

# American Foreign Policy

Christopher Chiego  
Class Meeting times:

Office Hours:

In-Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Online (via Gchat): \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Hours will be held at: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email for an appointment at any other time:  
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*[This is an edited version of the syllabus used for a Summer Session I course at Penn; I have edited it to fit a full semester course and to shift some material based on student feedback]*

## Course Overview:

How should the United States of America interact with foreign countries? This question has been on the mind of presidents and policymakers from the very beginning of the United States. In this course, we will embark first on a fast-paced tour of the historical roots of America's foreign policy and see what influences shaped America's initial engagement with the rest of the world and how that engagement changed over time. We will then discuss several theories that purport to explain how American Foreign Policy is made and evaluate each of those theories with respect to the historical record. The course concludes by surveying several contemporary issue areas and regions where the United States is currently facing a number of foreign policy challenges. Along the way, we will engage with a number of broad debates such as:

- Is the United States an "exceptional" nation in terms of foreign policy?
- What is the "national interest" of the United States? How has the view of that interest changed over time?
- How much of a role should the opinion of the American public play in formulating US foreign policy?
- Should the United States continue to participate in international political institutions?
- How should the United States engage today with rising powers such as China and old foes such as Russia?

## Prerequisites:

There are no formal course prerequisites. General knowledge of American history should be helpful as well as a keen interest in current events.

## Required Books:

Walter A. McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776*  
[This should be available used and in paperback; you may also be able to find a copy of it in the school's library]

The remainder of the readings will be available on CANVAS or will have links posted directly to them here on the syllabus.

**Grading:** [see final page for more details]

20% Class Engagement

25% Final Exam

15% Response Paper 1 [400-500 words]

15% Response Paper 2 [400-500 words]

25% Final Simulation and Position Paper

### **Academy Honesty**

Do not cheat, do not plagiarize. We will discuss this in more detail to ensure that any questions are answered. Please consult the Student Handbook or the appropriate webpage as well:

[www.college.upenn.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.college.upenn.edu/academic-integrity)

### **Accommodations:**

I am more than happy to accommodate any needs, but do need to know earlier rather than later what those might entail. Please make arrangements as necessary through the Office of Student Disabilities Services as soon as possible.

## **Daily Course Outline**

### *Week 1*

**Goals:** Introductions, overview of the course, discussion and modification of the syllabus as needed. Also discussion of advice for preparing for the readings, assignments, and exams. Then, debate the definition of the “national interest” and the origins and institutions of American Foreign Policy

### **Required Readings:**

Nye, Joseph S. (1999) "Redefining the national interest." *Foreign Affairs* (pp. 22-35.)

Rice, Condoleezza. (2000) "Promoting the national interest." *Foreign Affairs* (pp. 45-62.)

### *Week 2*

**Goals:** Introduction to what a “theory” of foreign policy might constitute; discussion of the early McDougall readings and review of some of the early history of the United States; continued discussion of the national interest and academic critiques of the concept.

**Required Readings:**

Introduction and Chapters 1-2 of McDougall (pp. 1-56)

*Week 3*

**Goals:** Understand American Foreign Policy in the 19th Century and main concepts like the Monroe Doctrine, Manifest Destiny, and Imperialism. Why did the United States try to expand its role in the world at the end of the 19th century?

**Required Readings:**

Chapters 3-4 of McDougall (pp. 57-98)

*Week 4*

**Goals:** Understand Mead's Four "Schools" of US Foreign Policy as well as the reasons for the rise and fall of both Wilsonian Internationalism and Isolationism

**Required Readings:**

Chapters 5-6 of McDougall (pp. 99-146)

Mead, Walter Russell. (2000). "The Jacksonian Tradition: And American Foreign Policy." *The National Interest* (58)

*Week 5*

**Goals:** Understand the importance of containment, the reasons for the rise of the Cold War, and the origins of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

**Required Readings:**

Kennan, George. (1947). "The Sources of Soviet Conduct." *Foreign Affairs* (pp. 566-582)

Chapter 7 of McDougall (pp. 147-171)

## **\*First Response Paper Due\***

*Week 6*

**Goals:** Understand how to apply theories of foreign policy to a specific event, especially the bureaucratic politics and governmental processes models.

**Required Readings:**

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

Krasner, Stephen. (1972) "Are Bureaucracies Important? Or, Allison Wonderland" *Foreign Policy* (pp. 159-178)

### *Week 7*

**Goals:** Begin discussion of the Vietnam War and consider the role of public opinion in U.S. Foreign Policy.

Holsti, O. R. (1992). "Public opinion and foreign policy: Challenges to the Almond-Lippmann consensus." *International Studies Quarterly* (pp.440-461)

Khong, Y. F. (1987). "Seduction by analogy in Vietnam: The Malaya and Korea analogies." *Institutions and Leadership: Prospects for the Future* (pp. 501-510)

### *Week 8*

**Goals:** Understand how the end of the Cold War brought about major changes in American Foreign Policy; discuss the role of human rights promotion in U.S. foreign policy

**Required Readings:**

Chapter 8 in McDougall (pp. 172-198)

Jimmy Carter Speech on Human Rights at Notre Dame

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7552>

and how the United States dealt with the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

### *Week 9*

**Goals:** Understand how the end of the Cold War and the 9/11 attacks brought about major changes in American Foreign Policy

George W. Bush West Point Speech in 2002

<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html>

Krauthammer, Charles. (2002). "The Unipolar Moment Revisited." *The National Interest* (pp. 5-18)

Mueller, J. (2002). "Harbinger or aberration? A 9/11 provocation." *The National Interest* (pp. 45-50)

### *Week 10*

**Goals:** Survey contemporary issues in American Foreign Policy and apply the lessons and lens of of the past to better understand them. First address the current force deployments of the United States around the world and counterterrorism efforts, then discuss potential future conflict arenas in robotics and cyberspace.

