

**POLS 224: American Foreign Policy (Section: 001)**  
**Spring 2018: M 5-7:50 p.m., MOLN 112**  
**Department of Politics, Philosophy, and Law**  
**University of Wisconsin-Parkside**

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Office Hours: MWF 10 a.m. – 11 a.m., M 4 p.m. - 5 p.m., and by appointment

**Course Description**

How the U.S. interacts with other countries is often complicated, with various actors wanting different outcomes, and actors making decisions that seem hypocritical to past statements or doctrine. This course examines how the U.S. is navigating global affairs, with a look at how foreign policy is developed, what are the salient issues being addressed, and what are challenges the U.S. faces in the present regarding foreign policy.

**Course Objectives**

At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify and explain how American power across the globe came to fruition and what are the present challenges to that power.
2. Explain how U.S. government institutions develop and execute foreign policy.
3. Identify and understand the role of outside actors that affect U.S. foreign policy decisions.

**Prerequisites:** One POLS course or junior standing.

**Required Texts**

Hook, Steven W. 2016. *U.S. Foreign Policy: The Paradox of World Power*. 5th ed. Washington: CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-5063-2158-5. **Required**

Bremmer, Ian. 2016. *Superpower: Three Choices for America's Role in the World*. New York: Portfolio. ISBN: 978-0143109709. **Required**

Coll, Steve. 2004. *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*. New York: Penguin. ISBN: 978-0143034667. **Required**

Houghton, David Patrick. 2012. *The Decision Point: Six Cases in U.S. Foreign Policy Decision Making*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0199743520 .**Required**

These textbooks are available at the University Bookstore as well as online retailers (e.g., amazon.com, barnesandnobles.com, half.com, etc.). It is also available as an e-book.

The university offers a free digital subscription to the New York Times for as long as you are a student. You have to re-register every year, but it is a great way to know what is going on in the world. Visit <http://libguides.uwp.edu/nytimes> and follow the instructions. As a student, you can also receive a discounted subscription to the Wall Street Journal. A 15-week subscription is only \$15 (\$1 per week). Visit <http://r.wsj.net/j8wrm> to sign up.

### **Student Responsibilities**

Please come to class prepared. This means you need to **read and take notes** on the assigned readings beforehand. Attending class and participating is important, as there will be material discussed only in lectures that will be tested on exams and quizzes. We will be discussing controversial issues throughout the semester, with some of you holding passionate opinions on these issues. Please treat your fellow classmates with respect, We all come to this course with diverse backgrounds and different ideas regarding various issues and how government should work. Please respect your classmates by not talking or interrupting when I or others are speaking. Late work **will be** penalized by a full grade deduction for each day assignments are not turned in. Exceptions **will not** be made to this policy.

### **Instructor Responsibilities**

As part of being your instructor, I have responsibilities to you. I will help answer questions regarding the course, and help you understand the material. I will be available during office hours and also available by appointment if you cannot make office hours. I will also try to answer questions via email within 48 hours (does not include weekends). All questions regarding grades must be asked in person, either after class or during office hours.

I also aim to provide clear guidelines as to what is expected. I will be using D2L to communicate and post grades. Please check your campus email and D2L regularly to make sure you can view course announcements and review your grades as the semester progresses.

### **Grading**

Exams: 50% (Two at 25% each)

Country brief: 15%

Issue brief: 15%

Quizzes: 10%

Participation: 10%

**Final grade scale:** A = 94% and above, A- = 90%-93%, B+ = 87%-89%, B = 83%-86%, B- = 80%-82%, C+ = 77%-79%, C = 73%-76%, C- = 70%-72%, D+ = 67%-69%, D = 60%-66%, F = 59% and below (Note: I do not round up final grades if you are just below the cutoff, such as having a 93.8%. I have to define the scale at some point, and some people are always going to fall on the other side of the divide).

