**US Foreign Policy**

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**Course Synopsis**

This course examines the role of the United States in the international arena. First, we will analyze the main conceptual approaches to American foreign relations drawing on theories of International Relations and the history of American politics. Second, we will examine the role of ideals and tradition in American foreign policy-making. Third, we will focus on the main aspects of the policy-making process, and on the domestic and geopolitical implications that set limitations to, and opportunities for, the U.S. abroad. Throughout the course we will ask the following questions: How is American foreign policy determined and how has it evolved? How is national interest defined? What are the roles of individuals, institutions, and public opinion in American foreign policy? What are the consequences of American international actions? Emphasis will be placed on the main international issues faced by the U.S. government since the end of the Cold War such as: terrorism, nuclear proliferation, humanitarian intervention, international cooperation, and global governance.

**Course Outline**

1. The strategic context: Foreign Policy Strategy and the Essence of Choice
2. The Domestic Context: Foreign Policy Politics and the Process of Choice
3. The Historical Context: Great Debates in American Foreign Policy: 1789-1945
4. The Cold Context: Origins and First Stages
5. The Cold War Context: Lessons and Legacies
6. Foreign Policy Strategy and Foreign Policy Politics in a New Era
7. Post-Cold War Geopolitics: Major Powers and Regions
8. The Middle East: A Special Focus
9. The Globalization Agenda

**Readings**

National interest vs. ideals: Is there an American tradition of foreign policy?

Morgenthau, Hans J. “The mainsprings of American foreign policy: the national interest vs. moral abstractions.” American Political Science Review, 44:4 (1950), pp. 833-854.

The institutional setting: who makes American foreign policy?

Peterson, Paul E. “The President’s dominance in foreign policy making.” Political Science Quarterly, 112 (1997), pp. 215-234.

Ornstein, Norman & Mann, Thomas. “When Congress Checks Out.” Foreign Affairs 85-6 (December 2006), pp. 67-82.

Allison, Graham. “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis.” American Political Science Review 63 (1969), pp. 689-718.

Beyond the European balance of power: the birth of a Great Power

Zakaria, Fareed. From wealth to power. The unusual origins of America’s world role (Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 154-180.

The liberal dream: Wilson and the League of Nations

Ikenberry, John G. After victory. Institutions, strategic restraint and the rebuilding of order after major wars (Princeton University Press, 2001). Ch. 5, pp. 117-162.

Tucker, Robert W. “The triumph of Wilsonianism?”. World Policy Journal, 10-4 (Winter 1993/1994), pp. 83-99.

From WWI to Cold War: the creation of the American Era

Ikenberry, John G. “America’s Liberal Grand Strategy: Democracy and National

Security in the Post-War Era”. American Democracy Promotion (August 2000), pp. 103-127.

The early Cold War Era: theory and practice of containment

Tierney, Dominic. “Pearl Harbor in reverse. Moral analogies in the Cuban missile crisis”. Journal of Cold War Studies 9:3 (Summer 2007), pp. 47-77.

Vietnam, Détente and Rollback: living in a bipolar world

Jervis, Robert. “Was the Cold War a Security Dilemma?”. Journal of Cold War Studies 3:1 (Winter 2001), pp. 36-60.

The end of the Cold War and the rise of a new International Order

Krauthammer, Charles. “The Unipolar Moment”. Foreign Affairs 70:1 (1990/1991), pp. 23-33.

Prospects of primacy and decline: living in a unipolar world

Mastanduno, Michael. “Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and U.S. Grand Strategy after the Cold War”. International Security, 21:4 (Spring 1997), pp. 49-88.

Krauthammer, Charles. “The Unipolar Moment Revisited”. The National Interest (Winter 2002-2003), pp. 5-17.

Layne, Christopher. “The Unipolar Illusion Revisited: The Coming End of the United States’ Unipolar Moment”. International Security, 31:2 (Fall 2006), pp. 7-41.

Monteiro, Nuno P. “Unrest Assured. Why Unipolarity is not Peaceful”. International Security, 36:3 (Winter 2011-2012), pp. 9-40.

Terrorism

Peter Neumann. 2007. Negotiating With Terrorists. Foreign Affairs, January/February.

S. Paul Kapur, Sumit Ganguly. 2012. The Jihad Paradox: Pakistan and Islamist Militancy in South Asia. International Security. 37(1): 111‐141

Patrick Johnson. 2012. Does Decapitation Work?: Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Targeting in Counterinsurgency Campaigns. International Security. 36(4): 47‐79.

Baker, Peter (2009), “How Obama Came to Plan for the ʻSurgeʼ in Afghanistan.” The New York Times, December 5, 2009. Accessed at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/06/world/asia/06reconstruct.html>

Katzman, Kenneth. (2009). “Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy.” Congressional Research Service, RL30588, December 30, pp. 28-36, 51-59. <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf>

Obama, Barack. (2009). “Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan,” December 1, 2009. Accessed at

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-address-nation-wayforward-afghanistan-and-pakistan>

New challenges and opportunities: US-China relations

Jisi, Wang. “China’s search for a Grand Strategy: A rising Great Power finds its Way”. Foreign Affairs 90-2 (March-April 2011), pp. 68-79.

Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China (2013).

