

GOVT 54: US Foreign Policy

TR 10:00 – 11:50 (x-hour: 3:00 – 3:50)

003 Rockefeller Hall

Prof. Brent Strathman

228 Silsby

Office Hours: M 2:00 – 4:00 (or by appointment)

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Course Description:

The main goal of this course is to enhance your knowledge and understanding of American foreign policy. In the first section of the course, we will examine the different actors and politics that inform American foreign policy. These factors include both external (e.g. the international system, geography) and internal (e.g. interest groups, bureaucratic politics, Congress, public opinion) elements. This section will explore the interconnections between important actors and their roles in the construction of American foreign policy. The second part of the course will apply these lessons to the history of American war-making. We will focus on key developments and conflicts during the post-Civil War rise of the American empire through the Cold War. Coursework will focus heavily on how American foreign and military policy results from the actions of the White House, the foreign policy bureaucracy, the military, Congress, elites, and mass opinion.

Assignments

Midterm	30%
Final	30%
Term Paper	30%
Participation	10%

The majority of your grade in this course is composed of examinations. Both exams will be short answer/essay exams, designed to gauge your knowledge of American foreign policy. The paper is a term-length exercise that examines a contemporary problem of American foreign policy. Lectures will provide opportunities for questions and commentary, and participation is an important part of the final grade. In particular, there are 4 'in-class' discussions that comprise a majority of the participation points. I will give you more information on the exams, the final paper, and the participation grade later in the term. I reserve the right to administer quizzes, depending on both attendance and participation.

Required Readings:

This class has several required books, and a number of articles/book chapters that I will provide electronically (via Blackboard).

W. LaFeber. The Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations: The American Search for Opportunity, 1865-1913 (ISBN: 0521483832)

W. LaFeber. America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2006 (ISBN: 0073534668)

Student Responsibilities:

Above all, students are required to read all the material, and think critically about the topics introduced in class. This reading is not elective, and if you do not read the material, you will not do well in this class. Assigned readings should be completed *before* class time.

Lectures will depend heavily on your feedback. I will try to cover all of the topics in a timely fashion, but lectures will change according to any questions you may have, and your understanding of the material. If you are interested in a specific topic, I will change lecture/readings to accommodate your requests. I do not have a 'missed exam' policy or a 'late paper' policy – if you miss an assignment, you forfeit the grade. Only extreme circumstances will be considered, and only when supported by in-depth documentation (i.e., more than a doctor's note).

If you know ahead of time that you will not be able to attend an exam or class period, make arrangements before (rather than after) the absence. My lecture notes are often too brief and incomplete; if you miss class, ask your classmates for their notes. If you begin to have difficulties with the coursework, please contact me so we can remedy the problem.

Additional Course Notes:

Disability: Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me, ideally, before the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Accessibility Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested. Please contact me as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements.

Academic Honesty: All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation) will be tolerated. If you have any questions about what constitutes either of these offenses, please see official Dartmouth policy (www.dartmouth.edu/~sources/) or ask me during office hours. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the committee on academic misconduct and handled according to college policy (see www.dartmouth.edu/~uja/honor/faculty).

Course Schedule:

Week 1:

Tuesday 1/8 Class introduction: A Need for Statecraft?

Readings: D. Ross, Selection from Statecraft (Ch. 1)

Pt. I: The Sources of American Foreign Policy

International Structure

Thursday 1/10 The Balance of Military & Economic Power

Readings: K. Waltz, Selection from Theory of International Politics
A. Wolfers, "Stresses and Strains in 'Going it with Others'"
David Lake, "International Economic Structures and American Foreign
Economic Policy, 1887-1934"
B. Braumoeller, "The Myth of American Isolationism"

Recommended: A.F.K. Organski, "Ch. 6: Natural Determinants of Power," from
World Politics
H. Morgenthau, "Ch. 11: The Balance of Power," from Politics Among
Nations

Week 2:

