

Carleton University
Fall 2020
Department of Political Science
<https://carleton.ca/polisci/>

PSCI 4606A
American Foreign Policy
Tuesday 8:35 – 11:25am

Instructor: Dr. Brian C. Schmidt
Office Hours: Email me for an appointment
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I. Course Description and Objectives

By almost any measure, American foreign policy is in a serious crisis today. While some attribute this to the policies of the current President of the United States, others argue that the problems facing the country are deeply rooted in the history of American foreign policy. This course focuses on a specific feature of American foreign policy; namely the rise and fall of the American empire. The question of whether or not the United States is an empire is contentious. So too is the question of whether or not the American empire, or the American liberal hegemonic order, is experiencing relative decline today. This course will examine and assess the numerous debates and controversies that have arisen in response to these two fundamental questions.

To help address these questions, we engage in a historical overview of American foreign policy. In order to assess the imperial character of American foreign policy, we have to go back to the early nineteenth century. We then devote specific attention to the post-World War Two period to the present. Different theoretical perspectives on the character and nature of American foreign policy will be provided. We will examine some of the problems that have been identified in the literature on American foreign policy and conclude by considering some of the recommendations that scholars have provided for an alternative foreign policy.

The main objective of the course is for students to comprehend the past and present character of American foreign policy. This will be facilitated by reading some of the pertinent literature by scholars who study American foreign policy. This leads to the second objective of understanding the theoretical underpinnings of, and debates about, contemporary American foreign policy. By actively participating in this seminar, and by reading the course material, students will become familiar with the current debates and controversies about both the study and practice of American foreign policy.

III. Course Format

This course will be conducted entirely synchronously (real-time, “live”) in Zoom. You can access the Zoom session via the link posted on the course cuLearn page. The class will meet every Tuesday from 8:35am – 11:25am. I will begin each class with a brief overview of the material that we will be discussing in the seminar. As detailed below, my opening remarks will be based, in part, on the weekly check-in assignment that you submit to me twenty-four hours before the seminar. Following my remarks, there will be class discussion and debate about the assigned

material. During the semester, I will be available to answer your questions, discuss the material, and address any of your concerns or issues. This can be done via email, phone call or a personal zoom meeting.

IV. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Recognize historical facts, details, and information about American foreign policy.
- Describe and interpret the history of American foreign policy.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the issues and debates about American foreign policy.
- Differentiate the periods and characteristics of American foreign policy.
- Assess the current debates about American foreign policy.
- Critique and defend different interpretations of American foreign policy.

V. Course Texts

There are two required texts for the course that are available for purchase at the Carleton University Bookstore. Both of the books are also available on Amazon as well as from the publishers (Picador and Oxford University Press). The required texts have been placed on reserve at the Carleton University library.

1. Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States* (Picador: New York: 2019).
2. Alexander Cooley and Daniel Nexon, *Exit from Hegemony: The Unraveling of the American Global Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

The weekly reading assignments have been placed on reserve in the library. You can access many of the assigned journal articles by using JSTOR and other search engines that are available on the Carleton University library website (<https://library.carleton.ca/>). All of the assigned readings can be directly accessed through ARES, which can be found on the course culearn website.

VI. Course Requirements and Grading Policy

All assignments are to be submitted via cuLearn.

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|---|-----|
| A. Weekly check-in (10 in total) | 15% |
| B. Reading Summaries (5 in total) | 25% |
| C. Newspaper Assignment..... | 10% |
| Due Date: October 20 | |
| D. Book Review Assignment..... | 20% |
| Due Date: November 24 | |
| E. Take-home Final Exam..... | 30% |
| Due Date: December 23 | |

VII. Explanations

A. You are required to submit 10 weekly check-ins that are due 24 hours prior to class (due on Monday by 8:35am). Late assignments will not be accepted. Your weekly check-in assignment should be roughly one page (250-300 words). This assignment is to be turned-in using the Assignment submission tool in culearn. The assignment is of great importance to the course because I will review all the check-in submissions and structure my opening remarks for each class on your comments. I will determine the grade by the end of the semester, which will be based on the number of check-ins that you submit as well as the quality of your submissions. I am looking for evidence that you completed and understood the assigned material for a given week.

There are two main questions of the check-in assignment:

1. What is one thing that you learned from the assigned reading? This could be a new concept, a theory, a historical fact, or information that you did not previously know. In your own words, you should briefly define or describe the concept, theory or information from the reading.
2. What is one thing you found to be either confusing or unclear about the assigned reading? This could be the author's argument or historical interpretation, a concept, a theory, or some specific aspect of the material. Please be as clear as possible in explaining what is not clear or confusing.

B. You are required to submit 5 two-page summaries of the assigned readings. These are due within a week of the material that you are summarizing. For example, if you selected to review the assigned reading of week 3 (September 29), the assignment would be due on October 6. Please keep track of how many assignments you complete because once we run out of weekly topics it will be impossible for you to fulfill this course requirement.