**Required Readings:**

Tierney, Dominic. "Why Has America Stopped Winning Wars?" *The Atlantic*. June 2nd, 2015.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/06/america-win-loss-iraq-afghanistan/394559/>

Jordan et. al (2016). "The Strategic Illogic of Counterterrorism Policy." *The Washington Quarterly* (pp. 181-192)

Horowitz et. al (2016). Separating fact from fiction in the debate over drone proliferation.

*International Security* pp. (7-42) [Read for the main argument in the first few pages, then skim]

## Week 11

**Goals:** Discuss cyberwarfare and climate change. To what extent do each of these emerging issues threaten America's nation security?

Schroeder, Emma. "Is America Really Ready for CyberWar?" *The National Interest*. May 23, 2017  
<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/america-really-ready-cyber-war-20804>

Gartzke, Erik. "Fear and War in Cyberspace." Lawfare Blog, December 1st, 2013.  
<https://www.lawfareblog.com/foreign-policy-essay-erik-gartzke-fear-and-war-cyberspace>

Deese, B. (2017). "Paris Isn't Burning: Why the Climate Agreement Will Survive Trump." *Foreign Affairs*

## \*Second Response Paper Due\*

## Week 12

**Goals:** Understand current American Foreign Policy in critical regions and conflicts and assess the likelihood of changes given the change in presidential leadership

### Required Readings:

Lynch, M. (2016). "Belligerent Minimalism: The Trump Administration and the Middle East." *The Washington Quarterly*, (pp. 127-144).

Cha, Victor. (2016) "The Unfinished Legacy of Obama's Pivot to Asia," *Foreign Policy*  
<http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/09/06/the-unfinished-legacy-of-obamas-pivot-to-asia/>

Allison, Graham. "The Thucydides Trap." *Foreign Policy*, June 9th, 2017.  
<http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/09/the-thucydides-trap/>

Haddad and Polyakova. "Don't Rehabilitate Obama on Russia" March 2018.  
<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/03/05/dont-rehabilitate-obama-on-russia/>

Posen, Adam. "The Post-American World Economy: Globalization in the Trump Era," *Foreign Affairs*. February 2018.

## Week 13

**Goals:** Debate the future of American Foreign Policy using the insights that we have derived from the past. What will it look like? What *should* it look like?

### Required Readings:

Brooks, S. G., Ikenberry, G. J., & Wohlforth, W. C. (2013). "Don't come home, America: The case against retrenchment." *International Security*, (pp. 7-51)

Posen, Barry. (2013). "Pull back: The case for a less activist foreign policy." *Foreign Affairs*

Brands, Hal. "Foreign Officials See Bush and Obama in Trump." *Foreign Policy*. February 2018.  
<http://foreignpolicy.com/2018/02/23/foreign-officials-see-bush-and-obama-in-trump/>

## **\*Final EXAM in class\***

*Week 14*

**Goals:** Take final exam, then prepare for the concluding simulation on topic TBD.

## **\*Position Paper Due by Start of Simulation\***

*Week 15*

**Goals:** Conduct a successful simulation and then debrief on the final day of class.

### **Grading Breakdown**

#### **Class Engagement (20%)**

A classroom works better when we have a variety of views and contributions. Since this is a time-condensed course, we'll need all hands on deck every day to help sort through the material and keep up with the readings. There are many options to contribute to this grade; some students may feel more comfortable contributing more thoughtful YourTakes, sharing relevant articles or videos to the rest of the class, or leading a structured discussion. (YourTakes are writing exercises that ask simply for your own take on a major question; we will use these to help kick off discussions at the start of classes and after returning from in-class breaks.) Completing all the YourTakes, taking part in class activities, completing any in-class content quizzes (graded solely for completion to help provide feedback), leading one structured discussion and presenting one current event article, and participating in class discussions by asking questions, building on others' contributions, and contributing thoughtful opinions will all be considered in this grade.

#### **Final Exam (25%)**

The final exam will cover all parts of the course up to (but not including) the day of the final exam. There will be both a content and analysis component to the exam. All concepts that might be tested will be indicated by bolded words and similar types of questions on the daily class handouts that will help guide your study.

#### **Response Papers (15% each)**

400-500 words (about 2 pages, double spaced).

Full details will be passed out on the first day of the class, but essentially these papers will require you to synthesize, compare, and analyze some of the readings for a given class day. Each response paper must have a clear argument; this is an analytical paper, not a summary. These are designed to be succinct and will likely require careful revising to make your ideas clear. These papers are

comparable to a brief prepared for a policymaking organization.

**Simulation (25%)**

**[60%]** 600-750 word position paper explaining your official's area of expertise and point of view. What are your goals? How might they be relevant to the other officials in this situation? Use the theories of American Foreign Policy that we've discussed throughout this class to illuminate your official's mindset and likely response to this situation (note that there is not necessarily a "right" answer here for all officials; rather, the key here is to make a plausible argument that incorporates both real-world facts about your official and content from this course). This will require a bit of outside research and we will discuss more details about all aspects of it closer to the end of the course.

**[30%]** Participation during the simulation.

**[10%]** Brief reflection paper written at the end of the simulation.