

FOREIGN POLICY
PSCI 437-01E
Spring 2024

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers a broad-based introduction to the major theoretical trends and scholarly traditions that define, organize, and drive foreign policy analysis. 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. Throughout the course, students will be exposed to classical and current debates in U.S. Foreign Policy and encouraged to examine the actions of policymakers as defined by a variety of constraints that limit their options and decision-making. The course will specifically focus on two topics that currently dominate the U.S. foreign policy agenda: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and U.S.-China relations.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Critical Thinking:** Students will become familiar with foreign policy decision making paradigms, theories, and concepts and develop critical and analytical skills in discussing international issues and world events.
- **Social Responsibility:** Students will demonstrate an awareness of societal and/or civic issues in the international arena.
- **Personal Responsibility:** Students will form their own research agendas in foreign policy analysis and will practice academic honesty in their writing assignments.
- **Communication:** Students will enhance their oral skills and communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion, with evident message and organizational structure.
- **Empathy skills:** Students will develop empathy skills and be encouraged to see the world from multiple perspectives.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, Tim Dunne. 2016. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 3rd Edition. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0198708902.
- William B. Quandt. 2005. *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967*, 3rd Edition. Brookings Institution Press. ISBN: 9780815730705.
- Thomas J. Christensen. 2015. *The China Challenge: Shaping the Choices of a Rising Power*. W. W. Norton & Company. ISBN: 9780393352993

FORMAT OF THE COURSE

The class will be a mix of lectures, discussions, and presentations. An outline of the reading schedule is provided in the syllabus. Students are required to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned materials. The course is largely designed as a seminar where all participants will share responsibility for the success of each individual session.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance & Participation: Attendance is vital to your success in class. More than 3 unexcused absences will automatically drop your final grade by one letter grade (e.g. if the student earned a “B” in the course, the final grade would be a “C”). Acceptable excuses include health and family emergencies. Participation points are earned through your contribution to class discussions and debates. If you’re not in class, you can’t earn participation points.

Discussion Leaders: Starting with the 7th week of classes, we will switch to a seminar style. Each student will pick one chapter from our textbook on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and one chapter from our textbook on US-China relations and run the discussion on the day their chosen chapter is covered in class. The responsibility of the discussion leaders is not to summarize the readings but to run the seminar by sparking new insights into the subject at hand, bringing in thoughtful remarks, highlighting the critical aspects of the readings and raising informed questions to set the stage for productive discussion throughout the session.

Weekly Reflections: Throughout the first 5 weeks of the class, you will write a total of 4 weekly reflection pieces which are expected to be 500-750 words in length (not more, not less). The deadline for submitting each reflection paper is every Sunday, 11.59 pm, on D2L. To complete this assignment, you need to first specify a US foreign policy decision. You can specify your empirical case by either perusing the foreign policy/world politics pages of newspapers and picking a case from current events or pick a case of US foreign policy issue that you are personally interested in. The main idea of the assignment is to analyze the real world cases in US foreign policy by using the foreign policy decision making paradigms we learn in class. You are required to do the following:

- Briefly explain the US foreign policy decision you picked and its political context.
- Explicitly relate the case you picked to the readings assigned for that week. You’re expected to deploy your critical thinking skills to apply and reflect upon what you’ve learned in class in the context of the real world case you work on.
- Be thoughtful and articulate but use your own voice. This exercise is intended to get you more informed in real world issues in US foreign policy and complete the course readings. However, more importantly, you are a citizen on planet earth, with only one life to reflect on the world you inhabit.

National Security Council Memorandum: The NSC memo will be based on the “Israeli-Palestinian Conflict” portion of the course. NSC is the principal forum used by the President of the US to elaborate on national security and foreign policy matters. The main function of the Council is to advise and assist the President on US foreign relations. The NSC memo requires you to engage in an in-depth analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the US’ role in it based on our class readings and discussions. As the author of the memo, your responsibility will be to advise the President of the US on how to approach the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in light of US national interests. The memo must include the following:

1. Explain the problem and the importance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in US foreign policy in the Middle East.
2. Create 3 solution scenarios with a particular focus on the US’ role in the conflict. The solution scenarios must be based on realism, liberalism, and constructivism.
3. Identify the scenario that would best serve the interests of each actor involved including the US.
4. Justify why your chosen scenario is the one that would best establish a permanent peace, and why other solutions would not work.

Solution scenarios are up to your creativity. However, they need to be designed according to the facts on the ground and arguments of the three theories they are based upon. NSC memos must be 7-10 pages long or about 2500-3000 words. The deadline to submit this assignment is **April 7, 11.59 pm**. There will be in-class presentations of the memos as well.

Final Exam: There will be a take-home final exam based on the Christensen book. The format of the final will be essay questions. The date of the final exam will be announced as we approach the finals week.

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
Attendance & Participation	10%
Discussion Leaders	20%
Weekly Reflections	20% (5% each)
NSC Memo	25%
Final Exam	25%
Total	100%

GRADE SCALE

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

MAKE-UP POLICY

Make-ups are allowed under special circumstances such as medical or family emergencies. You are required to request your make-up prior to the deadline. Documentary proof for your request might be required based on the circumstances. Post-deadline late extension requests will not be granted. Post-deadline submission of assignments without an excuse will lead to loss of points.

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 with 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 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

1/11 Introduction to the course/Overview of the syllabus

Week 2

1/16 Understanding Foreign Policy: The Levels of Analysis

1/18 Understanding Foreign Policy: The Levels of Analysis (continued)

Week 3

1/23 Realism and Foreign Policy Smith, Hadfield & Dunne Ch 2 & 11

1/25 Realism (continued)

Week 4

1/30 Liberalism and Foreign Policy Smith, Hadfield & Dunne Ch 3 & 10

2/1 Liberalism (continued)

Week 5

2/6 Constructivism and Foreign Policy Smith, Hadfield & Dunne Ch 4

2/8 Constructivism (continued)

Week 6

2/13 Foreign Policy Analysis – Theoretical Overview

2/15 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict-Introduction Quandt Ch 1

Week 7

2/20 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Quandt Ch 2, 3

2/22 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Quandt Ch 4, 5

Week 8

2/27 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Quandt Ch 6

2/29 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Quandt Ch 7

Week 9

3/5 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Quandt Ch 8, 9

3/7 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Quandt Ch 10

Week 10

Spring Break – No Class

Week 11

3/19 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Quandt Ch 11

3/21 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Quandt Ch 12

Week 12

3/26 Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Quandt Ch 13 & Conclusion

3/28 **NSC Memo Presentations**

Week 13

4/2 **NSC Memo Presentations**

4/4 **NSC Memo Presentations**

Week 14

4/9 The China Challenge Christensen Introduction & Ch 1

4/11 The China Challenge Christensen Ch 2

Week 16

4/16 The China Challenge Christensen Ch 3

4/18 The China Challenge Christensen Ch 4

Week 16

4/23 The China Challenge Christensen Ch 5

4/25 The China Challenge Christensen Ch 6

Week 17

4/30 The China Challenge Christensen Ch 7

5/2 The China Challenge Christensen Ch 8 & Epilogue

Final Exam Date TBA