POLS 477: American Foreign Policy  
Spring 2013  
Professor Stephen Shulman  
Department of Political Science  
Southern Illinois University

Meeting Place & Time:  Faner 1228; T/Th 11:00 – 12:15  
Office: 3163 Faner  
Office Hours:  T/Th 1-2 and 3:30 – 5:30  
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Course Description

This is a seminar course in American foreign policy for advanced undergraduates. This means that there will be no lecturing, and the main activity we will be engaged in is critical analysis and discussion of the readings. Therefore, you must come prepared for every class by having done and thought about the reading for that day. The penalty for being unprepared will be substantial.

This course has three main objectives:

1. To improve substantive understanding of the sources, goals, conduct and consequences of US foreign policy.

2. To improve critical thinking skills

3. To improve verbal communication skills

Course Requirements and Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
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The exams will be in-class, open-note and open-book. You will answer two essay questions. The questions will be designed so that students who have not read and studied the readings going into the exam will be at a severe disadvantage.

Your discussion grade will be based on the quantity and quality of your classroom participation, and on three in-class oral critiques of an article or book chapter.
Books for Purchase


We will read an average of approximately 75-90 pages per week, with a couple of weeks of heavier reading. If you do not think that you can handle this reading load, I strongly suggest that you reconsider your registration for the course.

At the beginning of each class I will announce the material that you will need to read for the following class. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to find out what the reading for the next class is.

Important Course Policies

Missed Exams

Students who cannot take an exam at the scheduled date and time must inform me beforehand. Students who fail to follow this procedure will not be permitted to take a make-up exam. I will use my discretion to determine whether students who do follow the procedure will be permitted to take a make-up exam without penalty.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be checked randomly approximately 12-15 times during the semester. You are allowed two absences without penalty. For every absence thereafter, your grade on the final exam will be reduced 2/3 of a grade. (E.g. If your grade on the final is a B, and you were caught absent 6 times, your penalty is 3 X 2/3 of a grade=2 letter grades. Thus your final exam grade changes to a D.) As a positive incentive to not skip class, if you are caught absent one or zero times, your final exam will increase by 2/3 of a letter grade.

WARNING: If you arrive late, or leave early, you will be considered absent. It is your responsibility to make sure you sign the attendance sheet on days when I take attendance. I will not accept the excuse that the attendance sheet did not make its way to a student.
Absence Policy: There is no such thing as an excused absence in this course. All absences after the first three will be penalized, REGARDLESS OF THE REASON FOR YOUR ABSENCE, INCLUDING ILLNESS. However, there is a way to erase the penalty for each absence you earn. You may write a one and a half to two-page synopsis (double-spaced, 12-point Times font, with separate cover sheet) of a journal article on any topic related to the course and turn it in within seven days of the absence. (Synopses will be evaluated “pass/fail”: if you write a coherent and accurate summary, your absence will be excused. Otherwise, the penalty will remain. Sometimes a student turns in a synopsis that suggests to me that he or she has read very little of the article. These putative “synopses” will not receive any credit.) The journal article must be at least fifteen pages in length, and you should attach the article to your synopsis when you turn it in.

WARNING: If you are caught absent EIGHT or more times, you will automatically receive an F for the course. This holds true regardless of whether you erase the penalty for absences applied to the final exam. Exceptions to this rule will be made only in rare circumstances where there is a prolonged illness or other chronic problem that I am informed about in a timely manner.

Grading Scale
All letter grades are converted to number grades for use by a computer program. A+=98, A=95, A-=92, B+=88, B=85, B-=82… F=55 NOTE: If you do not take an exam or turn in a paper, your score is a 0, which, of course, is considerably worse than an F.

List of Topics and Readings

I. Foundations for the Study of USFP (2 sessions)


II. Power and US Primacy (2 sessions)
II. The Durability of US Primacy (3 sessions)

Joseph S. Nye, *The Future of Power* (PublicAffairs, 2011), Cpts. 6-7 (approx 80 pages)


III. The Consequences of US Primacy (3 sessions)


US Grand Strategy I: The Role of Ideas and Ideology (2 sessions)


US Grand Strategy II: Alternative Options in an Age of Primacy and Possible Decline (4 sessions)


MIDTERM EXAMINATION – THURSDAY, MARCH 7

Humanitarian Intervention (2 sessions)


Democracy Promotion (2 sessions)


Domestic Sources of US Foreign Policy (2 sessions)


**Case Study I: Iraq War** (2 sessions)


**Case Study II: War on Terror** (2 sessions)


**Critiques of USFP** (3 sessions)


**FINAL EXAMINATION – WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 3:10-5:10 p.m.**