Department of Politics and International Studies
University of Cambridge
POL 14: U.S. Foreign Policy
2021-22

**Paper Organiser**

Dr. Steven Ward  
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Alison Richard Building 132

**Lecture schedule:**

**Michaelmas:** Thursday, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM and Monday, 9:00 – 10:00 AM  
**Lent:** Thursday, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

All lectures in Alison Richard Building, Room SG1

**Supervisors**

Flamur Krasniqi (**fk325@cam.ac.uk**)  
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**Paper Description**

By almost any measure, the United States has been the most powerful country in the world since 1945. Due to its standing, the U.S. is centrally involved with almost every important international political issue, ranging from the international security and economic arenas to transnational issues such as climate change and human rights regimes. For these reasons, the factors which shape U.S. foreign policy are of concern to people around the globe. This paper is designed to develop students’ understanding of these factors, both historically and in their present state.

The paper consists of three parts. Part I introduces students to a series of theoretical and conceptual tools that will help to make sense of how the United States behaves abroad. Some of these theories and concepts will be familiar to students from prior studies in international relations; others may be new. In this sense, this part of the paper functions as a course in advanced international relations theory, with a particular focus on understanding these dynamics as they apply to the context of foreign policy in the United States. Part II is a survey of the history of US foreign policy from independence to the present. Of course, this survey cannot be fully comprehensive – its objective will be to provide students with an overview of the evolution of American foreign policy, while demonstrating the application and use of theoretical and conceptual models introduced in Part I to help make sense of why US foreign policy has looked the way it has in the past, and how it has changed. Part III investigates the most important issues, debates, and questions facing American foreign policy today – including, among others, how to deal with rising and reemerging powers, how
to address the global crisis of manmade climate change, and whether the United States is in relative decline.

**Objectives**

- to understand how multiple different intellectual traditions, some complementary and some competing, have shaped U.S. foreign policy
- to appreciate the multi-level impacts that individuals, domestic institutions, and the international political system have had on U.S. foreign policy, and vice versa
- to understand different theories with which to interpret evidence that might explain how U.S. foreign policy has developed and operates at present
- to discern the relative strengths and weaknesses of different theories that purport to explain various episodes of U.S. foreign policy
- to introduce students to different methods used to analyze U.S. foreign policy, from historical case studies to quantitative analysis of public opinion
- to gain detailed knowledge of historical American foreign policy
- to learn to situate arguments about contemporary issues within wider debates related to U.S. power and influence in the world, while drawing for support on the insights of political scientists and historians

**Mode of Teaching and Assessment**

In Michaelmas and Lent, students will have 3 supervisions and 1 seminar. Students will be allocated a supervisor at the beginning of Michaelmas term, and should contact the course organizer if any problems occur. For each supervision, students should prepare a 2000 word essay. For the seminar, there is no written work but students should be prepared to discuss required readings. Supervision topics will be chosen by or in concert with your supervisor. All essays will be from the supervision topics listed at the end of each part of the paper. If you want to go beyond this please discuss with your supervisor. Each supervision has an accompanying list of suggested readings. This list is neither exhaustive nor required: it is not necessary to read all of the suggested readings to compose a successful supervision essay, nor is it the case that the list of suggested readings encompasses the entirety of the material that might be relevant to a particular topic. The suggested reading list is merely meant to guide you toward a handful of helpful resources for each topic.

In Easter term, we will have a revision seminar, and each student will have one revision supervision. Powerpoint slides will have been uploaded to the Moodle website throughout Michaelmas and Lent, available to all students enrolled in the paper.

Assessment will be via a divided three-hour essay examination, from which students will be asked to answer three questions. There will be three sections, and students must answer one question from each section. Section A will consist of questions aimed primarily at material from Part I; Section B will consist of questions aimed primarily at material from Part II; Section C will consist of questions aimed primarily at material from Part III. However, successful answers should demonstrate an ability to synthesize material across sections (in other words, a question from Section A might be primarily about theory, but a successful answer should also discuss relevant
historical evidence from Part II; a question from Section C might be primarily about a contemporary issue, but a successful answer should also discuss relevant theory from Part I). There is a mock exam at the end of this paper guide. The best way to prepare for the exam is to practice writing thorough, well-organized, well-argued, and well-supported supervision essays and mock exam essays.

