

**American Foreign Policy
Political Science 342
Writing Intensive
Fall 2016**

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Office Hours: Mondays, 3:30-4:30pm; Wednesdays, Noon-1pm.

Welcome to this upper-division course on American foreign policy. While everyone who reads the assigned materials, regularly attends class, and carefully carries out the research and writing project will certainly learn a great deal about American foreign policy, this course assumes some background in political science and international affairs. **If you have not taken the prerequisite for this class, PSC 240: International System, its equivalent, or another political science course relevant to this class, you should drop this course, and probably add PSC240 to your schedule.**

The past two decades have witnessed extraordinary vacillation, indecision and redirection in American foreign policy. The growing complexities of the modern era have imposed new challenges on the international behavior of the United States. This course is intended to develop an understanding of U.S. foreign policy and of the decision-making process in the American foreign affairs establishment. In addition to emphasizing the historical trends of American foreign relations, the course will analyze Washington's current political, military, and economic policies and assess the Clinton, G. W. Bush, and Obama Administrations' strategy and tactics.

Student Learning Objectives

By the end of this course students should have:

- an understanding of current U.S. foreign policy;
- an understanding of the decision-making process in the American foreign affairs establishment;
- an appreciation for the historical and philosophical origins of American foreign policy;
- research and writing skills in the field; and
- knowledge of the critical primary and secondary literature on American foreign policy.

Assignments

There will be two tests during the term (September 26 and November 7), and a final comprehensive exam. **Please note: The final exam will NOT be given individually or collectively at any earlier date and time than the scheduled period set by the Registrar. This semester it is scheduled for December 12 from 3:30 to 6:30pm.** Given the topical nature of the course, it will be important for members of the class to keep up with on-going world events and U.S. policy decisions during the semester. The best source for this information is *The New York Times*.

As you know, this is a writing intensive course. One of the course's goals is to improve your research and writing skills. Each student will prepare a research paper (13 to 18 pages,

the final version is due no later than November 30) on a topic of her or his choice and approved by me. The paper should cover some aspect of substantive **current** American foreign policy. Each class member will go through the normal paper preparation “thinking” process that is essential to good research and writing in the social sciences. The following scheduled steps will be included:

Not later than September 14 - Submission of a working title (your topic), thesis statement, and one-page tentative outline of your paper. Once you have your topic approved, you may not change it. I will provide feedback and recommendations on how to proceed with your research and writing.

Not later than October 12 - Submission of an annotated partial bibliography of at least four books and three academic articles relevant to your topic. **Please see me if you are unfamiliar with an “annotated” bibliography.**

I will meet with you individually between October 12 and November 9 to discuss your progress on the paper. Of course, you are welcome to make an appointment at any time to talk with me about your work.

Not later than November 14 - Submission of a rough draft of your final paper with a formal bibliography of **at least** seven scholarly books and seven scholarly articles.

The final exam will count for 25% of the final grade, the final paper 20%, topic and thesis statement 5%, annotated bibliography 5%, rough draft 5%, and each mid semester test 20%.

Required Texts

Richard Mansbach and Kirsten L. Taylor. *Contemporary American Foreign Policy: Influences, Challenges, and Opportunities*. Sage Publishers.
Bob Woodward. *Obama’s Wars*. Simon & Schuster
Additional readings found on the Canvas site for this course
(highly recommended) *The New York Times*

N.B.: There will be no class on Monday, September 12.

