RPOS 383: American Foreign Policy

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Office Hours: 2pm-4pm Tuesdays and Thursdays and by appointment
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Course Description:
This course will introduce you to the theories, concepts, and issues in US Foreign Policy by focusing on the nation’s foreign policy from the turn of the 20th century through the end of the Cold War and into today's post-9/11 world. We will look into the international sources of foreign policy and the foreign policy making process in the US while analyzing its position on various topics such as nuclear proliferation, international trade, the Middle East and terrorism. The goal of this course is to enhance your ability to analyze US foreign policy and help you become an articulate critic of its foreign policies.

3) Weiss, Thomas George, Crahan, Margaret E., Goerin, John. Wars on Terrorism and Iraq: Human rights, Unilateralism, and U.S. Foreign Policy

Academic Standards and Expectations:
What I expect from you:
1. Academic Honesty. 2. Follow the exam and paper guidelines. 3. Complete all assignments on time. 4. Attend class. 5. Keep up with the readings. 6. Attend office hours. 7. Do not come to class late. 8. Do not start packing your bags and backpacks until class has ended. 9. Turn your cell phone to silent before class begins, NOT on vibrating and don't text-message during class.

What to expect from me:
1. While no one can claim to be completely impartial, I will do my best to be fair and to faithfully present different sides of policy debates. 2. My lectures will be well prepared and organized. 3. I will see that your papers and exam are graded promptly and accurately. 4. I will remain accessible and hold office hours just before class and by appointment. 5. During the second week of class I will ask for anonymous evaluations to make adjustments that improve the course.

Plagiarism: Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this course. Any work submitted by a student for academic credit must be the student's own work. Students will strictly abide by SUNY Albany standards of academic conduct as outlined: http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/2003-2004/regulations.html
If you are involved in academic misconduct the penalty will be failure in the course and you will be reported to judicial affairs. In this one regard there are no second chances. If you are unsure if something violates standards please don’t hesitate to ask.
Your papers must use footnotes or endnotes to document all direct quotations, paraphrases, statements of fact, and the work of other authors. If you do not know what footnotes or endnotes are or what types of material you should include in them, please ask me. The simplest format to use is MLA [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/), however any format is acceptable.

**Attendance Policy:**
Frequent unexplained absences count against you and will affect your grade. Your absence must be documented and a result of a legitimate reason, such as illness or bereavement. Please let me know if you have a problem. Late papers will automatically result in a lesser grade if not a result of a legitimate reason.

**Accommodations:** Accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (Campus Center 137, 442-5490). This office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations ([http://www.albany.edu/studentlife/dss/Accommodation.html](http://www.albany.edu/studentlife/dss/Accommodation.html)). Please inform the instructor as soon as possible if you need academic accommodations for this course.

**Assignments:**
- Attend all sessions
- Reading the required texts *before* the class meets
- Participation
- Group Debates (2)
- Debate Papers
- Comparison Paper

**Grade Breakup**
Attendance: 10%
Participation: 10%
Essays: 1) Comparative paper 20%
- 2) Debate Papers: Each 20%
Final Exam: 20%

I value participation since it is an important way to learn and reinforce your knowledge and understanding of concepts and events. *I strongly encourage you to raise questions or make appropriate comments during lectures.* If there is something you did not understand, feel free to bring it up. Chances are that if you are confused on an issue, you are not alone and many of your classmates are also confused. I will not grade you on your opinion or perspective since I believe that we are all entitled to our own, but make sure that you are backing it up with the proper sources. Please keep in mind that attendance is not participation.
Debates:
Engaging students in collaborative learning practices promotes a deeper understanding of the concepts and allows the students to make conceptual linkages between theory and real world examples. Collaborative learning also forces students to take risks and express their views on complex and controversial issues (Lantis, 2004). As I strongly agree with in the value of reflective learning we will conduct two in class debates, one on humanitarian intervention and the other on just war. In order for the debates to be fruitful you need to be prepared. Also note that if you are not prepared for these classes it will be quite obvious so make sure you read the corresponding essays for those days as well as for the rest of the class.
For these debates the class will be divided into small discussion groups, you will be asked to address some common questions and encouraged to develop group consensus on them, you will then report your responses to the class as a whole through a spokesperson you nominate. We will record the group responses on a universal list of criteria for intervention for example, which is then subject to a timed debate in which each student may advocate or oppose the standards. A final majority vote will be taken for a list of criteria for intervention to be recommended to the president

Essays:
Debate essays: Two essays will be developed after the above mentioned in class debates. In these essays you will articulate your own perspective on the ethics of intervention and how they relate to theoretical arguments.

