About the Course

The purpose of this course is to explore the determinants and consequences of contemporary United States foreign policy. The early weeks of the course will introduce key themes. First, we will review the intellectual history and evolution of (classical) liberalism, which underlies US culture and informs US foreign policy—and which facilitated the rise of the scientific method that we use to study foreign policy systematically. Second, we will scrutinize the conceptualization and operationalization of US power and influence in order to understand the US role in creating and maintaining the contemporary liberal international order. Third, we will consider the foreign policy implications of new challenges to the liberal international order, such as political polarization in the US, growing populism in the West, and the rise of China in the East. Fourth, we will attempt to disentangle the complicated relationship between US public opinion, elites, and the media within the realm of foreign policy. The remainder of the course will reinforce these broad themes via deeper examinations of specific foreign policy issues and tools.

Learning outcomes of the course include the following:

• Students will distinguish between narrative and scientific approaches to the study of US foreign policy
• Students will apply the scientific approach to the study of US foreign policy
• Students will analyze contemporary US foreign policy issues and tools with grounding in important contemporary themes
• Students will synthesize the findings of recent studies in foreign policy analysis

Course Expectations

Attendance and participation

I expect each student to come to class prepared to take part in discussion. Although I do not grade attendance and participation, active attention and participation is vital to master course material. Though I post lecture slides, these are merely outlines to guide a deeper discussion. And not all lecture material is covered in assigned readings. As such, absences and inattention are likely to have a negative impact on performance.

Classroom behavior

This course will, at times, involve the discussion of controversial and sensitive ideas. Students should treat everyone with respect. Try to extend the benefit of the doubt to those who hold opinions contrary to your own. The instructor is expected to facilitate learning, to answer questions appropriately, to be fair and objective in grading, to provide timely and useful feedback on assignments, to maintain adequate office hours, and to treat students as he would like to be treated in their place.

On the same theme of respectfulness, please avoid talking or otherwise engaging in distracting behavior during class. Turn off or silence all cellphones (no vibration or sound). Students may use laptop computers/tablets as long as these devices are muted. However, students may not distract others with videos, websites, etc. If in doubt, consider whether your behavior could be detrimental to the learning of students around you.
Recording policy

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record class activities (lecture, discussion, etc.) without advance, written permission from the instructor. If authorized, recordings may be used only for personal, educational purposes. In no instance may recordings be posted to the internet. Unauthorized dissemination of recordings through any medium is forbidden, and will be considered an honor code violation.

Readings

Students should complete all assigned readings before the associated lecture. All readings are web sources linked in this syllabus or PDF documents that will be posted to Blackboard. For students who would like a textbook to supplement the lecture and readings, I recommend American Foreign Policy: The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century (fifth edition), by Bruce Jentleson: web link.

Grading

There will be three graded items, only two of which will count—equally—towards your final grade (i.e., at 50% each). Students may complete all three items if they wish; in this case, I will drop the lowest score.

Exams

There will be two exams: a midterm and a final. Exams are closed-book, consisting of 50 multiple choice questions, each worth 2 percentage points. Exams are scantron-based, so be sure to bring a number 2 pencil with you to the exam. I keep the exams, so if you want to see yours, you must see me during my office hours. You can take a make-up exam if and only if (1) you send me a notification email prior to the exam (exceptions only in case of emergency), and (2) you have a serious and documented excuse for missing the exam. Otherwise a grade of zero will be recorded. Make-up exams could differ from those given in class.

Course papers

Each student may write a course paper of no more than eight pages (double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins on all sides) reviewing recent academic studies—specifically in well-regarded, peer-reviewed journals—on any topic relevant to foreign policy. The purpose of the essay is to synthesize the arguments and findings of previous studies in order to present a holistic interpretation of the research covered and to point out useful future research questions that arise from this synthesis. Students wishing to write a paper must submit a topic statement (worth 5% of the course paper grade) and an annotated bibliography (worth 10% of the course paper grade) by the due dates specified below. The final paper will be due at the time of the final exam (worth 85% of the course paper grade). I will post additional information and grading criteria on Blackboard. Students who do not submit the topic statement/bibliography by the due date will not be allowed to write a course paper.