Health and Safety Protocols

The University and the Department of Politics and International Studies have implemented a number of policies in order to ensure that we minimize the risk of a Covid-19 outbreak, and can therefore continue to meet safely in person. Please abide by the following protocols throughout the year:

- Lecture halls must be vacant for at least ten minutes between lectures. This means that our lectures will begin no sooner than 11:05, and end no later than 11:55 on Thursdays (9:05 and 9:55 respectively on Mondays). It is imperative that you are ready to enter the room and take your seat promptly at 11:05, so that we can begin.
- There will be no physical handouts – this paper guide and any other information distributed throughout the year will be available electronically, on Moodle.
- Masks must be worn in the Allison Richard Building, including in the lecture hall. The exception will be if you are speaking – so if you have a question, or want to answer one I pose during lecture, you can remove your mask to do so.
- Lectures will be recorded and made available online for anyone that is unable to attend. This means that you should NOT feel any pressure to attend lectures if you feel ill at all.

Readings

Books that appear as core readings in the paper schedule below should be available at your college libraries or the Seeley Library. Core journal articles (and many books, as well) are available online without going into a library. If you are not comfortable going into a library, your supervisor and I will work with you to either get you a particular reading OR suggest some good alternatives from the supplemental readings list.

Core readings are very likely to figure prominently during lectures. I recommend that, if at all possible, you complete as many of these readings prior to lecture as possible. Supplemental readings may prove valuable to you as you revise supervision essays and prepare for the final exam. You cannot possibly cover all the material listed here (no one – not even a PhD student – could get through all of this for one class). Think of it as a useful bibliography. Some readings on the supplemental list will be mentioned during lecture, though often only in passing. When appropriate, I will draw your attention to supplemental readings that may be useful if you’d like to investigate a particular topic from lecture more deeply. But you should also use it independently, or in conjunction with your supervisor, to guide your own exploration.

General Overviews

The following books don’t appear in the readings associated with lectures, but rather are good reference sources concerning the history of U.S. foreign policy if you need them:

Steven W. Hook and John W. Spanier, *American Foreign Policy since World War II* [multiple editions] (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press); **most recent edition also available as an electronic resource, though only accessible on designated computers in the UL**


In addition to the primary and recommended readings, the following websites and “e-resources” may be useful for finding supplementary information:

- The Council on Foreign Relations (articles from *Foreign Affairs*, amongst many other useful pieces; cfr.org)
- Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS, an edited series of primary documents on U.S. diplomacy; [https://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections/FRUS/](https://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections/FRUS/))
- The National Security Archive (declassified documents from U.S. intelligence and other sources; nsarchive.gwu.edu)
- ProQuest Digital National Security Archive (an e-resource available through the UL website, quite similar to the source immediately above)
- War on the Rocks (“A platform for analysis, commentary, debate and multimedia content on foreign policy and national security issues through a realist lens”; warontherocks.com)
- The Monkey Cage (articles from political scientists on a range of different topics, including foreign policy; [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/))
PAPER SCHEDULE (TOPICS AND READINGS)

Michaelmas Term

Part I: Conceptual and theoretical tools for thinking about US foreign policy

1 (Thurs., Oct. 7): Introduction – is the United States (or its foreign policy) ‘exceptional’?

