

**MC 326**  
**U.S. Foreign Policy**  
**James Madison College**  
**Fall 2019**  
**Professor Lora DiBlasi**

**Course Information**

Class time: Monday & Wednesday 5-6:20  
Class location: 336 Case Hall  
Final Exam: Friday 12/13 10 am-12 pm

**Contact Information**

Email: [diblasil@msu.edu](mailto:diblasil@msu.edu)  
Office: 370 North Case Hall  
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 2-3:30

**Course Overview**

This course aims to provide students with an understanding of US foreign policy and national security. We will explore the history, traditions, and theories of US foreign policy. Through readings, lectures, class discussions, and a final policy paper, students will engage with current policy issues, analyze previous foreign policy and national security decisions, and explore various theoretical frameworks.

The first part of the course is dedicated to understanding what foreign policy is and does, and how theoretical frameworks help us understand the decision-making process. Next, we will explore the history of US foreign policy noting major turning points and policy changes. Third, we will look at the sources of foreign policy and discuss who actually makes foreign policy and how they do so. Fourth, we will discuss current American foreign policy in key regions around the world. Next, we will survey key issues and topics in US foreign policy. Lastly, we will discuss key issues on the US foreign policy agenda along with topics that may present concerns for the future of US foreign policy.

The goal of this course is to introduce students to US foreign policy. In addition, this course aims to connect the major theoretical frameworks introduced in previous courses to current events in US foreign policy to help students better understand these phenomena. The assignments, especially the two papers, aim to help students reinforce the material and apply what they learn in the classroom to the real world. The exams are designed to test students' knowledge and mastery of the course material.

**Course Materials**

Students are required to attend all classes, complete all assigned readings before coming to class, and complete all examinations and course assignments to pass the course.

Please purchase the following book for this class. Either digital or physical copy is fine. Also, please be sure to purchase the correct edition of the book. Previous editions will have different content and page numbers.

- Cox, Michael and Doug Stokes, eds. 2018. *US Foreign Policy*. **Third Edition**. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This book will be noted as “C&S” on the daily reading schedule.

Most other course material can be found through the MSU library with the provided hyperlink.

Items that are marked with a \* will be uploaded on Desire2Learn (D2L) under the appropriate heading. Please ensure you have access to D2L at the beginning of the semester. If you do not have access, please email the instructor within the first week of the course.

You should also consider reading periodicals with good international coverage. *The New York Times* is typically the most complete, while the *Washington Post* and the *Economist* also provide strong coverage. *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *Survival*, and *International Security* are also recommended journals with more sustained coverage of many of the topics we are studying. They are also good resources for your term paper. Knowledge of current events is expected. I can also point you to a variety of blogs that I think might be helpful to you.

### **Evaluations**

Course grades are based on one short paper, examinations (midterm and final), a simulation, and participation.

Due dates are below:

**October 7<sup>th</sup> (Media Analysis Assignment Due)**

**October 16<sup>th</sup> (Midterm Exam)**

**October 23<sup>rd</sup> (Policy Paper Topic Due)**

**November 20<sup>th</sup> (Policy Paper Due)**

**December 13<sup>th</sup> (Final Exam)**

Current Events Media Analysis Assignment (10% of final grade)

This assignment requires students to pick a current event in foreign policy and analyze the way it is being discussed by various media outlets and sources. The goal of this assignment is to have students critically assess how the media discusses foreign policy in terms of the variation of coverage and content. Students are expected to collect and evaluate how their topic is treated by a variety of media sources. We will discuss your analyses in class on Monday, October 7<sup>th</sup>. More details and instructions will be provided early in the semester.

**Due Date: Monday, October 7<sup>th</sup> (in class)**

Policy Paper (20% of final grade)

You will need to write one policy paper analyzing a US foreign policy issue, event, or decision. The paper should apply a major theoretical framework to the issue to explain US behavior. In addition, you should explain the potential options available to the US at that time. Lastly, you should propose and defend the best policy solution for the US. This can either be arguing the US should have chosen a different course of action given their available options or defending the choice of the US at that time. *You must email the instructor to approve your topic no later than 10/23.*

The paper should be about 12-15 pages long. Paper guidelines will be handed out in class and posted to D2L. Please upload your final paper in the drop box titled “Policy Paper” on D2L by the due date.

**Topic due date: Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:59 pm (via email)**

**Due Date: Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 pm (upload to drop box on D2L)**

Examinations (Midterm 25% and final exam 30% of final grade)

There will be one in-class midterm exam and one final exam. The exams will evaluate students’ knowledge and understanding of the readings and class discussions. You will need to bring a blue book for each exam.

