazine*. Sept. 7, 2008.
Hook and Spanier pages 289-297
Rubin, Barnett R., and Ahmed Rashid. "From Great Game to Grand Bargain." *Foreign Affairs*. November/December 2008. (on Courseweb)
- Monday, April 12** **Iran and Proliferation**
Hook and Spanier pages 325-328
Kaplan, Robert D. "Obama Cannot Afford to Get Iran Wrong." *The Atlantic*. July 8, 2009.
Krauthammer, Charles. "2009: The Year of Living Fecklessly." *Washington Post*. Dec. 25, 2009.
Kuperman, Alan J. "There's Only One Way to Stop Iran." *New York Times*. Dec. 23, 2009.
Nasr, Vali, and Ray Takeyh. "The Costs of Containing Iran." *Foreign Affairs*. January/February 2008. (on Courseweb)
- Monday, April 19** **China Rising**
Hook and Spanier pages 334-338
Mearsheimer, John J. "China's Unpeaceful Rise." *Current History*. April 2006. (on Courseweb)
Paulson, Henry M. Jr. "A Strategic Economic Engagement." *Foreign Affairs*. September/October 2008. (on Courseweb)
Shanker, Thom. "U.S. Sees Chinese Military Rise." *New York Times*. March 26, 2009.
Zakaria, Fareed. "The Future of American Power." *Foreign Affairs*. May/June 2008. (on Courseweb)
- Monday, April 26** **Final Exam**