

POL 242A: US Foreign Policy

Fall 2018, Gettysburg College

Time and Place: Tuesday and Thursday, 2:35-3:50pm, Instructor: Prof. Franziska Boehme
in Glatfelter Hall 102
email: fboehme@gettysburg.edu
Office hours: Wed 4-5pm, Thu 11am-12pm, and by
appointment in Glatfelter Hall 310

Class Objectives

‘Superpower,’ ‘exceptional,’ and ‘liberal beacon’ – all these words are routinely used to describe the United States of America and its position in the world. However, others have deemed the US to be ‘hypocritical’ or an ‘overstretched empire in decline.’ These debates bring up many questions, among them: Who influences the US policy-making process? What are the country’s interests abroad and where do they come from? How can the US secure its superpower position and is this even desirable? In this class we will engage with these arguments and questions by drawing on political science research to better understand and analyze how US foreign policy is made, historical shifts in US foreign policy, and how the US engages with different world regions. Given the combination of domestic and international influences on US foreign-policy making and the country’s far-reaching impact on world politics, this class offers new and exciting insights to students of both US politics and international relations. The class will increase students’ knowledge of actors and themes in US foreign policy and hone their skills in understanding and critically engaging with political science research on the topic.

Learning Goals

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

- Understand and critically reflect on key theories and concepts in US foreign policy (achieved through readings and discussions)
- Evaluate the key actors in foreign policy making, their objectives, and constraints in theory but also in concrete historical moments (readings, discussion, simulation)
- Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of various policy options and make informed suggestions for future policies (policy brief, simulation)
- Communicate the results of their analyses both orally and in writing (policy brief, simulation paper, presentation)
- Understand and critically evaluate the work of political scientists (readings, discussions, presentations)
- Discuss and critically evaluate current topics and events in US foreign policy, their origins as well as their effects on the US and other countries abroad (news reports, policy brief)

Expectations: REI (Responsibility, Effort, Inquisitiveness)

Students should expect vigorous discussion and debate! This means that I place an emphasis on collegiality in class. We can engage in debates, but this needs to be constructive and without resorting to personal attacks. Rude and inappropriate comments or disruptive behavior can result in students being asked to leave the classroom or in a reduced grade.

To succeed in this class (and in college overall), I expect you to commit to the three principles of “REI”: Responsibility, Effort, and Inquisitiveness. This means that you commit to be responsible adults. This includes respecting classroom policies (be on time, no cellphones, no disruptions, etc.), doing the

assigned readings *before* class, and that you seek my consent and advice when you know you will be absent beyond the three allowed absences, when you have a scheduling conflict, or when you have any concerns or feedback about the class or your performance. You also commit to invest significant effort into this class. This means that you will perform to the best of your ability to learn relevant material. This can include rereading assigned texts, seeing me during office hours to clarify material, forming study groups with fellow students, or seeking out extra material to help you do well in the class. It also means you will participate as much as possible during class because it makes it more fun for all of us and we all have viewpoints to contribute! The third principle is inquisitiveness, which means a commitment to knowledge. It means that you will be ready to ask questions during class and ask questions of the readings. Be critical of what you read! Challenge each other and me with other perspectives!

Requirements

Think about your final grade in terms of points: You can get up to 100 points for this class:

- **Attendance and Participation: 20 points**
 - Participation is an important part of your contribution to this class. This score includes attendance and participation in class discussions, occasional homework assignments, in-class group work, short writing prompts, etc.
 - You can miss up to three classes a semester without prior consultation or explanation. Any absence beyond those will result in a lower score (unless you have an excused absence for a class trip, medical reason with a doctor’s note), one point per missed class!
 - Option for reluctant speakers: If you are very uncomfortable speaking in class, please feel free to email me analytical reflections on the class readings and questions it raised *consistently* and *before* class. Please note that you are still expected to participate in group work and active listening during class. However, I highly encourage you to push yourself to participate in class discussions based on your emailed reflections. This should give you some comfort in your statements.

Possible points	Level of participation (assumes perfect attendance)
18-20 (A)	Contributes to class discussions frequently, critical thinking, shows respect for everyone. Frequent email reflections.
16-17.5 (B)	Occasional participation, some engagement with the material. Occasional email reflections.
14-15.5 (C)	Rare participation, some engagement with the material. Rare email reflections.
12-13.5 (D)	No engagement or interest in the class, student is on phone, disrupts class etc. No email reflections.

