POLS 359: Problems in American Foreign Policy
Monday, Wednesday– 9:55-10:45 AM – Spring 2015

Professor Jon Pevehouse
313 North Hall; 1050 Bascom Mall
pevehouse@polisci.wisc.edu
Office: 262-4839

OFFICE HOURS:
M, Tu 1:30-2:30
[and by appointment]

Teaching Assistants:
Annie Anderson: aostrow@wisc.edu
Timothy Williams: twilliams3@wisc.edu
Olivia Butler: obutler@wisc.edu

TA Office Hours:
Anderson:
Williams:
Butler:

Course Description:
The purpose of this class is to undertake a historical and analytical examination of U.S. Foreign Policy since World War II. The course is divided into three main topics. First, we will discuss the history of U.S. Foreign Policy since World War II. We will examine topics such as how current U.S. policy has evolved and what was the impetus behind our important foreign policy choices. The second part of the class will examine the institutions and processes that guide foreign policy formation and implementation. Questions will revolve around who are the important people setting the foreign policy agenda and what are the important institutions attempting to implement this agenda. Finally, the last third of the course will review some of the more salient foreign policy challenges facing the U.S. as we enter the 21st century. Some of these issues include how we have responded to the attacks of September 11th, whether our foreign aid policy is effective, and whether U.S. foreign policy towards Africa is undergoing significant change.

Required Readings:
The following books are available at the UW Bookstore and are required for the class.


I also urge you to read a good internationally-oriented newspaper, web site, or blog such as the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal. Other sources of good international news are the Washington Post, the Financial Times, the Economist, and the BBC online (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news).

Evaluation:
Grades will be determined as follows:
Exam 1 25% Discussion Participation 15%
Final 30% Research Paper 30%
The midterm exam and final exam will have identical formats and will be in three parts: there will be a few multiple-choice questions, identification questions, and an essay question. I will hand out a review sheet with potential identification questions and the essays a week before the exam. The final is pseudo-comprehensive - its format will be identical to the first exam, but it will contain two essay questions, the second one will be comprehensive. The other sections of the exam (multiple choice, ID, first essay) will cover only the material from portion of the class after the mid-term. I will hand out a separate instruction sheet discussing the research paper. There will be no makeup exams.

COURSE OUTLINE
HS = Hook & Spanier  RS = Rosati/Scott  * = articles on Learn@UW

Part 1: The History of U.S. Foreign Policy

January 21: Welcome - Class Overview
Saying hello and go over logistics.

January 26: Studying U.S. Foreign Policy & The Inter-war Period
What kinds of questions do we want to ask when studying U.S. foreign policy? What different approaches exist to studying foreign policy? Also, a brief review of that often forgotten period between the World Wars (1918-1939).

HS: Chapter 1  RS: Chapter 1

January 28: World War II and the Emergence of Containment
How did the Soviet Union and the U.S. develop their heated rivalry? Was it inevitable? Could the U.S. have withdrawn from the world stage again? What were the major initiatives of the U.S. in post-War Europe? What did these policies really hope to accomplish?

HS: Chapter 2

February 2-4: Containment & Cold War - US Policy and Influence
Why did the U.S. and the Soviets battle across the globe? How does the Cold War affect Korea? Africa? Latin America? Europe? The Middle East? What were the major crises of the early Cold War period?

HS: Chapter 3; also pp. 71-87

February 9: Vietnam - The Height and Limits of Containment
Why was America involved in Vietnam? How did our involvement change the way foreign policy is made in the U.S.? Is the legacy of Vietnam still a force in U.S. foreign policy?

HS: Chapter 4: pp. 88-100.
February 11: Détente & The Cold War, Part Two
How did détente between the superpowers proceed? What, if any, effect did it have on Europe, the Middle East, and Africa? Was détente a preview of the end of the Cold War? How and why did it end? Were any particular events and/or people to blame? Was Cold War II as "cold" as Cold War I? Would then end of the Cold War have occurred without Cold War II?

HS: Chapters 5-6

February 16: The End of the Cold War & the New World Order
Why did the Cold War end? Could we have predicted the end of the Cold War? How did U.S. foreign policy fundamentally change after the Cold War? What were the major issues confronting the U.S. in the immediate post-Cold War landscape? Were they fundamentally different than the problems of the previous 40 years or the same old problems re-packaged?

