

PSCI 4801-C
Selected Problems in Global Politics: The Rise and Fall of American Hegemony
Tuesday 8:35am – 11:25am

While face-to-face classes at Carleton remain suspended because of COVID-19, this course will meet in a synchronous online format via Zoom. Please find access information on Brightspace.

Instructor: Dr. Brian C. Schmidt
Office Hours: Via Zoom: T 2-3:30, and by appointment
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I. Course Description and Objectives

By most accounts, American hegemony is, once again, on the wane. There have been earlier periods when American hegemony has been questioned, such as during the early 1980s, but with the rise of China, and a plethora of domestic and international issues besetting the United States, the decline debate has greatly intensified. This course examines the nature and character of American hegemony. Students will be introduced to the terms of debate on whether American hegemony is coming to an end. We will look at the post-WW II foundations of American hegemony that many argue led to the creation of a liberal international order (ILO). Next, we will examine the evolution of American hegemony up to the present day. This will allow us to conclude by examining the question of whether American hegemony is ending.

The main objective of the course is for students to comprehend the past and present character of American hegemony. This will, in part, be facilitated by reading the new book by G. John Ikenberry that chronicles the history of liberal internationalism. This leads to the second objective of understanding the theoretical underpinnings of, and debates about, American hegemony and whether it is declining or not. By actively participating in this seminar, and by reading the course material, students will become familiar with the current debates and issues about American hegemony.

III. Course Format

This class will be “face to face” meeting on Tuesdays from 8:35am to 11:25am. 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. Therefore, you must be fully prepared for each class. 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 hegemony.
- Describe and interpret the history of American foreign policy.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the issues and debates about the rise and fall of American hegemony.
- Identify distinct periods and the accompanying characteristics of American foreign policy.
- Assess the current debates about American hegemony and US foreign policy.
- Critique and defend different interpretations of American hegemony.

V. Course Texts

There is one required text for the course that is available for purchase at the Carleton University Bookstore. The book is also available on Amazon as well as from the publisher (Yale University Press). The required text has been placed on reserve at the Carleton University library.

G. John Ikenberry, *A World Safe for Democracy: Liberal Internationalism and the Crises of Global Order* (New Haven: Yale 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 brightspace page.

VI. Course Requirements and Grading Policy

All assignments are to be submitted via Brightspace.

A. Class Participation.....	10%
B. Weekly check-in (6 in total)	10%
C. Research Paper Proposal	10%
Due Date: February 8	
D. Book Review Assignment.....	20%
Due Date: March 1	
E. Research Paper.....	40%
Due Date: April 12	
F. Oral Presentation.....	10%

VII. Explanations

A. 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 engage 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. Attendance is mandatory and missing class will result in a grade reduction. In addition to attendance, your class participation grade will be determined by both the quantity and quality of your comments in class. After each class, I will note whether you participated at a high, medium, or low level.

B. You are required to submit 6 weekly check-ins that are due 24 hours prior to class (due on Monday by 9:00am). 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 Brightspace. 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 based on your comments and questions. During class, I will randomly ask several students to share their check-in to help generate class discussion. 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.

C. You are required to submit a 3 page research proposal that identifies the topic that you will be researching this semester and lists a bibliography of sources that you will be using. There are a wide variety of topics to choose from and the ideal topics will be related to the course theme of the rise and fall of American hegemony. Your topic can be historical, theoretical, policy relevant, or empirical. In addition to identifying and explaining your topic, you should also indicate your preliminary argument or thesis. You should also indicate how you will be supporting your argument or thesis: case study, literature review, historical analysis, theoretical interpretation, statistical analysis.

D. You are required to write a 5 page review of Ikenberry's, *A World Safe for Democracy*.

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 provide your own reaction – positive or critical – to the book. What were the strengths and weaknesses, what were the insights, how convincing were the arguments, what did it say about American foreign policy? These are some of the questions that you may wish to consider as you write your review of the book.

