Politics 372
American Foreign Policy

Prof. Michael Marks          Spring Semester 2015
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Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the formation and implementation of the foreign policy of the United States. Through involved classroom discussions and writing assignments students will explore the political, economic, and security relations between the United States and the rest of the world. The purpose of the course is to help students make sense out of the changes demanded of American foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. We will do this by situating U.S. foreign policy in a historical and comparative context. Different theoretical explanations of the foundations of American international conduct will also be examined.

The course also incorporates active student learning through the “case method”. Classes during most weeks of the semester will revolve around a case study of American foreign policy. In this method of learning, students take the initiative in drawing out the lessons contained in a selection of instances of U.S. foreign policy that span a range of theoretical questions and policy issues.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of theory for describing and explaining American foreign policy.
2. Identify major historical trends in the evolution of American foreign policy.
3. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of competing arguments for the formulation, implementation, and outcomes of American foreign policy.
5. Write effectively and persuasively analyzing historical trends in American foreign policy.
6. Use factual evidence to analyze American foreign policy.

Time Commitment for This Course

Willamette’s Credit Hour Policy holds that for every hour of class time there is an expectation of 2–3 hours work outside of class. Thus, for a class meeting three hours a week such as this one you should anticipate spending 6–9 hours outside of class engaged in course-related activities. For this course you should allocate your time among the following three activities: Reading the assigned case studies (including making notes in response to the suggested questions handed out with each case study and preparing for the assigned role-playing exercise), reading newspapers and/or online news resources on topics relevant to the class, writing the three essay assignments due over the course of the semester.
Writing Assignments

There will be three take-home writing assignments. Questions will ask the students to analyze and evaluate some feature of the preceding weeks’ thematic discussions as covered in the case studies. No research is required for these take-home writing assignments aside from a thorough reading of the case studies. **Notice that some of the essays are due on a Monday.**

More About the Case Method

It is my conviction that people learn only when they verbalize new material. Therefore, in the classes I teach I encourage student participation. In the case method of learning, student participation is not only helpful, it is absolutely necessary. Students are responsible for elucidating the lessons contained in each case by talking through problems and even acting out decisions made by American foreign policy makers. I will act to facilitate discussions, but the students will be the engine that moves class discussions along. **Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that every student should read and prepare for each case before the week for which it is assigned.**

Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Laptop computers can assist in note taking and wireless Internet access on campus can aid in organized classroom exercises. However, laptop computers can also be a classroom distraction. Laptop computers are permitted in class for note taking purposes. Additionally, there may be occasions when the class as a whole may want to use the campus wireless network to look things up online. However, please refrain from checking e-mail, online chatting, websurfing, game playing, etc. during class. If you are observed doing so during class time, you will be asked to no longer bring your laptop to class. Additionally, cell phones should be turned off prior to class.

Accommodations

Students requiring accommodation should contact the Office of Disability & Learning Services (Baxter Hall, Phone: 503–370–6471, TTY: 503–375–5383) for consultation and to make the necessary arrangements.

Plagiarism and Cheating Policy

All writing assignments turned in must be your own written work. You may not copy, borrow, or appropriate other authors’ work, unless you are doing so in the form of a cited quotation. All references to other authors’ work must be fully documented in the form of citations and/or footnotes, and direct quotes must be indicated as such with quotation marks. Suspected cases of plagiarism will be pursued vigorously and appropriate penalties (including an “F” for the course) will be applied.

Readings

Case Studies

The core of this class consists of the case studies that will provide for the majority of classroom discussion. All of the cases are available online from the Georgetown University Institute for the Study of Diplomacy (GUISD).
Instructions for buying cases: To purchase each case, first go to the GUISD website at:

http://www.guisd.org/index.cfm

Click on “Case Studies.” You can then browse by case number, title, or author. When you find the case for each week you can purchase the case with a credit card. You have two choices: Either you can have a paper version of the case mailed to you for $5.00, or you can view the case online in PDF format for $3.50 (if you view the case online you can still print the case and have a hard-copy version of it for your use).

You can also save money by purchasing all nine cases in the form of a case book which I gave created through GUISD. The case book is catalogued by instructor name (Marks) and also by course number (Politics 372) and is designated Case Book 308 (cb308). The case book if purchased as a PDF file (with each case individually printable) is $27; if purchased as a hard copy it is $45. Make sure to purchase the case book for this semester (as I have taught the course before and GUISD may still have links for previous semesters online). In addition, make sure to purchase the case book for this class (there is also a case book for my International Security and Cooperation course which is also listed under my name).