HS: Chapter 7-8 (skim 9)

February 18: Post-Cold War Challenges & 9/11
Did U.S. foreign policy ever find firm footing after the end of the Cold War? Did the U.S. focus enough on non-traditional issues such as failed states, terrorism, or development? How did 9/11 change the American foreign policy outlook? Which of these changes have been lasting?

HS: Chapters 11-12

Part 2: U.S. Foreign Policy Process and Institutions

February 23-25: The President and U.S. Foreign Policy
Is the President the most powerful actor in U.S. foreign policy? How has the President's role evolved over time? What policy instruments are at the President's disposal? Does the individual President's own personal style make a difference for U.S. foreign policy?

RS: Chapters 3-4

March 2-4: Congress and the Courts
What role does Congress play in foreign policy? The courts? How, historically, has Congress asserted its right to guide or make foreign policy? What institutions are at its disposal when confronting foreign policy problems? Do courts play any role in American foreign policy?

RS: Chapter 10


March 9: The State Department
How does the State Department function in guiding and implementing U.S. foreign policy? Is State too large to be an effective and efficient tool of U.S. foreign policy? How do the rules and operating procedures guiding State hinder or help their pursuit of America's interests?

RS: Chapter 5

March 11, 16: The Defense Department **REVIEW SHEET|PAPER TOPICS DUE**
How does the DoD shape U.S. policy? Has their role lessened with the end of the Cold War? How has their mission changed over time? Are civil-military relations better or worse in the U.S. than 25 or 50 years ago?

RS: Chapter 6


March 18: The Intelligence Community
Is the CIA an outmoded relic of the Cold War? What functions can and should the intelligence community perform? Is there a role for a "secret" foreign policy in a democracy?

RS: Chapter 7

March 23: U.S. Foreign Economic Policy
Who makes foreign economic policy? How is U.S. foreign economic policy made? Is our foreign economic policy adequate for a globalized world? Are the institutions that guide this policy more or less in tune with the rest of the foreign policy community?

RS: Chapter 8


March 25: Mid-term Exam (in class)

March 28-April 5: SPRING BREAK!

April 6: Models of Decision-Making
What do political scientists have to say about the way our foreign policy is made and implemented? Can modeling foreign policy decision-making tell us anything about making better foreign policy?

RS: pp. 270-285

April 8: Public Opinion
What role do the American people play in making and changing U.S. foreign policy? Should they play a larger (or smaller) role? Do foreign policy officials respond to demands by the U.S. public?

RS: Chapter 11

April 13: Interest Groups
What is the influence of interest groups on U.S. foreign policy? What are the important interest groups in the U.S.? Are their goals often at odds with "official" government policy? How do interest groups attempt to influence policy?

RS: Chapter 12

April 15: The Media
What role does the media play in guiding U.S. Foreign Policy? Does it help to set an agenda or does it serve a "watch dog" function? How can a democracy balance national security concerns with freedom of the press?

RS: Chapter 13

Part 3: Issues and Problems in American Foreign Policy

April 20: Russia
Why have tensions increased with Russia in the past decade? How did the post-Cold War “glow” of cooperation between East and West decline? What, if anything, can be done to repair the damage that has been done?

HS: pp. 354-358


April 22: Africa
Why has Africa long been neglected in American foreign policy? Is this changing? Why? Can U.S. foreign policy be a strong force for change in Africa? For better or worse?


April 27: Foreign Aid & Humanitarianism
Does the U.S. give too much foreign aid or not enough? What views does the public hold of this aid? Is the aid effective at promoting American national interests? Solving problems of poverty and development? None of the above?


* Jadish Bhagwati, “Banned Aid.” *Foreign Affairs*, Jan. 2010


***PAPERS DUE ON MAY 4***

April 29: China
Is China a Superpower? Should they be treated as one? Does the U.S. have a coherent policy towards China? Has the U.S. successfully balanced issues such as human rights, the environment, military security, and economics in our China policy? How does North Korea fit in America’s China policy?


May 4: The Middle East
The past decade has brought tremendous transformation to the Middle East, an area of deep interest for American foreign policy. How will the Arab Spring influence US foreign policy in the long run? Is it too early to tell whether the regimes of the region have reached equilibrium? Should the US maintain its strong military presence in the region?


May 6: The Future of American Strategy

**REVIEW SHEET**

What does the future hold for American foreign policy? Can the US maintain an expansive foreign policy posture in an era of shrinking budgets? Can the US maintain international supremacy despite challenges from China and others? Should the US spend resources to maintain this supremacy?


**FINAL EXAM:**

May 15, 2015  5:05 pm  Room: TBA