This course is intended to present an overview of the main issues actors and theoretical approaches to the study of United States' foreign policy. The course will generally take a thematic approach to the topic. At the beginning of the semester we will look at several themes or “traditions” of American foreign policy and then we will return to these themes throughout the remainder of the semester as we study historical and contemporary events. These themes will include the debates between isolationism and interventionism, between realism and liberalism and between unilateralism and multilateralism. While these themes seem to dominate current debates over foreign policy in the United States, as we will see during the course, none of them are particularly new and the issues that they raise for policymaking have been part of the discussion over foreign policy for much of the history of the nation.

We will also study the practical setting in which foreign policy is made – that is to say the actors and processes which influence the formulation of policy and the impact that they have on the final outcome.

In the second half of the semester we will move on to more substantive issues. First we will cover a brief history of recent U.S. foreign policy (from the beginning of the Cold War to the present day.) Then we will focus on some of the dominant issues regarding foreign policy in the United States today. Throughout the semester we will use current events to illustrate the theoretical points we are making regarding foreign policy.

Foreign policy making is what political scientist Robert Putnam describes as a “two-level game.” By this he means that policymakers work in two different arenas when devising policy. They are responsive to the domestic demands of political constituencies within the country, whether they be interest groups, voters or other politicians. However, at the same time policymakers cannot lose sight of the fact that the policies that they are developing will have an impact in the international arena and other states and actors in international politics may well react to these policies. Sometimes these competing arenas will push policymakers in the same direction and the development of a policy will be relatively easy, but many times politicians are faced with competing pressures which greatly complicate the development of a coherent, logical and effective policy. It is important to keep this in mind as we study the material in this course.

Course Goals:

This course has several concrete, substantive goals as well as more general goals related to learning in general

1. Develop an understanding of the actors, processes and issues involved in the development of American foreign policy.
2. Be able to place specific events within the broader context of American foreign policy as it has developed over time.
3. Develop an awareness of the major current concerns, and potential future concerns, relating to
American foreign policy-making and America’s role in the world.

4. Develop and improve research skills and critical reasoning skills.
5. Develop and improve the ability to synthesize information from multiple sources.

Assignments:

There are four graded requirements for this course:

1. A Midterm Examination – The midterm will be an essay exam. The exam will consist of some short essay questions and one longer essay question. You will have some choice. The midterm exam will take place in class on Wednesday, October 16th. (25 points)

2. A Final Examination – This will be in two parts:
   1. A take-home exam. This will present you with an international ‘crisis’ and ask you to develop a policy that the United States should adopt in response to this situation. (25 points)
   2. A traditional ‘blue book’ exam. This will be similar to the mid-term. It will consist of both short and long essays. More details on both exams will be discussed in class nearer the exam times. The exam will take place on December 12th from 10:00-12:00. (25 points)

There is a second option for the final exam. Instead of the ‘blue book’ section of the exam students may choose to write a paper on The Quiet American. If you choose this option, then you must inform the instructor in writing no later than November 25th. This option requires that you write an essay in response to the following question: What lessons if any can we draw from The Quiet American for contemporary American foreign policy? This essay will be turned in no later than the time of the regularly scheduled final exam (December 12th.).

3. A research paper. You will be asked to write a paper on a topic of your own choosing. More details and instructions on this will be handed out early in the semester. The final paper should be turned in during class no later than Monday, November 25th. (25 points)

Note: The dates for these assignments are fixed. Failure to complete or turn in an assignment by the required date will result in the loss of one point for each day that the assignment is late. If you are ill or have some other unavoidable conflict which means you will miss an exam, you MUST inform the instructor in advance, preferably either in person or by email.

Grades will be assigned on the following formula: 91-100 – A, 81-90 – B, 71-80 – C, 61-70 – D, 0-60 – F.

Reading:

There are three assigned books for this course. All of them have been ordered through the university bookstore and are also readily available from online booksellers.

Jeffrey S Lantis. 2013. US Foreign Policy in Action (Wiley-Blackwell) – This is the main text book for the course. (Hereafter Lantis)

Andrew Bacevich, Ed. 2012. The Short American Century: A Postmortem (Harvard University Press) – This book collects a set of essays which assess the evolution of American foreign policy since World War II and examine the prospects for America’s role in the world in the coming years. (Hereafter Bacevich)

Graham Greene. 1955. The Quiet American. (Penguin Classics) – This is a novel about the United
States involvement in Vietnam in the mid 1950s (in the period before major American involvement in the Vietnam War) which elaborates on some of the themes which we will develop in this course and which also ties in with some of points raised by Bacevich in his work.

In addition to these readings, there will be some other readings assigned that will be available online. I will either provide links in the syllabus for the readings or they will be available through the library listing of online journals.

