Welcome to RPOS 383: American Foreign Policy. We will explore the bases of U.S. action and its political, economic, military, and social orientation towards other states. In addition, we will examine the effects these policies have on creating a more secure and prosperous environment for American interests.

This course has three principal objectives:

1. To equip you with a solid understanding of past and current strategic challenges facing the U.S. and how it has attempted to resolve them;

2. To help you develop a “toolkit” to analyze individual American policies from multiple theoretical perspectives, which you can then apply to other issues;

3. To formulate your own informed opinions about the future of U.S. policy towards other states and the international system generally.

**Grading**
Your grade will depend on the following components. Additional details about each of these will be released throughout the semester.

1. *Op-Ed Paper*: Due October 21. (20%)
2. *Policy Briefing*: Due November 25. (20%)
3. *Mid-term Exam*: October 23. (15%)
4. *Final Exam*: Date TBD. (30%)
5. *Participation*. (15%)

**Books**

**Readings and Schedule**
I encourage you to be actively aware and even participate in current U.S. foreign policy. For American citizens, it is a civic duty to be informed about the policies and actions being undertaken in our name. For foreign students, the U.S. has an indelible impact on major economic, political, social, and security issues, an influence that you will encounter regularly throughout your lives.

So in addition to the readings listed below, I expect you to actively engage in current international affairs, particularly by reading newspapers, blogs, and policy journals devoted to these topics. I’d recommend the New York Times, the Washington Post, Politico, Foreign Policy magazine, Foreign Affairs, the National Interest, the Economist, and War on the Rocks (minus the alcohol). In addition, many think tanks – like the Brookings Institution, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the American Enterprise Institute – provide in-depth articles, as well as helpful briefings covering the main issues surrounding trade, military, and human rights challenges.

NOTE: If you have difficulty using the web links below, please make sure you are either connected to the university’s network, either directly or through a VPN.

Introduction: 8/26

Theories of U.S. Foreign Policy: 8/28, 9/2, 9/4, 9/9, 9/11

8/28: Power
- Kenneth Waltz, “Anarchic Orders and Balances of Power.”

9/2: Liberalism

9/4: Congress and DOD

**9/9: The Executive and Bureaucracy**
- Graham Allison, "Conceptual Models of the Cuban Missile Crisis."

**9/11: Public Opinion**
- Douglas C. Foyle, Counting the Public In: Presidents, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy (NY: Columbia University Press 1999), 1-29

History and Grand Strategy: 9/16, 9/18, 9/23, 9/30, 10/2

9/16: The Early Republic, Expansion, and Empire
• Washington’s Farewell Address
• Federalist Papers 2-5, 24, 74-75

9/18: The Interwar Period

9/23: The Cold War

9/30: The Post-Cold War World
• Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing U.S. Grand Strategies”
  • Response by G. John Ikenberry.

Terrorism: 10/2, 10/7

10/2: Understanding the problem

10/7: What to do about it

Limited War – Afghanistan: 10/9
• Gordon Goldstein, “Vietnam, Afghanistan and Learning from History,” Los Angeles Times (12 November 2009). (1 pp.)
• Frederick Kagan, “Afghanistan is not Vietnam,” Newsweek (11 February 2009). (3 pp.)

Moral Impulses

10/14: Humanitarian Intervention


10/16: Human Rights & Democracy


Review Session: 10/21

Mid-term: 10/23
Economic Policy: 10/28, 10/30, 11/4

10/28: Domestic Interests and Trade

10/30: International Economic Institutions

11/4: Foreign Aid
- *Foreign Aid: An Introduction to U.S. Programs and Policy*


11/6: Hegemony

**11/11: China**

**11/13: Russia**
- Alexander Lukin, *What the Kremlin Is Thinking*, Foreign Affairs, July/August 2014
- Daniel Gross. “Russia is Europe’s Gas Station.” *Slate.com*. July 24, 2014. [http://www.slate.com/articles/business/the_juice/2014/07/putin_economic_sanctions_he_has_nothing_to_fear_because_russia_is_europe.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/business/the_juice/2014/07/putin_economic_sanctions_he_has_nothing_to_fear_because_russia_is_europe.html)

**11/13: The Middle East: Iraq, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia**


11/18: Israelis, Palestinians, and Saudis


Robert Malley and Peter Harling, “Beyond Moderates and Militants,” *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2010), pp. 18-29.

http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66541/daniel-byman/how-to-handle-hamas

http://warontherocks.com/2014/07/israel-and-gaza-force-is-futile/

Nuclear Proliferation: 11/25, 12/2

11/25: General Issues

http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65732/graham-allison/nuclear-disorder
- Tom Clancy. *The Cardinal of the Kremlin*. pp. 128-134. Does this popular novelist understand nuclear dynamics better than the experts?

12/2: Current Challenges

- Scott Sagan “How to Keep the Bomb from Iran” *Foreign Affairs* 85:5 (Sep.-Oct., 2006), pp. 45-59
- Jeffrey Goldberg, “The Point of No Return,” *The Atlantic* (September 2010). 

The Future of American Leadership: 12/4

- Charles Krauthammer, “Decline is a Choice,” *The Weekly Standard* (October 19, 2009), pp. 15-21. [http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/017/056lfnp_r.asp](http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/017/056lfnp_r.asp)

12/9: Review Session

12/11-18: Final Exam