Comparative essay: A compare and contrast analysis of doctrines formulated during a number of individual presidencies: from Harry Truman to George W. Bush. The paper will formulate a thesis, based on analysis, that advocates which approach (es) is (are) most useful for today’s international dynamics. You will need to conduct your own research in addition to course materials .
See: Obama Chooses to Stay the Course on Foreign Policy
http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=9818

NOTE: your grade will NOT be affected by choice of arguments or the political implications of your analytical choices.

Course Outline
Overview

Jan. 21 Introduction to Course

Jan. 26: Historical Overview of Foreign Policy
Hasted Chapter 2
Nation’s First National Security Strategy on Health
National Security Strategy
http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/strategy/
http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/foreign-policy

Grand Theories of Foreign Policy

Jan. 28-Feb.2 Theories: Realism and Liberalism, (Neo conservatives)

Feb. 4 Theories: Continuation of Theories of Foreign Policy
Hasted, Chapter 3

Feb. 9 Historical Context of Foreign Policy
Question for debate: should past events serve as lessons for today’s policies?
Hastedt, Chapter 4

Sources of Foreign Policy

Feb. 11 –Feb 18 The Constitution
Hastedt, Chapter 5-6
Scheffer, David “Nouveau Law and Foreign Policy” Foreign Policy 76 (1989), 44-65
(Discussion of President Reagan’s administration’s tendency to re-interpret laws unilaterally)
**Feb. 11 Comparative paper due

Feb.16 No Class

Feb. 23-25- Presidency and Foreign Policy Bureaucracy
The Presidency & the Foreign Affairs Bureaucracy
Hastedt. Ch. 7, 9
Mallaby, Sebastian “The Bullied Pulpit: A Week Chief Executive Makes Worse Foreign Policy” Foreign Policy, 79 (2000), 2-8
March 2-4 Congress and the States
Hastedt, Ch. 8

March 9-11 The Media & Public Opinion
Baum, Matthew A. “Sex, Lies, and War: How Soft News Brings Foreign Policy to an Inattentive Public.” *The American Political Science Review*

Topics

March 16 Models of Policy Making
Hastedt Chapter 10

March 18 *In Class Debate: When is Humanitarian Intervention Justified?*
Hasted 401-402

March 23 – Presentation of argument/theories

March 25 – The Military
Arms for the World: How the US Military Shapes Foreign Policy
Hastedt, Chapters 15 and 16

1st Essay Due

March 30 and April 1st – No Class –Spring Break

April 6 - Terrorism
Hastedt Chapter 11 pages 287-294; 403-404
Anatol Lieven and John C. Hulsman, “Neoconservatives, Liberal Hawks and the War on Terror” *World Policy Journal* (Fall 2006), 64-74
Weiss, Crahan and Goerin: Introduction

**April 8 – 13** Terrorism and Iraq
(Analysis of the interaction between “threats” and “rights”)
Weiss, Crahan and Goerin: Introduction, Chapters 3, 9 and 10

**April 14 - 2nd In class Debate: Just War Theory – Kosovo Case**

**April 20 -22** Trade and Globalization
Access at [http://tinyurl.com/6cgjdo](http://tinyurl.com/6cgjdo)
Additional readings will be provided later
**April 22 -Second debate paper due**

**April 27 - American Imperialism – How does the rest of the world view America?**
Chomsky, A Negotiated Solution to the Iranian Nuclear Crisis [http://current.com/1ne8a4c](http://current.com/1ne8a4c)

**April 29 –May 4** The Post American World
Zakaria - All.

**May 4th - Review**

**May 6 - Final**