

PO 516: American Foreign Policy

Instructor: Ivan Willis Rasmussen
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30-11:45 am
Location: Campion 010

Office hours: Tuesday 1:30-3:30 and Thursday 2-4 pm, McGuinn 204A

Introduction to the course

The major theories of international relations, realism, liberalism, Marxism, and constructivism, predict a variety of outcomes in global affairs. However, these theories rarely tell us how exactly those outcomes are manufactured. How does a country go about creating a foreign policy that it will then pursue? If foreign policy is based on national interests, who decides what is in the national interest? Where do national interests come from? An easy answer would be the 'people' or, especially in authoritarian states, the ruler. The reality is far more complex particularly in the case of the United States.

Building on that theme, this course examines the ways in which American foreign policy is created by asking questions such as: What serves as the basis for US grand strategy, interests or ideals? What are the goals of American engagement with the world? Analyzing the historical trends and different administrations' approaches to international relations will allow for more informed reflection on current affairs. The course explores current challenges confronting the United States in the context of America's shifting role in the world. Practical exercises will illustrate the complexity of American foreign policy, including the international and domestic political factors that shape that policy.

Instructor

Ivan Willis Rasmussen is a PhD candidate at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. He has a background in the study of international affairs at both Tufts University and Princeton University (the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs). His experiences at the United States Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, inform both his current research and this course. Beyond thematic interests in US diplomacy, conflict resolution, and international organizations, he is regionally focused on Asia. Mr. Rasmussen can be contacted via email: ivan.rasmussen@bc.edu.

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Required readings

The following books, available for purchase at the bookstore and on reserve at O'Neill Library, will serve as the foundation for much of the course:

Bruce Jentleson. *American Foreign Policy: The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2010 (4th edition). (hereafter referred to as **Jentleson**) **REQUIRED**

Daniel Drezner, ed. *Avoiding Trivia: The Role of Strategic Planning in American Foreign Policy*. Brookings Institute, 2009. (hereafter referred to as **Drezner**) **No need to purchase**

The majority of readings will be on electronic reserve through the Blackboard Vista course site or links on the syllabus. Blackboard will be the primary mode through which course content and critical information will be shared. Note that there may be changes made to this syllabus over the course of the semester; any of these changes will be announced in class and on Blackboard. Please access and make sure that all contact information on Blackboard Vista is up to date: <https://cms.bc.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct>.

Advice on weekly readings

You will find that the amount of weekly reading material should be manageable. You are expected to have read all material **before** coming to the class for which that material is assigned. You are **not** expected to have memorized the readings. Instead, you should be prepared to discuss the key ideas and factual information from each piece. You should also keep informed about current affairs, particularly as they relate to international relations and American foreign policy; to help with this I have suggested several news sources, blogs, and government agency websites. Drawing in parallels from current affairs not only highlights the lessons learned from each session but also keeps the discussion dynamic. I encourage informed, active class participation. In terms of assigned readings, there are both primary and secondary sources. Here some advice on ways to approach the readings:

For primary source material, start by contextualizing the piece based on date of publication. Ask yourself: When was the author writing this piece? In what historical context? Who is the audience for the piece? Moving to substance, then examine the language and content of the reading. Ask: Is the author examining US domestic politics or specific foreign relations? Does the tone speak to any themes from the course (e.g. ideals vs interests, levels of analysis, schools of international relations)? Finally, what argument or point of view do you think the author may espouse?

As with primary sources, I suggest that you approach secondary sources (typically scholarly articles) with an initial question of when the author is writing the piece and to whom it is targeted. For example, is the article in response to a major change or event in world history? Beyond contextualizing the secondary source, it is important to note the major thesis or argument of the author—this should be done in just one or two lines. What evidence does the author use to support that thesis? Finally, how does the piece fit into the broader context of the course whether it is US foreign relations or major theories?

Please note that there are guiding questions for each class session.

Assignments and grading

For this course you will have four forms of evaluation: participation, an in-class midterm (**March 1**), a short response paper to the practical exercise/simulation (**due April 27**), and a take-home final exam (**distributed May 1 and due May 10**). The percentage breakdown of grades is as follows:

- 20% Participation
- 25% In-class midterm (identification and short answer)
- 20% Response paper to simulation (6 pages maximum)
- 35% Take-home final exam (essay based)

Grading rubric: A (100-95), A- (94.4-89.5), B+ (89.4-86.5), B (86.4-83.5), B- (83.4-79.5), C+ (79.4-76.5), C (76.4-73.5), C- (73.4-69.5), D+ (69.4-66.5), D (66.4-63.5), D- (63.4-59.5), F (below 59.4)

1. Participation accounts for 20% of your grade and includes three **required** elements of 1) contributing to class discussion including debates, 2) attending at least one office hour session prior to the midterm/Spring break, 3) active participation in the simulation exercise.

