Political Science (POLS) 4330 (crn --27437): Foreign Policy of The U.S.

Spring 2016

216 UGLC
M, W: 10:30-11:50

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Office Hours:
1:30-2:30 (Mondays and Wednesdays)
and by appointment

Course Website:
Note that this course uses Blackboard (through the MY UTEP portal and the UTEP homepage) and will be used daily to post vital information about the course schedule and content

Catalog Course Description

A study of the structures and processes of the United States foreign policy decision-making. Prerequisite: POLS 2310 and 2311

Course Overview and Goals

This course provides an examination to key concepts, principles, and processes in US foreign policy decision-making, some history of US foreign policy epochs, and case analysis of regional hotspots and bilateral relations of key states with the USA. The processes of foreign policy creation and implementation are complex due to an array of actors within the US government that often make US policy seem less than unitary. The politics of these processes will be examined with the goal of understanding how the US government operates in the area of foreign policy. Time will also be spent understanding important relationships between the USA and its allies and also hostile states, with an eye towards understanding current events and critical analysis.

After the completion of this course, students should have the following skills or knowledge:

- Have a basic understanding of how US foreign policy is created and implemented
- Have a comprehension of epochs of US foreign policy history
- Have some foundation to analyze the role of US in certain case studies and regions of the world
- Have basic geographic knowledge of countries around the world and the case studies discussed during the course

**Tips for Passing this Course**

Purchase or borrow the textbooks, and read them. Many quiz and exam questions are based on the textbooks. If you attempt to take this course and not read the textbooks, then you may fail the course. When you read and study, do not just do it to memorize the material. Study with an aim towards comprehension. If you are confused about ideas or concepts, speak with the instructor. Utilize the instructor’s office hours or make appointments. Stay informed about what is going on in the course, such as the scheduling and content of quizzes and exams. Check in on Blackboard often and check your UTEP email for messages from the instructor or teaching assistant.

Review the power point slides, but remember that they do not suffice as a reminder of everything that was covered in a lecture. For this reason, you need to take notes, which forces you to concentrate on lecture and class discussions. Typing up notes is an excellent way for you to study from your notes because it forces you to think again about what was said. Try to include your responses or ideas that you have in conjunction with the notes or content of the course as a way to connect it to your life in a way that you care about the subject matter. Typing these thoughts will also trigger in your mind what we discussed. Take an active interest in the subject matter, even if it is not your top interest. After all, you are not going to learn what you don’t want to know.

**Course Technology**

This course utilizes the Blackboard system through the My UTEP portal. This is the central means of communication for the course and also includes the syllabus and other important content. Lectures will also be posted on Blackboard, sometimes with a time-lag so that students can use these to study for tests. Hence, attendance and note-taking are vital to passing the course.

**Requirements and Evaluation of Performance**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings and Current Events Quizzes</td>
<td>20% total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational Plan Attendance and Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Research Team Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Policy Research Paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
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**Midterm and Final Exams:** The midterm and final exams will cover material from the course textbooks and lectures. The purpose is to evaluate student comprehension of the subject matter. The format will likely be a combination of map identifications, essays, short answer questions,
and multiple choice questions. Students are required to bring their own clean bluebooks or white lined paper. The final exam will be cumulative. Our final exam day is Friday, May 13 from 10:00-12:45. The final exam is considered over when the instructor is no longer in the room (all other students present have completed the exam), so do not be late. The exam must be taken on this day unless you have a valid university accepted excuse. Going on vacation or booked flights are not a proper excuse. There may be a possibility of a take-home exam that would be a written paper, in case the instructor presents this as an option. If so, we will hold a democratic vote.

Reading and Current Event Quizzes: Most weeks there will be a quiz on the readings for that week, or thereabouts, and prominent news stories that directly relate to US foreign policy. These will be short quizzes of a ten questions or less. Students may drop their lowest quiz grade.

Policy Research Team Project: This is a team project that includes some individual evaluation, and this is described in detail in other guideline documents to be provided to you early in the semester. There are multiple steps to this project. The first step is team organization and formulation of a team plan, including consultation with library instructors. The second step is approval of this plan. The next steps are the execution of the research plan, presentation of the case study, and finally the production of individual student papers. The purpose of this project is to practice research, writing, team-work, and presentation skills.

Attendance/Participation Grade and Policy: Students will be able to earn participation points each class session by attending and participating in class discussions. Attendance is mandatory by university policy and will be recorded daily. It is expected of you that you do not miss assignments or classes, which will result in a penalty to your grade. Here are specific situations of absence and whether or not excuses will be accepted as valid or not:

- If you know you will be unable to attend a class due to a valid university excuse (NCAA sports, religious purposes, other university events, brief military duties) you must notify me ten days in advance by a letter provided by the Dean of Students). Please provide the appropriate documentation in advance to the teaching assistant.
- The instructor reserves the right to accept, or not, excuses related to medical issues. Naturally, it is not usually feasible to document in advance any time lost due to illness. The exception is planned surgeries and appointments (not normal check-ups). Any class time missed will not be excused without medical or other valid documentation. Yo puedo leer y hablar (píquito) Español, y aprendo mas poco a poco, so documentation from Mexico is permissible. Students with severe medical problems that result in missing a majority of the semester may want to consider a complete withdrawal from the university for medical purposes. That is an option when multiple courses are affected.
- Absences due to conflicts with work, child care, etc. that make it impossible for you to regularly attend this class are not permitted. If you know you will have scheduling conflicts with this class, then you should make other arrangements or post-pone this class until a future semester.
- Missed exams or quizzes due to family hardship or family medical problems may not be accepted by the instructor as valid excuses. For example, helping family members move, picking up at the airport, driving family members to medical appointments when you
know they conflict with class, and other such activities, will not be permitted as valid excuses. Emergencies such as deaths in the family must be documented, unfortunately.

