

SOCS 611 American Foreign Policy At The Crossroads: The Challenge of the Post-9/11 Era

Summer 2010, August 9-13
M-F 9 am- 5 pm
Class Location: PAC 107

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Course Description

As the United States faces an ever-widening array of international problems in the post-9/11 world, the challenge for the nation is to construct an effective foreign policy to support American interests while dealing with the threat of terrorism and managing situations as diverse as Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan. To evaluate a framework for the future, the course begins with an exploration of the traditions and processes of American foreign policy. We consider the successes and failures of American foreign policy in the post-World War II period with particular attention to the experience in Vietnam. We then focus our attention on the foreign policy process itself and the major actors shaping its formulation. In the third and final course section, we consider and evaluate the major strategic choices available to policy makers as confront the myriad challenges before them.

Course Grading

Grades will be based on two short papers (20% each), an essay final (35%), and participation (25%).

Class periods will be devoted to a mixture of lecture and discussion. Students should complete all the reading before the course begins.

Short Papers

Short Papers: The short papers should be 4-5 pages in length. Students are required to write **one** paper in two of the three course sections (two papers in total). The paper topic can address any one of the discussion questions listed in the class schedule below (questions are listed after the reading). Please note the question you are addressing at the top of your paper. **Papers must be written on questions from different sections** (i.e., one paper from Section I and one from Section II; one from II and one from III; or one from Section I and one from Section III). Please contact me if you have a question regarding this requirement.

Please upload your paper into the appropriate place in the course Moodle. **Paper 1 is due on July 14 (any time)**. I will return graded papers by July 23. **Paper 2 is due on August 4 (anytime)**. I will return graded papers by August 9. Please feel free to contact me by e-mail if you have any questions on your papers. Normally, you can expect a reply from me within 24 hours of the next business day (Monday – Friday).

Papers should be typed, double-spaced in Times New Roman 11 point font with 1 inch margins. All pages should be numbered.

Comments will be provided through e-mail and grades will be recorded through the course Moodle.

References to material assigned for the course can be of the form: (Author Name, page number). Any references to material not assigned for the course should conform to the style outlined in: Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual For Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Examples of citation formatting are given through the appropriate link on my homepage at <http://dfoyle.web.wesleyan.edu/> under "Additional Resources."

Final

Take-Home Essay Final: A take-home essay final will be due on August 20 (anytime). The essay should be e-mailed to me as an attachment. Comments and grades will be provided through the Moodle. The page limit is 6-8 pages.

The question is:

Given what you have learned in this course, do you believe the United States' national interest is served by the adoption of a clear grand strategy? Why or why not?

In formulating your essay, you might want to consider the historical experience of the United States, the processes by which the policy is formulated, and the options that are available.

Participation

Participation will be evaluated based upon the student's contribution to discussion, responsiveness to other students, and quality of insight.

If a student has more than one excused absence from a class session, the student has the option of completing extra work to make up for the missed participation. The make-up work is a 1 page reaction paper to one of the readings for that section. Essentially, pick one of the readings from the day missed and give your view on why the article is useful, not useful, etc. (e.g., "Professor Murray completely misses the point that...").

Readings

The following books are required reading:

John Lewis Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, rev. ed., 2005

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Second Chance, 2007

Robert Gordon Kaufman, In Defense of the Bush Doctrine, 2007

All of the books are on reserve at the Olin Library. A number of other readings are available directly from the course Moodle as indicated on the syllabus.

The following item is available for purchase (in paper or pdf format) directly from the Kennedy School of Government at <http://www.ksgcase.harvard.edu/>. Make sure you purchase the 28 page case study (listed as a “case” for type).

Case 271.0 Richard Neustadt, “Americanizing the Vietnam War”

CLASS SCHEDULE

I. Approaches to the Study of American Foreign Policy and Its Historical Context

August 9 (Monday)

1. Morning Session 1 Course Introduction

McDougall, "Can the U.S. Do Grand Strategy" FPRI April 2010
(Moodle)

McDougall, referring to Toynbee, notes the claim that "empires die by suicide, not murder." Thinking of the eleven strategic blunders outlined in the article, is the U.S. making these blunders? (for the paper, consider 2 or 3 at the most)

Note: Come ready to discuss. This first session will focus on a discussion of the strategic blunders to avoid.

2. Morning Session 2 American Foreign Policy to 1946

Charles A. Kupchan, and Peter L. Trubowitz. "Grand Strategy for a Divided America." Foreign Affairs 86.4 (July-August 2007): 71.
(Moodle)

Walter Russell Mead, "The American Foreign Policy Legacy," Foreign Affairs 81 (January/February 2002): pp. 163-76. (Moodle)

Kupchan and Trubowitz contend that the U.S. is facing a problem of "political solvency" in its foreign policy. Do you agree with their assessment? Why or why not?

Who, if anyone/anything, is/are Kupchan and Trubowitz criticizing in their article? Why do you reach this conclusion?