I do regularly take attendance. I have a 1-2-3 policy regarding absences: You may miss any two sessions without having proper documentation, your third absence should be documented (illness, death in the family, natural disaster), and any thereafter we will need to meet during office hours to discuss. Further absence will be penalized with points taken away from the participation grade.

Participation in class sessions is a required element of the course regardless of your background or perceived level of expertise. You all will have contributions to make. I am interested in hearing your opinions and perspectives on the issues we will examine, but be sure to support any argument you make with reference to your own experiences and the relevant history or scholarly viewpoint. **I ask that you turn off your cell phone during class and, while laptops may be used in class, I reserve the right to prohibit their use if I feel they are distracting students from the course material.** Finally, be courteous to your peers and constructive in your responses.

At the beginning of the semester, I will also offer a non-required supplementary practicum on applying for internship opportunities associated with foreign affairs and policymaking. I find that students benefit from going through the application process with guidance. Contact me individually if you are interested in the opportunity.

2. The in-class midterm will be held on **March 1**. The midterm will review key concepts, history, and terms. There will be two sections to the midterm: identification and short answer. Please note that those students with documented learning limitations must adhere to the very clear and specific guidelines for

requesting special testing accommodations:

<http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices/testing.html>

3. A response paper of a maximum of 6 pages will be required after the simulation exercise due on **April 27**. This paper, for which a prompt will be provided after the simulation, should focus on your experience from the simulation and how you might apply the lessons learned to a current challenge facing American foreign policy. You may consult with me on this paper either in office hours or via email; however, any consultation with classmates is **not** allowed.
4. The take-home final will be distributed electronically on **May 1**. You will have over a week for this open-book, open-note exam, as it is due on **May 10**. The exam will be essay format likely to require two essays (maximum 4 pages each) with a choice from available topics. The final exam will focus on the second half of the course, but should be considered comprehensive in nature as much of the history and analytical frameworks from the first half of the semester will be highly relevant. You may not discuss the take-home final with fellow students.

For any late work, the penalty will be a 1/3 letter grade for each 12 hours of lateness (eg an A will become an A-) and after three days of lateness the maximum possible score will be a C- on any given assignment.

Course Schedule (please note that all readings are required unless otherwise indicated and subject to change)

Jan 17: Intro to class

Why study American foreign policy?

Jan 19: Frameworks for analysis (theories of IR and levels of analysis plus the 4 Ps)

What analytical frameworks set up the study of American foreign policy, historical and current? Which theories of international relations are applicable?

- Jentleson, pg 2-26
- John Mearsheimer. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. WW Norton & Company, 2001. PAGES 14-22 (Realism vs Liberalism)
- Robert Putnam. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games." *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (Summer 1988). PAGES 427-441
- Henry Kissinger. *American Foreign Policy*, Part One. SKIM PAGES 9-50
- OPTIONAL: Daniel Drezner. "Theory of International Politics and Zombies". Blog post on *Foreign Policy*. Aug 18, 2009. Online: http://drezner.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/08/18/theory_of_international_politics_and_zombies

Jan 24: The Making of America

What are the origins of the 'United States' as we know it with a collective 'foreign policy'? Are the origins of 'America' exceptional and unique?

- Alexander Hamilton. *Federalist Papers*, Nos. 6 (27-33), 11 (63-70), 23-25 (145-162)
- Alexis de Tocqueville. *Democracy in America*, Volume 2, Part 3, Chapters 18-26 (pg 589-635)
- Jentleson, pg 90-95

Jan 26: Welcome to the World

How can we weigh, using relevant history, the trade-offs between isolationism and engagement?

- George Washington's Farewell Address
- Jentleson, pg 83-87
- Ian Toll. *Six Frigates: The Epic History of the Founding of the U.S. Navy*. W. W. Norton; First Edition. October 2, 2006. EXCERPT
- Nathaniel Hawthorne. "The May-Pole of Merry Mount" (360-370)

Jan 31: Monroe Doctrine PLUS From the 'Pretty Little War' to FDR

What is the historical legacy behind the US 'coming of age' particularly in a regional context?

- Jentleson, pg 72-103 and 239-245
- Monroe Doctrine, *President James Monroe's 7th annual message to Congress December 2, 1823*.

