

US FOREIGN POLICY

Fall 2019

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Course Description

This course will examine the politics of American foreign policy. We will assess the major actors and theories of US foreign policy through readings, class discussions, and presentations. The students will also participate in a mock National Security Council simulation.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should:

- Have a broad knowledge of the history of American foreign policy and the key actors involved in the formation of policy.
- Have developed knowledge of important issues related to the conduct of US foreign policy.
- Be able to identify and critique the relevant theories that scholars employ to understand US foreign policy.
- Be able to identify and critically discuss ethical problems in US foreign policy.
- Have refined their verbal communication and presentation skills.
- Have refined their written communication, research, and critical analysis skills.

Required Materials and Texts

- All journal articles are available online via e-Journals from the McMaster library website or via the address provided.
- The required readings not available online will be available on Avenue to Learn.
- Students should keep up to date on current events in American foreign policy by reading the New York Times, the Washington Post or any other well-respected media source.

Class Format

Seminar format with simulation.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Participation (25%), each class
2. Library Skills (5%), due September 25
3. Paper Outline (5%), due October 2
4. Discussion Leader (15%), due once throughout the term as assigned
5. Position Memo (5%), due October 23
6. Simulation Participation (15%), due October 30
7. 3 Minute Paper Presentation (5%), due November 13 or November 20 as assigned
8. Research Paper (25%), due November 27

Course Evaluation – Details

Participation (25%): each class

Your participation is an essential part of this seminar. Students are responsible for all of the required readings and for taking an active part in class discussion. This means you may not engage in activities unrelated to the course (text-messaging, reading for another course, browsing the internet) during class time.

To help you prepare for class in weeks 2,3,4,5,6,13, and 14 I will post discussion questions on Avenue by the previous Friday at 4pm. Every student is required to post a brief (approximately 250 word) response by Monday at midnight. The response should include a preliminary answer to at least one question I posted for that week, propose at least one additional discussion question, and indicate familiarity with all the assigned readings. Ongoing participation will be assessed on the basis of consistent, quality contributions to class, and posted responses that demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the readings.

Attendance at every class is required. If you know you will be missing a class due to illness or have another similar documented reason, please email the professor in advance of the class.

Assignment 1: Library Skills (5%), due September 25

This short assignment will assess library research skills. Finding the best resources for your research means you need to move beyond Google, and requires you to critically think about the value and importance of the resources you choose for your academic research. This assignment will take you into McMaster Library's electronic collection of books and journal articles, and will help you learn how best to use library resources, and how to choose which sources are most appropriate for your needs.

Assignment 2: Paper Outline (5%), due October 2

To assist with writing the research paper, students will create an outline of their research project. The outline will include: 1) A descriptive title; 2) A one sentence research question; 3) a one sentence thesis statement (that is an answer to the research question); 3) A 400-word summary, including a description of your plan to substantiate the argument that will be made in the paper (briefly describe the evidence you will use to support the argument); and 4) An annotated bibliography of at least 15 sources which should include both academic books and journal articles.

Assignment 3: Discussion Leader (15%), due once throughout the term as assigned

Each student will be responsible for leading part of the discussion for at least one class in the weeks 2,3,4,5,6,13, and 14. The responsibility each week will be shared, usually among three or four students. Students should discuss how they will divide the class in advance and inform the professor of their plan at least one week before the class.

The students leading the discussion should prepare a presentation on the topic that identifies the major points for discussion and evaluates the arguments made in the readings assigned for that topic on the syllabus. The students should not simply summarize the readings. In addition to the assigned readings, the discussion leaders should also draw on a couple of additional sources on the topic and present new, related information. The questions posed to the class could include the professor's questions, questions from student responses, as well as questions related to the discussion leader's presentation. However, given the time constraints it will likely be necessary to synthesize student questions on Avenue (by merging, editing, and organizing the ideas raised in the responses according to the themes you identify).

Each group of students is required to meet with the professor at least one week in advance of their presentation to discuss the direction of their presentation and additional sources. Failure to meet with the professor will negatively influence the grade.

Assignment 4: Position Memo (5%): due October 23

Each student will write a position memo from the perspective of the student's role assigned for the simulation. It will offer a policy recommendation that adheres to the role's institutional interest and concerns. In about two single-spaced pages, it will present a set of policy options for consideration by the NSC and recommend one of them to the president. The recommendation or position outlined in this memo will inform the position that your group will defend during the role-play.

Assignment 5: Simulation Participation (15%), due October 30

Students will be organized into groups to participate in a simulation.

Students will conduct a mock NSC meeting in the classroom to debate and discuss the issues raised in the case and how the United States should respond. They will take on the roles of NSC participants, creating and defending institutional positions on an issue while negotiating policy proposals with those who represent potentially conflicting views.

Assignment 6: Research Paper (25%), due November 27

The essay, 15 pages in length, should address a topic relevant to American foreign policy. The research essay will be double-spaced, include a bibliography with at least 15 sources and be properly referenced.