Core

Walter Russell Mead, Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World (Routledge, 2002), chapter 1


Supplemental


2 (Mon., Oct. 11): Anarchy, power, and security

**Core**


Sebastian Rosato and John Schuessler, “A Realist Foreign Policy for the United States,” *Perspectives on Politics* vol. 9, no. 4 (2011)


**Supplemental**


3 (Thurs., Oct. 14): Ideas, ideologies, and grand strategies

**Core**


Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (Routledge, 2002), chapter 2

Walter McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776* (Mariner, 1997), chapter 1


**Supplemental**


**4 (Mon., Oct. 18): Identities – beyond ‘exceptionalism’**

*Core*


*Supplemental*


5 (Thurs., Oct. 21): Presidents and the presidency
Core


Supplemental


Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith, *Spoils of War: Greed, Power, and the Conflicts that Made Our Greatest Presidents* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2016)


Stephen Walker, Mark Schafer, and Michael Young, “Presidential Operational Codes and Foreign Policy Conflicts in the Post-Cold War World,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* vol. 43, no. 5 (1999)


Margaret Hermann and Thomas Preston, “Presidents, Advisers, and Foreign Policy: The Effect of Leadership Style on Executive Arrangements,” *Political Psychology* vol. 15, no. 1 (1994)

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Imperial Presidency* (Houghton Mifflin, 1973)

W. Stuart Darling and D. Craig Mense, “Rethinking the War Powers Act,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* vol. 7, no. 2/3 (1977)

Kenneth Sharpe, “The Post-Vietnam Formula under Siege: The Imperial Presidency and Central America,” *Political Science Quarterly* vol. 102, no. 4 (1987/88)


David Hastings Dunn, “‘Quacking like a Duck’? Bush II and Presidential Power in the Second Term,” *International Affairs* vol. 82, no. 1 (2006)

6 (Mon., Oct. 25): Institutions, bureaucratic actors, and foreign policy organizations

**Core**


Scott Silverstone, *Divided Union: The Politics of War in the Early American Republic* (Cornell University Press, 2004), chapters 1 and 2


**Supplemental**


Terry Terriff, “‘Innovate or Die’: Organizational Culture and the Origins of Maneuver Warfare in the United State Marine Corps,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* vol. 29, no. 3 (2006)


**7 (Thurs., Oct. 28): Interest groups and public opinion**

*Core*


*Supplemental*


Rachel Blum and Christopher Parker, “Trump-Ing Foreign Affairs: Status Threat and Foreign Policy Preferences on the Right,” *Perspectives on Politics* vol. 17, no. 3 (2019)


**Seminar 1: Monday, November 1 – room and time to be confirmed**

**Supervision questions for Part I:**


**Suggested readings:** core readings from Lecture 1.
2) What is “national security”? In order to ensure its security, how should a state behave? What does this imply about American foreign policy?

**Suggested readings:** core readings from Lecture 2.

3) Have ideas about race affected the ways in which the United States has behaved in its relations with other countries – for instance, by influencing the way it has expanded, or the relationships it has formed with other states? Does race continue to influence US foreign policy?

**Suggested readings:** Abdelal et al. 2006; Horne 1999; Maass 2020; Vucetic 2011; Hemmer and Katzenstein 2002; Tillery 2011.

4) What is “grand strategy”? Is this a useful concept? If so, how? How does understanding grand strategy help us understand US foreign policy? If not, what is wrong with the concept? Why do so many analysts focus their attention on it, and what are the consequences?

**Suggested readings:** Friedman Lissner 2018; Hemmer 2015; Brands 2014; Kitchen 2010; Edelstein and Krebs 2015; Avey, Markowitz, and Reardon 2018.

5) What are the most important differences between the major approaches to American grand strategy? What factors best explain why different writers and thinkers disagree with one another about what the United States should aim to do – and how it should do it – abroad?

**Suggested readings:** Desch 2008; Mead 2002; McDougall 1997; Nau 2013; Art 2003.

6) Modern realists claim to offer the best explanation for state behavior in international politics. At the same time, they are among the most frequent critics of contemporary American foreign policy. Are these positions compatible? Why or why not?

**Suggested readings:** Mearsheimer 2014; Rosato and Schuessler 2011; Zarnett 2017; Walt 2018.

7) Do democratic political institutions improve or hinder the quality of American foreign policy? If they improve the quality of foreign policy, through what mechanisms do they work? If they hinder the quality of foreign policy, why do you think so?