Your main task is to provide a succinct summary of the assigned reading. You cannot simply repeat what you read, because you only have two pages to provide a summary. When there are multiple readings assigned for a specific week, you are allowed to focus on a specific book chapter or article as long as you also provide an overall summary of the material assigned for a specific week. When writing your summary, you may wish to focus on a specific theme or issue that you find to be of special significance. I want you to engage the material and identify the strengths and weaknesses. Do you agree or disagree with the author's argument (be sure to identify the argument)? What did you find to be of interest and importance? I am looking for evidence that you understood the issues and debates that were covered in the assigned reading.

C. You are required to find and read a current newspaper article dealing with a topic or issue related to American foreign policy and submit a two-page summary/re-action paper. Please include the title of the article, the name of the newspaper, and the date when it was published. If possible, please include a link to the article that you have selected. The assignment is due **October 20**.

D. You are required to write a 7- 8 page review of a book dealing with contemporary American foreign policy. The more you read the more you will understand the central issues in American foreign policy. **The book review is due November 24**. There are many books that you can

select to read. The course outline includes a list of recommendations that you may wish to consider. You are not allowed to review an edited book or textbook. You should let me know in advance the book that you have selected to read and review.

There are two main aspects of the assignment. First, you should provide a concise summary of the book (the main argument, the theoretical framework, organization of the book, type of evidence employed). Second, you should relate the book you read to the course material and the debates and issues that have been raised in the assigned reading. How does your book speak to the themes and issues raised in the class? While you are reading the book, you should also be critically evaluating it. 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? These are the types of questions you should be answering when you write your book review.

If you have never written or read a book review, you should take some time and read some book reviews that have been written in academic journals or a quality newspaper such as the *New York Times* book review section that appears every Sunday.

D. The final exam will be a take-home exam. The questions will be distributed in class on December 8 and the assignment is due on **December 23, 2020 at 12:00 p.m.** There will be two or three questions to answer and each answer should be approximately 5- 7 pages (typed and double-spaced). More information about the final exam will be provided at the end of the term.

VIII. Course Schedule and Assigned Readings

Week One (September 15)

Course Introduction

- William Appleman Williams, "Empire as a Way of Life," *The Nation*, 231 (August 2, 1980): 104-114. This article was reprinted in *Radical History Review* 50, (1991): 71-102.

Recommended:

William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1962).

Andrew C. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of US Diplomacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

Week Two (September 22)

Empire, Imperialism, and Race

- Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, 3-108.
- Annette Gordon-Reed, "America's Original Sin: Slavery and the Legacy of White Supremacy," *Foreign Affairs* 97, 1 (January/February 2018): 2-7.

Recommended:

W.E.B. Du Bois, *Color and Democracy: Colonies and Peace* (New York; Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1945).

Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance* (Holt Paperbacks, 2004).

A.G. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018).

Neil Smith, *American Empire: Roosevelt's Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

Week Three (September 29) Administering an Empire

- Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, 109-212.
- Robert Vitalis, "Birth of a Discipline," in David Long and Brian C. Schmidt eds., *Imperialism and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations* (New York: SUNY Press, 2005): 159-181.
- Brian C. Schmidt, "Political Science and the American Empire: A Disciplinary History of the 'Politics' Section and the Discourse of Imperialism and Colonialism," *International Politics* 45 (2008): 675-687.

Recommended:

Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).

Paul S. Reinsch, *Colonial Administration* (New York: Macmillan, 1905).

Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York: Metropolitan, 2000).

Week Four (October 6) World War Two, American Hegemony and the Liberal International Order

- Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, 213-316
- G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), Ch. 5 (159-219).

Recommended:

G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

Frank Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century: U.S. Foreign Policy Since 1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

Week Five (October 13) The Cold War

- Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, 317-371.
- Walter LaFeber, "An End to Which Cold War?" in Michael J. Hogan ed., *The End of the Cold War: Its Meaning and Implications* (Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 1992, pp. 13-19.

- Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), Ch. 3 (51-70).

Recommended:

John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Thomas J. McCormick, *America's Half-Century: United States Foreign Policy in the Cold War and After*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement 1945-1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

Week Six (October 20)

Hegemony and Order

- Cooley and Nexon, *Exit from Hegemony*, chs. 1-3.
- Brian C. Schmidt, "Hegemony: A Conceptual and Theoretical Analysis" Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute, Berlin, Germany, August 15, 2018.

<https://doc-research.org/2018/08/hegemony-conceptual-theoretical-analysis/>

- Brian C. Schmidt, "The Debate on American Hegemony" Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute, Berlin, Germany, June 13, 2019.

<https://doc-research.org/2019/06/the-debate-on-american-hegemony/>

Recommended:

G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

Hal Brands, *American Grand Strategy and the Liberal Order: Continuity, Change, and the Options for the Future* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2016).

