

SEMINAR IN FOREIGN POLICY
PSCI 508
Fall 2023

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to the major theoretical trends and scholarly traditions that define, organize, and drive foreign policy. The overall aim of the course is to enable students to broaden their understanding of world politics by using foreign policy decision making as an analytical tool. The course starts with a discussion on how we, as political scientists, can study foreign policy, alongside an overview of American grand strategy in the 21st century, before turning to the domestic and international factors that impact the U.S. foreign policy. Students will then be exposed to the U.S. policies towards the Middle East and encouraged to examine the actions of American and Middle Eastern policymakers as defined by a variety of constraints that limit their options and decision-making.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will become familiar with concepts and theories of Foreign Policy and develop critical and analytical skills in discussing international issues and world events.
- Students will demonstrate an awareness of societal and/or civic issues in the international arena and will be encouraged to see the world from multiple perspectives.
- Students will form their own research agendas in the field of Foreign Policy Analysis and will practice academic honesty in their writing assignments.

REQUIRED TEXTS

There are no textbooks for this course. All required readings are available on D2L.

FORMAT OF THE COURSE

This is a fully online class. You're required to follow the course requirements on D2L on a regular and timely basis.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Reflections: Students are required to write short weekly reflections (1-2 pages, single-spaced), that critically and constructively engage the week's assigned readings. These should not be summaries. Instead, they should make a clear argument. You might compare and contrast opposing arguments or methodological approaches, critique research designs and offer fruitful alternatives, discuss the theory or policy implications of a set of arguments, suggest new research questions that emerge from your reading, connect readings to current events, etc. These reflections are due **every Sunday at 11.59 pm on D2L**. You may choose to write your reflections about whichever topic(s)/argument(s) (based on the readings) you find most interesting.

Midterm: There will be a take-home midterm exam, due **November 5, 11.59 pm, on D2L**.

Final Research Paper: Students are required to write a substantial (20-25 pages) research paper. This paper must be on a topic relevant to the course and should include the following sections:

- Abstract
- Problem Statement and Research Question(s)
- Literature Review
- Theoretical analysis
- Conclusion

A detailed guidelines and grading rubric for this assignment will be available on D2L. Final research paper is due **December 15, 11.59 pm, on D2L**.

Format Requirements: All assignments must be double-spaced, typed, and written with Times New Roman, 12-point font. Sources for each assignment must include books, academic articles and news pieces. All sources must be cited properly and listed in a bibliography or in footnotes/endnotes format. Regarding citations, you may use any academically accepted format.

GRADING

Course Requirements	Weight
Weekly Reflections	20%
Midterm	30%
Final Paper	50%
Total	100%

GRADE SCALE

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Below 60 = F

MAKE-UP POLICY

Late submission of assignments is allowed only under special circumstances such as medical or family emergencies. However, you must request them prior to the deadline and present documentary proof. Post-deadline late submission requests will not be granted under any circumstances. If you submit any of your assignments late without an excuse, I will cut off 5 points for each day after the deadline for up to 3 days.

CIVILITY AND RESPECT

All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. I expect everyone to be respectful of each other's perspectives and opinions during class discussions. Any behavior that disrupts the class or impedes other students' ability to fully engage with the course will not be tolerated.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student is required to be responsible for purposefully pursuing and honestly submitting research and work that is original and is the sole work of the individual. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism occurs when a student purposefully or unintentionally takes information directly from a source without proper citation. If you are unclear about the ethics of an academic action, please consult me during my office hours.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services Texas A&M University-Commerce Gee Library Room 132 Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148 StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Texas Senate Bill-11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas

are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 8/28 - 9/3

Introduction to the course/Overview of the syllabus

Week 2 9/4 - 9/10

Defining Foreign Policy

- Elman, Colin. 1996. "Why Not Neorealist Theories of Foreign Policy?" *Security Studies*, 61(1), 7-53.
- Fearon, James D. 1998. "Domestic Politics, Foreign Policy, and Theories of International Relations," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1, 289-313.
- Hudson, Valerie M. 2005. "Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 1. 1-30.
- Houghton, David Patrick. 2007. "Reinvigorating the Study of Foreign Policy Decision Making: Toward a Constructivist Approach," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 3, 24-45.