**Midterm Exam: October 16**

**Final Exam: December 13**

Attendance and Participation (15% of final grade)

The final component of your grade is determined by your attendance and participation in class. Students are expected to attend all classes and actively participate in discussion. Attendance will be tracked by a sign-in sheet that will be distributed in class. If a student knows they will miss class for a university recognized event (student-athletics, university sponsored club or organization event, religious observance, etc.), they are expected to follow university policies by informing me at the start of the semester and sending a reminder one week before the event takes place.

Note: Excessive absences or failures to post will adversely impact your class grade.

### **Grading Policies**

All assignments, participation, and exams will be graded according to the following criteria:

4.0: Exceptional work. Offers exceptional insights during class discussions; outstanding, original written work displays complex understanding of the assigned readings and develops a sophisticated argument.

3.5: Excellent work. Makes consistent contributions to large class discussions which demonstrate full and careful reading of assigned materials; consistently on task during small-group discussions; written work is original, clearly written, and carefully argued.

3.0: Good work. Makes consistent contributions to large class discussions; however, these contributions are not always consistent in terms of quality or quantity; written work makes a persuasive argument that is clearly written and reasoned.

2.0: Sufficient work. Meets minimum requirements. Occasionally contributes to class discussion; written work reveals knowledge of course themes and familiarity with the assigned materials; however, it is not always clearly written and does not develop a consistent argument.

1.0: Below average work; does not meet minimum requirements.

### Break Down of Grade:

Media Analysis Assignment: 10%

Midterm Exam: 25%

Policy Paper: 20%

Participation: 15%

Final Exam: 30%

### Grading Scale

4.0 = 92% and above

3.5 = 91% to 86%

3.0 = 85% to 80%

2.5 = 79% to 75%

2.0 = 74% to 70%

1.5 = 69% to 64%

1.0 = 63% to 58%

0.0 = below 58%

Any challenges to grades must be submitted in writing no sooner than one week after I have graded the assignment.

### **Course Policies**

#### Communication

Email is the best way to contact me outside of class. My email address is [diblasil@msu.edu](mailto:diblasil@msu.edu). Please do not email me through D2L. If you email me, include “MC 326” in the subject line to make sure the email does not get missed.

#### Technology in the Classroom

Laptops and tablets are allowed for note-taking purposes only. Any use of technology for other purposes (email, Facebook, Youtube, etc.) is not allowed. Do not record lectures unless given explicit permission. I reserve the right to ban laptops and tablets from class should they be abused.

Lecture slides from each class will be posted on D2L in PDF format after class. Please note that slides will not be available before class.

#### Missed Exams or Assignments

You are responsible for ensuring that all exams and assignments are completed as scheduled on the due dates listed in the syllabus. Papers that are late will be penalized by 15 points per day. Papers that are more than one week late will receive a 0. Makeup exams are administered only in the case of a university excused absence or medical emergency (ie. hospitalization). In the case of university excused absence, students are required to notify the instructor at least two weeks before the assignment or exam is to take place and provide relevant documentation associated with the absence. In the case of medical emergency, a doctor’s note is required. Students must contact the professor and provide the doctor’s note BEFORE the time of the exam/assignment, and the work (exam or paper) MUST be submitted within one week of the original deadline unless further doctor’s notes are submitted. It is the student’s responsibility to make sure the make-up exam is scheduled within this timeframe.

Grief Absence Policy: <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/regulations/selected/grief-absence-policy>

### Classroom Etiquette

Please be respectful both to your classmates and me. I request that you avoid the following behavior while in class.

- Use of Mobile Devices (talking, texting, web-surfing, or email use)
- Facebook or other social media websites
- Excessive Tardiness
- Sleeping in class
- Excessive Disruption (talking/arguing with classmates, reading newspapers, leaving class, etc.)

Note: Engagement in these activities during class will adversely impact your attendance/participation grade.

### Accommodations for Students

Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at [rcpd.msu.edu](http://rcpd.msu.edu). Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation (“VISA”) form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc).

### Academic Honesty

Article 2.III.B.2 of the SRR states: “The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” In addition, the Department of Political Science adheres to the policies on academic honesty specified in General Student Regulation 1.0, *Protection of Scholarship and Grades*; the all-University Policy on *Integrity of Scholarship and Grades*; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations.

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the [www.allmsu.com](http://www.allmsu.com) Web site to complete any course work in this course. Students who violate MSU regulations on Protection of Scholarship and Grades will receive a failing grade in the course or on the assignment.