As well as the required readings, students are expected to keep up with international news as it is relevant to the material covered in this course. To this end I encourage you to read a newspaper that covers international events in a serious manner. The New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal and many other papers provide the level of information you should be reading. I strongly urge you to look at foreign news sources as well as they often present U.S. policies in a very different light. Additionally, you are urged to at least look at three journals which address international affairs and U.S. foreign policy in many of their articles – Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy and The World Policy Journal. All three journals frequently publish important articles about questions of foreign policy and they are all available online through the library web-page.

Note on Academic Honesty:

Part of the grading for this course relies on papers. Students are reminded that when you write a paper it must be all your own material. It is entirely permissible to quote, paraphrase or refer to someone else's arguments. However, if you do so, you must provide them with credit by citing the source of your information. Passing someone else's work off as your own is cheating and will be punished as prescribed under the university regulations. Cheating in examinations (which includes, but is not limited to, bringing outside notes or books into the exam room and copying from another student) will also be punished as directed by the university regulations.

Schedule of Classes:

Aug 26: Introduction to the Course/Review Syllabus

Aug 28: America in the World: The Global Setting of US Foreign Policymaking
Read:
Lantis, pages 1-12
Bacevich, pages 1-14

Aug 30: Competing Visions of American Foreign Policy
Read:
Lantis, pages 14-35

Sept 2: No class – Labor Day holiday

Sept. 4: Competing Visions of American Foreign Policy
Read:
Washington, George. 1796. Farewell Address (Available online at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp)
Sept 6: Competing Visions of American Foreign Policy
Read:

Sept 9: Competing Visions of American Foreign Policy
Read:

Sept 11: Competing Visions of American Foreign Policy
Read:
Greene, *The Quiet American*

Sept 13: Competing Visions of American Foreign Policy
Read:
Greene, *The Quiet American*

Sept 16: Competing Visions of American Foreign Policy
Read:
Bacevich, pages 59-81

Sept 18: The Cold War and the Rise of Foreign Policy
Read:
Lantis, pages 38-58

Sept 20: The Cold War and the Rise of Foreign Policy
Read:

Sept 23: The Cold War Foreign Policy in Action
Read:
Bacevich, pages 38-58
Greene, *The Quiet American*

Sept 25: The Cuban Missile Crisis: Testing Decision-making Theories
Read:
Lantis, pages 116-144

Sept 27: The Problem of the End of the Cold War
Read:
Lantis, pages 58-64

Sept 30: The President and Foreign Policy
Read:
Lantis, pages 68-84

Oct 2: Congress and Foreign Policy
Read:
Lantis, pages 84-99

Oct 4: Other Sources of Foreign Policy

Oct 7: Foreign Policy in a Democracy
Read:
Lantis, pages 163-185

Oct 9: Persuasion and Decision-Making in Foreign Policy
Read:
Lantis, pages 204-224

Oct 11: Discussion of The Quiet American
Read:
Greene, The Quiet American

Oct 14: Exam Review Session

Oct 16: Mid-Term Examination

Oct 18: Current Issues in American Foreign Policy: Setting the Stage

Oct 21: Globalization and American Foreign Policy
Read:
Bacevich, pages 121-141

Oct 23: Globalization and American Foreign Policy
Read:
Bacevich, pages 142-157

Oct 25: No Class – Fall holiday

Oct 28: National Security Policy
Read:
Lantis, pages 100-111

Oct 30: National Security Policy
Read:
Lantis, pages 145-160

Nov 1: National Security Policy
Read:
Lantis, pages 186-200

Nov 4: Regional Challenges for the United States
Nov 6: The Economy and Foreign Policy
Read:
Bacevich, pages 187-230

Nov 8: The Economy and Foreign Policy

Nov 11: The Global Environment and American Foreign Policy
Read:
Lantis, pages 186-200

Nov 13: Challenges and Threats to the United States
Read:
Lantis, pages 262-278

Nov 15: The Obama Doctrine
Read:

Nov 18: The Decline of American Power?
Read:
Bacevich, pages 15-37

Nov 20: The “American Empire” Debate
Read:
Bacevich, pages 158-186

Nov 22: The “American Empire” Debate

Nov 25: Looking to the Future
Read:
Bacevich, pages 231-239

Nov 27: No class – Thanksgiving Holiday

Nov 29: No class – Thanksgiving Holiday

Dec 2: Re-Evaluating Theories of Foreign Policy
Read:
Lantis, pages 243-260

Dec 4: Re-Evaluating Theories of Foreign Policy
Bacevich, pages 82-120

Dec 6: Exam Review Session

Dec 12: Final Exam, 10-12