

# U.S. Foreign Policy

Vanguard University of Southern California

## Class

Semester: Spring, 2014

Room: Newport Mesa 202B

Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30-3:45

## Instructor

Kevin Walker, Ph.D.

Office: Social Science Building

Office Hours: M, 11-2:15; W 11-12:15; F 11-11:50

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## **Course Description**

Like all aspects of American government, the Founders intended U.S. foreign policy to be shaped by politics. Congress and the presidency were pitted against each other in a system of checks and balances, not so much to limit the government's power, but to bring out the best in both institutions, and offer the nation and the world alike the wisest foreign relations possible. Yet that approach to foreign policy did not endure: through the twentieth century, Congress increasingly deferred foreign policy to the president and his advisors, while presidents at once expanded their authority over world affairs, but also managed to lose their control over the executive branch. Moreover, the vision of American identity and the "exceptional" character of the regime went through multiple transitions, at some times asserting itself boldly in the world, and at other times retreating – only to come back again in even bolder and less principled ways. What does this mean for the United States? What does it mean for the rest of the world? How can we as citizens assume a fuller responsibility for foreign affairs? This class aims to answer those questions with a careful examination of U.S. foreign policy. We will study the constitutional framework behind foreign policy-making, and the historical developing of foreign affairs since the time of the Founding. We will then examine the current cases in foreign policy, and how the U.S. has approached terrorism, nuclear proliferation, diplomacy, and international law. Lastly, we will examine the enduring dispute over American exceptionalism, and study the debate on the role of the United States in world affairs.

## **Required Texts**

Students are required to own the following texts (in order of reading):

- Kaufman, Joyce. *A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy*. Fifth Edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013.
- Carter, Ralph G., Editor. *Contemporary Cases in U.S. Foreign Policy: From Terrorism to Trade*. Thousand Oaks: CQ Press, 2014.
- Bacevich, Andrew J. *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2009.
- Kagan, Robert. *The World America Made*. New York: Vintage Books, 2013.

## Course Requirements and Grading

Grades for the course will be based on the following:

- **Participation (10%).** Come to class every day with the readings done and be prepared to answer questions about the texts. Inability to answer questions about the text or not having the book will result in the loss of a participation point. Unexplained absences will also result in the loss of a point.
- **Ten Weekly Reading Responses (20%, 2% each).** These are short essays in response to the reading questions.
- **Midterm Exam (20%).** This is an exam on the terms, basic concepts, and readings on Weeks 1-5 of the course. There will be a study session.
- **Final Exam (20%).** This is an exam on the terms, basic concepts, and readings on the second half of the course. There will be a study session.
- **Research Essay I (30%).** This is a 12-14+ page research essay on a topic of your choice in U.S. Foreign Policy. There will be a prompt. Incorrect footnote and bibliographic citations *will result in the immediate loss of a letter grade.*
  - **Presentation (10%).** This is a short 10 minute presentation on your research essay topic, presented on the day we discuss that particular topic.

## Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, or the use of someone else's text without quotes and proper citation, is considered a violation of the university's standards of academic integrity and will be grounds for serious disciplinary action. A first offense will be an F on the assignment; a second offence will be an F in the class and a referral to the Dean.

## 2013-2014 Disability Services Statement

The Disability Services Office offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your professor(s), and the Disability Services Office. If you have not yet established services through the Disability Services Office, but have a temporary or permanent disability that impacts your learning, attention, mental health, vision, hearing, physical health, or other disabilities that may require accommodations, you are welcome to contact the Disability Services Office. The Disability Services Office is located in the Scott Building 244.

