INR 4102: American Foreign Policy

Fall 2018

Course syllabus

Instructor: Andrew Boutton

Office: 302 Howard Phillips Hall

Office hours: Wednesday & Friday, 3:00PM-5:00PM

Email: andrew.boutton@ucf.edu

Location: Online

Credit hours: 3

Prerequisites: ENC 1102 or POS 2041

Teaching Assistant: Douglas Namur (contact via Canvas)

Overview

This course will cover the theory and practice of American foreign policy, with a particular focus on the post-1945 period. The goal is to provide students with a framework to which they can refer in order to understand past, ongoing, and future US foreign policy issues. The course will follow a mostly chronological path from the beginning of the Cold War to the present, examining how the US domestic political system and features of the international system interact to shape the decisions and incentives of US foreign policy makers. Are strategies and policies formulated with the sole aim of advancing US national interests? What other influences might factor into foreign policy decisions?

While I students are encouraged to make use of my office hours, this class will take place entirely online, with no scheduled face-to-face meetings. This format works well for some people, but you should seriously reconsider taking this class in this format if you a) are not comfortable reading, communicating, or otherwise working online; or b) will not have unlimited access to high-speed internet between January 8 and May 1.

Course objectives

This is not a history class, or even one about current events. The overarching goal of this class is to develop broad knowledge about general themes and trends in US foreign policy, and then be able to apply them to specific cases. Specifically, by the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Identify the primary foreign policy issues that have faced the United States since the end of World War II

2. Apply general concepts learned in class to explain various US foreign policy crises and their outcomes
3. Draw upon historical examples in order to gain insight into current and future foreign policy issues (where possible and appropriate)
4. Evaluate policy alternatives using logic and evidence

Course materials

The content of this course will come primarily from the following three books:

- **James Lee Ray. 2013. *American Foreign Policy and Political Ambition, Second Edition*. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press**
- **Paul Pillar. 2001. *Terrorism and US Foreign Policy*. Brookings Institution Press**
- **George Herring. 2013. *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975 (5th edition)*. New York: McGraw-Hill.**

These books are in stock at university bookstores, but you may be able to find them for less on Amazon or another online bookseller. Regardless of where you get them, do so quickly. It is incumbent upon you to acquire the course materials in a timely fashion; we will begin using the textbook in earnest in Week 1, and no extensions will be granted if you're unable to complete an assignment because you cannot access the material.

On occasion, I will assign supplementary readings from academic articles, selections from books, online newspapers, or blog posts by academics or policy experts. Links to some of them are found in the online course schedule and/or PDF of the syllabus, and I'll make the others available to you via Webcourses.

Finally, the content for this class will also consist of several full-length films. If they are not available to stream online through a reputable website, they will be available to rent for $2.99 through Amazon, YouTube, Google Play, or some other source, so please make the necessary arrangements to access them through some digital distribution service.

Requirements & Grading

Discussion posts: 100 points (10 @ 10 point each)

For most of the course modules, you are expected to make two (2) kinds of online posts: an initial response post and a follow-up post for each of the course modules we will be covering. Initial posts are worth 50 points and follow-up posts are worth up to an additional 50, depending on quality. These will be graded according the rubric criteria, which can be found here. Please read the rubric carefully. The total points you can accumulate for discussion posts over the course of the semester will be aggregated in accord with the table posted below.

Quizzes: 150 points (10 @ 15 points each)

There will be ten (10) quizzes of equal value throughout this course. These will be based directly on the assigned reading for that module. The quizzes will vary in format and will typically consist of a mix of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short-answer questions.

Final paper: 150 points (25 points for the proposal, 125 for the paper)

Each of you will produce a (roughly) 2,500-2,800-word research paper, which will cover a case or issue area of your choosing that is relevant to contemporary or historical US foreign policy. More specifically, you will analyze this case through the lens of the "political ambition" theory that serves as the framework for the Ray textbook. Does your case fit neatly within this framework, or do US actions and/or policies conflict with what political ambition theory would predict? Why and how does it fit? Does the policy or action that would most benefit the political career(s) of the relevant decision makers align with the national interest?

As part of this grade, you will need to submit a 500-750-word proposal that describes your case in detail. You can select any case or policy area you would like, but please clear it with me first. I'll provide more specifics on the paper and proposal at a later date.

You are welcome to choose any topic you would like, but please clear it with me by **October 10**.

The proposal will be due on **Thursday, November 8, at 11:55 PM via Turnitin**.

The final paper will be due **Monday, December 3, at 5:00 PM** via Turnitin.

