inr4102 - American Foreign Policy

David Houghton

Instructor Contact

Instructor David Houghton

Office Phillips Hall 311G

Office Hours MW, 11.30am-1.20pm

Phone 407 823-6025

E-mail david.houghton@ucf.edu

Introduction

Welcome to INR4102 *American Foreign Policy*, Spring 2013. This course is fully online; there are no face-to-face meetings, although I will hold office hours for most of the course during which you are welcome to visit me if you are within commuting distance of campus. On this website you will find the course schedule, which will tell you what to read - and in some cases what to watch - in each Module (click on 'Schedule'). Modules generally post at 5pm on a Friday, with the exception of Module 1 (which will post on the first day of class on Monday 7 January). Each week a new Module will be posted which will ask you to complete various readings and do assignments, in most cases within seven days.

Course Description

This class is intended as a basic introduction to U.S. foreign policy. There are many ways to cover a topic like this one. Some look at the *history* of U.S. foreign relations. Others examine the *institutions* which are integral to the making of our nation's foreign policy. Still others concentrate on the *ideas* behind U.S. foreign policy, while other courses of this type are primarily concerned with the contemporary challenges and *issues* which confront us today. This course is designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to all four - history, institutions, ideas and issues - in a concise and accessible way.

This class examines the past, present and future course of American foreign policy, with a particular emphasis on the period since 1945. By the end of the class you should possess:

- An appreciation of the various dilemmas facing contemporary U.S. foreign policy, especially of the ways in which 9/11 has affected the approach of current policymakers towards foreign policy;
- An understanding of the various theories, traditions or 'logics' which have shaped America's behavior towards the rest of the world;
- An historical knowledge of the patterns and paths which American foreign policy has taken in the past, particularly since WWII;
- A knowledge of the key institutions involved in the formulation and implementation of American foreign policy, and of theories of decision-making relevant to these.

Required Text

You should purchase the following book as soon as possible. This should now be available for purchase at the UCF Bookstore on campus. Note that we will also occasionally make use of materials available online, such as video presentations accessed through YouTube.

Steven Hook, *U.S. Foreign Policy: The Paradox of World Power*, third edition (Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2010). There is an Amazon.com link here.

There is a handy website for the book, which you can access by clicking here. I will also make occasional use of other readings, which you will be able to access via a link on the course webpage called - appropriately enough - 'Additional Readings Box'.

A Word of Warning About Online Courses

If you haven't taken an online class before, you should know that they can be gruelling: since there are no face to face meetings, there are more readings than you might do in an ordinary class, and most of all you need to discipline yourself to complete the readings on time. This will require a great deal of intensive reading on your part. Do not take this course unless you are strongly motivated to do the readings and other assignments on time.

A Note About Civility in Discussions

Please note that you are required to maintain civil standards in your postings, and that you are bound by UCF's Golden Rule in your communications in this class and in all other classes taken online. See the UCF Golden Rule for further information. Amongst other things, you may not make any derogatory statement in your postings which could reasonably be expected to offend a reader. As a rule, when you are responding to another person's message rather than simply generating your own, be courteous and polite. You can of course disagree with a statement - this is the essence of reasoned academic discussion, and academic freedom depends on the free interchange of ideas - but you should not disparage your colleague's intelligence or motivations. You should also phrase your message in such a way that it cannot possibly be misinterpreted as doing this, whatever your original intention was. Note that the instructor reserves the right to deduct points from any posting which violates UCF policy, and repeated violations may lead to outright exclusion from the course.

Rules of Assessment

The final grade will be composed of three elements:

- A Midterm Examination on everything covered so far, taken online *at any time* between Friday 22 February 5pm and Friday 1 March 5pm. Consists of 50 multiple choice questions and worth 40%.
- A Cumulative Final Examination, taken online *at any time* between Friday 19 April 5pm and Friday 26 April 5pm. Consists of 100 multiple choice questions and worth 50%.
- Discussion postings will collectively account for 10%. You will usually have a week to do each posting, and discussion topics will close when the week ends (see individual Modules for details). Note: although I will allow every member of the class to do *one* late posting during the semester, after that I will deduct 1% from your 10% Discussions score for every posting which appears late. It is therefore very much in your interest to ensure that you do the readings and discussion postings on time.