Week Seven (October 27)

Reading Week – No Class

Week Eight (November 3)

Unipolar Moment and Bush II

- Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, 372-401.
- Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (1990/91): 23–33.
- G. John Ikenberry, "America's Imperial Ambition," *Foreign Affairs* (Vol. 81, No. 5 (September/October 2002): 44-60.
- Brian C. Schmidt and Michael C. Williams, "The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War: Neoconservatives Versus Realists," *Security Studies* 17, 2 (April-June 2008): 191-220.

Recommended:

Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).
David Calleo, *Follies of Power: America's Unipolar Fantasy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
Nuno P. Monteiro, *Theory of Unipolar Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
Charles Krauthammer, *Democratic Realism: An American Foreign Policy for a Unipolar World* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 2004).
Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay, *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2005).
Robert Jervis, *American Foreign Policy in a New Era* (New York: Routledge, 2005).
John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).
Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Price of America's Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004).
Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, *The Imperial Temptation: The New World Order and America's Purpose* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1992).

Week Nine (November 10)

The Decline of the United States

- Robert Pape, "Empire Falls," *National Interest* 99 (Jan/Feb 2009): 21-34.
- Michael Cox, "The Economic Rise of a Superpower: From Washington to Trump," in Michael Cox and Doug Stokes eds., *US Foreign Policy, 3rd ed* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018): 56-75.
- Chris Layne, "This Time It's Real: The End of Unipolarity and Pax Americana," *International Studies Quarterly* 56, 1 (March 2012): 201-212.
- Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, "American Primacy in Perspective," *Foreign Affairs* 81, 4 (July/August 2002): 20-33.

Recommended:

Charles A. Kupchan, *The End of the American Era: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Geopolitics of the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002).
Donald W. White, *The American Century: The Rise and Decline of the United States as a World Power* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999).
Fareed Zakaria, *Post-American World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008).
Aaron Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America and the Struggle for the Mastery of Asia* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011).

Week Ten (November 17)

The Rise and Fall of Great Powers

- Cooley and Nexon, *Exit from Hegemony*, 4-6.

Recommended:

Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987).
Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape the Thucydides's Trap?* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017).

Week Eleven (November 24)

The End of the Liberal International Order

- John J. Mearsheimer, "Bound to Fail: The Rise and Fall of the Liberal International Order," *International Security* 43, 4 (Spring 2019): 7-50.
- Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "Liberal World: The Resilient Order," *Foreign Affairs* 97, 4 (July/August 2018): 16-24.

Recommended:

G. John Ikenberry, *A World Safe for Democracy: Liberal Internationalism and the Crisis of Global Order* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020).

John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press).

Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, *The Empty Throne: America's Abdication of Global Leadership* (New York: Public Affairs, 2018).

David C. Hendrickson, *Republic in Peril: American Empire and the Liberal Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

Week Twelve (December 1)

The 45th President of the United States of America

- Cooley and Nexon, *Exit from Hegemony*, ch. 7
- Barry R. Posen, "The Rise of Illiberal Hegemony: Trump's Surprising Grand Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 92, 2 (March/April 2018): 20- 27.
- Eliot A. Cohen, "America's Long Goodbye: The Real Crisis of the Trump Era," *Foreign Affairs* 98, 1 (January/February 2019): 138-146.
- Doug Stokes, "Trump, American Hegemony and the Future of the Liberal International Order," *International Affairs*, 94, 1 (2018): 133-150.

Recommended:

Richard Haas, *A World in Disarray: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order* (New York: Penguin Books, 2018).

David Frum, *Trumpocracy: The Corruption of the American Republic* (New York: Harper, 2018).

Patrick Porter, *The False Promise of Liberal Order: Nostalgia, Delusion and the Rise of Trump* (New York: Polity, 2020).

Bob Woodward, *Fear: Trump in the White House* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2018).

Hal Brands, *American Grand Strategy in the Age of Trump* (New York: Brookings Institution Press, 2018).

Week Thirteen (December 8)

What are the Alternatives?

- Cooley and Nexon, *Exit from Hegemony*, ch. 8.
- Jennifer Lind and Daryl G. Press, "Reality Check: American Power in an Age of Constraints," *Foreign Affairs* 99, 2 (March/April 2020): 41-48.
- Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions: America's Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018), ch. 7 (255-291).
- Barry Posen, "The Case for Restraint," *American Interest* Vol. 3, 1 (November/December 2007): 7-17.

- G. John Ikenberry, "The Next Liberal Order: The Age of Contagion Demands More Internationalism, Not Less," *Foreign Affairs* 99, 4 (July/August 2020): 133-142.

Recommended:

Stephen M. Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Response to U.S. Primacy* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005).

Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions: America's Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018).

Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *America Abroad: The United States' Global Role in the 21st Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Barry Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014).

IX. Accommodations during COVID

Due to COVID, instructors will not request or require a doctor's note when students seek accommodation for missed term work or exams due to illness. Instead, students will be asked to complete the self-declaration form available here: https://carleton.ca/registrar/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19_Self-declaration.pdf

X. Academic Accommodations

Pregnancy

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For

more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: students.carleton.ca/course-outline

Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

More information on the University’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found at:
<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Intellectual property

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s). Students are **not** allowed to record or share the content of the zoom class meetings.