The syllabus for this course is also posted online. You can open up the web page for the case book and for each individual case by clicking on the case number (each listed below for the appropriate week) or the case book number in the preceding paragraph which opens a link in your web browser to the appropriate GUISD web page. From there you can purchase the individual case or the case book.

The first time you purchase a case you will set up an account. Each time you purchase a case you will use your existing account. You will need a credit card to purchase cases. If you do not have a credit card please see the instructor to make alternate arrangements.

Very Important Information: 1) If you choose to have paper versions of the cases mailed to you make sure to leave enough time to have the case delivered. 2) If you choose to view an individual case online (from which you can print up a hard copy) you have seven days from the date of payment to view the case. In some cases computer browser caches are not large enough to view entire cases. Therefore, do not wait until the last minute to view or print a case online in the event your browser cache is experiencing difficulty downloading a case.

Grading

Incompletes will only be given under exceptional circumstances such as serious illness. You may appeal any of your grades during office hours only after you have handed in a typed, reasoned memorandum detailing the specific reasons why you think the grade you received is not justified.

Late writing assignments will be assessed a one-third grade penalty per day (e.g., a B+ paper handed in a day late receives a B, two days late a B–, etc.).

Evaluation Criteria

The composition of the final grade will calculated as follows: Each of three essays: 30%; In addition, because the case method requires active student involvement, 10% of the final grade will be comprised of class participation.
**Attendance Policy**

According to CLA policy, students participating in approved university activities (e.g., varsity athletics, Debate Team, theater and other performing arts, Model UN, etc.) are excused from class provided proper notification has been made by the relevant office supervising the event. Additionally, the CLA faculty have adopted a policy whereby students are permitted to be absent from class to observe religious holidays that do not fall on days in which classes are otherwise not in session.

Beyond the above, students in this course are permitted to be absent from class a maximum of 10% of class sessions (which this semester is four class days) due to illness, injury, or other emergency (e.g., death of a family member, flooded dorm room or apartment, hostile roommate interaction, etc.). Notice of a missed class due to illness, injury, or emergency must be made by 5:00 pm on the day that class is missed. Additional absences for students with a contagious disease as documented by a medical professional will be permitted. Students with a prolonged illness should consider petitioning the university for a Medical Incomplete or Medical Withdrawal for some or all of their courses.

Students who exceed the allotted un-excused absences must submit a 750 word essay analyzing the topic of each additional missed class session (students should contact the instructor for specific instructions). Essays are due within 48 hours of a missed class. Failure to turn in these essays will result in a one-third reduction in the course grade for each essay not submitted.

**Course Schedule and Weekly Reading Assignments**

**January 20:** Introduction

No Readings

**January 22–29:** A Brief History of American Foreign Policy

See handouts.

**February 3–5:** Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

See handouts.

**February 10–12**


**February 17–19**

CASE # 426: “Muted Differences: The Negotiations to Normalize U.S.-Chinese Relations” (Author: Thomas P. Bernstein)

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23: FIRST ESSAY DUE**
February 24–26


March 3–5

CASE # 358: “The War Powers Resolution and U.S. Policy in Lebanon, 1982-84” (Author: Vincent A. Auger)

March 10–12

CASE # 130: “European Community Enlargement and the United States” (Authors: John Odell and Margit Matzinger-Tchakerian)

March 17–19: Summary and Review

Discussion of case studies to date.

March 23–27: Spring Break

Spring Break

MONDAY, MARCH 30: SECOND ESSAY DUE

March 31–April 2

CASE # 153: “Shifting Winds and Strong Currents: George Bush Charts a Trade-Policy Approach to Japan” (Author: Michael J. Fratantuono)

April 7–9

CASE # 355: “Hamstrung Over Haiti: Returning the Refugees” (Authors: Louis Ortmayer and Joanna Flinn)

April 14–16

CASE # 243: “Certifying Mexico in the War on Drugs” (Authors: Jules Boykoff and William M. LeoGrande)

April 21–23

CASE # 300: “Morality, Public Health, and the National Interest: The President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)” (Author: John W. Dietrich)

April 28–May 5: Conclusion

Summing up

TUESDAY, MAY 5: THIRD ESSAY DUE