Assignment 7: 3 Minute Paper Presentation (5%), due November 13 or November 20 as assigned

Students will each be given 3 minutes to present the main points of their final research papers. This assignment is based on the popular 3-minute thesis competitions (3MT). Students are encouraged to review 3 Minute thesis competitions available online to pick up pointers. Following the presentations,

the students will answer questions from their student colleagues. The class will vote on the top three presentations.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (September 4)

Course Introduction

Course syllabus; readings; assignments; weekly schedule; and expectations of students.

Readings: None

Notes: Sign up for presentations.

Week 2 (September 11)

Introduction to the Study of American Foreign Policy

Readings:

Hudson, Valerie. "The history and evolution of foreign policy analysis," in Steve Smith et al Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases, (Oxford, 2016, 3rd ed). 13-34.

Houghton, David Patrick. "Reinvigorating the study of foreign policy decision making: toward a constructivist approach." Foreign policy analysis 3.1 (2007): 24-45.

Hastedt, Glenn, "Chapter 1: Defining American Foreign Policy Problems," In American Foreign Policy: Past, Present, and Future (Rowman and Littlefield, 2015, 11th ed).

Cox, M. and D. Stokes eds., US Foreign Policy (Oxford, 2012, 2nd ed): Introduction and ch 1 "Theories of US foreign policy", 1-20.

Week 3 (September 18)

The Importance of Individuals in American Foreign Policy

Readings:

Gallagher, Maryann E. and Susan H. Allen. "Presidential Personality: Not Just a Nuisance," Foreign Policy Analysis 1 January 2014, Volume10 (Issue1), 1-21.

Balmas, Meital. "Tell me who is your leader, and I will tell you who you are: Foreign leaders' perceived personality and public attitudes toward their countries and citizenry." American Journal of Political Science 62.2 (2018): 499-514.

Destler, Irving M. Chapter Five: "The Strategies of Presidents: Foreign Policy-Making under Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon," in *Presidents, bureaucrats and foreign policy: The politics of organizational reform*. (Princeton University Press, 2015), 95- 153.

Herbert, J., McCrisken, T., Wroe, A. (2019) Chapter 8 "Trump's Ordinary Foreign Policy". In: *The Ordinary Presidency of Donald J. Trump*. Palgrave Studies in Political Leadership. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Notes: The class will begin with a brief presentation about the library assignment due next week.

Week 4 (September 25)

The Role of Bureaucracy in Foreign Policy

Readings:

Allison, Graham. "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *American Political Science Review*, 63 (September 1969): 689-718, reprinted in G. John Ikenberry ed., *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays* (New York: Longman, 2005): 402-445.

Alden, Chris and Amnon Aran, Chapter 3 "Bureaucracies and foreign policy," in *Foreign Policy Analysis: New Approaches*, (Routledge, 2017).

Drezner, Daniel W. "Present at the Destruction: The Trump Administration and the Foreign Policy Bureaucracy." *The Journal of Politics* 81.2 (2019): 723-730.

Weldes, Jutta. "Bureaucratic politics: A critical constructivist assessment." *Mershon International Studies Review* 42.2 (1998): 216-225.

Notes: Library Research Assignment due

Week 5 (October 2)

Key Institutions: The National Security Council and the State Department

Readings:

Rosati, Jerel A. and James M. Scott. Chapter 4: "Bureaucracy, Presidential Management and the National Security Council," in *The Politics of United States Foreign Policy* (Wadsworth-Thomson Learning, 2014, 6th ed.).

CFR, [The Role of the National Security Advisor](#)

CFR, [The National Security Council Interagency Process](#)

Browse the [U.S. Department of State](#) website, in particular review the pages on [Department Organization](#)

[National Security Council](#), White House.

Notes: Paper outlines due; Preparation for Foreign Policy Decision Making Simulation: Assignment of Groups and Details

Week 6 (October 9)

Trump's National Security Organization

Readings:

Burke, John P. "The Contemporary Presidency "It Went Off the Rails": Trump's Presidential Transition and the National Security System." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 48.4 (2018): 832-844.

NPR, "[Under The Trump Administration, A Rocky Year Of Transition For The State Department](#)," NPR All Things Considered, December 31, 2017

Kumar, Martha Joynt. "The Contemporary Presidency Energy or Chaos? Turnover at the Top of President Trump's White House." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 49.1 (2019): 219-236.

Burke, John P. "Struggling with Standard Order: Challenges and Performance of the Trump National Security Council System." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 48.4 (2018): 640-666.

Choi, David. "[I'm the only one that matters': Trump disregards State Department's unfilled positions](#)" *Business Insider* Nov. 3, 2017,

Week 7 (October 16)

Reading Week

Notes: Prepare for the simulation: read assigned case and group material and write the position memo.

Research papers: Continue to work on your research paper and 3 Minute presentation.

