

POL 1026 U.S. Foreign Policy

University of Minnesota
Fall Semester 2000
110 Blegen Hall
W 6:20-8:50

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Course Description

The purpose of the course is to introduce to students to the study of U.S. Foreign Policy. What has been the history of U.S. foreign policy vis-à-vis certain parts of the world? What values have guided U.S. foreign policy in the past? How is foreign policy made? Who are the principal actors in determining U.S. foreign policy? What are some contemporary foreign policy issues under debate in the U.S.? How do these issues relate to past U.S. foreign policy?

The course consists of three interrelated parts. First, we discuss the history of U.S. foreign policy since the late 19th century, considering in more detail the foreign policies of the Presidential administrations since Nixon. Second, we look at foreign policy decision-making in the U.S., the actors and structures that guide the process. Finally, we will study contemporary debates in the realm of U.S. foreign policy. Should the U.S. be internationalist or isolationist in its foreign policy? Should we take action unilaterally or should we attempt a multilateral partnership with other countries? What military and economic objectives guide U.S. foreign policy? We will pay particular attention to the case study of the conflict in Kosovo.

Course Objectives

The course has several objectives. The main objective of the course is to help students develop knowledge about issues related to foreign policy. Second, by the end of the semester, each student should more clearly understand the actors and processes of foreign policy making in the U.S. Finally, each student should be able to relate historical themes, actions and values of U.S. foreign policy to contemporary debates and issues in foreign policy. Emphasis is placed on developing critical reading and writing skills, rather than on the memorization of facts and figures.

Learning Methods

Class will be a combination of interactive lecture and discussion. During the lecture, the instructor will take primary responsibility for leading the course, while encouraging active question and answer throughout. Lectures will complement, not duplicate, assigned reading. Small group discussion will also be an important part of each session, with students taking a more active role in promoting their own, and their classmates', learning. Discussions will be based on questions or exercises provided by the instructor. Occasionally, throughout the semester, I will assign 5 minute papers - a chance for you to write, in class, for a few minutes on an assigned topic. The 5 minute papers will be part of your participation grade. In addition, readings and two writing assignments will promote learning outside the classroom.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend and to have read the assigned readings prior to each class session. A substantial portion of your grade will be based on participation. If you do not regularly attend, your participation grade will reflect your absences. In addition, attendance alone will not meet the participation requirement. Each student must actively and regularly participate in class discussion in order to receive full credit for participation.

Classroom Atmosphere

It is expected that students will be prompt to class (as tardiness is disruptive) and will in all instances treat their fellow classmates, T.A. and instructor with respect. A lack of respect hinders useful discussion. No disparaging or discriminatory language or conduct will be tolerated.

Required Reading

The following texts are required reading for this course. All are available for purchase in the West Bank Bookstore.

David Fromkin, Kosovo Crossing: American Ideals Meet Reality on the Balkan Battlefields (\$21.00)

Glenn Hastedt, American Foreign Policy: Past, Present, and Future, 4th ed. (\$45.00)

John T. Rourke, Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in American Foreign Policy (\$17.25)

In addition, I recommend that students register on-line for free access to the New York Times, in order to have daily access to a good source of international news coverage. To register on-line, go to the NYT home page at www.nytimes.com and select a user name and password. I suggest saving your username and password so you will not have to reenter it each time you use the website.

Grading

Students must complete all required assignments to pass this course. Grades will be calculated on the basis of the percentages listed below.

Discussion and Participation (15%)

Mid Term Exam (20%)

Writing Exercise on Foreign Policy of Presidential Candidates (10%)

Paper Assignment (25%)

Final Exam (30%)

Paper Assignment:

For the paper assignment, each student will do a critical book review of Fromkin's Kosovo Crossing or the book of your choice (with prior approval of the instructor). The book review should be approximately 5-7 typed, double-spaced pages in length. Detailed instructions will be handed out sometime in the first three weeks of class. Late papers will be penalized one-third of a grade *per day*.

Exercise on Foreign Policy of Presidential Candidates:

This exercise will require you to do online research on the stated foreign policy positions of the Republican and Democratic Presidential Candidates on three issues. The exercise and detailed instructions will be handed out two weeks prior to the due date (November 8). Late papers will be penalized one-third of a grade *per day*.

Exams:

There will be two in-class, essay format exams. The mid-term will be a one-hour exam consisting of short answer/identification questions and one long essay. The final will be a comprehensive, two hour exam of several short answer/identification questions and two long essay questions.

No extra credit is available and no incomplete grades or makeup exams will be granted, except under documented, unusual circumstances (family emergency or illness) and only with the prior approval of the instructor.

Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction and History of U.S. Foreign Policy before WWII

September 6

No Assigned Reading

Week 2: U.S. Foreign Policy WWII-Vietnam

September 13

Assigned Reading: Hastedt, Chapter 3

Weeks 3-6: The Process of U.S. Foreign Policy Making

September 20 Constitutional and International Law

Assigned Reading: Hastedt, Chapter 7 and Rourke, Issue 18

September 27 Presidency and the Congress

Assigned Reading: Hastedt, Chapters 8 and 9 and Rourke, Issue 8

October 4 Bureaucracy and Domestic Constraints on Foreign Policy

Assigned Reading: Hastedt, Chapters 6 and 10 and pages 313-321 and Rourke, Issue 9

October 11 U.S. Foreign Policy Making Case Studies

Assigned Reading: Hastedt, Chapters 11, 12 and 13

Weeks 7-8: U.S. Foreign Policy: Vietnam through the Cold War

October 18 Vietnam Conflict through Reagan Administration

Assigned Reading: Hastedt, pages 48-65

October 25 Out of the Cold War and Into? Bush and Clinton Administrations

Assigned Reading: Hastedt, pages 66-82

Week 9: MidTerm Exam

November 1

No Assigned Reading

Week 10: U.S. Foreign Policy under a New Administration

November 8 Return Midterms and Discuss Election Implications

Assigned Reading: Rourke, Issues 13, 15 and 16

Exercise on foreign policy objectives of Presidential candidates due tonight

Weeks 11-15 Post Cold War U.S. Foreign Policy: Issues and Objectives

November 15 The Post Cold War International Context

Assigned Reading: Hastedt, Chapters 1 and 2 and pages 359-376 and 386-398.

November 22 The Role of the U.S. in the World

Assigned Reading: Rourke, Issues 1-3 and Hastedt, Chapter 18

November 29 The Economic Dimension of U.S. Foreign Policy:

Tools, Objectives and the International Context

Assigned Reading: Rourke, Issues 7, 11 and 12 and Hastedt, Chapter 15

December 6 Kosovo Case Study

Assigned Reading: Fromkin, pages 1-112 and Rourke, Issue 10

December 13 Kosovo Case Study

Assigned Reading: Fromkin, pages 115-196 and Rourke, Issue 4

Papers Due Tonight

Week 16: Final Exam

December 20

No Assigned Reading