Other Course Policies and Expectations

No make-up exams or quizzes will occur without a student having provided to the instructor valid documentation explaining or excusing the absence. See the above policies. The instructor has the discretion to decide if a make-up is allowable outside the university excused absences. Debate and discussion are important in the critical evaluation of politics. It is expected that students will treat the instructor and other students with respect, including refraining from disparaging remarks, personal insults, derogatory comments, and other unprofessional behavior, in person or electronically. Any problem related to rude conduct, or any threats to violence, etc., will result in the student being dropped from the course by the instructor. Please also note that this course involves discussion of countries hostile to the USA, but it is important to maintain an objective and analytical approach to this subject matter and not debase course discussions with comments that are racist in regard to other races, nations, and cultures. There are at least two sides to every dispute.

Outside work and other non-class related activities are not permitted in our classroom. If you engage in behaviors that distract others or create a disturbance, you will be asked to leave the class. If you refuse to leave class, university police will be contacted.

Cell phone/smart phone/PDA usage is not permitted during exams or at other times when it might pose a class disturbance. Laptops, tablets, or other electronic devices used for note-taking are permissible, but students using such must not engage in any activities that disturb other students.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS’ Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities. The CASS phone number is 747-5148 or at cass@utep.edu or go to Room 106 Union East Building. The Student is responsible for presenting to the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions before arrangements need to be made for exams, quizzes, or other needs.

Mandatory Course Materials (available at UTEP Bookstore or elsewhere)


Schedule of Classes

Week 1 (1/20) Introductions and Policy Research Team Organization:

Week 2 (1/25 - 1/27) Overview Themes in US Foreign Policy:
Monday (1/25), meet in library with instructional librarians for presentation on sources
Carter Chapter 1
Wednesday, Overview Lectures on Policy, American Political Culture, and epochs/themes of American Foreign Policy

Week 3 (2/01 - 2/03) Founding Fathers, Theories, and Pirates:
- Monday, February 1, we all meet with instructional librarians on research strategies and other tips
- Carter Chapter 2
- Wednesday, quiz on readings from last two weeks (Carter 1 & 2)
- Wednesday lectures continue on historical epochs, culture, and theories

Week 4 (2/08 - 2/10) Continuation of Previous Week and Context of US Foreign Policy:
- Carter Chapter 3
- Lecture on the Cold War, likely continuing into the following week
- Wednesday, quiz on readings (Carter 3, Snow 1)
- Snow Chapter 1 (Russia)

Week 5 (2/15) Overview of US Government Actors and Problems:
- No class on Wednesday due to Papal visit
- Carter Chapter 4
- Lecture on decision making problems and case studies
- Monday, reading quiz (Carter 4)

Week 6 (2/22-2/24) and Theories of Individual and Group Decision-making:
- Carter Chapter 5
- Wednesday Snow Chapter 9 (Mexico)
- Reading quiz (Carter 5, Snow 9)
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-Mexico relations

Week 7 (2/29-3/02) Catching up and Midterm:
- Snow Chapter 1 (Russia) review
- Midterm Examination
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-Russia relations
- Case study on the Cuban Missile

Week 8 post-spring break (3/14-3/16) Bureaucratic Politics and Policy Making:
- Carter Chapter 6
- Reading quiz
- Snow Chapter 10 (Cuba)
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-Cuba relations

Week 9 (3/21-3/23) Congressional Foreign Policy Making:
- Carter Chapter 7
- Snow Chapter 2 (China)
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-China relations

**Week 10 (3/28-2/30) Pluralist Society and Actors:**
- Carter Chapter 8
- Snow Chapter 4 (North Korea)
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-North Korean relations

**Week 11 (4/04-4/06) Case Studies:**
- Carter Chapter 9
- Snow Chapters 3 & 6 (Iran, Iraq)
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-Iranian relations
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-Iraqi relations

**Week 12 (4/11-4/13) US Military Tools Lecture, also Afghanistan:**
- Lecture on US military tools, allies, and strategy
- Snow Chapter 8 (Afghani)
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-Afghani relations

**Week 13 (4/18-4/20) Pluralist Policy Processes and International Actors:**
- Snow Chapters 5 & 6 Pakistan and India
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-Pakistani relations
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-Indian relations

**Week 14 (4/25-4/27) US Role in The World, Case Studies:**
- Lecture on US role in the World
- Snow Chapters 11 & 12 (Israel & Egypt)
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-Israeli relations
- Research Policy Team Presentation on US-Egyptian relations

**Week 15 (5/02-5/04, 5/06) Foreign Policy Outputs and Future:**
- Note, we will meet on “Dead Day” due to Papal visit on 2/17 cancelation.
- Carter Chapters 10 & 11
- Individual papers from previous week due by May 4. No papers will be accepted after this date without a valid excuse.

**Final Exam:** May 13, Friday, 10:00-12:45 if in class