**Suggested readings:** Owen 2000; Schultz 2004; Schultz 2017; Silverstone 2004; Baum 2004; Tomz, Weeks, and Yarhi-Milo 2020.

8) Do the experiences, beliefs, or other individual-level characteristics of US presidents matter for the quality of US foreign policy? Why is this such a difficult question to answer?

**Suggested readings:** Jervis 2013; Dafoe and Caughey 2016; Yarhi-Milo 2018 Saunders 2011; Horowitz, Stam, and Ellis 2015.

9) Do you think American foreign policy would change markedly if a woman were elected
president? If so, how and why? If not, why not?

**Suggested readings:** Jervis 2013; Eichenberg 2003; Brooks and Valentino 2011; Barnhart et al. 2020; Mart 1996; Swers 2007; Holman et al. 2011.

**Part II: The evolution of American foreign policy**

8 (Thurs., Nov. 4): From the early republic to the Civil War

**Core**

George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1776* (Oxford University Press, 2008), chapters 1-6 (skim for background)

Silverstone, *Divided Union* chapters 3-6


**Supplemental**


Washington’s Farewell Address
[https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/resources/pdf/Washingtons_Farewell_Address.pdf](https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/resources/pdf/Washingtons_Farewell_Address.pdf)


Nau, *Conservative Internationalism* chapters 4 and 5


John Owen, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War* chapters 3 and 4


9 (Mon., Nov. 8): Becoming a ‘great power’

Core

Herring, *From Colony to Superpower* chapters 7-9 (skim for background)


Supplemental

John Thompson, *A Sense of Power: The Roots of America’s Global Role* (Cornell University Press, 2015), introduction and chapter 1


Owen, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War* chapter 5

Maass, *The Picky Eagle* chapter 7


Kristin Hoganson, “‘As Badly off as the Filipinos’: U.S. Women’s Suffragists and the Imperial Issue at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” *Journal of Women’s History* vol. 13, no. 2 (2001)


Patrick Kirkwood, “‘Lord Cromer’s Shadow’: Political Anglo-Saxonism and the Egyptian Protectorate as a Model in the American Phillipines,” *Journal of World History* vol. 27, no. 1 (2016)


Dana Munro, *The United States and the Caribbean Republics, 1921-1933* (Princeton University press, 1974)


Alan McPherson, *A Short History of U.S. Interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, chapters 2-4

10 (Thurs., Nov. 11): The world wars

**Core**

Herring, *From Colony to Superpower* chapters 10-13 (skim for background)


**Supplemental**

Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Interest of America in International Conditions* (Little, Brown, and Co., 1910)


Thompson, *A Sense of Power* chapters 2-5

Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, chapters 10-13


Daniel Larsen, *Plotting for Peace: American Peacemakers, British Codebreakers, and Britain at War, 1914-1917* (Cambridge University Press, 2021), chapter 3

Tony McCulloch, “Franklin D. Roosevelt,” in Cox, Lynch, and Bouchet, eds., US Foreign Policy and Democracy Promotion


David Scott Fogelsong, America’s Secret War Against Bolshevism: United States Intervention in the Russian Civil War, 1917-1920 (University of North Carolina Press, 1995)


Dan Reiter, “Democracy, Deception, and Entry into War,” Security Studies vol. 21, no. 4 (2012)


J. Samuel Walker, “Recent Literature on Truman’s Atomic Bomb Decision: A Search for Middle Ground,” *Diplomatic History* vol. 29, no. 2 (2005)


Alan McPherson, *A Short History of U.S. Interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, chapters 5 and 6

**11 (Mon., Nov. 15): The early Cold War**

*Core*

Herring, *From Colony to Superpower* chapters 14-16 (skim for background)

George Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” *Foreign Affairs* vol. 25, no. 4 (1947)

Gaddis, *Containment* chapters 2-6


*Supplemental*

Thompson, *A Sense of Power* chapter 6


Kai He and Huiyun Feng, “‘Why is there no NATO in Asia?’ Revisited: Prospect Theory, Balance of Threat, and US Alliance Strategies,” *European Journal of International Relations* vol. 18, no. 2 (2012)