Final grade calculation

Final letter grades are recorded as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% or above</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 to 89.99</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 to 84.99</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 to 79.99</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 to 74.99</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 69.99</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 64.99</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 60</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
There will be no individual extra credit, although I might offer the entire class extra credit opportunities. If I am impressed with attendance and participation, I might reduce grade thresholds by rounding decimals of $\geq .5$ up. I do not raise grades due to job or scholarship requirements, or simply because a student was close to receiving a higher grade. Typically, I will not respond to emails asking for this type of preferential treatment. Of course, I am always willing to double-check for errors in grade calculations.

**Incompletes**

An incomplete grade is an exception and I will assign such a grade only if two criteria are simultaneously met: (1) the student is unable to complete the course due to a serious personal illness or tragedy, which is adequately documented; (2) the student has completed 50% of the course requirements.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will be treated as such. USC has severe penalties for cases of plagiarism. Should I determine that plagiarism has occurred, I will determine whether the seriousness of the situation warrants (1) a penalty to the assignment, up to assigning a score of 0 for the work, (2) a penalty to the course, up to assigning an ‘F,’ or (3) a more severe penalty in accordance with the approved university procedure.

**Accommodating disabilities**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to participate fully in this class, contact the Office of Student Disability Services: 777-6142, TDD 777-6744, email sasds@mailbox.sc.edu, or stop by LeConte College Room 112A. All accommodations must be approved through the Office of Student Disability Services.

**Schedule**

**Part 1: Themes**

**Week 1 (August 28 & 30): Introduction**

*Readings:* check out websites such as The Monkey Cage, Foreign Affairs, Council on Foreign Relations, Foreign Policy, War on the Rocks, and International Affairs Blog.

**Week 2 (September 4): The Enlightenment origins of contemporary US foreign policy**

*Readings:* Desch 2008, Smith 1993 (skim), Stevens and Smith 1995

*note: No class on September 2: Labor Day*

**Week 3 (September 9 & 11): Approaches to the study of US foreign policy**

*Readings:* Walt 1998; Kertzer and Zeitzoff 2017, Quartz article

**Week 4 (September 16 & 18): The foreign policy “toolkit” and the scope of US power and influence**

*Readings:* Starrs 2013, Drezner 2015, IIA blog post

**Week 5 (September 23 & 25): The US-led liberal international order**

Week 6 (September 30 & October 2): The liberal order continued

Readings: Mead 2017, Schultz 2018

Week 7 (October 7 & 9): Elites, the media, and public opinion

Readings: Baum and Potter 2019, Guisinger and Saunders 2017

Week 8 (October 14 & 16): Catch-up, review, and exam 1

No assigned readings
note: Midterm exam in class on October 16

Part 2: Issues

Week 9 (October 21 & 23): Security policy and counter-terrorism

Readings: Porter 2018, Gartzke 2013, Gadarian 2010
note: Topic statements due (uploaded to Blackboard) by 5 PM on Friday, October 25

Week 10 (October 28 & 30): Nuclear/WMD anti-proliferation

Readings: Miller 2014, Bennett 2015, PVG blog post

Week 11 (November 4 & 6): Fostering democracy and human rights

Readings: Schenoni and Mainwaring 2019, Pevehouse and Vabulas 2019

Week 12 (November 11 & 13): Promoting economic development and free markets

Readings: Bermeo and Leblang 2015, Whang et al. 2018
note: Annotated bibliography due (uploaded to Blackboard) by 5 PM on Friday, November 15

Week 13 (November 18 & 20): Regulating trade and globalization

Readings: Mutz and Kim 2017, Skonieczny 2018

Week 14 (November 25): Protecting the environment

Readings: Busby 2008, FP article
note: No class on November 27: Thanksgiving Break

Week 15 (December 2 & 4): Combating drug trafficking across borders

Readings: Andreas and Price 2001, CFR article

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 11 – 12:30 PM, in the normal classroom

note: course paper due (uploaded to Blackboard) at the start of the final exam