Feb 2: World War I

What led to US involvement in WWI? Are these lessons from the post-War failure of the League of Nations—a failure in idealism?

- 14 Points, *President Woodrow Wilson's speech to Congress January 8, 1918*.
- Jentleson, pg 90-113
- John Ikenberry. *After Victory*. Princeton University Press, 2001. Introduction and Chapter 5.

Feb 7: World War II

How did the US lock in a power structure after World War II?

- John Ikenberry. *After Victory*. Princeton University Press, 2001. Chapter 6 and Conclusion.
- Jentleson, pg 230-238

Feb 9: Cold War

How can we understand US foreign policy in a bipolar context? What are the challenges to foreign policy in moments of 'crisis'?

- Long telegram from George Kennan

- Jentleson, pg 114-149
- Graham Allison. "Conceptual Models of the Cuban Missile Crisis." *American Political Science Review* 63, no. 3, (1969)
- Jack Snyder. *Myths of Empire*. Cornell University Press, 1991. Chapter 6: America's Cold War Consensus. SKIM
- OPTIONAL: Abram Chayes. *The Cuban Missile Crisis*. Chapter One: Preliminaries. Lanham, MD: University Press of America (1987).

Feb 14: Sino-US Normalization

What led to Sino-US 'warming' of relations? What are the trade-offs of ideology vs realpolitik? Can foreign policy contain internal contradictions?

- Henry Kissinger. *On China*. Penguin Press, 2011. Pg 202-274 (note Ch 10 optional)
- Jentleson, pg 263-272
- Shanghai Communiqué and Taiwan Relations Act (with supplementary questions)
- OPTIONAL: James Mann. *About Face: A History of America's Curious Relationship with China: From Nixon to Clinton* (New York: Knopf, 1999), pg 78-193.
- OPTIONAL: Brookings Institute Report 30 years after normalization.

Feb 16: Post-Cold War End of History

DEBATE: End of History?

- Francis Fukuyama. "The End of History?" *The National Interest*, Summer 1989.
- President William Clinton's 1996 National Security Strategy
- Jentleson, pg 177-196 and 273-278
- OPTIONAL: Francis Fukuyama. "Reflections on the End of History, Five Years Later." *History and Theory*, Vol. 34, No. 2, Theme Issue 34: World Historians and Their Critics (May, 1995), pg. 27-43.

Feb 21: Bush II

What impact do bias and misperception have on foreign policy and decision-making?

- Robert Jervis. "Hypotheses on Misperception." *World Politics*, Vol. 20, No. 3. (Apr., 1968), pg. 454-479.
- Condoleezza Rice. "Promoting the national interest". *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (Jan. - Feb., 2000), pg. 45-62.
- President George W Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy
- Chaim Kaufman. "Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas." *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Summer, 2004), pg. 5-48. SKIM

Feb 24: Obama

How can different theories of international relations play out at the level of American foreign policy? What is a grand strategy? Why is it important?

- David Brooks. "Chicago style". *NYTimes*. June 5, 2009. Online: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/05/opinion/05brooks.html>

- Daniel Drezner. "Does Obama have a grand strategy?". *Foreign Affairs*. July/Aug 2011. Online: <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67919/daniel-w-drezner/does-obama-have-a-grand-strategy>
- Fareed Zakaria. "The Strategist". *Time*. January 19, 2012. Online: http://www.fareedzakaria.com/home/Articles/Entries/2012/1/19_The_Strategist.html

Feb 28: Historical Review through the lens of the framework
REVIEW FOR MIDTERM

- Short review reading from Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay. *America Unbound*. Brookings Institute, 2005. Chapter 1: pg 1-15.

March 1: **Midterm IN CLASS**

Combination: key terms, concepts, short answers, and definitions

March 5-9 Spring Vacation

NB While the first half of the class focused on the historical elements of American Foreign Policy, the second half of the class examines 1) key actors and themes in foreign policy based on cases and 2) current issues or challenges facing American Foreign Policy.

March 13: Conceptual Models

Looking at models for analyzing American Foreign Policy, what are the key actors and what roles do these actors play? How do decision makers make decisions?

- Gerry Alons. "Predicting a State's Foreign Policy: State Preferences between Domestic and International Constraints," *Foreign Policy Analysis*. 3 July 2007. Pg 211-232.
- Jentleson, pg 27-71.

March 15: Forms of Power and Multi- vs Uni- lateralism

DEBATE: Hard vs Soft Power; Multi- vs Unilateralism?

