**Scope:** This course examines US foreign policy, its formulation and execution, from the early days of the republic to the present. We will concentrate on how the different instruments of national power were considered in formulating foreign policy, and how they were leveraged in its execution.

To begin the course, we will examine the historical underpinnings of US foreign policy as it evolved through history, from the colonial period and the early desire to avoid foreign entanglements, to a position of primacy after World War II.

We will then examine the post-World War II era in detail with emphasis on the “pillars” of foreign policy; national security, economic interests, the application of diplomacy and intelligence in pursuit of national interests, and how they became the basis for foreign policy under successive administrations.

We will pay particular attention to the contemporary foreign policy environment through consideration of contemporary case studies, and address the question “what is the appropriate role of the US in the world going forward?” This course will place emphasis on individual and group research of policy interests, choices, and decision-making.

**Requirements:** During the course students will complete several short writings, a midterm exam, an individual research paper, and a final group presentation analyzing selected policy issues and recommending solutions. Students are responsible for all readings and for meaningful participation in class discussions. Students should also keep abreast of current events using credible sources such as the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, and reputable policy journals. **This class is offered for grade only.**

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend every class session. Each unexcused absence will result in a half-letter reduction of the final course grade. Foreseeable absences will be excused only if 1) for a valid reason and 2) requested and approved in advance by the TA or RA (at least 14 days in the case of a religious holiday). For emergencies when prior notification is not feasible, contact the TA or RA as soon as possible for a determination of excusal. In any case, proactive and detailed communication is essential.

**Grading:**
- Group Research Project – 30%
- Individual Research Paper – 20%
Midterm exam – 20%
Participation and weekly submissions – 20%
Short papers – 10%

Graded requirements and final grades will be determined on a plus/minus basis as follows:

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<th>Exams, Presentations</th>
<th>Short Papers</th>
<th>Final Grades</th>
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Readings: Weekly readings will be available through Canvas in the “Module” section. Lecture sides will be made available the night before class in the same section.

You are required to submit weekly comments on readings on a Canvas discussion board of 250-400 words each. These are due for posting each week on the Thursday morning before class by 9:00 am (except for Week One when no comment is due). These will not receive letter grades, but will count towards your class participation grade (20% of the total course grade).

These comments should offer your thoughts on the subject for the week. Comments can address which readings you agreed or disagreed with and why, or what further questions the readings might have raised in your mind, or suggest particular angles you would like to discuss the next day in class, or perhaps can relate the readings to a contemporary policy issue. These comments should not merely summarize the readings, but instead should offer your critical reflections and help develop themes for our class discussions.

Teaching Assistant for this course is Karna Venkatraj at kkvenkatraj@utexas.edu. You may also contact the Research Associate.

Course Schedule

Aug 30: Course Introduction/ Historical Evolution of US Foreign Policy from Colonial Period to Civil War

During the first two sessions we will consider the historical development of US foreign policy from the colonial period through the immediate aftermath of World War II. We will consider the interplay between elements of the national experience, the shaping of views toward the rest of the world, and evolving perceptions of the US role in it.

Sep 6: Historical Evolution of US Foreign Policy from Civil War to 1947


Presentation groups assigned.

1st writing requirement assigned. (Opinion editorial – diplomacy)

Sep 13: Pillars of Foreign Policy – Diplomacy

The first of three “pillars of foreign policy” to be considered will be that of diplomacy. The US has been criticized for its lack of effective diplomacy, even a lack of effort, in the wake of military action in Iraq and Afghanistan. How has the US sought to advance its national interests through diplomacy? How will the US exercise “soft power” within the emerging international order? The aftermath of World War II saw the growth of a number of multinational organizations to ensure international cooperation on various issues and prevent a repeat of escalation to world war. What is their track record? Are they relevant to today’s challenges?


Chas W. Freeman, “Militarism and the Crisis of American Diplomacy”, Epistulae #20, National Humanities Institute, July 7, 2015.


1st writing requirement due.

Sep 20: Pillars of Foreign Policy – National Security

How does the US pursue its national security interests? How does it, or should it, interact with other nations? What is the contemporary national security posture,
and how does the US pursue national security through bilateral and multilateral agreements?


*Group presentation proposals due.*

**Sep 27: Pillars of Foreign Policy – Economic Engagement**

In the wake of World War II the US faced the task of converting from a wartime to peacetime economy, and reached out with the Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe. What are the foreign policy implications of an economy that continues to become more globalized as time goes on? How do we leverage economic activity toward foreign policy goals?