Course Outline

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| I. The History of American Foreign Policy | August 20-31 |
| A. Isolationism | |
| B. World War I and Beyond | |
| C. The Cold War | |
| D. The Post-Cold War Puzzle | |
| E.. Enduring Characteristics | |
| Readings: Mansbach and Taylor, <i>Cont. Amer. For. Policy</i> , Introduction, Chapter 2. | |
| Woodward, <i>Obama’s Wars</i> , Chapters 1-2 | |
| Canvas: Walter A. McDougall, <i>Back to Bedrock</i> | |

- II. The Domestic Setting of American Foreign Policy September 7-21
 A. The Constitution and the Democratic Consensus
 B. The Presidency
 C. State and Defense
 D. NSC and the Intelligence Community
 Readings: Mansbach and Taylor, *Cont. Amer. For. Policy*, Chapter 1.
 Woodward, *Obama's Wars*, Chapters 3-14
- III. America's National Security in the post-Cold War Era Sept. 28 – Oct. 10
 A. Nuclear Policy and Arms Control
 B. Defense Policy in the Post-Cold War Era
 C. National Security Policy: The War on Terrorism, Syria, ISIS
 Readings: Mansbach and Taylor, *Cont. Amer. For. Policy*, Chapters 3-4; pp. 185-194
 and 196-200.
 Woodward, *Obama's Wars*, Chapters 15-33
 Canvas: 2015 National Security Strategy
- IV. U.S. Relations with the Great Powers October 12-31
 A. Russia in the Putin Years
 B. China: The New Enemy?
 C. European Integration and Crises
 D. Emerging Powers
 Readings: Mansbach and Taylor, *Cont. Amer. For. Policy*, Chapters 12-14.
- V. America and the World Economy November 2-16
 A. Bretton Woods – US Monetary and Financial Policy
 B. Globalization – US Trade Policy
 Reading: Mansbach and Taylor, *Cont. Amer. For. Policy*, Chapter 5.
- VI. America: World Challenges and World Order Nov. 21 – Dec. 5
 A. Iraq, Iran, and the Middle East
 B. Ethnic, Religious and Nationalist Conflict: Africa and other Hot Spots
 C. The United Nations: Peacekeeping, Human Rights, and the Less Developed World
 Readings: Mansbach and Taylor, *Cont. Amer. For. Policy*, Chapters 7, 10-11, and 15.
 Canvas: Jerry Pubantz, "George W. Bush and the United Nations"

Some General Notes and Guidelines

Canvas: Please establish access to the Canvas site for this course. Regular announcements, reserve readings, the syllabus, assignments, and other critical information for the class will be maintained there. Check the site daily if possible. You are responsible for knowing all course information on the site.

Tests and other assignments: Except in the case of a bona fide medical emergency with confirming documentation, or the sudden death or catastrophic illness of an **immediate** relative, I do not approve make-up tests or accept assignments late. If you have a

commitment scheduled for the day of a test or assignment, you should contact me well before the date so that we can consider the possibility of taking the test or submitting the assignment early. Given the percentage each test and assignment counts in this class, it should be expected that you will likely fail the course if you do not take a test or turn in a required assignment. It is absolutely critical that you complete all of the work in the course.

Class rules: This class is wide open for discussion. So please come prepared, be on time, and actively participate. In our exchanges all of us have the right to expect professionalism and courtesy. As part of that courtesy, you are expected to arrive in the classroom by the time the class begins and to remain for the full class period.

If you have a cell phone or pager with you, **BE SURE to turn it off before you enter the room.** If it rings while in class, you will not be allowed to bring it to class again. Please bring old-fashioned paper, pens, and pencils. **I do not want you to use your laptop or tablet during class.** It is far better to be focused on the discussion and materials in the class than on trying to transcribe every aspect of the session. You can transfer your handwritten notes to your computer at a later time, which will prove a very valuable learning exercise.

All students must abide by the University's academic integrity regulations. If you are not familiar with the University's policy, please see <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>. Plagiarism (presenting the ideas or words of another as if they were one's own) is cheating. **At a minimum, plagiarism on the paper assignments or cheating on the tests will result in a grade of "F" for the course – not for the assignment, but for the course.** The UNCG Honor System and judicial process will be triggered by your misuse of materials, or by your submission of work that was done by others but passed off as your research and writing.

Office hours: This semester I will hold office hours on Mondays right after this class from 3:30 to 4:30pm, and on Wednesdays from noon to 1pm. Should you need to make an appointment for another time, you may do so by e-mail or in person and we will set a time to meet. I look forward to talking with you about your work.