## Class Schedule

### I. The History of U.S. Foreign Policy

#### Week 1 – The Constitutional Framework

##### January 13

U.S. Constitution (in class)

##### January 15

Joyce Kaufman, *Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy* – Chapter 1: Setting the Stage for Understanding U.S. Foreign Policy (pp. 1-31)

#### Week 2 – Foreign Policy in the Early Republic

##### January 20

Martin Luther King Day – No Class

##### January 22

*Concise History* – Chapter 2: Unilateralism and Engagement (pp. 33-59)  
Packet – Alexander Hamilton, Federalist #11, #23 and #70

## Week 3 – The New Superpower

### January 27

*Concise History* – Chapter 3: From Isolationism to Superpower (pp. 61-81)  
Packet – Theodore Roosevelt, “The Strenuous Life” (1899)

### January 29

*Concise History* – Chapter 4: The Making of a Superpower (pp. 83-103)  
Packet – Charles Lindberg, Speech on the America First Committee Meeting (1941)

## Week 4 – The Cold War

### February 3

*Concise History* – Chapter 4: The Making of a Superpower (pp. 103-121)  
George F. Kennan, The “Long Telegram” (1946)

### February 5

*Concise History* – Chapter 5: The Cold War and Beyond (pp. 123-146)  
Ronald Reagan, “Evil Empire” Speech (1983)

## Week 5 – After the Cold War

### February 10

*Concise History* – Chapter 6: George W. Bush, 9/11, and the Bush Doctrine (pp. 147-167)

### February 12

*Concise History* – Chapter 7: Obama and the Future of U.S. Foreign Policy; Chapter 8 (pp. 169-198)

## II. Cases in U.S. Foreign Policy

## Week 6 – Fighting Terrorism

### February 17

President’s Day – No Class

### February 19

*Contemporary Cases* – Frederick Gagnon and Ryan C. Hendrickson, “The United States versus Terrorism” (pp. 11-33)

**Research Essay Part I – Due February 21**

## Week 7 – Fighting Terrorism (continued)

### February 24

*Contemporary Cases* – Priya Dixit, “Assassinating Bin Laden: Right or Wrong?” (pp. 41-63)

### February 26

*Contemporary Cases* – Jeffrey S. Lantis and Eric Moskowitz, “Executive Decisions and Preventative War” (pp. 66-96)

## Week 8 – Nuclear Proliferation

### March 3

*Contemporary Cases* – Thomas Preston, “The Nuclear Standoff between the United States and Iran” (pp. 102-126)

### March 5

*Contemporary Cases* – Patrick James and Ozgur Ozdamar, “The United States and North Korea” (pp. 132-159)

## Week 9 – Diplomacy

### March 10

*Contemporary Cases* – Stephen Zunes, “Friendly Tyrants? The Arab Spring and the Egyptian Revolution” (pp. 222-245)

### March 12

*Contemporary Cases* – Chen Guangchang: The Case of the Blind Dissident and US-China Relations” (pp. 249-269)

**Spring Break**

## Week 10 – International Law

### March 24

*Contemporary Cases* – Linda Cornett and Mark Gibney, “The Rights of Detainees: Determining the Limits of Law” (pp. 409-431)

### March 26

*Contemporary Cases* – Donald W. Jackson and Ralph G. Carter, “The International Criminal Court: National Interests versus International Norms” (pp. 435-459)

## Week 11 – Presentations

### March 31

Presentations

### April 2

Presentations

## III. American Exceptionalism Reconsidered

## Week 12 – Unsustainable Exceptionalism

### April 7

Andrew Bacevich, *The Limits of Power* – Introduction; Chapter 1: The Crisis of Profligacy (pp. 1-66)

### April 9

*The Limits of Power* – Chapter 2: The Political Crisis (pp. 67-123)

**Research Essay Final Draft Due April 11**

## Week 13 – Exceptionalism in Crisis

### April 14

*The Limits of Power* – Chapter 3: The Military Crisis (pp. 124-169)

### April 16

*The Limits of Power* – Conclusion (pp. 170-189)

## Week 14 – Exceptionalism and Global Stability

### April 21

Robert Kagan, *The World America Made* (pp. 1-36)

### April 23

*The World America Made* (pp. 36-68)

## Week 15 – Exceptionalism and the Future

### April 28

*The World America Made* (pp. 68-101)

### April 30

*The World America Made* (pp. 101-140)

**Final Exam: Wednesday, May 7, 03:30pm - 05:30pm**