*Individual research paper proposals due.*

**Oct 4: Intelligence Community Past and Future**

The Intelligence Community has played a key role in foreign policy formulation throughout the nation’s history. How has the community evolved over time? How does it function? What are the key considerations as it goes about informing leaders in pursuit of US national interests?

Oct 11: Relations with China

China poses perhaps the most consequential foreign policy challenge of the new millennium. Adversary? Competitor? Ally? With a burgeoning capitalist economy under a communist government, how should the US approach China?

Readings:


Oct 18: US Engagement in the Middle East

The US initiated Global War on Terror has spawned a new era of engagement in the Middle East, with significant reverberations worldwide and public opinion of the US in the region at an all-time low. Long-standing involvement in the Israeli –
Palestinian dispute is also a factor. Given the foreign policy imperatives of healthy relations in the region (oil being only one among several), how does the US go about improving its foreign policy stance in the region?

Readings:


Oct 25: Mid Term Exam

Nov 1: US Relations with Russia

As Russia continues its emergence from the dissolution of the Soviet Union and seeks to stake out a new position of importance of the global stage, what are the challenges and opportunities for US foreign policy?

Readings:


Fyodor Lukyanov, “Putin’s Foreign Policy: The Quest to Restore Russia’s Rightful Place”, Foreign Affairs, May/June 2016.


2nd writing assignment due.

Nov 8: US Relations with Europe

Perhaps no relationship runs deeper for the US than that of the transatlantic partnership with Europe. It has emerged as the vanguard of the post-war liberal order, but challenges and fissures abound.


Celeste A. Wallander, “NATO’s Enemies Within: How Democratic Decline Could Destroy the Alliance”, Foreign Affairs, July/August 2018.


Research paper first draft due for peer review.

Nov 15: US and Latin American Relations

Throughout its history the US has interacted with its neighbors to the south out of economic interest and the desire to see representative government evolve in the
western hemisphere. But in an increasingly globalized world, the complexion of US-Latin American relations is changing.


Research paper peer-reviewed drafts returned.

Nov 22: No Class - Thanksgiving

Nov 29: US Policy Toward South Asia

Afghanistan and Iraq have dominated our attention for almost a decade. Would our long term security needs be better served by a more holistic view of the region? What regional dynamics are in play, and what opportunities exist to craft a policy that will best serve US interests? Is the South Asian Association for regional Cooperation (SAARC) a viable regional construct?


Final research papers due.

Dec 6: Group Presentations, Course Survey

Group Presentation Instructions will be provided separately.

Individual Research Paper Instructions: Improving your research and writing abilities is a primary learning objective of this course. Choose a foreign policy issue that you are interested in and write a research paper examining the issue, stating your conclusions and any recommendations you have for its resolution. The writing process will be iterative and include peer reviews. Separate detailed instructions will be issued. Papers are due at the beginning of class on November 30. Late submissions are subject to a letter-grade cut for every day late.

Short writings: These will be assigned and are due on the dates indicated in the schedule. Separate instructions will be given for each requirement.

Students with disabilities: Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 512-410-6644 (Video Phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

Academic dishonesty/plagiarism: Students are expected to respect the LBJ School's standards regarding academic dishonesty. You owe it to yourself, your fellow students, and the institution to maintain the highest standards of integrity and ethical behavior. A discussion of academic integrity, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, as well as helpful information on citations, note taking, and paraphrasing, can be found at the Office
of the Dean of Students web page. ([http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/)) and the Office of Graduate Studies ([http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/ethics/transcripts/academic.html](http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/ethics/transcripts/academic.html)). The University has also established disciplinary procedures and penalty guidelines for academic dishonesty, especially Sec. 11.504 in Appendix C of the Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities section in UT's General Information Catalog.

**Emergency evacuation routes:**

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, ([http://operations.utexas.edu/units/csas/terms.php](http://operations.utexas.edu/units/csas/terms.php)):

a. Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

b. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.

c. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors.

d. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

e. Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050

f. Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: ([https://preparedness.utexas.edu/emergency-plans](https://preparedness.utexas.edu/emergency-plans))

**Religious holidays:**

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Campus safety and wellness resources:**

More information on how to sign up for emergency text alerts, contact information for various UT offices, wellness resources, and campus initiatives relating to safety and/or wellness can be found at ([https://www.utexas.edu/campus-life/safety-and-security](https://www.utexas.edu/campus-life/safety-and-security)).