

PSCI 4606B
American Foreign Policy
Wednesday 11:35 – 2:25 p.m.; A602 Loeb

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Office Hours: Monday 1- 3
Tuesday 10 – 12

I. Course Description and Objectives

This seminar critically investigates the contemporary grand strategy that the United States appears to be following under the George W. Bush administration. The seminar is devoted to understanding and explaining contemporary American grand strategy. In order to understand the present, we look back at the Cold War period and the grand strategies that have been put forth to guide American foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. These grand strategies include neo-isolationism, selective engagement, off-shore balancing, liberalism, and primacy.

With this historical and theoretical background, the seminar pursues a critical examination of President George W. Bush's grand strategy and the foreign policy developments that have followed in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attack on the United States. Some analysts have concluded that these recent developments, culminating in the Bush Doctrine and the decision to invade Iraq, represent a major change in American foreign policy while others argue that there is nothing radical or different about Bush's grand strategy. We will carefully consider these contending arguments about American foreign policy. We will also carefully examine the role of neo-conservatism in shaping contemporary American foreign policy. In addition to trying to understand American grand strategy, we will also examine some of the global responses and reactions to the current direction of American foreign policy. Throughout this examination we will try and determine the current American grand strategy and ask if it is consistent with the American national interest.

The main objective of the course is to familiarize students with the major theoretical and policy debates concerning contemporary American foreign policy. Students are expected to understand the role that theory plays in shaping the debate over American grand strategy. By the end of the course a student should be able to identify and understand the major theoretical and policy debates regarding contemporary American foreign policy. Students are also expected to comprehend the recent history of American foreign policy and relate theoretical debates to key foreign policy developments that have occurred since the end of the Cold War.

II. Course Texts

There are four required texts for the course that are available for purchase at the Carleton University Bookstore. The four required texts have also been placed on reserve at the Carleton University library. All of the other assigned readings have been placed on reserve in the library (reserve readings are indicated on the syllabus with an ®). You can also access many of the assigned journal articles by using JSTOR that is

available through the Carleton University library website (<http://catalogue.library.carleton.ca>). The reserve readings will also be available in the political science reading room. Please be considerate of other students in the class and do not remove these readings for your own personal use. Students are expected to complete all of the assigned reading prior to attending class.

1. Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).
2. Steffan Halper and Jonathan Clarke, *America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
3. Stephen M. Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Responses to U.S. Primacy* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005).
4. Gary Rosen, *The Right War? The Neoconservative Debate on Iraq* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

III. Course Requirements and Grading Policy

- A. Class Participation.....15%
- B. Oral Presentation.....15%
- C. Essay Assignment I.....25%
- D. Essay Assignment II.....25%
- E. Book Review Assignment.....20%

IV. Explanations

A. Class Participation: Your presence and active participation in class is an integral part of this course. Since the course is a seminar you are required to participate actively in class discussions. The reason for this is simple; seminars do not work if there is no student participation. It is necessary that you complete all reading assignments prior to coming to class so that you are fully prepared to discuss the assigned material. We will be discussing the assigned material in class and if you fail to participate in class discussions and do not engage the assigned material this will be taken as a sign of inadequate preparation and result in a grade reduction. Participation grades will be influenced by three important criteria: the quality of participation, the regularity of participation, and the collegiality of students. You will receive full credit (15%) if you attend class regularly and participate frequently in class discussions; a grade of B if you attend class regularly and participate sporadically in class discussions; a grade of C if you attend class regularly and almost never participate, or if you attend class and participate sporadically; a grade of D or less if you attend class sporadically and do not participate in class discussion.

B. Oral Presentation: Students will select a date on which they will be responsible for summarizing, discussing, and raising pertinent questions about the assigned readings.

Depending on the enrollment, students will most likely work in pairs and together be responsible for discussing the assigned material, raising questions for class discussion, and preparing a handout that identifies the key themes of the reading and sets forth a number of discussion questions. Your presentation should go beyond merely summarizing and repeating the reading (all students are expected to have completed the reading). Please do not read your presentation. Your aim is to engage the material, to highlight the main points, assess the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments, and to get the class involved in debating and discussing the material.

You will be evaluated on the basis of the substance and style of the presentation as well as the quality of your hand-out and discussion questions. I will especially be looking for evidence that you have carefully read and thought about the assigned readings. Your presentation is expected to cover the main points, issues, and arguments that arise from the readings. You should situate the readings theoretically, critique the readings, and consider the policy implications of the readings. Each presentation should be 10-15 30 minutes in length for a total of 20-30 minutes. You should coordinate your presentation before arriving in class.

