

PSC 342
American Foreign Policy
Spring 2016
Prof. Griffiths
Office: 322 Curry
Email: rjgriffi@uncg.edu
Office Hours: 10-11 TTh and by appointment

The United States remains the world's preeminent military and economic power. In 2014, the U.S. GDP was \$17.5 trillion, way ahead of China in second place with a \$10 trillion GDP. The U.S. accounted for about 37% of total global military expenditure in 2013. In 2012, the U.S. spent \$682 billion on defense, more than the combined \$652 billion spent by the next ten countries with the largest military expenditures. U.S. power and influence are felt around the world in areas such as security, economics, politics, and culture. Despite this formidable power, the U.S. faces an array of complex foreign policy challenges. The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the historical context of American foreign policy, the actors and influences on foreign policy making and implementation, and the major issues in American foreign policy. After taking this course, students will be able to:

- appreciate the complex global environment in which American foreign policy is made;
- discuss the impact of conceptual frameworks, values, and beliefs on foreign policy making;
- explain the role of the executive and legislative branches of government in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy;
- outline the influence of non-government actors on foreign policy;
- analyze the nature of contemporary foreign policy challenges.

Text: Steven W. Hook, 2014, *U.S. Foreign Policy: The Paradox of World Power*, Fourth Edition, (Los Angeles, CA: CQ Press). Additional readings will be posted on Canvas. Students are also required to keep up with current issues in American foreign policy by reading *The New York Times* and/or *The Economist* on a regular basis. You might also consider a digital subscription to *Foreign Policy*, available at foreignpolicy.com. You can also supplement your foreign policy knowledge by checking news websites like the BBC, Al Jazeera, and CNN and regularly listening to National Public Radio.

Class Sessions: Classes will consist of lecture and discussion, with particular emphasis on discussion. Class participation is encouraged and may help your final grade. Class discussion should always be guided by civility, recognition of differing points of view, and tolerance of those different viewpoints. Students should come to class having read the assigned material and be prepared to discuss it. I would like this to be more of a seminar class than a lecture. Attendance is **essential** if you expect to do well in the class. I also expect you to arrive to class on time, stay awake, and remain for the duration of class. You should leave class only in an emergency. Wandering in and out of class is distracting.

Evaluation: There will be mid-term and a final exam. Students will also be responsible for a 15- page research paper on a contemporary topic in American foreign policy. Details of this

assignment will be posted on Canvas. There will also be a group exercise towards the end of the semester in which groups will be responsible for preparing a foreign policy briefing.

The weight of the assignments is as follows: introduction/proposal- 10%; mid-term- 20%; paper- 30%; briefing 15%; final-25%.

Note: the final exam is scheduled for 4/28/2016 from 3:30-6:30.

Policy on Electronic Devices: The use of all electronic devices is strictly prohibited in class. This includes laptop computers. **All phones and computers must be turned off and put away before class.** If you leave class to check your phone, don't bother to come back. Use of your phone or computer in class will cost you five points off your final grade for the first infraction, ten for the second. If you cannot disconnect for the duration of class, you should not take the class.

Assigned Readings- Dates are approximate. Additional articles will be posted on Canvas.

1/14-1/19- The U.S. and the World. Hook, chapter 1; Richard Haass, 2014, "The Unraveling: How to Respond to a Disordered World," *Foreign Affairs*, 93:6 Nov./Dec. 2014; James Steinberg & Michael O'Hanlon, 2014, "Keep Hope Alive," *Foreign Affairs*, 93:4, July/August 2014..

1/21-1/26- Historical Development of U.S. Power. Hook, chapter 2.

1/28-2/2- Conceptual Frameworks. Hook, chapter 3; John J. Mearsheimer, 2014, "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault," *Foreign Affairs*, 93:5, Sept./Oct. 2014; G. John Ikenberry, 2014, "The Illusion of Geopolitics: The Enduring Power of the Liberal Order," *Foreign Affairs*, 93:3, May/June 2014; Stephen M. Walt, 2016, "What Would a Realist World Have Looked Like?" *Foreign Policy*.

2/4-2/9- The President and Foreign Policy. Hook, chapter 4; Fred Kaplan, 2016, "Obama's Way: The President in Practice," *Foreign Affairs*, 95:1, January/February, 2016.

2/11-2/16- Congress, the Bureaucracy, and Foreign Policy. Hook, chapter 5,6.

2/23- Exam.

2/25- Public Opinion. Hook, chapter 7.

3/1- The Media. Hook, chapter 8.

3/3- Civil Society. Hook, chapter 9.

3/15-3/24- Defense and Security. Hook, chapter 10; Max Boot, 2014, "More Small Wars: Counterinsurgency is Here to Stay," *Foreign Affairs*, 93:6, Nov./Dec. 2014; Richard K. Betts, 2014, "Pick Your Battles," *Foreign Affairs*, 93:6, November/December 2014.

3/29-4/5- Economic Policy. Hook, chapter 11; Michael Froman, 2014, "The Strategic Logic of Trade: New Rules for the Global Market," *Foreign Affairs*, 93:6, Nov./Dec. 2014.

4/7-4/12- Transnational Problems. Hook, chapter 12;

4/14-4/19- Foreign Policy Briefings.

4/21- Summary and Conclusion.