Washington, DC: Department of Defense. Executive summary, 1-27, 60-64. <http://www.defense.gov/pubs/2013_china_report_final.pdf>

Middle East and the Arab Spring

Hicham Ben Abdallah El Alaoui. 2011. The Split in Arab Culture. Journal of Democracy, 22(1).

Matthew Kroenig, 2012.Time to Strike Iran, Foreign Affairs, 91:76.

Seth Jones. 2013. Mirage of the Arab Spring: Deal with the Region You Have, Not the Region You Want. Foreign Affairs, 92(1), 55‐63.

Sheri Berman. 2013. Promise of the Arab Spring: In Political Development, No Gain without Pain, Foreign Affairs. 92(1),

New challenges and opportunities: beyond the American Era?

Posen, Barry P. & Ross Andrew L. “Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy”.

International Security 21: 3 (Winter 1996/97), pp. 5-53.

Rosen, Stephen. “An Empire, if You Can Keep It”. National Interest, 71 (Spring 2003), p. 1-7.

Joseph Nye. 2010. The Future of American Power. Foreign Affairs 89.6.

Francis Fukuyama. 2012. Can Liberal Democracies Survive the decline of the Middle Class? Foreign Affairs, 91: 53

Scott Thomas. 2010. A Globalized God: Religion's Growing Influence in International Politics. Foreign Affairs, 89.6.

**Essay questions**

How did the US Lock in a power structure after World War II?

How can we understand US foreign policy in a bipolar context? What are the challenges to foreign policy in moments of ‘crisis’?

What are the key actors and what roles do these actors play? How do decision makers make decisions?

The US is “the indispensable nation”. Discuss

Describe the main stages in the rise of the US to become a superpower

What is the “Vietnam Syndrome” and how has it affected US security policy?

How have American presidents coped with national security issues after the end of the Cold War?

Assess the foreign policy record of either George Bush senior or Bill Clinton.

How radical a break with US foreign policy traditions was the first George W Bush administration?

Assess the impact of the Iraq war on US foreign policy.

Compare and contrast the roles of the State Department and the National Security Council.

How does Congress influence foreign policy?

Examine the role and influence of lobbies on US foreign policy.

Do the media and public opinion influence US foreign policy?

How does the US trade and budget deficit impact on US foreign policy?

Assess the impact of 9/11 on US national security?

America is obsessed with terrorism and rogue states. Discuss.

Unlike Europe, the US has no interest in working through international organisations. Discuss.

How does the Pentagon influence US foreign policy?

What are the main theories impacting on US foreign policy?

The US aim of bringing democracy to the Middle East is unrealistic. Discuss.

Are there significant party differences concerning foreign policy?

How will energy impact on US foreign policy?

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| **Resources****Websites, journals and media sources** The US government has numerous websites relevant to foreign and security policy. Among the more useful are:[www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov/)[www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov/)http://usinfo.state[www.defenselink.mil](http://www.defenselink.mil/)[www.odci.gov](http://www.odci.gov/)[www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov/)[www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov/)The two main Congressional committees dealing with foreign policy have the following websites:[www.senate.gov/~foreign](http://www.senate.gov/~foreign); [www.house.gov/international\_relations](http://www.house.gov/international_relations)There are numerous journals dealing entirely or partly with foreign policy issues - some also have websites. Among the most useful are:[Foreign Affairs](http://www.foreignaffairs.org/)[Foreign Policy](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/)The National InterestWorld Policy JournalWorld PoliticsSAIS ReviewInternational SecurityCongressional Quarterly[Americans and the World](http://www.americans-world.org/)[Foreign Policy in Focus](http://www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org/)Most of the leading think tanks have good websites:[American Enterprise Institute](http://www.aei.org/)[American Foreign Policy Council](http://www.afpc.org/)[Brookings Institution](http://www.brookings.org/)[Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](http://www.ceip.org/)[CATO Institute](http://www.cato.org/)[Center for Defense Information](http://www.cdi.org/)[Center for Strategic and International Studies](http://www.csis.org/)[Council on Foreign Relations](http://www.cfr.org/)[Foreign Policy Association](http://www.fpa.org/)[Henry L. Stimson Center](http://www.stimson.org/)[Hoover Institute](http://www.hoover.org/)[Institute for International Economics](http://www.iie.com/)[Middle East Institute](http://www.mideasti.org/)[National Endowment for Democracy](http://www.ned.org/)[RAND](http://www.rand.org/)[The Globalist](http://www.theglobalist.com/)[The Heritage Foundation](http://www.heritage.org/)[US Institute of Peace](http://www.usip.org/)[Washington Institute for Near East Policy](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/)Woodrow Wilson CenterThe New York Times and the Washington Post have good websites with archived material on US foreign policy. Among the foreign press, the Financial Times, The Economist, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Le Monde and El País have regular quality coverage of US foreign policy.You are encouraged to become familiar with major newspapers, journals and magazines covering national and international politics, and foreign policy. Some useful links include:Financial Times (<http://news.ft.com/world>)The New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/index.html>)Washington Post (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/world>)Foreign Affairs (<http://www.foreignaffairs.org>)The National Interest (<http://www.nationalinterest.org>)Council on Foreign Relations (<http://www.cfr.org/>)The Economist (<http://www.economist.com/>)Wall St. Journal(<http://asia.wsj.com/home-page>) |