- **Exams: 20 points**
 - There will be two exams during the semester, each concluding a thematic unit. Each exam is worth 10 points. They can include multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions on content that was covered in the readings and class discussions.
 - The second exam will be on Sunday, 9 December 2018 from 1:30-3:30pm. In addition to Part II material, the final exam will include one cumulative essay question: “To what extent is the US still leading the free world? Please support your argument with evidence and literature we discussed in class.” Take advantage of this information: Themes, theories, data and current events that we study over the semester will help you shape your answer to this question.

- **Foreign Policy Simulation and Paper: 20 points**
 - To get a ‘feel’ for the real world of US foreign policy, you will participate in the Statecraft US Foreign Policy Simulation. You will be assigned to act as a specific actor and engage with others in the handling of foreign policy.
 - You have to sign-up for the simulation. This will cost \$25. If you are unable to front the money, please come and see me as soon as possible after the start of the semester.
 - The assignment consists of two parts:
 - 10 points: Regular participation in the simulation and in the debriefing session after the simulation’s end. Students are expected to complete that part of the assignment outside of the classroom. The simulation will give you a performance score. **Extra Credit is possible!**
 - 10 points: Writing a reflection paper in which you connect the simulation to class discussions and readings.
 - Please see the assignment sheet “Simulation Assignment” for more details on Moodle.
- **News Briefs: 15 points (Fourth Hour Requirement)**
 - Keeping up with news on international affairs is a critical part of civic life, and an essential activity for the student of US foreign policy. Throughout the semester, you will write 3 news briefs (each worth 5 points) on current events.
 - These are due on Monday or Wednesday by midnight before the relevant class session you signed up for! They should range between 500 to 600 words and be submitted via Moodle.
 - Every student must submit one news brief in Part I and the remaining ones in Part II.
 - For the paper, please read at *least two recent news articles* from the news aggregator website www.RealClearWorld.com, and submit a one-page, single-spaced summary of the articles and how they relate to that week’s readings from the syllabus.
 - *You are free to choose the news articles, but it is critical to do the following:*
 - Identify the titles of the article, the authors, and the sources (i.e., where it was published) at the end of the brief.
 - Explicitly relate the articles to the reading assigned for that week. For example, if you select an article about civil war in Syria on the week in which we cover domestic sources of policy making, discuss how the article raises important issues for the role of Congress or President in responding to the Syrian crisis.
 - Please include two discussion questions for the class at the end.
- **Policy Brief: 25 points**
 - This paper requires you to select a current problem in US foreign policy.
 - The assignment consists of three parts:
 - 10 points: A proposal is due on Thu, 9/20. This should be between 300-400 words and describe the issue you chose and include a list of at least 5 academic readings you will use and provide a brief annotation of 150-200 words for each sources.
 - 5 points: A presentation at the end of the semester where you present your findings and engage with the class in a debate on the issue.
 - 10 points: In the paper you will briefly describe the problem, generate three possible options on how to address the issue, critically evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each option by drawing on the evidence and arguments produced by scholars and practitioners, make a policy recommendation based on this assessment. The paper is due on the date of your presentation.
 - More details on this assignment will be provided on Moodle.

Grading

“A range” indicates an outstanding performance in which there has been distinguished achievement in all aspects of the course.

- A: 93-100
- A-: 90-92

“B range” indicates a good performance in which there has been a high level of achievement in some aspects of the course.

- B+: 87-89 points
- B: 83-86
- B-: 80-82

“C range” indicates an adequate performance in which a basic understanding of the subject has been demonstrated.

- C+: 77-79 points
- C: 73-76
- C-: 70-72

“D range” indicates a minimal performance in which despite recognizable deficiencies there is enough to merit credit. D: 60-69

Readings and Late Work and Make-up Exams

In the course schedule (below), I have indicated the readings to be completed ahead of each session. I ask you to read between 50-60 pages per week. The required textbook for the course is Michael Cox and Doug Stokes, *US Foreign Policy* (3rd edition, 2018) and may be purchased at the College bookstore. Additional course materials (journal articles and book chapters) will be available through Moodle. Please contact me if you have any problems.

Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date listed on the syllabus. **For the semester, you have ‘2 penalty-free late days’ which you can either use for one assignment or split up for two assignments. Note that this applies to the paper components BUT NOT to the presentation component and the news briefs!** Beyond this policy, any assignment not turned in at the specified time will be considered late except in the case of an extraordinary situation and will result in a lower grade (1/3 letter grade per day). Make-up examination for the first exam will be granted only for documented medical or family emergencies. In cases of severe illness or family emergencies, I require proof (e.g. doctor’s note signed and on the doctor’s letterhead explaining why you cannot take the exam and/or emails from your academic advisor explaining the specific situation).