Week 8 (October 23)

Film Demonstrations

- 1) CSPAN OCTOBER 14, 1997: National Security Council Mock Session
- 2) Running a National Security Council Meeting

Following the film demonstrations: Group meetings

Notes: Position memos due

Week 9 (October 30)

In Class Exercise: Foreign Policy Decision Making Simulation

Readings: None. Focus on final preparation for the simulation.

Notes: This class will be held in the Council Chambers.

Week 10 (November 6)

Writing Workshop

Readings: TBA

Notes: Bring your graded paper outlines to class with you.

Week 11 (November 13)

3 Minute Paper Presentations

Week 12 (November 20)

3 Minute Paper Presentations

Week 13 (November 27)

The Other, Fear and US Foreign Policy

Readings:

Jackson, Richard, and Matt McDonald. "Constructivism, US foreign policy and the 'war on terror'." *New directions in US foreign policy*. Routledge, 2009. 32-45.

Weldes, Jutta. "Constructing National Interests." *European Journal of International Relations* 2.3 (1996): 275-318.

Nayak, Meghana. "Orientalism and 'saving' US State Identity After 9/11." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 8.1 (2006): 42-61.

Mueller, John and Mark G. Stewart. "The Terrorism Delusion: America's Overwrought Response to September 11." *International Security*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2012, 81–110.

Notes: Research papers due

Week 14 (December 4)

The Future of American Foreign Policy: Continuity or Change?

Readings:

Harris, Peter. "Why Trump Won't Retrench: The Militarist Redoubt in American Foreign Policy." *Political Science Quarterly* 133.4 (2018): 611-641.

Rapp-Hooper, Mira and Rebecca Friedman Lissner. "The Open World: What America Can Achieve after Trump," *Foreign Affairs* 98, no. 3 (May-June 2019): 18-25

King, James D., and James W. Riddlesperger Jr. "The Trump Transition: Beginning a Distinctive Presidency." *Social Science Quarterly* 99.5 (2018): 1821-1836.

Abrams, Elliott. "Trump versus the Government: Can America Get Its Story Straight." *Foreign Affairs*. 98 (2019): 129.

Drezner, Daniel W. *This Time Is Different: Why U.S. Foreign Policy Will Never Recover*, 98 *Foreign Affairs*. 10, 17 (2019).

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All assignments should be turned in as a hard copy. Emailed copies will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the professor.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate written assignments:

Research and Analysis

Papers based on research that go beyond the course readings will receive higher grades. Likewise, papers that include analysis rather than simple description will be graded higher. For example, tell the reader what you think the connections are between the variables rather than simply summarizing what others have reported. Use the information or analysis the authors provide to support your own argument. A key clue that you are summarizing is a series of paragraphs focused on the work of others that each begin along the lines of "X author in article Y states". It is better to begin a paragraph with a topic sentence that reflects your own argument (or sub argument) and then follow that sentence with evidence gleaned from a variety of sources.

Thesis Statement and Development of an Argument

A clear thesis and a logical argument that supports the thesis are key to achieving a higher grade on your research paper. When writing each section of the paper ask yourself if that section helps to convince the reader of your argument. Avoid excessive description that does not directly provide evidence for your argument.

The Writing: Organization, Grammar and Spelling

Clear and accurate writing is crucially important to convincing your reader of your argument. The ideas in the paper should be well organized. Ask yourself: Do the

sections/paragraphs clearly relate to the thesis statement? Do ideas follow logically?
Are paragraph transitions clear?

A paper with many grammatical and spelling mistakes is difficult to comprehend. Most people cannot see their own mistakes right away so it is best to take time between drafts (for example, go for a walk, or if time permits, take a couple of days away from the paper). When you return to the paper it will be much easier to see your own errors, especially if you read it out loud, slowly to yourself. It is also okay to have a friend also read your paper for you, to tell you if your writing or ideas are unclear or if you have made spelling or grammatical errors. In addition to having them point out obvious spelling or grammatical mistakes ask them, "What am I arguing in this section and is it convincing?"

Referencing

Develop a system to keep track of your sources so you can cite them and a construct a bibliography. Use at least 15 sources in the final research paper and cite them properly. Any of the recognized bibliographic styles are fine but stick to one. Review what constitutes plagiarism. Remember to single space and indent long quotes (over 4 sentences long) and avoid excessive quotations ([only quote when the quotation adds obvious value](#))

Final Advice

Consider consulting online resources such as The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) or McMaster's [Student Success Centre](#). The Student Success Centre is an excellent resource and everyone (including strong writers) are encouraged to make an appointment with them to review your written work.

Turn your work in on time and meet the other requirements of the paper assignment. Remember to include a title page, add page numbers, use a standard 12-point font and one inch margins, and to double space the lines.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+

MARK	GRADE
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be accepted, but will be subject to a five per cent per day penalty. After seven days the assignments will no longer be accepted and students will receive a grade of zero on that assignment. In addition, papers submitted after the deadlines will be graded without comments.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

Students are expected to let the professor know of any absences as soon as possible by emailing the professor.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.