

Political Science 4401G/ 9754B
American Foreign Policy
(Preliminary outline- subject to change)
Seminar Meetings: **Wed 1:30- 3:30- SSC 4112**
Instructor: **Jennifer Mustapha**
(jmustap@uwo.ca)
Office Hours: **Wed TBD- SSC 4134**

Course Overview:

This course examines and explores the foreign policy of the United States through a variety of contemporary theoretical perspectives with an emphasis on the constitutive role of political practices, institutions, ideologies and culture. Selected issues, concepts and cases will highlight various domestic and external factors thought to be responsible for influencing America's conduct and engagement in the world. Throughout the course, attention will also be paid to the significant influence of US foreign policy in affecting the dynamics of international relations and in shaping world affairs.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with the theoretical approaches and models commonly deployed to explain American foreign policy.
- Demonstrate concrete knowledge of the features of contemporary American foreign policy.
- Demonstrate critical engagement with significant topics and issues pertaining to American foreign policy.

Course Format:

This is a seminar course. Students are expected to attend every seminar, to complete the readings each week, and to come to class armed with relevant questions and ideas in order to participate actively in class discussions. Seminars only work when participants are prepared, willing to share their ideas, and willing to learn from one another.

Required Texts:

- Cox, Michael and Doug Stokes Eds. *US Foreign Policy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (2008)
- Hastedt, Glenn P. *American Foreign Policy 8th Edition*, Boston: Pearson (2011)
[Please note that it is necessary to obtain the 8th Edition of this book]
- All other assigned readings are available online, on e-Journals and/or on WebCT

Course Requirements And Student Assessment:

Participation: 20%

Seminar Presentations: 2 X 10%

Presentation Reflections: 2 X 10%

Analytical Research Essay: 40%

Course Requirement Details:

PARTICIPATION (20%)

This course is a fourth-year/graduate seminar course. As such, you are expected to read and absorb the assigned materials before you come to each class. Each week, several textbook chapters and one or more additional articles (more advanced reading) are assigned. You are expected to complete all of them, unless instructed otherwise (sometimes there will be “recommended” readings, which are for your own further study). You are expected to participate in a regular and ongoing fashion. You are expected, in class discussions, to demonstrate that you have read the material, that you have seriously pondered the significance and relevance of the readings, and that you are making connections between the current week’s ideas and ideas discussed in prior weeks. It is also expected that students will be paying attention to current events and news pertaining to American Foreign Policy during the duration of the course. Participation grades will be based on your attendance record and the level and quality of your participation from week to week.

Be mindful of the following points, and you will be successful:

- Simply attending does not earn marks. Come to each seminar having completed the assigned readings for that week and prepared to participate.
- Be constructive. This means sharing relevant thoughts and ideas and engaging with the topical questions.
- Do not *over-participate*. When only a few students dominate discussions, opportunities to share and learn are lost.
- Show respect for your colleagues. *Regardless of differences in opinion, you must maintain common courtesy during discussion at all times.*

PRESENTATION I (10%) and PRESENTATION II (10%)

Beginning on week 3, one or more students per week will give short presentations (10-15 minutes in length) at the beginning of class. Each student will give TWO of these presentations per term. Please note that due to the number of students/weeks you may not get to present on your first choice of topic(s). The instructor reserves the right to assign students to particular topics in order to spread presentations out across the term. A presentation should offer the presenter’s *critical assessment* of the week’s readings, highlighting common themes and making connections where appropriate. It is assumed that all students will have come to class having already read and thought about the readings, so *presenters need to avoid the tendency to simply summarize the readings*. Each presentation should end with the presenter offering several thought-provoking questions to stimulate the discussion for the remainder of the seminar. Accordingly, presenters will be evaluated on their ability to discern relevant debates and issues as well as their success in stimulating discussion amongst their classmates. Presenters are encouraged to work with their co-presenters in any given week so as to avoid too much overlap. Equitable division of the readings between presenters is allowed.