Week 3 9/11 - 9/17

Grand Strategy and the Future of American Foreign Policy

- Posen, Barry R. and Andrew L. Ross 1996/97. "Competing Visions for US Grand Strategy," *International Security* 21(3), 5-53.
- Kreps, Sarah. 2009. "American Grand Strategy after Iraq," *Orbis*, 53(4), 629-645.
- Posen, Barry R. 2013. "Pull Back: The Case for a Less Activist Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, 92, 116- 128.
- Brooks, Stephen G., G. John Ikenberry and William C. Wohlforth. 2013. "Lean Forward: In Defense of American Engagement," *Foreign Affairs*, 92, 130-142.

Week 4 9/18 - 9/24

International Sources of American Foreign Policy

- Rose, Gideon. 1998. "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics*, 51(1), 144-172.
- Ikenberry, G. John. 1989. "Rethinking the Origins of American Hegemony," *Political Science Quarterly* 104, no. 3 (Autumn 1989), pp. 375-400.
- Miller, Benjamin. 2010. "Explaining Changes in U.S. Grand Strategy: 9/11, the Rise of Offensive Liberalism, and the War in Iraq," *Security Studies*, 19(1), 26-65.

Week 5 9/25 - 10/1

Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: The President

- Saunders, Elizabeth N. 2009. "Transformative Choices: Leaders and the Origins of Intervention Strategy." *International Security*, 34(2), 119-161.
- Gallagher, Maryann E. and Susan H. Allen. 2014. "Presidential Personality: Not Just a Nuisance," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 10, 1-21
- Renshon, Jonathan, 2008. "Stability and Change in Belief Systems: The Operational Code of George W. Bush," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 52(6), 820-849.
- Winter, David G. 2011. "Philosopher King or Polarizing Politician? A Personality Profile of Barack Obama," *Political Psychology*, 32(6), 1059-1081.

Week 6 10/2 - 10/8

Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: The Congress

- Lindsay, James M. 1992/93. "Congress and Foreign Policy: Why the Hill Matters," *Political Science Quarterly*, 107(4), 607-28.
- Angevine, Sara, 2016. "An Analysis of Congress, Foreign Policy, and the Boundaries of Women's Surrogate Representation," *Political Research Quarterly*, 1-13.
- Lindsay, James M. 2003. "Deference and Defiance: The Shifting Rhythms of Executive-Legislative Relations in Foreign Policy," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 33(3), 530-46.
- Howell, William G. and Jon C. Pevehouse. 2005. "Presidents, Congress, and the Use of Force," *International Organization*, 59, 209-232.

Week 7 10/9 - 10/15

Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Public Opinion

- Baum, Matthew A. and Tim Groeling. 2010. "Reality Asserts Itself: Public Opinion on Iraq and the Elasticity of Reality," *International Organization*, 64(3), 443-479.
- Brooks, Deborah Jordan and Benjamin A. Valentino. 2011. "A War of One's Own: Understanding the Gender Gap in Support for War," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 75(2), 270-286.
- Karol, David and Edward Miguel. 2005. "The Electoral Costs of War: Iraq Casualties and the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election," *Journal of Politics*, 69(3), 633-648.
- Baum, M. 2004. "How Public Opinion Constrains the Use of Force: The Case of Operation Restore Hope," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 34, 187-227.

Week 8 10/16 - 10/22

Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Media

- Robinson, Piers. 1999. "The CNN Effect: Can the News Media Drive Foreign Policy?" *Review of International Studies*, 25(2), 301-309.
- Robinson, Piers. 2005. "The CNN Effect Revisited," *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 22(4), 344- 349.

- Gadarian, Shana Kushner. 2010. "The Politics of Threat: How Terrorism News Shapes Foreign Policy Attitudes," *Journal of Politics*, 72(2), 469-483.
- Baum, Matthew. 2002. "Sex, Lies, and War: How Soft News Brings Foreign Policy to an Inattentive Public," *American Foreign Policy Review*
- Groeling, Tim and Matthew A. Baum. 2008. "Crossing the Water's Edge: Elite Rhetoric, Media Coverage, and the Rally-Round-the-Flag Phenomenon," *Journal of Politics*, 70(4), 1065-1085.

Week 9 10/23 - 10/29

Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Interest Groups: The Israeli Lobby?

- Mearsheimer, John J. and Stephen M. Walt. 2006. "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Middle East Policy*, 13(3), 29-87.
- Slater, Jerome. 2009. "The Two Books of Mearsheimer and Walt," *Security Studies*, 18(1), 4-57.
- Mearsheimer, J.J. and S.M. Walt, 2009. "Is it Love or the Lobby? Explaining America's Special Relationship with Israel," *Security Studies*, 18(1), 58-78.