E. You are required to submit a 12-15 page research paper on a topic or theme related to the course material: the rise and fall of American hegemony. The focus does not necessarily have to be exclusively on the United States because we will also be considering the rise of other potential hegemony such as China. You could identify a topic or gap in the literature that you

want to explore. Your paper can focus on something contemporary, what is happening at this moment, or it could be historical. You can focus on security, economics (trade), human rights, war, the environment. In short there are many potential topics, and you should select something that you find interesting or puzzling.

F. Oral Presentation of your research paper.

In 10-12 minutes, your main task is to describe and explain the topic that you have investigated. You should indicate your argument or thesis. Finally, you should illustrate how your research topic is related to the theme of the course.

VIII. Other Guidelines

Late assignments will be downgraded one letter-grade category per day. For example, a B+ paper, one day late, will receive a B.

To obtain credit in this course, students must complete all the course requirements listed on the course outline.

IX. Course Schedule and Assigned Readings

Week One (January 11) Course Introduction

Week Two (January 18) Hegemony

- Brian C. Schmidt, "Hegemony: A Conceptual and Theoretical Analysis and its Application to the Debate on American Hegemony." In *Hegemony and World Order*, edited by Piotr Dutkiewicz, Tom Caiser and Jan Aart Schulte New York: Routledge, 2021: 32-47.
- Tom Casier, "Unraveling Power and Hegemony: Why Shifting Power Relations do not Equal a Change of International Order." In *Hegemony and World Order*, edited by Piotr Dutkiewicz, Tom Caiser and Jan Aart Schulte. New York: Routledge, 2021: 48-64.
- Paul Musgrave, "International Hegemony Meets Domestic Politics: Why Liberals can be Pessimists," *Security Studies* 28, 3 (2019):451-478.

Recommended

Piotr Dutkiewicz, Tom Caiser and Jan Aart Schulte eds., *Hegemony and World Order: Reimagining Power in Global Politics*. New York: Routledge, 2021.

Week Three (January 25) Hegemonic Unraveling

- Alexander Cooley and Daniel Nexon, *Exit from Hegemony: The Unraveling of the American Global Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), ch. 3, pp. 54-79.
- Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, "The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers in the Twenty-first Century: China's Rise and the Fate of America's Global Position," *International Security* 40, 3 (Winter 2015/16):7-53.

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' Trap?* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017).

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

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 Four (February 1) Liberal Internationalism to Wilson

- Ikenberry, *A World Safe for Democracy*, chs. 1-4.
- Walter Russell Mead, "The End of the Wilsonian Era: Why Liberal Internationalism Failed," *Foreign Affairs* 100, 1 (January/February 2021):123-137.

Recommended:

David Long and Brian C. Schmidt eds., *Imperialism and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations* (New York: SUNY Press, 2005).

Charles A. Kupchan and Peter L. Trubowitz, "Dead Center: The Demise of Liberal Institutionalism in the United States," *International Security* 32, 2 (Fall 2007): 7-44.

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

Week Five (February 8) Liberal Hegemony

- Ikenberry, *A World Safe for Democracy*, chs. 5-7.
- G. John Ikenberry, "America's Liberal Grand Strategy: Democracy and National Security in the Post-war Era," in Michael Cox, G. John Ikenberry, and Takashi Inoguchi eds., *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 103-126.
- Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), Ch. 2

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).
 David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

Week Six (February 15) Rise and Fall of American Hegemony

- Cooley, Alexander and Daniel H. Nexon. "How Hegemony Ends: The Unraveling of American Power." *Foreign Affairs* 99, no. 4 (2020): 143-157.
- Kitchen, Nicholas and Michael Cox. "Power, Structural Power, and American Decline." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 32, no. 6 (2019): 734-752.
- Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion Revisited: The Coming End of the United States' Unipolar Moment," *International Security* 31, 2 (2006): 7-41.
- Christopher Layne, William Wohlforth, and Stephen G. Brookes, "Decline or Primacy? A Debate." In Michael Cox and Doug Stokes eds., *US Foreign Policy*, 3rd ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018): 397-414.