*Exams (Two at 20% each):* Two exams will be given during the course. Exams will be long-format essay and given in class. Exams may be made-up if you have an approved excuse or an emergency. Absences related to academic workload, illness, work schedule, car problems, etc. If you have an emergency that causes you to miss an exam, you must contact me as soon as possible (within 24 hours unless there is a **valid** reason why you could not contact me sooner) to arrange a make-up exam that will be given in an alternative format from the exam taken in class

*Country brief (15%):* You will act as an analyst in the State Department and tasked to write a brief outlining that country's relationship with the United States. You can pick any country, except China, Russia, Mexico, and members of the G7. Briefs will be between 1,500-1,600 words. Please pick your country and email it by the start of class Monday, February 5. Your choice is on a first-come, first-served basis, so please have a few choices and rank them. Briefs are due by 11:59 p.m. on Monday, March 19, via Dropbox.

*Issue brief (15%):* You are tasked with selecting an issue that is on the U.S.'s foreign policy agenda. However, your brief will be on a topic that is off the public's radar, so do not pick topics such as trade or terrorism, unless you can make a case to me why you should write on it. Briefs will be between 1,500-1,600 words. Please submit a one-paragraph proposal for your topic that includes a short description of why it is important and why it is on the public's radar by the start of class on Monday, April 9, via Dropbox on D2L. Memos are due by 11:59 p.m. on Monday, May 7, via Dropbox.

*Quizzes (10%):* Expect some sort of quiz every week during class. Quizzes may cover the previous class readings and discussion, and the readings and discussion for that week. I may give quizzes at the start of class, middle, or near the end, so it is important to show up on time and not leave early. Quizzes will be short essay (one- or two-paragraphs).

*Participation (10%):* Participation is an important component of learning. It is not enough to merely show up and listen to me talk. Here are a few things I look for that count for participation: asking questions; answering other students' questions; and making comments relevant to the discussion using the readings, other sources, and personal experiences. You do not have to agree what I say or what your classmates have said, but I do ask that we are respectful of each other's opinions. Behaviors that lead to lower participation scores are: not listening, texting or surfing the Internet, side conversations, speaking without being recognized, and making fun of comments from others. As part of participation, you are asked to keep track of your participation with a list of dates that you participated and how you participated. You will need to email me sometime during Week 7 and during Week 13 regarding your participation. You are welcome to suggest a participation grade you think you earned and I will provide feedback. I also reserve the right to ask for notes to be emailed to me before class to earn participation points if I discern that many of you are not reading the assigned articles.

Participation is contingent on attendance, because you cannot participate if you are not in class. Absences related to your academic workload, illness, work schedule, car problems, etc. are not usually excused absences. Excused absences generally are for university-sponsored events such as athletics, performing arts, or other special events held during class time. Events related to

student organizations are not excused unless attending a conference. You are allowed one absence during the course. After two unexcused absences, you will only receive 80 percent of your participation grade. Every absence after that is another 20 percent off your participation grade for each absence. If you miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining the missed material (e.g., notes) from another student, as my notes/PowerPoint slides will not be made available.

**Grading notes:** Proper spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure will be part of your research paper grade. Students need to develop the ability to write clearly and in common political science style that includes a research question, literature review, methodology, and results section, as well as a conclusion. Students are expected to carefully read, edit, and proofread their written work. If English is not your native language, or even if it is and you would like further assistance, there are on-campus resources that are there to help you. The university offers assistance in various subjects through the Parkside Academic Resource Center (PARC). Assistance is free and is available in Wylie D180. If you need help with this course, please make an appointment. Help with writing assignments is available on a walk-in basis. Visit the PARC in-person or online at <https://www.uwp.edu/learn/academicsupport/parc/> for hours and more information.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**

Use of the intellectual property of others without attributing it to them is considered a serious academic offense, and I will generally fail students from the course for academic misconduct. It can also lead to a disciplinary hearing where sanctions can suspension or expulsion from the university. The University of Wisconsin-Parkside's policy on academic misconduct can be found at <https://www.uwp.edu/live/offices/studentaffairs/upload/14.pdf>.