Austin Carson, *Secret Wars: Covert Conflict in International Politics* (Princeton University Press, 2018), chapter 5


Jutta Weldes, *Constructing National Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (University of Minnesota Press, 1999)


Mark Haas, “Prospect Theory and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *International Studies Quarterly* vol. 45, no. 2 (2001)


Alan McPherson, *A Short History of U.S. Interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, chapter 7


Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy?* chapter 1


12 (Thurs., Nov. 18): The late Cold War

Core

Herring, *From Colony to Superpower* chapters 17-19 (skim for background)

Gaddis, *Containment* chapters 7 and 8


Supplemental

Kenneth Waltz, “The Stability of a Bipolar World,” *Daedalus* vol. 93, no. 3 (1964)


Gaddis, *Containment* chapters 9-11

Lindsey O’Rourke, *Covert Regime Change: America’s Secret Cold War* (Cornell University Press, 2018)

Austin Carson, *Secret Wars: Covert Conflict in International Politics* (Princeton University Press, 2018), chapters 6 and 7


Alan McPherson, *A Short History of U.S. Interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, chapter 8

Keren Yarhi-Milo, *Who Fights for Reputation* chapters 6 and 7


**13 (Mon., Nov. 22): The unipolar moment**

*Core*

Herring, *From Colony to Superpower* chapter 20 (skim for background)

Charles Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment,” *Foreign Affairs* (September 1990)


Keren Yarhi-Milo, *Who Fights for Reputation* chapter 8

*Supplemental*

Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” *The National Interest* no. 16 (Summer 1989)


Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* vol. 72, no. 3 (1993)


https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb245/

Anthony Lake, “From Containment to Enlargement,” speech delivered at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, D.C. (September 21, 1993)


Alan McPherson, *A Short History of U.S. Interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, chapter 9


14 (Thurs., Nov. 25): 9/11 and the ‘War on Terror’


**Supplemental**


**15 (Mon., Nov. 29): US foreign policy after the Bush Doctrine**

*Core*


Supplemental

Sylvia Bashevkin, Women as Foreign Policy Leaders: National Security and Gender Politics in Superpower America (Oxford University Press, 2018)


Simon Chesterman, “Leading from Behind’: The Responsibility to Protect, the Obama Doctrine, and Humanitarian Intervention after Libya,” Ethics & International Affairs vol. 25, no. 3 (2011)


Peter Dombrowski and Simon Reich, “Does Donald Trump have a Grand Strategy?” International Affairs vol. 93, no. 5 (2017)


Randall Schweller, “Three Cheers for Trump’s Foreign Policy: What the Establishment Misses,” *Foreign Affairs* vol. 97 (September/October 2018)


Thorsten Wojczewski, “Trump, Populism, and American Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* vol. 16, no. 3 (2020)


Steve Clemons, “The Biden Doctrine: Has the vice president made a lasting contribution in foreign policy?” *The Atlantic* (August 22, 2016)

**Supervision questions for Part II:**

1) How did American foreign policy change after the end of the Cold War? If you think it changed markedly, did it become more or less assertive? Why? If you think it did not change
much, why not?


2) How important have different “sectional” interests been as an influence on US foreign policy?


3) Is the emergence and persistence of American dominance since the of the end of World War II evidence that US foreign policy has been unusually competent? Or is it evidence, for instance, that the United States has been blessed by favorable geography, timing, or other circumstances? What specific instances or examples support each position?


4) Is it accurate to say that the United States acted as an “offshore balancer” during the first half of the 20th century? What evidence suggests that it did, and what evidence suggests that it did not?

Suggested readings: Jackson 2012; Layne 2006; Mearsheimer 2014; Kupchan 2020; Braumoeller 2010.

5) Was the United States justified to use nuclear weapons against Japan in 1945? Be sure to explain your criteria for determining whether a foreign policy decision is justified.


6) Was the Cold War largely the result of a security dilemma, or was it largely the result of other dynamics?