Electronic Etiquette Policy

I do not allow the use of computers or cell phones during class. The temptation to just check your email or look up something is just too strong! Studies have also consistently shown that students without computer perform better on tests and that computer use is extremely distracting to other students as well. So please spare us the trouble and bring a nice notebook and pen/pencil. If you violate this policy, I will exercise my right to lower your participation points.

Academic Honesty

Consistent with the Gettysburg College Honor Code, “students must submit work that is the fruit of their own study and labor, acknowledge assistance, words, and ideas they use in their work, and be honest with all members of the community involved in supporting their education” (Honor Code Summary, p. 1). Please be sure to read the Honor Code in its entirety; it is your responsibility to be familiar with and abide by both the rule and spirit of this code.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with learning or physical issues which may affect performance in the course should come and see me as soon as possible. Bring your Individual Educational Accommodation Plan with you and we will discuss what are the reasonable accommodations give the structure, content, and philosophy of the course. You must have an IEAP to receive accommodation in this course.

Religious Observances

Gettysburg College is fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. If they choose, all students, faculty, administrators, and support staff have the right to engage in essential practices of their faith while minimizing conflict with work, academic or athletic requirements. As soon as possible but no later than the end of the drop/add period, each student has the responsibility to inform me about religious observances that are likely to conflict directly with academic, campus, or other required extracurricular activities. Once the [Religious Observance Accommodation Form](#) has been submitted, we will agree upon what would constitute a reasonable accommodation (i.e., missing a class, extending an assignment deadline, rescheduling an exam or assignment without penalty, etc.) for holidays.

Mental Health

Life can be difficult sometimes. Gettysburg College Counseling Services is committed to creating a safe and comfortable environment for all students and aiding the exploration of personal, social, and academic concerns. They provide free confidential counseling, emergency services, psychiatric services, consultations, self-help resources, educational programs, and workshops to help students gain the skills and insights they need to overcome adversity and thrive in their life and learning. For more information, browse http://www.gettysburg.edu/about/offices/college_life/counseling/index.dot or call 717-337-6960 to arrange to speak with a counselor.

Key Dates to remember: Please note these in your calendars so you don't forget!

- Tue, 9/11: First news briefs due
- Thu, 9/20: Proposal is due
- Thu, 10/4: First exam
- Thu, 11/15: Simulation paper is due
- Thu, 11/15-Tue, 12/4: Individual presentations and policy papers are due
- Sun, 12/9: Final exam

Part I: THEORY, HISTORY, AND DOMESTIC ACTORS

W	Day	Themes	Readings
1	Tue, 8/28	<u>Introduction</u>	Getting to know the content, one another, and the syllabus
	Thu, 8/30	<u>US Exceptionalism, THOMAS</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 2, "Exceptionalism," Deudney and Meiser (20 pg.)• Walt, "The Myth of American Exceptionalism" (2011)
2	Tue, 9/4	<u>History I</u> Sign up for news briefs weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 3 "The US rise to world power, 1776-1945" LaFeber (16 pg.)• Chapter 4 "American foreign policy during the Cold War" Saull (23 pg.)

	Thu, 9/6	<u>History II</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5, “America in the 1990s: searching for purpose” Dumbrell (15 pg.) Chapter 6 “Obama and smart power” Nye (12 pg.)
3	Tue, 9/11	<u>Theories of US foreign policy</u> First news briefs due!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1, “Theories of US Foreign Policy,” Schmidt (20 pg.) Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games” read 427-435 (7 pg.)
	Thu, 9/13	<u>Foreign Policy Theory</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allison, “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” read 689-691 (3 pg.) Krebs, “Narratives and US Foreign Policy” (28 pg.)
4	Tue, 9/18	<u>Domestic Policy Actors</u> News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 7 “The foreign policy process: executive, Congress, intelligence” Foley (19 pg.) Council on Foreign Relations, “Balance of US War Powers” (Moodle link)
	Thu, 9/20	<u>Presidents and advisors</u> Proposal is due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saunders, “No Substitute for Experience: Presidents, Advisers, and Information in Group Decision Making,” (26 pg.) Badie, “Groupthink, Iraq, and the War on Terror: Explaining US Policy Shift toward Iraq.” (read excerpt 277-282, 5 pg.)
5	Tue, 9/25	<u>Bureaucracy and the Blob</u> News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Porter, “Why America’s Grand Strategy Has Not Changed: Power, Habit, and the U.S. Foreign Policy Establishment” (read excerpts, 9-19, 38-46, 18 pg.) Watch 55 min “America’s Diplomats” on Kanopy
	Thu, 9/27	<u>Media and Public Opinion</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 10, “Media in US foreign policy” Robinson (18 pg.) Jacobs and Page, “Who Influences U.S. Foreign Policy?” (16 pg.)
6	Tue, 10/2	<u>Gender and Interest groups</u> News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter “Gender and US foreign policy” Jentleson, “The Domestic Context: Interest Groups” 56-66 (10 pg.) Moodle doc
	Thu, 10/4	First Exam	