- Joseph Nye. "Soft Power". *Foreign Policy*, No. 80, Twentieth Anniversary (Autumn, 1990), pg. 153-171.
- Barry Posen. "Command of the Commons". *International Security*. Volume 28, Issue 1, pg 5-46.
- Jentleson, pg 280-302
- Agency: Department of Defense (<http://www.defense.gov/>)
- OPTIONAL: Nye's *Paradox of Power* and Christopher Preble's *The Power Problem*.

March 20: The executive and NSC

How much does the President and presidential advisors impact foreign policy decision-making?

- Drezner Ch 5 (Bruce Jentleson, “An Integrative Executive Branch Strategy for Policy Planning”, pg 69-83)
- Jentleson, pg 41-48 and 216-220
- Agency: Executive branch (http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/foreign_policy/)

March 22: Department of State (Case: Afghanistan)

How do ‘turf wars’ play out on issues of significant national security? How do various agencies make their voice heard in the cacophony of multitudes of actors?

- Michael Hastings. Excerpt from *The Operators* . TBA
- “Afghanistan Index” from Brookings Institute:
<http://www.brookings.edu/topics/afghanistan.aspx> SKIM
- Jentleson, pg 405-479
- Agency: Department of State <http://www.state.gov/>
- OPTIONAL: James Dobbins. *After the Taliban: Nation-building in Afghanistan*. Potomac Books. (2008)

March 27: Interest Groups and Public Opinion (Case: ‘Israel Lobby’)

What impact do non-government groups have on American Foreign Policy?

- John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt. *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 1st edition. August 27, 2007. EXCERPT
- Jentleson, pg 49-71 (review) and 223-230
- Agency: Senate Foreign Relations Committee
(<http://foreign.senate.gov/index.html>)

March 27: 9 pm showing of *No End in Sight*

March 29: Military and Intelligence Community (Case: Iraq)

How can we understand inter-agency disconnect?

- Rajiv Chandrasekaran. *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone*. Vintage Press. September 19, 2006. EXCERPT
- Agency: CIA <https://www.cia.gov/>
- Simulation materials distributed

April 3: NO CLASS

April 5: NO CLASS

April 10: SIMULATION I

April 12: SIMULATION II

April 17: Debrief and Interagency Issues

What have we learned from the simulation? What are the significant issues facing inter-agency cooperation and decision-making?

- Drezner Ch 1 (Daniel Drezner, “The Challenging Future of Strategic Planning in Foreign Policy”, pg 3-20)

April 19: The US and North Korea—a black hole for American Foreign Policy

How can foreign policy be created in a context of tremendous uncertainty?

- Readings TBA

April 24: The US and East Asia

How does the US deal with a rising China?

- John Ikenberry. “The Rise of China and the Future of the West”. *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 1 (Jan. - Feb., 2008), pg. 23-37.
- Christensen. “Posing Problems without Catching Up”. *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Spring, 2001), pg. 5-40.
- Jentleson, pg 368-381

April 26: The End of an American Era?

Can we envision an end of American dominance? How would that decline be precipitated by, altered, or mitigated certain foreign policy decisions?

- Charles Kupchan. *The End of the American Era*. Vintage, 2003. Pg 3-35 and 304-336.
- Jentleson, pg 528-551

FRIDAY April 27

Short response paper due by 5 pm (via email)

May 1: Future Challenges

TAKE-HOME FINAL distributed (open book, open note)

What future, non-traditional challenges will there be for American Foreign Policy?

- For this class, we will cover a selection of significant challenges that the US faces moving forward in an international context.
- You may select your own reading on following issues based on your own interests: Climate Change/Environment (Jentleson pg 568-577), Human Rights/Aid (Jentleson Ch 10, pg 551-563), Energy (TBD), Public Diplomacy (Heil article), Non-state actors (Jentleson pg 316-320), Genocide/Humanitarian Intervention (Jentleson Ch 9), and Global Health (Jentleson pg 563-568).