Faculty are required to report all instances in which a penalty grade is given for academic dishonesty. Students reported for academic dishonesty are required to take an online course about the integrity of scholarship and grades. A hold will be placed on the student's account until such time as the student completes the course. This course is overseen by the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.

### Spartan Code of Honor: Academic Pledge

The Spartan Code of Honor was adopted by ASMSU on March 3, 2016, endorsed by Academic Governance on March 22, 2016, and recognized by the Provost, President, and Board of Trustees on April 15, 2016.

The Spartan Code of Honor Academic Pledge:

“As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the highest ethical standard. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that honor in ownership is worth more than grades. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do.”

<https://msu.edu/unit/ombud/academic-integrity/Spartan%20Code%20of%20Honor%20Academic%20Pledge.html>

### Anti-Discrimination Policy

All members of James Madison College and Michigan State University are subject to the University’s Anti-Discrimination Policy, which prohibits discrimination or harassment of any kind on the basis of someone’s age, color, gender, gender identity, marital status, disability status, height, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, weight or any other characteristic. Discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated in this class. Any and all acts of discrimination by a member of this classroom community will: A) be immediately reported to the appropriate University officials; and, B) result in a participation grade reduction. To access the full MSU Anti-Discrimination Policy, please click this [link](#).

Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct: All members of James Madison College and Michigan State University are subject to the University Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct (RVSM). To access the full University Policy on RVSM, please click this [link](#) or see the PDF document posted on our course D2L site. To access the Student Quick Guide to RVSM, please click this [link](#). Both documents contain information about support resources and procedures for reporting relationship violence or sexual misconduct.

**IMPORTANT:** As your professor, I am your ally and my door is always open to you if you are in need. Please note, however, that I am a mandatory reporter. That means that if you reveal to me that you have experienced relationship violence or have been the target of sexual misconduct, I am required by law to report your case to the appropriate University officials.

**Please Note:** I reserve the right to modify this syllabus at any point in the course to suit the needs of the class. All changes will be announced in class, sent to students via email, and a revised syllabus will be posted to D2L as soon as possible.

Commercialization of lecture notes and university-provided course materials is not permitted in this course.

## Course Schedule

**August 28: NO CLASS**

**September 2: NO CLASS (Labor Day)**

**September 4: Introduction**

- No Assigned Reading

**September 9: Policy Process**

- Joyce P. Kaufman. Chapter 1. *A Concise History of US Foreign Policy* \*
- Amelia Hoover Green, "How to Read Political Science: A Guide in Four Steps" \*

**September 11: Paradigms Review**

- Jack Snyder, "[One World, Rival Theories](#)", *Foreign Policy*

**September 16: Grand Strategy**

- C&S Chapter 2
- Rebecca Friedman Lissner, "[What is Grand Strategy](#)" *Texas National Security Review*
- Alasdair Roberts (2018) "[Grand Strategy Isn't Grand Enough](#)", *Foreign Policy*

**September 18: International Structure**

- Robert Hunter Wade (2006) "[The Invisible Hand of the American Empire](#)" *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays* 17(2): 77-88
- Sebastian Rosato and John Schussler (2011) "[A Realist Foreign Policy for the United States](#)" *Perspectives on Politics* 9(4): 803-819

**September 23: Pre-WWII & American Exceptionalism**

- C&S Chapter 3
- C&S Chapter 4

**September 25: Cold War**

- C&S Chapter 6
- George Kennan, "[Long Telegram](#)" Parts 1, 2, and 5.

**September 30: America in the 1990s-mid 2000s**

- C&S Chapter 7
- C&S Chapter 8
- Jeremy Suri (2009) "[American Grand Strategy from the Cold War's End to 9/11](#)" *Orbis* 53(4): 611-627
- Stephen M. Walt (2001/2) "[Beyond Bin-Laden: Reshaping U.S. Foreign Policy](#)" *International Security* 26(3): 56-78

## **October 2: Congress & President**

- C&S Chapter 9
- Sarah Binder, "[Three reasons you should be startled by how the Senate rebuked Trump](#)", *Monkey Cage*
- Michael A. Bailey, Cathy Lee, and Erik Voeten, "[Trump makes longtime allies nervous. Here's how we measured this](#)", *Monkey Cage*