7) Was the invasion of Iraq in 2003 a mistake? If so, what were the most important sources of the error?


8) Did Donald Trump’s term as president fundamentally alter the United States’ position in the
world, or the direction of its foreign policy? If so, how? If not, why not?

**Suggested readings:** Restad 2020; Harris 2018; Porter 2018; Haass 2020; Drezner 2019; Schweller 2018; Yarhi-Milo 2018; Kirshner 2021.

**Lent Term**

**Part III: Contemporary issues, questions, and debates**

16 (Thurs., Jan. 20): The return of ‘great power competition’

*Core*


*Supplemental*


John Mearsheimer, “Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West’s Fault,” *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2014)


17 (Thurs., Jan. 27): Nuclear weapons – consequences, counterproliferation, and doctrine

*Core*


*Supplemental*


Lauren Sukin, “Credible Nuclear Security Commitments Can Backfire: Explaining Domestic Support for Nuclear Weapons Acquisition in South Korea,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* vol. 64, no. 6 (2020)


Matthew Kroenig, “Time to Attack Iran: Why a Strike is the Least Bad Option,” *Foreign Affairs* vol. 91, no. 1 (2012)


Trevor McCrisken and Maxwell Downman, “Peace through strength’: Europe and NATO deterrence beyond the US Nuclear Posture Review,” *International Affairs* vol. 95, no. 2 (2019)


18 (Thurs., Feb. 3): Military posture, alliances, and primacy

**Core**


Hal Brands and Peter Feaver, “What are America’s Alliances Good For?” *Parameters* vol. 47, no. 2 (2017)


**Supplemental**


19 (Thurs., Feb. 10): The international and domestic politics of climate change

**Core**


David Barker and David Bearce, “End-Times Theology, the Shadow of the Future, and Public Resistance to Addressing Global Climate Change,” *Political Research Quarterly* vol. 66, no. 2 (2013)

**Supplemental**


Robert Keohane and David Victor, “The Regime Complex for Climate Change,” *Perspectives on Politics* vol. 9, no. 1 (2011)


John Duffield and Charles Hankla, “The Efficiency of Institutions: Political Determinants of Oil Consumption in Democracies,” *Comparative Politics* vol. 43, no. 2 (2011)


**20 (Thurs., Feb. 17): Disease, global health, and the world after COVID-19**

-Core-


Supplemental


David Fidler, “Rise and Fall of Global Health as a Foreign Policy Issue,” *Global Health Governance* vol. 4, no. 2 (2011)


21 (Thurs., Feb. 24): The function and fate of American hegemony

Core


Alexander Cooley and Daniel Nexon, Exit from Hegemony: The Unraveling of the American Global Order (Oxford University Press, 2020) chapters 1-3, 7


Supplemental


**22 (Thurs., Mar. 3): American decline and the future of world politics**

*Core*


*Supplemental*


Randall Schweller, “The Future is Uncertain and the End is Always Near,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* vol. 24, no. 2 (2011)


Robert Lieber, “America in Decline? It’s a Matter of Choices, Not Fate,” *World Affairs* vol. 175, no. 3 (2012)


Paul MacDonald and Joseph Parent, *Twilight of the Titans: Great Power Decline and Retrenchment* (Cornell University Press, 2018)


**Seminar 2: TBD (around March 10)**

**Supervision questions for Part III:**

1) Can China be accommodated? If so, what kinds of specific concessions would this take? If not, why not?

   **Suggested readings:** Friedberg 2014; Zala 2020; Ward 2020; Glaser 2015; Allison 2020; Schweller 2018; Buzan and Cox 2013.

2) John Mearsheimer argues that the Ukraine crisis – Russia’s intervention in Ukraine and annexation of Crimea in 2014 – was the West’s fault. Do you think this argument is correct?

   **Suggested readings:** Mearsheimer 2014; Götz 2017; Chrzanowski 2021; Theiler 2018; Clunan 2014; Clunan 2018; Goldgeier 1998; Shifrinson 2016; Trachtenberg 2020.

