What role should the United States play in global politics? Should it seek to maintain a commanding lead in military capabilities over its allies and adversaries (e.g. primacy)? Or should it take advantage of its relative geographic isolation to channel its resources toward achievement of domestic policy objectives by investing in ‘butter’ rather than ‘guns’? Should it heed George Washington’s advice to avoid entangling alliances? Or is diplomacy the key to creating a more peaceful and equitable world?

This course introduces students to U.S. foreign policy through the lens of grand strategy. It examines the interplay of international forces and domestic politics in shaping American statecraft since the 1890’s. Students are challenged to analyze pivotal events and trends in American foreign policy history from diverse theoretical perspectives. We will read provocative works which challenge conventional understandings of U.S. national security strategies past and present.

Students should be advised that this course has a heavy reading load and is theoretically rigorous. Students are expected to come to class ready to discuss assigned readings. We will also collaborate on developing a course blog where students will be invited to discuss thought-provoking articles on contemporary and historical foreign policy issues. Students will benefit from having already taken PS205 Introduction to International Relations and PS201 Introduction to U.S. Politics.

**Student Objectives**

- To gain broad familiarity with a range of theoretical approaches to analyzing foreign policy decisions.
- To develop an understanding of the relationship between foreign policy and international politics.
- To understand broad historical variations in:
  - U.S. international engagement and foreign policy behavior.
  - The U.S.’s relative power capabilities.
  - The domestic coalitional and ideational roots of foreign policy decisions.

**Required Book Purchases**

Students must purchase the following books which are available at the UO bookstore:


These texts can also be purchased online. All other course readings will be posted on Blackboard.

**Assignments**

To excel in this course, students must complete assigned readings, regularly attend class, participate, and develop a capacity to analyze foreign policy decisions through competing theoretical lenses.
Students will be evaluated based on participation, performance on in-class quizzes, critique of an outside article on the course blog, and a take-home final exam.

- (3) of 4 in-class quizzes (15% of grade apiece = 45% total)
- (1) Critique of an outside article on the course blog (10% of grade)
- (1) Take-home final examination (35% of grade)
- Class attendance and participation (10% of grade)

**Academic Integrity**

This course challenges students to develop their critical thinking and composition skills through analytical writing exercises. Plagiarism will not be tolerated (for a definition, see [http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html](http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html)). To ensure the authenticity of students’ work, take-home examinations will be uploaded through SafeAssign on Blackboard. Students are advised to review the University of Oregon’s Academic Misconduct Code which is available at: [http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct/tabid/248/Default.aspx](http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct/tabid/248/Default.aspx)

**The Accessible Education Center**

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability related barriers to your participation, please notify me as soon as possible. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu

**Course Overview and Reading Schedule**

*Denotes that texts are available on Blackboard.

**Week 1 – Realpolitik**

*54 total weekly pages*

**Monday (3/30)**  
*First Day of Class - No Assigned Readings*

**Wednesday (4/1)**

*John Mearsheimer: “Anarchy and the Struggle for Power” in *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (pp. 29-54)*

**Friday (4/3)**

*John Mearsheimer: “Wealth and Power” in *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (pp. 55-82)*

**Week 2 – Innenpolitik**

*30 total weekly pages*

**Monday (4/6)**

*Brian Schmidt: “Theories of US Foreign Policy” in Cox and Stokes, eds., *U.S. Foreign Policy* (p. 5-20)*

**Wednesday (4/8)**

*Michael Mastanduno: “The United States Political System and International Leadership” (p. 227-240)*

**Friday (4/10)**

*No Assigned Readings*
Week 3 – Theorizing U.S. Grand Strategy 76 total weekly pages

Monday (4/13)
Trubowitz, Chapter One: “Statesmen, Partisans, and Geopolitics” (p. 1-8)

Wednesday (4/15)
Trubowitz, Chapter Two: “Grand Strategy’s Microfoundations” (p. 9-43)

Friday (4/17)
Trubowitz, Chapter Three: “Why States Appease Their Foes” (p. 44-76)

Week 4 – Executive Choice Theory 38 total weekly pages

Monday (4/20)
Trubowitz, Chapter Four: “When States Expand” (p. 77-96, 104-105)

Wednesday (4/22)
Trubowitz, Chapter Five: “Why States Underreach” (p. 106-119, 127-128)

Friday (4/24)
No Assigned Readings

Week 5 – Origins of the Cold War 78 total weekly pages

Monday (4/27)

Wednesday (4/29)
Layne, Chapter Two: “World War II and the Foundations of American Global Hegemony” (p. 39-50)

Friday (5/1)
Layne, Chapter Four: “The Open Door and American Hegemony in Western Europe” (p. 71-93)

Week 6 – Global Cold War or Hegemony? 64 total weekly pages

Monday (5/4)
*Michael Cox: “The USA, China, and Rising Asia,” in Cox and Stokes, eds., U.S. Foreign Policy (p. 259-276)

Wednesday (5/6)
*Toby Dodge: “US Foreign Policy in the Middle East,” in in Cox and Stokes, eds., U.S. Foreign Policy (p. 197-218)

Friday (5/8)
No Assigned Readings
Week 7 – Defense Budget Politics  
Monday (5/11)  
Wirls, Chapter One: “Irrational Security” (p. 1-17)  
Wednesday (5/13)  
Wirls, Chapter Two: “After the Cold War” (p. 18-51)  
Friday (5/15)  
Wirls, Chapter Three: “What Comes Down Must Go Up” (p. 52-90)  

Week 8 – Post-Cold War Grand Strategy  
Monday (5/18)  
Wirls, Chapter Four: “From Ambition to Empire” (pp. 91-127)  
Wednesday (5/20)  
Trubowitz, Clinton and Bush Grand Strategies (p. 120-128, 97-105)  
Friday (5/22)  
No Assigned Readings  

Week 9 – The Unipolar Moment  
Monday (5/25) – No Class – Memorial Day Holiday  
Wednesday (5/27)  
Wirls, Chapter Five: “Hidden in Plain Sight” (pp. 128-167)  
Friday (5/29)  
Wirls, Chapter Six: “Paying the Price” (pp. 168-198)  

Week 10 – The U.S. Strategic Dilemma  
Monday (6/1)  
Layne, Chapter Seven: “The End of the Unipolar Era” (p. 134-158)  
Wednesday (6/3)  
Layne, Chapter Eight: “The Strategy of Offshore Balancing” (p. 159-192)  
Friday (6/5)  
Trubowitz, Chapter Six: “Statecraft’s Twin Engines” (p. 129-150)  

Take-Home Final Exam Assigned – Due Thursday, June 11th @ noon