## **October 7: Media**

### **\*\*Media Analysis Assignment Due\*\***

- C&S Chapter 11

## **October 9: Military & Intelligence Community**

- Beth A. Fischer, "Military power and US foreign policy" \*

## **October 14: Review for Midterm**

- No Assigned Reading

## **October 16: Midterm Exam**

- Bring blue book for exam

## **October 21: US and Middle East**

- C&S Chapter 12
- Kirstin Fabbe, Melani Cammett, and Marc Lynch, "[This big factor is at the heart of political protests all over Middle East](#)", *Monkey Cage*
- Toby Craig Jones (2012) "[America, Oil, and War in the Middle East](#)" *The Journal of American History* 99(1): 208-218

## **October 23: US and Russia**

### **\*\*Policy Paper Topic Due\*\***

- C&S Chapter 14
- Daniel Drezner (2010) "[American Foreign Policy toward Russia: Is a U-Turn, or Any Turn, Possible?](#)" *American Academy of Arts & Sciences*

## **October 28: US and China**

- C&S Chapter 15
- Melissa Hanham (2017) "[China's Happy to Sit out on the Nuclear Arms Race](#)" *Foreign Policy*
- Thomas J. Christensen (2006) "[Fostering Stability or Creating a Monster? The Rise of China and U.S. Foreign Policy Toward East Asia](#)" *International Security* 31(1): 81-126
- Yuen Foong Khong (2018) "[A Regional Perspective on the U.S. and Chinese Visions for East Asia](#)" *Asia Policy* 13(2): 6-12

### **October 30: US and Latin America**

- C&S Chapter 16
- Megan Specia, "[What is Happening in Venezuela? How It Got Here and Why It Matters](#)" *New York Times*

### **November 4: US and Africa**

- C&S Chapter 17
- Wesley Morgan, "[Behind the Secret U.S. War in Africa](#)" *Politico*
- Padraig R. Carmody and Francis Y. Owusu (2007) "[Competing Hegemons? Chinese versus American Geo-economic Strategies in Africa](#)" *Political Geography* 26(5): 504-524

### **November 6: Terrorism**

- C&S Chapter 18
- Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter (2006) "[The Strategies of Terrorism](#)" *International Security* 31(1): 49-80.
- Stephen Walt (2015) "[The Soft Logic of Soft Targets](#)", *Foreign Policy*
- Zach Beauchamp (2016) "[Why is ISIS turning to global terrorism? Because it's losing](#)", *Vox*

### **November 11: Gender**

- C&S Chapter 20
- Mary Caprioli (2000) "[Gendered Conflict.](#)" *Journal of Peace Research* 37(1): 51-68.

### **November 13: Environment**

- C&S Chapter 21
- Idean Salehyan and Cullen Hendrix (2014) "[Climate Shocks and Political Violence](#)" *Global Environmental Change* 28: 239-250
- David Michel and Ricky Passarelli, "[The Climate Wars Are Already Here](#)" *Foreign Policy*
- "[How Could A Drought Spark a Civil War](#)", *NPR*

### **November 18: Security Technology**

- James Stavridis, "[The United States is Not Ready for a Cyber Pearl Harbor](#)", *Foreign Policy*
- Andy Greenberg, "[How an Entire Nation Became Russia's Test Lab for Cyberwar](#)", *Wired*
- Mark Bowden, "[The Killing Machines](#)", *The Atlantic*

### **November 20: Issues in Modern Warfare**

**\*\*Policy Paper due by 11:59 pm\*\***

- James Stavridis (2015) "[NATO's Circle of Ice and Fire](#)", *Foreign Policy*
- P.W. Singer, "[Robots at War: The New Battlefield](#)", *Wilson Quarterly* Winter 2009
- J.M. Berger (2015) "[War on Error](#)" *Foreign Policy*

**November 25: Humanitarian Intervention**

- Philip Gourevitch, “We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda” \*
- Alan J. Kuperman (2000) “[Rwanda in Retrospect](#)”, *Foreign Affairs*
- Benjamin Valentino (2011) “[The True Costs of Humanitarian Intervention](#)”, *Foreign Affairs*

**November 27: No Class (Thanksgiving break)**

- Instead of attending class you should watch the movie “The Ghosts of Rwanda”
- Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJAuyIRfYIM>

**December 2: Issues on the Horizon**

- C&S Chapter 22
- C&S Chapter 24
- C&S Chapter 25
- Steven Pinker and Andrew Mack, “[The World is Not Falling Apart](#)”, *Slate*
- Joshua S. Goldstein (2011) “[Think Again: War](#)” *Foreign Policy*

**December 4: Wrap Up and Final Exam Review**

- No Assigned Reading

**December 13: Final Exam (10 am-12 noon in 336 Case Hall)**

- Bring blue book for exam