3) The 2017 National Security Strategy of the United States described Russia and China as “revisionist” states. Is “revisionism” a useful concept in this context? Why or why not?
Suggested readings: core readings for lecture 16; the 2017 NSS; Friedman 2019; Cooley, Nexon, and Ward 2019; Turner and Nymalm 2019.

4) Should the United States be willing to use force in order to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons?

Suggested readings: Kroenig 2012; Kroenig 2018; Secher and Fuhrmann 2017; Kahl 2012 (both); Waltz 2012.

5) Do forward deployments of US troops stabilize, deter, and promote American influence? Or do they promote free-ridership among allies and threat perceptions among potential adversaries?


6) Is climate change a threat to American national security? If so, in what ways? If not, why not?


7) What is the most important obstacle to effectively addressing climate change?

Suggested readings: Brannen 2021; Aklin and Mildnerberger 2020; Barker and Bearce 2013; Hardin 1968; Mildnerberger 2019; Duffield and Hankla 2011.

8) Has the COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally altered the United States’ standing in the world? If so, how? If not, why not?

Suggested readings: Hicks 2020; Drezner 2020; Burke 2021; Lipman 2021; Walther 2021; Brands, Feaver, and Inboden 2020; Wright 2020; Schake 2020; Kahl and Wright 2021.

9) What would happen if the hegemony of the US dollar collapsed? Is this likely in the near future? Why or why not?


10) What is the “liberal international order”? Does it serve American interests? Is it in danger?

11) Is the United States in decline? If so, why? Was this avoidable, or is it the consequence of inevitable structural changes? If not, why is recurrent concern about American decline so prominent?

**Suggested readings:** Huntington 1988; Cox 2007; Beckley 2011/12; Beckley 2018; Walt 2018; Kupchan 1989; Joffe 2014; Cerny 1989; Musgrave 2019; Layne 2012; Fettweis 2018; Lieber 2012 (both).

12) Would the erosion of unipolarity constitute a fundamental threat to American national security? Would it alter the character of international politics in other ways?

**Suggested readings:** Monteiro 2011/12; Monteiro 2018; Wohlfforth 1999; Blagden 2015; Brooks and Wohlfforth 2008; special issue of the *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* on Brooks and Wohlfforth 2008 (introduced by Brendan Simms, 2011); MacDonald and Parent 2018; Roberts 2011; Laïdi 2014; Bafumi and Parent 2012; Ballard-Rosa, Jensen, and Scheve 2021.
Students must answer a total of **three** of the following questions. There are three sections; **students must answer exactly ONE (1) question from each section.** Though questions are primarily directed at material from the designated section, answers should draw, as appropriate, on material from the other two sections as well.

**Section 1: Theories and concepts (answer ONE question from this section)**

A) Is “grand strategy” a useful concept for understanding US foreign policy?
B) Is realism – as applied by analysts of US foreign policy – best understood as a set of ideas about what the United States *should* do, or a way of explaining how the United States has behaved historically?
C) Would US foreign policy be “better” if the United States had different political institutions?
D) Does the identity of the US president matter for the quality or character of US foreign policy?
E) How do gender politics and dynamics influence US foreign policy?

**Section 2: Evolution of US foreign policy (answer ONE question from this section)**

A) How did American foreign policy change after the end of the Cold War?
B) Is the emergence and persistence of American dominance since the of the end of World War II evidence that US foreign policy has been especially well-directed, or is it evidence of something else (like extremely good luck)?
C) Is it accurate to say that the United States acted as an “offshore balancer” during the first half of the 20th century?
D) Why did the United States invade Iraq in 2003?
E) Did Donald Trump fundamentally alter American foreign policy?

**Section 3: Contemporary debates (answer ONE question from this section)**

A) Should the United States try to accommodate China?
B) Should the United States maintain troops deployed overseas?
C) Is the erosion of the “liberal international order” a threat to US interests?
D) Why have Americans so frequently expressed anxiety about relative decline?
E) What would the world be like if “unipolarity” – American military and economic dominance – eroded?

END OF PAPER