Part II: TOPICAL DEBATES AND REGIONAL CONCERNS

W	Day	Themes	Readings
7	Tue, 10/9	READING DAY NO CLASS	
	Thu, 10/11	<u>Global Terrorism</u> News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 19, “Global Terrorism,” Rogers (16 pg.) • Listen to “How 9/11 Changed How Americans View the World,” National Public Radio, Sept. 10, 2012. • Zimmerman, “The Never-Ending War on Terror” (4 pg.) • Read simulation manual, take the online test until Sunday so we can start on Monday, 10/15!
8	Tue, 10/16	<u>Global Economy</u> [Simulation period I] News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 18, “Global economy,” Gowan and Stokes (18 pg.) • Mayes et al, “Trump’s trade war has started. Who’s been helped and who’s been hurt?” Monkeycage 2018
	Thu, 10/18	<u>Global Environment</u> News briefs Report on your policy paper progress!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 20, “Global Environment,” Eckersley (20 pg.) • McKibben, “The Reversal of Fortune” (16 pg.)
9	Tue, 10/23	<u>US and Europe</u> [Simulation period II] News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 13, “The USA and the EU,” Smith (20 pg.) • Kanet, “Still Mars, Still Venus? The United States, Europe, and the Future of the Transatlantic Relationship” (4 pg.)
	Thu, 10/25	<u>US and Asia</u> News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 15, “The USA, China, and rising Asia,” Cox (18 pg.) • Silove, “The Pivot before the Pivot: U.S. Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia” (read 45-53, 8 pg.)
10	Tue, 10/30	<u>US and Africa</u> [Simulation period III] News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 17, “US foreign policy in Africa,” Patman (18 pg.) • Olsen, “The ambiguity of US foreign policy towards Africa” (15 pg.)
	Thu, 11/1	<u>US and Middle East</u> News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12, “US foreign policy in the Middle East,” Dodge (22 pg.) • Baumgartner et al. “A Clash of Civilizations? The Influence of Religion on Public Opinion of U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East” (8 pg.)

11	Tue, 11/6	<u>US and Russia</u> [Simulation period IV] News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 14, “US foreign policy in Russia,” Rutland and Dubinsky (20 pg.) • Galeotti and Bowen “Putin’s Empire of the Mind” (5 pg.)
	Thu, 11/8	<u>US and Latin America</u> News briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 16, “US foreign policy in Latin America,” Dunkerley (20 pg.) • Friedman and Long, “Soft Balancing in the Americas: Latin American Opposition to U.S. Intervention, 1898–1936” 120-128, 8 pg.)
12	Tue, 11/13	<u>US in decline?</u> <u>Debate over primacy</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finnemore, “Legitimacy, Hypocrisy, and the Social Structure of Unipolarity: Why Being a Unipole Isn’t All It’s Cracked Up to Be” (28 pg.) • Chapter 23, “US decline or primacy? A debate” Layne et al. (22 pg.)
	Thu, 11/15	5 presentations Simulation paper due	
13	Tue, 11/20	5 presentations	
14	Tue, 11/27	5 presentations	
	Thu, 11/29	5 presentations	
15	Tue, 12/4	5 presentations <u>Homework:</u> Write a short essay (500-600 words) reflecting on how the semester has influenced your foreign policy thinking. Has it changed and if so, how? Has it reinforced some of your positions? Which topics and concepts proved especially useful and why?	
	Thu, 12/6	<u>Evaluations and Conclusion</u>	
	Sun, 12/9	Final Exam, 1:30-3:30pm	