PRESENTATION REFLECTION I (10%) and PRESENTATION REFLECTION II (10%)

Students will prepare TWO presentation reflections- one based on each of their presentations. The presentation reflections will be *short* essays of between 1200-1500 words each (around 5 pages, double spaced, 12 pt. font). These reflection essays are *due 1 week after the corresponding presentation*. Reflections will *critically engage* with the issues raised in the readings of a presentation week. Specifically, students are expected to identify a central question, issue, theme or debate that animates the literature and to reflect critically on this aspect of the literature. To this end, only a *very small portion* of a reflection should be devoted to summarizing the readings or outlining the authors' arguments. Instead, students should identify at least one question (posed in question form) to be discussed in their analysis, provide a very brief outline of the principal arguments/approaches of the authors in relation to the specific question identified and (most importantly) offer a critical assessment of the readings around the question identified, *setting out the student's own observations, opinions, critiques, and questions*. Presentation reflections must include footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical citation and a bibliography organized according to the Chicago style. Please note that papers must be submitted in hard copy and may not be submitted via e-mail.

ANALYTICAL RESEARCH ESSAY (40%)

The analytical research project is designed to allow students to demonstrate *a detailed knowledge of and critical engagement with* a particular issue pertaining to American Foreign Policy. Using original research, students will prepare an essay of approximately 4,500-5000 words (18-20 pages, double spaced, 12 pt. font). Students are free to formulate any topic that they see as relevant to the course in consultation with the instructor. The objective is to fully explore and defend a position on a particular American Foreign Policy topic or a major theoretical approach to American Foreign Policy. The final analytical research essay *may* be based upon ideas you have explored in either of the two short essays. The final essay must be submitted to the instructor in hard copy and may not be submitted via e-mail. It is due on the last day of class, April 11th 2011.

The following technical criteria must be met for the final analytical research essay:

- The essay will be 4,500-5000 words (18-20 pages, double spaced, 12-point font). The page count/word count does *not* include the bibliography, endnotes or any supporting material such as charts and tables.
- Your essay is required to have *at least* 18 substantial sources, which must be books/edited volumes and/or peer-reviewed journal articles only. Assigned course readings may be used as sources- please note that book-chapters do not count as a single source individually, but rather the book that it came from counts as a single source. This means that if you used, say, 3 chapters from a single book (or edited volume), that still only counts as 1 source out of the required 18.
- Multi-media (films, documentaries) or web resources (such as blogs, institutional or governmental websites etc.) can be used if cited properly, but they do *not* count towards the 18 required sources.

- Wikipedia and other online encyclopaedias can be useful quick-reference tools but they are *not* legitimate sources for an essay bibliography.

When marking your essay, the following will be considered. Do not underestimate the importance of these criteria:

Analytical Content: Higher grades will be given to work that demonstrates comprehension of the class content, and that presents a related interpretation and critical analysis of the topic(s) covered in your essay. Lower grades will be given to work that simply summarizes or describes the topic you are writing on. The key here is critical engagement with the literature and topic, as opposed to repetition of the existing literature or a mere accounting of events.

Development of an Argument: Higher grades will be given to work that has a clearly stated thesis and a set of logically developed and reasonably comprehensive arguments in support of that thesis. Lower grades will be given to work that has no thesis or has a thesis that is not logically developed or supported by the body of the paper.

Grammar, Spelling, and Style: Higher grades will be given to written work that is grammatically correct and is clearly and accurately written, while lower grades will be given to work that is difficult to read or understand due to excessive grammatical and/or spelling errors.

Mechanics and Aesthetics: All written work must be submitted on time, and must fulfill the technical criteria of the assignment (length, number of sources etc.). Higher grades will be given to written work that includes all of the basic requirements of any written assignment. This includes a title page, complete and proper referencing in a major recognized format, and numbered pages. Further, all of the conventions of essay writing should be observed (i.e. double-spacing, use of a standard sized font, uniform one inch margins, single spacing and indenting of quotes longer than four lines, etc.). Lower grades will be assigned to work that does not include all of these elements, and to any work that is generally sloppy.