Do Kupchan/Trubowitz and Mead fundamentally agree or disagree on the main forces driving American foreign policy? Explain.

How would you characterize the readings for this session (optimistic, pessimistic, contingent) in their views regarding American foreign policy's future? Why do you reach this conclusion?

Lunch

3. Afternoon Session 1 American Foreign Policy 1947-1953 -- The Origins of Containment

John Lewis Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, pp. 1-125.
George Kennan, "Sources of Soviet Foreign Policy" Foreign Affairs 65
(Spring 1987): 852-68. (Moodle).

NSC 68 (Moodle). Skim for highlights and feel.

What were the main assumptions, concepts, views driving American foreign policy conduct during this period? Do these prove accurate?

In the Kennan article, how does he believe the United States should respond to the Soviet Union? Is it a military, economic, and/or cultural response he recommends? What evidence in Kennan's article do you see to support your view?

How are the Kennan article and NSC 68 similar and different in their perspective and recommendations?

Given your reading of the material, is American foreign policy "effective" in responding to the international situation?

4. Afternoon Session 2 AFP 1953-1963 – The Nuclear Question

Gaddis, Strategies, 126-234
John Foster Dulles, "Massive Retaliation" (Moodle)
Richard Smoke, "Flexible Response," pp. 90-94 (Moodle)

Does the United States effectively figure out how to "use" nuclear weapons in this period? Why or why not?

Does the U.S. follow a coherent policy during this period?

How closely connected is American foreign policy behavior with the strategic ideas the (then) president had embraced?

August 10 (Tuesday)

5. Morning Session 1: Vietnam

Americanizing the Vietnam War by Richard Neustadt– this case will be the basis for discussion (see note under readings for purchase information)
Gaddis, Strategies, pp. 235-271

Given the readings for today (and not based on the eventual results of the policy) is Vietnam a logical extension of containment or a misapplication of it?

Was there a point that DMs could have chosen to disengage from Vietnam (last clear chance to disengage)? If so, when? Why was it not chosen? If there was not such a point, why not?

6. Morning Session 2 AFP 1969-End of the Cold War – U.S./Soviet Relations, the End of the Cold War, and Aftermath

Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, pp. 272-391

Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Stein, We All Lost the Cold War, selections (Moodle)

Considering the material on the Cold War, do you feel George Kennan's Mr. X article helped or hindered American interests? Why or why not?

Is the end of the Cold War a testament to the success of American foreign policy? Why or why not?

What are the main components driving American foreign policy conduct during this period?

Lunch

7. Afternoon Session 1: Decision Makers, Policy, and "Peace On Earth"

No Reading

Movie: Dr. Strangelove (1964)

8. Afternoon Session 2: Discussion of Dr. Strangelove

No Reading

August 11 (Wednesday)

II. Institutions and Actors

9. Morning Session 1 The Presidency and Congress

Larry George, "Democratic Theory and the Conduct of American Foreign Policy" (Moodle).

Harold Koh, "Why the President Almost Always Wins in Foreign Affairs" (Moodle)

James M. Lindsay, "From Deference to Activism and Back Again: Congress and the Politics of American Foreign Policy" (Moodle)

Donald R. Wolfensberger, "The Return of the Imperial Presidency," Wilson Quarterly Spring 2002 (Moodle)

Norman J. Ornstein and Thomas E. Mann, "When Congress Checks Out," Foreign Affairs, November/December 2006 (Moodle)

Derek Chollet and James M. Goldgeier, "The Truman Standard," The American Interest, Summer 2006 (Moodle)

Howell and Pevehouse, "When Congress Stops Wars," Foreign Affairs (Moodle)

Do you feel centralized executive foreign policymaking is an appropriate model for American foreign policy? Why or why not?

Should Congress have a strong role in the formulation of American foreign policy? Why or why not?

What determines the balance of power between the president and Congress?

Can this system of government described in the readings think and act strategically?

10. Morning Session 2 Public Opinion, the Media, and Elections

Foyle, "*Vox Populi* as a Foundation for Foreign Policy Renewal? Unity and Division in Post-Bush Administration Public Opinion," working draft. (Moodle)

Foyle, Douglas C. "Public Opinion's Influence on Foreign Policy: Conditionality and Engagement in the Third Wave," working draft (Moodle).

Daniel C. Hallin, "The Media, the War in Vietnam, and Political Support: A Critique of the Thesis of an Oppositional Media," Journal of Politics, Vol. 46, No. 1. (Feb., 1984), pp. 2-24 (Moodle)

William Quandt "The Electoral Cycle and the Conduct of American Foreign Policy, Political Science Quarterly Vol. 101, no. 5, pp. 825-37. (Moodle)

With all things considered, do these domestic factors (public opinion, media, elections) fundamentally help or hinder effective foreign policy formulation?

Do public opinion, the media, and elections affect foreign policy formulation? How?