Grading

Your final grade can be calculated using the following formula:

Percentage grade = (Total discussion points earned + Total quiz points earned + Total paper & proposal points earned)/400

Letter grades will be assigned according to the table below:

Letter Grade	Points
A	93 – 100
A-	90 – 92
B+	87 – 89
B	83 – 86
B-	80 – 82
C+	77 – 79
C	73 – 76
C-	70 – 72
D+	67 – 69
D	63 – 66
D-	60 – 62
F	59 and below

Make-up/late work policy

All assignments are due at 11:55 PM Eastern Standard Time on the date indicated on the course schedule and syllabus. As a general rule, you will not be able to go back and complete missed assignments, quizzes, or exams. It is your responsibility to keep up with the pace of the course.

Students with a university-approved excuse (hospitalization, jury duty, family emergency) may be asked to provide documentation in order to make up graded assignments. Students with an approved excuse must also contact me **before** the assignment in question is due, otherwise no accommodations will be made. All make-up work is at the discretion of the instructor.

Extra credit/grade rounding policy

There will be absolutely no extra credit offered in this class, so please do not ask. Final grades will be rounded up to the nearest whole number **if and only if the grade is within 0.5 points of the next highest whole number**. For example, a grade of 89.5 will be rounded to 90, but a grade of 89.49 will not be. There will be no discussion on this point. I realize this may be frustrating in some cases, but you are all adults, and the line must be drawn somewhere.

Communication

If you have any questions about readings, specific assignments, or anything else that is not answered in the syllabus, please either email me (andrew.boutton@ucf.edu) or get in touch via the email feature in Webcourses. The TA for the course, Douglas Namur (contact via Canvas) will also be able to answer questions that pertain specifically to grading. I will make every effort to respond to emails within 48 hours of receiving them. I will post important class announcements and reminders on the Announcements page in Webcourses, so be sure to check that multiple times per week. ****Please to not attempt to contact me by simply replying to an announcement. It is unlikely that I will notice that****

Disability Access

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Academic Conduct Policy

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor's discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course. Episodes of plagiarism will result in an automatic failure of the class and will see the case forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct with a recommendation for expulsion.

University Writing Center

The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF undergraduates and graduates. At the UWC, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you on anything you're writing (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the UWC website at http://www.uwc.ucf.edu, stop by MOD 608, or call 407.823.2197.

Campus Safety Statement for Students in Online-Only Courses

Though most emergency situations are primarily relevant to courses that meet in person, such incidents can also impact online students, either when they are on or near campus to participate

in other courses or activities or when their course work is affected by off-campus emergencies. The following policies apply to courses in online modalities.

- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to <https://my.ucf.edu> and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."
- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Religious Observances

Students are expected to notify their instructor in advance if a holy day of their religious faith is expected to influence their participation in the class. Given the online nature of the class, this is not expected to be an issue. If a conflict does exist, immediately notify the instructor. For a current schedule of major religious holidays, see the Faculty Center's main web page under "Calendars," and for additional information, contact the Office of Diversity Initiatives at 407-823-6479.

Course schedule
Fall 2018

Week	Topic	Assignment	Due
8/20-8/26	Course introduction	Financial aid activity	8/24
	Theoretical framework	Discussion 1	8/26
8/27-9/2	History US foreign policy	Quiz 1	8/29
	None	None	
9/3-9/9	The presidency & congress	Discussion 2	9/5
	Interest groups	Discussion 3	9/9
9/10-9/16	The media	Quiz 2	9/12
	Public opinion	Quiz 3	9/16
9/17-9/23	Carrots & sticks	Discussion 4	9/19
	Carrots & sticks II	Discussion 5	9/23
9/24-9/30	Allies, cooperation, & empire	Quiz 4	9/26
	None	None	
10/1-10/7	Cold War I	Quiz 5	10/3
	Cold War II	Quiz 6	10/7
10/8-10/14	Nuclear weapons & deterrence	Quiz 7	10/10

	Vietnam I	None	
10/15-10/21	Vietnam II	Discussion 6	10/17
	Vietnam III	None	
10/22-10/28	Vietnam IV	Quiz 8	10/24
	Terrorism & counterterrorism I	Discussion 7	10/28
10/29-11/4	Terrorism & counterterrorism II	Discussion 8	10/31
	Terrorism & counterterrorism III	Discussion 9	11/4
11/5-11/11	US foreign policy in Africa	Proposal due	11/7
	US foreign policy in Asia	Quiz 9	11/11
11/12-11/18	US foreign policy in Latin America	None	
	US foreign policy in Europe	None	
11/19-11/25	Thanksgiving break		
11/26-12/2	US foreign policy in the Middle East	Quiz 10	11/28
	Future of US foreign policy	Discussion 10	12/2