Late essays:

- Late essays are subject to a **10% per-day late penalty to an absolute maximum of 5 days (including the weekend), after which they will not be accepted and a mark of 0 will be recorded.** There will be NO EXCEPTIONS to the 5-day rule. This means that since the essay is due in class on Wednesday, no essays will be accepted after 12-noon on the following Monday.
- In the interest of fairness to all students, there will be no exceptions to late penalties unless you have arranged *in advance of the due-date* for an extension, and ONLY if the extension is granted.
- Late papers may receive only a grade with no detailed comments.

- March 14:* 9. US Foreign Policy in Action I: Multilateralism and Economic Policy
- March 21:* 10. US Foreign Policy in Action II: The Dynamics of Regional Foreign Policy Interests- Southeast Asia, China and Korea
- March 28:* 11. US Foreign Policy in Action III: 9/11 and the War on Terror- Enemies at Home and Abroad
- April 04:* 12. US Foreign Policy in Action IV: Aid and Interventionism- “Helping” “Others.”
- April 11:* <<<<<<< FINAL ANALYTICAL RESEARCH ESSAY DUE >>>>>>>
13. American Foreign Policy and the Future

SAMPLE ESSAY EVALUATION CHECKLIST

(Items are *not* equally weighted.)

Good/Av./Problem

↓ ↓ ↓

Focus/Sense of Purpose

- thesis clearly states *your* opinion, & answers question decisively & directly
- introduction outlines your argument
- thesis is kept in focus throughout the body of the essay

Content/Support

- analysis, rather than description, dominates the paper
- major points support the thesis
- all claims and observations are adequately supported
- obvious criticisms of your position are countered
- overall, your case seems reasonable and persuasive

Citations and Quotations

- all words, ideas & data taken from someone else are properly credited to them
- appropriate, brief, quotations used selectively, & their relevance is made clear
- quotations are not used to begin or end a paragraph
- referencing follows the guidelines of the syllabus

Research

- non-academic internet or news sources were not heavily used
- relevant journal articles or books were consulted
- insights from class discussions and lecture were considered

Organization

- there is a clear connection between the essay and the objectives of the course
- introduction, body, and conclusion are clear, and clearly linked together
- "signposts" guide the reader through the argument
- paragraphs are unified around one point, and clearly linked to the central argument
- there is a logical order of ideas, and no excessive repetition

Expression/Style

- the prose is graceful, clear and free of jargon
- words are used correctly, thesaurus has not been used to excess
- meanings are clear - there is no need to "read between the lines"

Mechanics

- sentences are short, direct, and to the point
- there are no sentence fragments, or run-on sentences
- spelling is accurate, punctuation is appropriate
- subjects agree with verbs, pronouns agree with their antecedents

Format

- essay is typed, double-spaced, on white paper, and stapled together
- essay is not longer than the 2000 word/8 page limit (ex bib and title)
- essay is not significantly shorter than the 2000 word/8 page limit

Comments:

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DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Prerequisite checking - the student's responsibility

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Use of Personal Response Systems ("Clickers")

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Duplication of work

Undergraduate students who submit similar assignments on closely related topics in two different courses must obtain the consent of both instructors prior to the submission of the assignment. If prior approval is not obtained, each instructor reserves the right not to accept the assignment.

Grade adjustments

In order to ensure that comparable standards are applied in political science courses, the Department may require instructors to adjust final marks to conform to Departmental guidelines.

Academic Offences

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THE MAIN OFFICE DOES NOT DATE-STAMP OR ACCEPT ANY OF THE ABOVE.**

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acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

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Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

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Accessibility at Western

Please contact poliscie@uwo.ca if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.

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