

Syllabus for POLS 4853
Contemporary American Foreign Policy
Spring 2024

Course: POLS 4853 Contemporary American Foreign Policy

Class: M,W, & F 12:00-12:50, PY 209

Lecturer: Steve Garrison, Ph.D.

Contact	Information
Office:	111B Bridwell
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Contemporary American Foreign Policy This course we will examine contemporary American foreign policy from both a theoretical and analytical viewpoint. Concentrating on the US superpower era, this course is designed to help improve your ability to explain the American foreign policy making process as well as develop a better understanding of the underlying factors that influence American behavior in the international arena. To accomplish this we will examine the major analytical frameworks used to evaluate American foreign policy, the key actors in the foreign policy formulation process, and the historical and societal forces that shape American foreign policy. As part of this investigation we will explore a series of critical foreign policy decisions through a series of case studies to illustrate the policy making process.

Texts: *American Foreign Policy*, (Fifth Edition) Bruce Jentleson (2013), W. W. Norton and Co.

Case Studies: We will be using a few case studies in addition to the text book. These cases will allow us to indepthly explore an international relations event. The case studies

are available online from the Georgetown University Institute for the Study of Diplomacy website: <https://isd.georgetown.edu/case-studies/>.

- Case 103: Painter, David. Allied Relations in Iran: 1941-1945
- Case 184: Auger, Vincent. The War Powers Resolution and U.S. Policy in Lebanon, 1982-1984
- Case 129: Gabrielle Brussel. The Cuban Missile Crisis: U.S. Deliberations and Negotiations at the Edge of the Precipice
- Case 288: Kuzma, Larry, Steve Leibel, & Jason Edwards. Courting the Dragon: Nixon's Rapprochement with China.
- Case 156: Nardin, Terry and Kathleen Pritchard. Ethics and Intervention: The United States in Grenada.
- Case 244: Ausink, John. Watershed in Rwanda: The Evolution of President Clinton's Humanitarian Intervention Policy.
- Case 342: Katz, Rebecca. Global Governance of Disease.

The cases are delivered as PDF files which can be downloaded from the website. They are \$3.50 for each case for a total of \$24.50.

Expectations, Examinations, and Grading: Students are expected to attend class. Lectures will not reproduce the texts. Students are expected to enthusiastically participate in class discussions. During lectures, students are expected to behave in an adult fashion: i.e. no note passing, punching, kissing, kicking or other juvenile behavior. Disrespectful behavior towards other students or the instructor will not be tolerated and you will be removed from class. This is your official warning. Also, please turn cellular phones off during class.

There will be two examinations and a final exam. The format of each is short answer questions and identification of key terms. The highest grading scale will be 90 (A), 80 (B), 70 (C), and 60 (D). If for any reason you should have to miss a test please inform the instructor prior to the time of the test and provide documentation for your absence. Periodic case preparation assignments will also be assigned in order to prepare students for the case discussion days. In order to ensure that students diligently do their reading

assignments there will also be periodic reading quizzes. Students will also be required to complete a series of research presentations that explore US foreign policy issues. These presentations will allow the student to explore a topic more indepthly while providing the class with a greater coverage of issues. The privilege of additional work will not be granted. The percentage breakdown is as follows:

Grading:

Exam 1 20 %
Exam 2 20 %
Final Exam 3 20 %
Case Preparations and Reading Quizzes 10 %
Research Presentations 20 %
Class participation 10%

Disability Policy: Any student in this course who has a disability that may preclude demonstrating fully his or her abilities should contact me as soon as possible. We will discuss the accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate education.

Plagiarism: I take plagiarism very seriously and will check your work. By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a “limited right” in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The “limited right” shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student’s work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, for educational purposes. The University’s *minimum penalty* for cheating or plagiarism is *a failure of assignment*. Cheating or plagiarism can lead to expulsion from the Honors program and the university. If you have questions about original work, please consult the Student Handbook Code of Student Conduct on Academic Dishonesty (page 71): <https://msutexas.edu/student-life/assets/files/handbook.pdf>

Calendar The following calendar represents the schedule of readings and topics for the course. The reading assignments are located under the date and topic. The instructor reserves the right to change the schedule.

Course Schedule

January 17: Introduction

- Syllabus

Section I: The U.S and the International System

January 19 & 22: The Structure of the International System

- Jentleson, Chapter One

January 24 & 26: Theories of International Politics

- Jentleson, pages 216-224

January 29 & 31: The U.S. in the International Environment

- Jentleson, Chapter Four

February 2: Case I

- Painter, David. **Allied Relations in Iran 1941-1945** (Case 103)

Section II: Actors in American Foreign Policy

February 5 & 7: The Three Branches

- Jentleson, Chapter Two

February 9: Presentations I

- Student Presentations

February 12: The Three Branches (cont.)

- Jentleson, Chapter Two

February 14: Case II

- Auger, Vincent. **The War Powers Resolution and U.S. Policy in Lebanon, 1982-1984** (Case 184)

February 16: Presentations II

- Student Presentations

February 19: Exam One

- Study Guide One

February 21: Bureaucracy

- Jentleson, Chapter Two

February 23 & 26: Interest Groups, The Media, & Public Opinion

- Jentleson, Chapter Three

Section II: Actors in American Foreign Policy

February 28, March 1, & 4: US as a Superpower & the Cold War

- Jentleson, Chapter Five

March 6: Case III

- Gabrielle Brussel, **The Cuban Missile Crisis: U.S. Deliberations and Negotiations at the Edge of the Precipice** (Case 129)

March 8: Presentations III

- Student Presentations

March 11, 13, & 15: Spring Break

- No class

March 18: Detente

- Jentleson, Chapter Six: pages 167-194

March 20: Case IV

- Lynn Kuzma, Steve Leibel, & Jason Edwards **Courting the Dragon: Nixon's Rap-prochement with China** (Case 288)

March 22: Presentations IV

- Student Presentations

March 25: Exam II

- Study Guide Two

March 27: Work Day

- Work on Research Paper

March 29: Easter Break

- No class

April 1 & 3: The End of the Cold War

- Jentleson, pages 194-212

April 5: Case V

- Terry Nardin and Kathleen Pritchard, **Ethics and Intervention: The United States in Grenada** (Case 156)

April 8 & 10: A New Era

- Jentleson, Chapter Seven

April 12: Case VI

- John Ausink. **Watershed in Rwanda: The Evolution of President Clinton's Humanitarian Intervention Policy** (Case 244)

April 15: Globalization

- Jentleson, Chapter Eight

April 17: Case VI

- Rebecca Katz. **Global Governance of Disease** (Case 342)

Section III: American Foreign Policy Across the World

April 19 & 22: China & the US

- Jentleson, Chapter 10

April 24: China and India

- Jentleson, pages 635-643.

April 26: The Middle East & the US

- Jentleson, Chapter 11

April 29: Afghanistan, Iraq & the Arab Spring

- Jentleson, pages 643-651

May 1: Europe, Russia & the US

- Jentleson, Chapter 12

May 3: Catch Up

- Final Exam Review

May 8 (Wednesday): 3:30-5:30 p.m.

- Final Exam Study Guide