May 3: Concluding remarks

TUESDAY May 10

Take-home final due by 5 pm (via email)

Additional Resources (alphabetical order)

Suggested news sources (domestic and international):

Al Jazeera: <http://www.aljazeera.com/>
BBC News: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/>
CNN: <http://www.cnn.com/>
Economist: www.economist.com
Financial Times: www.ft.com
FoxNews: <http://www.foxnews.com/>
NYTimes: www.nytimes.com
Wall Street Journal: <http://online.wsj.com/>
Washington Post: www.washingtonpost.com

Commentators:

David Brooks: <http://brooks.blogs.nytimes.com/>
Daniel Drezner: <http://drezner.foreignpolicy.com/>
Graham Allison: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/graham-allison/>
Martin Wolf: <http://www.ft.com/comment/columnists/martinwolf>
Stephen Walt: <http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/>
Steve Clemons (Washington Note): <http://www.thewashingtonnote.com/>
Thomas Ricks: <http://ricks.foreignpolicy.com/>

Think tanks:

Brookings Institute: <http://www.brookings.edu/>
Council on Foreign Relations: <http://www.cfr.org/>
CSIS: <http://csis.org/>
Heritage Foundation: <http://www.heritage.org/>
RAND Corporation: <http://www.rand.org/>

Relevant agency websites:

CIA: <https://www.cia.gov/>
CRS: <http://www.loc.gov/crsinfo/>
DEA: <http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/index.htm>
DoD: <http://www.defense.gov/>
DoE: <http://www.energy.gov/>
DoJ: <http://www.usdoj.gov/>
DoS: <http://www.state.gov/>
DoT: <http://www.treasury.gov>
GAO: <http://www.gao.gov/>
NSA: <http://www.nsa.gov/>
Senate Foreign Relations Committee: <http://foreign.senate.gov/index.html>
Treasury: <http://www.ustreas.gov/>
USAID: <http://www.usaid.gov/>
Whitehouse/Executive: http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/foreign_policy/

Academic Integrity and Classroom Policies

As you fulfill the requirements of the class, you must also be highly attentive of classroom policies and appropriate academic behavior. Boston College places great value on academic integrity. The University's statement on academic integrity is the following (the policies and procedures manual can be accessed online <http://www.bc.edu/offices/policies/manual/>):

“Academic Integrity

The pursuit of knowledge can proceed only when scholars take responsibility and receive credit for their work. Recognition of individual contributions to knowledge and of the intellectual property of others builds trust within the university and encourages the sharing of ideas that is essential to scholarship. Similarly, the educational process requires that individuals present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique, and eventual reformulation. Presentation of others' work as one's own is not only intellectual dishonesty, but also undermines the educational process.

Standards

Academic integrity is violated by any dishonest act which is committed in an academic context including, but not restricted to the following:

Cheating is the fraudulent or dishonest presentation of work. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- the use or attempted use of unauthorized aids in examinations or other academic exercises submitted for evaluation;
- fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data, results, sources for papers or reports, or in clinical practice, as in reporting experiments, measurements, statistical analyses, tests, or other studies never performed; manipulating or altering data or other manifestations of research to achieve a desired result; selective reporting, including the deliberate suppression of conflicting or unwanted data;
- falsification of papers, official records, or reports;
- copying from another student's work;
- actions that destroy or alter the work of another student;
- unauthorized cooperation in completing assignments or during an examination;
- the use of purchased essays or term papers, or of purchased preparatory research for such papers;
- submission of the same written work in more than one course without prior written approval from the instructors involved;
- dishonesty in requests for make-up exams, for extensions of deadlines for submitting papers, and in any other matter relating to a course.

Plagiarism is the act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrations, or statements of another person or source, and presenting them as one's own. Each student is responsible for learning and using proper methods of paraphrasing and footnoting, quotation, and other

forms of citation, to ensure that the original author, speaker, illustrator, or source of the material used is clearly acknowledged.

Other breaches of academic integrity include:

- the misrepresentation of one's own or another's identity for academic purposes;
- the misrepresentation of material facts or circumstances in relation to examinations, papers, or other evaluative activities;
- the sale of papers, essays, or research for fraudulent use;
- the alteration or falsification of official University records;
- the unauthorized use of University academic facilities or equipment, including computer accounts and files;
- the unauthorized recording, sale, purchase, or use of academic lectures, academic computer software, or other instructional materials;
- the expropriation or abuse of ideas and preliminary data obtained during the process of editorial or peer review of work submitted to journals, or in proposals for funding by agency panels or by internal University committees;
- the expropriation and/or inappropriate dissemination of personally-identifying human subject data;
- the unauthorized removal, mutilation, or deliberate concealment of materials in University libraries, media, or academic resource centers.

Collusion is defined as assistance or an attempt to assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty. Collusion is distinct from collaborative learning, which may be a valuable component of students' scholarly development. Acceptable levels of collaboration vary in different courses, and students are expected to consult with their instructor if they are uncertain whether their cooperative activities are acceptable.”

If, at any time, you have questions about this policy or any concerns with regards to academic integrity issues, consult with your academic dean or myself.