Governmental Actors: The Executive Branch, Congress, & Bureaucracy

Tuesday 1/15

Thursday 1/17

Readings: S. Skowronek, Selection from The Politics Presidents Make
W. Howell & J. Pevehouse, "When Congress Stops War"
G. Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis"

Recommended: M. Mastanduno "The United States Political System & International
Leadership"

Week 3:

Public Opinion, Interest Groups, & Media Effects

Tuesday 1/22

Thursday 1/24

Readings: O. Holsti, "Public Opinion & Foreign Policy"
M. Baum, "Sex, Lies, and War"
J. Mearsheimer & S. Walt, "The Israel Lobby & US Foreign Policy"
J. Frieden, "Sectoral Conflict and US Foreign Economic Policy, 1914-1940"
S. Iyengar et al., "Experimental Demonstrations of the 'Not-So-Minimal' Consequences of Television News Programs"

Recommended: L. Jacobs & B. Page, "Business Versus Public Influence in US Foreign Policy"

Week 4:

Tuesday 1/29 Competing Models

Readings: O. Holsti, "Models of International Relations & Foreign Policy"

Thursday 1/31 MIDTERM

Pt. II: The History of American Foreign Policy

Week 5:

Tuesday 2/5 Post-Civil War Rise of the American Empire

Thursday 2/7 The Spanish American War

** IN-CLASS DISCUSSION **

Readings: LaFeber, American Search for Opportunity (chs. 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8)
M. Gilderhus, "The Monroe Doctrine: Meanings and Implications"
S. Ricard, "The Roosevelt Corollary"
J. Offner, "McKinley & the Spanish-American War"

Week 6:

Tuesday	2/12	A Missed Opportunity?
Thursday	2/14	The Korean Conflict

** IN-CLASS DISCUSSION **

Readings: W. LaFeber, America, Russia, & the Cold War (ch. 3, 4)
Mr. X, "Sources of Soviet Conduct"
D. Merrill, "The Truman Doctrine: Containing Communism and Modernity"
W. LaFeber, America, Russia, & the Cold War (ch. 5)
J. Gaddis, Selection from Origins of Containment
A. George, "Am. Foreign Policy and the North Korean Aggression"

Week 7:

Tuesday	2/19	Crises of Containment
Thursday	2/21	Vietnam

** IN-CLASS DISCUSSION **

Readings: W. LaFeber, America, Russia, & the Cold War (ch. 7,8, 10)
LBJ, Selection from "Defeating Aggression & Securing the Peace"
L. Gelb & R. Betts, Selection from The Irony of Vietnam

Week 8:

Tuesday	2/26	Détente, Decline, & Revolution
Thursday	2/28	Operation Desert Storm & a New World Order

** IN-CLASS DISCUSSION **

Readings: W. LaFeber, America, Russia, & the Cold War (ch. 11, 12, 13, 14)
B. Woodward, Selection from The Commanders
C. Crabb & K. Mulcahy, "George Bush's Management Style and Operation Desert Storm"

Week 9:

Tuesday 3/5 Afghanistan, the Gulf War & End of Pax Americana

Readings: W. LaFeber, America, Russia, & the Cold War (ch. 15)
 S. Walt, Selection from Taming American Power (ch. 1, 5)
 F. Zakaria, Selection from The Post-American World (Ch. 3)
 J. Nye, "US Power & Strategy After Iraq"

Thursday 3/7 CONCLUSION: The Last War?

Readings: J. Mueller, "Is There Still a Terrorist Threat?"
 M. Murphy, "Piracy and the Exploitation of Sanctuaries"
 J. Lindsay & R. Takeyh, "After Iran Gets the Bomb"
 A. Moravcsik, "Striking a New Transatlantic Bargain"
 S. Walt, Selection from Taming American Power (ch. 5)
 F. Zakaria, Selection from The Post-American World (Ch. 7)

**** FINAL EXAM ~~ 8:00 am, March 14th****