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).
 Nina Hachigian and Mona Sutphen, *The Next American Century: How the U.S. Can Thrive as Other Powers Rise* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008).

Week Seven (February 22) Break – Reading Week

Week Eight (March 1) The Crisis of the ILO

- Ikenberry, A World Safe for Democracy, chs. 8-9.
- John J. Mearsheimer, "Bound to Fail: The Rise and Fall of the Liberal International Order," *International Security* 43, 4 (Spring 2019): 7-50.

Recommended

John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018).

Week Nine (March 8) Trouble Ahead: The Rise of China

- Layne, Christopher, "The US-Chinese Power Shift and the End of the Pax Americana." *International Affairs* 94, no. 1 (2018): 89-111.
- John J. Mearsheimer, "The Inevitable Rivalry: America, China, and the Tragedy of Great Power Politics," *Foreign Affairs* 100, 6 (November/December 2021): 48-58.

- Alastair Iain Johnston, "China in a World of Order: Rethinking Compliance and Challenge in Beijing's International Relations," *International Security* 44:2 (2019) 9-60.
- Michael Beckley, "China's Century? Why America's Edge Will Endure," *International Security* 36,3 (Winter 2011/12): 41-78.

Week Ten (March 15) What to do?

- Robert Kagan, "A Superpower, Like It or Not: Why Americans Must Accept their Global Role," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2021).
- 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.
- Barry R. Posen, "Pull Back: The Case for a Less Activist Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 92, No. 1 (January/February 2013): 116-128.
- Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, "Don't Come Home, America: The Case Against Retrenchment," *International Security* 37, 3 (Winter 2012/13): 7-51.
- John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), ch.8.

Week Eleven (March 22) Student Presentations

Week Twelve (March 29) Student Presentations

Week Thirteen (April 5) Student Presentations

x. Appendix

Covid-19 Information

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow COVID-19 prevention measures and all mandatory public health requirements (e.g. wearing a mask, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory and cough etiquette) When accessing campus you must fill in the [COVID-19 Screening Self-Assessment in cuScreen](#) each day before coming to campus. You must also check-in to your final destination (where you plan on being longer than 15 minutes) within a building using the [QR location code](#).

If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately, self-isolate, and complete the mandatory [symptom reporting tool](#). For purposes of contact tracing, attendance will be recorded in all classes and labs. Participants can check in using posted QR codes through the cuScreen platform where provided. Students who do not have a smartphone will be required to complete a paper process as indicated on the [COVID-19 website](#).

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow guidelines regarding safe movement and seating on campus (e.g. directional arrows, designated entrances and exits, designated seats that maintain physical distancing). In order to avoid congestion, allow all previous occupants to fully vacate a classroom before entering. No food or drinks are permitted in any classrooms or labs.

For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and required measures, please see the [University's COVID-19 webpage](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca

Please note that failure to comply with University policies and mandatory public health requirements, and endangering the safety of others are considered misconduct under the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#). Failure to comply with Carleton's COVID-19 procedures may lead to supplementary action involving Campus Safety and/or Student Affairs.

Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy accommodation: 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 accommodation: 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.

Accommodations for 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, reach out to your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more information, please visit carleton.ca/pmc.

Accommodation for 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 engage in student activities 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.

Sexual Violence Policy

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated. 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.

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 includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

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).

Submission and Return of Term Work

Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the departmental office will not accept assignments submitted in hard copy.

Grading

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
90-100	A+	12	67-69	C+	6
85-89	A	11	63-66	C	5
80-84	A-	10	60-62	C-	4
77-79	B+	9	57-59	D+	3
73-76	B	8	53-56	D	2
70-72	B-	7	50-52	D-	1

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.

Carleton E-mail Accounts

All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via official Carleton University e-mail accounts and/or Brightspace. As important course and university information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton University email accounts and Brightspace.

Carleton Political Science Society

The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. By hosting social events, including Model Parliament, debates, professional development sessions and more, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through our networking opportunities, academic engagement initiatives and numerous events which aim to complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CarletonPoliticalScienceSociety/>.

Official Course Outline

The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.