C. Essay Assignment I: Students will be given a set of questions relating to the readings that have been assigned through February 13. You will receive the questions at least two weeks before the due date. You will select a question to answer and compose a **8 – 10 page** essay. Your essay should answer the question that you have selected and directly engage the assigned reading material. Your essay should also seek to incorporate additional material that relates to your topic. The essay should demonstrate your comprehension of the material. **The assignment is due in class on February 13.** For those students who are doing the presentation on February 13, your due date is February 15.

D. Essay Assignment II: Students will be given a set of questions relating to the readings that have been assigned in the course, with an emphasis on the reading assigned after February 13. You will receive the questions at least two weeks before the due date. You will select a question to answer and compose a **8 – 10 page** essay. Your essay should answer the question that you have selected and directly engage the assigned reading material. Your essay should also seek to incorporate additional material that relates to your topic. The essay should demonstrate your comprehension of the material. **The assignment is due in class on April 9.** For those students who are doing the presentation on April 9, your due date is April 11. There are no exceptions to these due dates and late papers will not be accepted.

D. Book Review: Students are required to write a **8** page book review of a recent book dealing with American foreign policy. **The book review is due on Wednesday March 19.** There are many books to choose from and I will provide a hand-out of suggested books for you to consider. You should let me know in advance the book that you have selected to read and review.

There are two main aims of this assignment. First, you should provide a concise account of the book (the main argument, the theoretical framework, organization of the book, type of evidence employed, etc.). The second aim is to link your chosen book to the course material and the debates and issues that have been raised in the assigned readings. How does your book speak to the themes and issues raised in the class? In

fulfilling these two aims, you should also be critically evaluating the book that you have selected. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the book, how convincing is the author's argument, how important of a contribution has the book made to the study of American foreign policy?

V. Other Guidelines

- Assignments sent by fax to the Department of Political Science will not be accepted. I will also not accept any paper that has been e-mailed to me.
- It is not acceptable to hand in the same assignment for two or more courses.
- To obtain credit in this course, students must meet all of the course requirements. Failure to complete all of the assignments will result in a failing grade for the course.
- Late assignments will be downgraded one letter-grade category per day. For example, a B+ paper, one day late, will receive a B.

VI. Topics and Reading List

January 9 **Course Introduction**

January 16 **Explaining US Foreign Policy**

- Fareed Zakaria, "Realism and Domestic Politics: A Review Essay," *International Security*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Summer 1992), pp. 177-198. ®
- Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics*, Vol. 51 (October 1998), pp. 144-172. ®
- Melvyn P. Leffler, "National Security," in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson eds., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations, Second Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 123-136. ®

January 23 **US Grand Strategy**

- Layne, *Peace of Illusions*, Introduction, ch. 1
- Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Winter 1996/97), pp. 5-53. ®

January 30 **US Grand Strategy and the Cold War**

- Layne, *Peace of Illusions*, chs. 2-5
- NSC 68, www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68.htm

February 6 **A Liberal Grand Strategy**

- Rosen, *The Right War?*, pp. 1-6, 18-35, 36-72, 96-101, 102-169, 170-221, 232-243

March 26 **No Class**

April 2 **An Off-shore Balancing Grand Strategy**

- Layne, *Peace of Illusions*, chs. 7,8, Conclusion
- Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion Revisited: The Coming End of American Hegemony," *International Security* Vol. 31, No. 2 (Fall 2006), pp. 7-41. ®.

April 9 **The Global Response to Primacy**

Walt, *Taming American Power*, chs. 3,4,5

Robert A. Pape, "Soft Balancing Against the United States," *International Security* Vol. 30, No. 1 (Summer 2005): 7-45.

Academic Accommodations

For Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course are encouraged to contact the Paul Menton Centre (PMC) for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) to complete the necessary forms. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs **at least two weeks before the first in-class test or CUTV midterm exam**. This will allow for sufficient time to process your request. Please note the following deadline for submitting completed forms to the PMC for formally scheduled exam accommodations: **March 14th, 2008** for April examinations.

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism: The Undergraduate Calendar defines plagiarism as: "to use and pass off as one's own idea or product, work of another without expressly giving credit to another." The Graduate Calendar states that plagiarism has occurred when a student either: (a) directly copies another's work without acknowledgment; or (b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgment; or (c) borrows, without acknowledgment, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student's own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of his or her own work. Instructors who suspect plagiarism are required to submit the paper and supporting documentation to the Departmental Chair who will refer the case to the Dean. It is not permitted

to hand in the same assignment to two or more courses. The Department's Style Guide is available at: <http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html>

Oral Examination: At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Course Requirements: Students must fulfill all course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade. Failure to hand in any assignment will result in a grade of F. Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

Connect Email Accounts: The Department of Political Science strongly encourages students to sign up for a campus email account. Important course and University information will be distributed via the Connect email system. See <http://connect.carleton.ca> for instructions on how to set up your account.