Week 10 Take-Home Midterm Due November 5, 11.59 pm.

Week 11 11/6 - 10/12

U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East: An Introduction

- Chomsky, Noam. 2011. "After the Cold War: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East," *Cultural Critique*, 19, 14-31.
- Al Sarhan, Atallah S. 2017. "United States Foreign Policy and the Middle East," *Open Journal of Political Science*, 7, 454-472.
- Byman, David and Sara Bjerg Moller. 2016. "The United States and the Middle East: Interests, Risks, and Costs," in Jeremi Suri and Benjamin Valentino (eds.), *Sustainable Security: Rethinking American National Security Strategy*, Oxford University Press.
- Herrmann, Richard. 1991. "The Middle East and the New World Order: Rethinking U.S. Political Strategy after the Gulf War," *International Security*, 16(2), 42-75.

Week 12 11/13 - 11/19

The Legacies of Iraq

- Leffler, Melvyn. 2013. "The Foreign Policies of the George W. Bush Administration: Memoirs, History, Legacy," *Diplomatic History*, 37(2), 190-216.
- Muftuler Bac, Meltem. 2006. "Turkey and the United States: The Impact of the War in Iraq," *International Journal*, 61(1), 61-81.
- Mousavi, Mohammad A. and Heydari. 2011. "The Nature of U.S. Democracy Promotion Policy: Reality versus Illusion, the Case of Iraq," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1(20), 110-121.

- Brands, Hal and Peter Feaver. 2017. "Was the Rise of ISIS Inevitable?" *Survival*, 59(3), 7-54.

Week 13 11/20 - 11/26

The U.S. and the Arab Spring

- Huber, Daniela. 2015. "A Pragmatic Actor: The U.S. Response to the Arab Uprisings," *Journal of European Integration*, 37(1), 57-75.
- Hamid, Shadi. 2015. "Islamism, the Arab Spring, and the Failure of America's Do-Nothing Policy in the Middle East," *The Atlantic*.
- Murray, Donette. 2013. "Military Action but Not as We Know It: Libya, Syria and the Making of an Obama Doctrine," *Contemporary Politics*, 19(2), 146-166.
- Geis, Anna and Gabi Schlag. 2017. "The Facts Cannot Be Denied: Legitimacy, War, and the Use of Chemical Weapons in Syria," *Global Discourse*, 7(203), 285-303.
- 2017. "The Future of US Syria Policy," *Strategic Comments*, 23(1), ix-xi.

Week 14 11/27 - 12/3

4/18 The U.S.-Iran Relations

- Sanati, Reza. 2014. "Beyond the Domestic Picture: The Geopolitical Factors that Have Formed Contemporary US-Iran Relations," *Global Change, peace and Security*, 26(2), 125-140.
- O'Sullivan, Meghan L. 2010. "Iran and the Great Sanctions Debate," *The Washington Quarterly*, 33(4), 7-20.
- Vakil, Sanam. 2014. "Obama's Iranian Gamble," *The International Spectator*, 49(3), 8-13.
- Friedman, Thomas. 2015. "Iran and the Obama Doctrine," *The New York Times*.
- Kroenig, Matthew. 2018. "The Return to the Pressure Track: The Trump Administration and the Iran Nuclear Deal," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 29(1), 94-104.

Week 15 12/4 - 12/10

From Obama to Trump: The Future of the U.S. Foreign Policy

- Brands, Hal, 2016. "Barack Obama and the Dilemmas of American Grand Strategy," *The Washington Quarterly*, 39(4), 101-125.
- Unger, David. 2016. "The Foreign Policy Legacy of Barack Obama," *The International Spectator*, 51(4), 1-16.
- Lynch, Marc, 2016. "Belligerent Minimalism: The Trump Administration and the Middle East," *The Washington Quarterly*, 39(4), 127-144.
- Warren, Elizabeth, 2018. "A Foreign Policy for All: Strengthening Democracy at Home and Abroad," *Foreign Affairs*, 98(1), 50-61.
- Sullivan, Jake. 2018. "More, Less, or Different? Where U.S. Foreign Policy Should – and Shouldn't – Go from Here," *Foreign Affairs*, 98(1), 168-175.

Week 16 12/11 – 12/15

Finals Week

Final Paper Due December 15, 11.59 pm.