Lunch

11. Afternoon Session 1 Policy Makers 1: NSC, State, Intelligence

Graham Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," American Political Science Review Vol. 63 (September 1969): 689-718. (Moodle) (focus on the *main concepts* of the organizational and bureaucratic politics models).

Ivo H. Daalder and I.M. Destler, "How National Security Advisers See Their Role" (Moodle)

Luce & Dombey, "US Foreign Policy: Waiting on a Sun King," Financial Times (Moodle)

Lois Romano, "Hillaryland Goes State" Washington Post, March 11, 2010 (Moodle)

Charles Parker and Eric Stern "Bolt from Blue or Avoidable Failure?" Foreign Policy Analysis November 2005 (Moodle)

How able is the president to overcome bureaucratic obstacles? How much of an impediment, if any at all, is it to presidential power?

How well does the foreign policy system discussed to day work? Why do you reach this conclusion?

With the readings from this section in mind, is the president fundamentally constrained by the foreign policy system or does the president have a relatively broad hand in the formulation of foreign policy? Why?

12. Afternoon Session 2 Policy Makers 2: The Military

Ole Holsti, "A Widening Gap Between the U.S. Military and Civilian Society? Some Evidence, 1976-96" International Security 23 (Winter 1998/99): 5-42 (Moodle)

FPRI, "Mind the Gap: Post-Iraq Civil-Military Relations in America A Conference Report" January 2008 (Moodle)

Why is there a "gap" between the military and civilian authorities? Is this a potential problem? Why or why not?

How could the gap between military and civilian officials be rectified?

III. Alternative Futures for American Foreign Policy

August 12 (Thursday)

13. Morning Session 1

Thinking About Grand Strategy

Daniel W. Drezner, Ed. Avoiding Trivia (articles by Drezner, Haass, and Legro) (Moodle)

David C. Ellis, "U.S. Grand Strategy Following the George W. Bush Presidency," International Studies Perspectives November 2009 (Moodle)

DNI Threat Assessment, 2010 (Moodle)

Is there a commonality to the threats in the world to the United States?
Why or why not?

Given what you have seen so far, do you feel the U.S. is capable of
formulating a comprehensive approach to foreign policy which it can
follow over time? Why or why not?

14 . Morning Session 2

Realism

Brzezinski, Second Chance, all

Richard Haass, "Age of Nonpolarity" Foreign Affairs 2008 (Moodle)

Charlie Rose Interviews Brzezinski, Henry Kissinger, and Brent
Scowcroft, June 18, 2007 (Moodle)

Charlie Rose Interviews, Henry Kissinger, March 23, 2007 (Moodle)

Henry Kissinger, "Spreading Democracy: A Realist's Assessment of the
Freedom Agenda" (Moodle)

Does realism allow for political solvency (see Kupchan/Trubowitz from September 20)? Why or
why not?

What aspects of the Bush Doctrine do realists find most troubling? Why?

Lunch

15. Afternoon Session 1 Effective Policy or Luck? The Fog of War

No Reading

Movie: The Fog of War (2004)

16. Afternoon Session 2: Discussion on Fog of War

No Reading

August 13 (Friday)

17. Morning Session 1 The Bush Doctrine

Kaufman, In Defense of the Bush Doctrine, all.

Does the Bush Doctrine allow for political solvency (see Kupchan/Trubowitz from September 20)? Why or why not?

Do you believe the Bush Doctrine can provide the foundation for American foreign policy for the next 50 years (as containment did)? Why or why not?

18. Morning Session 2 Multilateralism

Michael Mandelbaum, The Case For Goliath: How America Acts as the World's Government in the Twenty-First Century, selections (Moodle)

Joseph Nye, The Paradox of American Power, selections (Moodle)

Michael Lind, "Beyond American Hegemony," National Interest, May/June 2007 (Moodle)

Do these multilateral approaches allow for political solvency (see Kupchan/Trubowitz from September 20)? Why or why not?

What aspects of the Bush Doctrine do the multilateralists find most troubling? Why?

What aspects of realism do the multilateralists find most troubling? Why?

Lunch

9. Afternoon Session 1 And Now for Something Really Different: Strategic Critiques

Andrew Bacevich, The New American Militarism, selections (Moodle)

Noam Chomsky, Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance, selections (Moodle)

Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Eagle Has Crash Landed," Foreign Policy July/August 2002 (Moodle)

Eugene Gholz, Daryl G. Press, Harvey Sapolsky, "Come Home America," International Security 1997 (Moodle) Skim for main points.

Pick one of these perspectives from today. Does the view provide political solvency? (see Kupchan/Trubowitz from September 20)? Why or why not?

Pick one of these perspectives. What is its critique of the Bush Doctrine, realism, and multilateral perspectives?

20. Afternoon Session 2 Course Conclusions

No Reading

Take-Home Essay Final Due on August 20 – e-mail your essay to me at dfoyle@wesleyan.edu