### **Student Accessibility**

Students with disabilities will be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact me the beginning of the semester with a copy of your accommodation letter so I can make the needed accommodations. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility and receive an accommodation letter from Disability Services. Please visit <https://www.uwp.edu/live/offices/disabilityservices/> for more information.

### **Registration Requirement**

The official registration deadline to add this course without a permission number is Friday, February 2. The deadline to add the course with a permission number is Friday, February 9. Course drops must be completed by Friday, February 23, to not receive a Grade "W", and the last day to withdraw with a Grade "W" is Friday, March 16. Please refer to the university's policies regarding pro-rated tuition refund dates. University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Please confirm enrollment in Solar. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the posted deadlines.

## **Class Schedule**

Readings will come from the textbooks. You should be prepared to discuss the assigned reading on the day listed below. I may make changes to the schedule as needed.

### **Week 1 – Introduction (Jan. 29)**

#### **Week 2 – Setting the Stage (Feb. 5)**

##### **Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 1
- Houghton, ch. 1
- Coll, ch. 1-3

### **Week 3 – Expansion of U.S. Power (Feb. 12)**

##### **Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 2
- Bremmer, ch. 1
- Houghton, ch. 2
- Coll, ch. 4-6

### **Week 4 – How Decisions Get Made (Feb. 19)**

##### **Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 3
- Bremmer, ch. 2
- Houghton, ch. 3
- Coll, ch. 7-9

### **Week 5 – Presidential Power (Feb. 26)**

- Hook, ch. 4
- Bremmer, ch. 3
- Houghton, ch. 4
- Coll, ch. 10-12

### **Week 6 – Congressional Power (Mar. 5)**

##### **Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 5
- Bremmer, ch. 4
- Houghton, ch. 5
- Coll, ch. 13-15

### **Week 7 – Foreign Bureaucracy (Mar. 12)**

##### **Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 5
- Bremmer, ch. 5-6
- Coll, ch. 16-18

**Important dates:**

- Country brief due (Mar. 12)

**Week 8– Midterm exam (Mar. 19)**

**Spring Break (No class Mar. 26)**

**Week 9 – Public Opinion and Foreign Policy (Apr. 2)**

**Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 7
- Houghton, ch. 6
- Coll, ch. 19-21

**Week 10 – How Media Shapes Foreign Policy (Apr. 9)**

**Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 8
- Houghton, ch. 7
- Coll, ch. 22-24

**Week 11 – Social Movements and Interest Groups (Apr. 16)**

**Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 9
- Houghton, ch. 8
- Coll, ch. 24-27

**Week 12 – National Security and Defense (Apr. 23)**

**Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 10
- Houghton, ch. 9
- Coll, ch. 28-30

**Week 13 – Economic Issues (Apr. 30)**

**Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 11
- Houghton, ch. 10
- Coll, ch. 31-32 and Afterword

**Week 14 –Transnational Issues and Final (May 7 and 11)**

**Readings:**

- Hook, ch. 12

**Important dates:**

- Issue brief due (May 9)
- Final exam (5:45 p.m. – 7:45 p.m., May 11)

## **General Grading Standards for Written Assignments**

- A – OUTSTANDING.** An "A" essay or paper is clearly written and contains no grammatical errors. It demonstrates mastery of the relevant material and offers significant insight into the topic at hand.
- B – GOOD.** A "B" essay or paper is clearly written but may contain a very few grammatical errors. It clearly relates the facts, gives sound analysis, and provides some interesting insight.
- C – MEDIOCRE.** A "C" essay or paper is clearly written but may contain some grammatical mistakes. It adequately relates the facts and offers some analysis, although it probably does not offer much insight.
- D – POOR.** A "D" essay or paper is intelligible but probably contains some serious grammatical errors. It often relates the facts poorly, offers little analysis, and provides no real insight.
- F – UNACCEPTABLE.** An "F" essay or paper is poorly written and makes no coherent argument. It struggles to relate the facts and offers little or no analysis. It often creates confusion instead of providing insight.