Makeup examinations and extensions to weekly assignments will be offered *only in the very rarest of circumstances*. In order to be eligible to take a makeup exam or get an extension, you must give a *convincing written explanation*, backed up with proper medical or other documentation, as to why you

were unable to meet the expectations required of other class members. Only where the instructor is fully satisfied that the student could not be expected to complete the original assignment/examination given his or her personal circumstances will any exceptions whatsoever be granted. Note also that any makeup examination *will not necessarily be of the same format as the original exam*.

Finally, please note that ***no extra credit*** will be offered in this course; by continuing with the course, you are agreeing to abide by its rules of assessment and agreeing to accept the marks/grades assigned to your work. All grades are final. The grading scheme will be as follows:

A 90 or above
A- 88-89
B+ 86-87
B 82-85
B- 80-81
C+ 78-79
C 73-77
C- 70-72
D+ 67-69
D 63-66
D- 60-62
F Below 60

Course Schedule

The following readings may be subject to change as the course proceeds.

Date Module Posts	**Module**	**Reading/Activity**
Monday 7 January	**1: Introduction To The Course**	Overview of course and summary of course requirements.
Friday 11 January	**2: The Seven Sins of American Foreign Policy**	Read Loch Johnson, 'Seven Sins', which you can find on the main course webpage inside the link labelled 'Additional Readings Box'. View 'Seven Sins' Powerpoint, which you will find inside the 'Powerpoints' box on the course webpage.
Friday 18 January	**3: The United States in a Turbulent World**	Read Steven Hook, *U.S. Foreign Policy: The Paradox of World Power*, Chapter 1 and Powerpoint.

Friday 25 January	**4: Soft Power**	Read Joseph Nye, 'Soft Power' (see Additional Readings Box) and Powerpoint. Video, interview with Nye on soft power which you can view here.
Friday 1 February	**5: The Expansion of U.S. Power**	Hook, Chapter 2 and Powerpoint.
Friday 8 February	**6: Mars and Venus in the Post-Cold War World**	Read Robert Kagan, 'Power and Weakness' (see Additional Readings Box) and Powerpoint. Video, CSPAN *Booknotes* interview with Kagan, which you can watch here.
Friday 15 February	**7: Dynamics of Decision-Making**	Hook, Chapter 3 and Powerpoint. Video, PBS Frontline *The War Behind Closed Doors*, which you can view online here.
Friday 22 February	**8: Midterm Examination**	Midterm examination on everything covered up to this point, available from Friday 22 February 5pm until Friday1 March 5pm. 50 multiple choice questions.
Friday 1 March	**9: Spring Break**	UCF Closed – No new assignments.
Friday 8 March	**10: Presidential Power**	Hook, Chapter 4 and Powerpoint.
Friday 15 March	**11: Congress Beyond the "Water's Edge"**	Hook, Chapter 5 and Powerpoint.
Friday 22 March	**12: The Foreign Policy Bureaucracy**	Hook, Chapter 6 and Powerpoint.
Friday 29 March	**13: Public Opinion at Home and Abroad**	Hook, Chapter 7 and Powerpoint.
Friday 5 April	**14: The Impact of Mass Communications**	Hook, Chapter 8 and Powerpoint. Also read Livingston and Eachus, 'Humanitarian Crises' and Robinson, 'The CNN Effect' (Additional Readings Box).
Friday 12 April	**15: Social Movements and Interest Groups**	Hook, Chapter 9 and Powerpoint.
Friday 19 April	**16: Final Examination**	Comprehensive final examination, available from Friday 19 April 5pm until Friday 26 April 5pm. 100 multiple choice questions.