FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

This course will discuss how presidents have made American foreign policy. Domestic public opinion, Congress, and the media have played a major role in U.S. foreign policy decisions. The foreign affairs bureaucracy is not only responsible for carrying out the president’s policies but also shapes them by providing analyses and information. We will then analyze past American foreign policy decisions. Why did policy makers choose a particular course of action? Did their decision help to achieve U.S. objectives? Or did policy makers make misjudgments?

The course will cover American foreign policy since 1945. Was the Cold War inevitable? Did the U.S. containment policy inevitably lead to the Vietnam War? Why did the Cold War end?

Three books have been ordered at the Bookstore and are suggested for purchase:

Deborah Welch Larson, Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation.

Deborah Welch Larson, Anatomy of Mistrust: U.S.-Soviet Relations during the Cold War

Leslie Gelb and Richard Betts, The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked

The books should be on reserve at College Library. The articles are linked on the class web page. You will need to be registered for the class and to have a Bruinonline account to access them. The lectures will be podcast and accessible on the class web page. If you have any problems with the recordings, please contact bruincasthelp@ucla.edu.

Requirements

Students will be graded on a midterm and final, which will cover the readings and lectures, and an analytical essay (6-10 pages). The exams will consist of one essay question, a short answer, and short identifications (dates, names, treaties, concepts). The analytical essay will cover more recent issues that we do not have time to go over in class. Paper topics will be posted later in the quarter. Grades will be calculated as follows: midterm, 30 percent; discussion paper, 30 percent; final, 30 percent; performance in section, 10 percent. The grading scale is as follows: 92-above A; 90-91 A-; 88-89 B+; 82-87 B; 80-81 B-; 78-79 C+; 72-77 C; 70-71 C-.
Those who are unable to attend the midterm because of family emergencies or serious illness must notify me the day of the exam and provide some form of written evidence later. Students who are too ill to take the exam should get a physician’s excuse. A makeup will be given back to back with the final exam for students who have excused absences. The same policy applies to late papers: the instructor and TA should be notified when the paper is due, and documentation must be provided to avoid deduction of points.

**Grading**

The questions on the midterm and final will cover both the reading and the lectures. For the IDs, you should briefly define a term or identify a name or treaty, then indicate its significance. Your exam essays will be graded both for mastery of facts and analysis. If you do not understand why you were given a particular grade, you should discuss it with the teaching assistant first. If you would like for me to grade the exam a second time, I will do so, but I reserve the right to lower your grade if I find mistakes in the original grading.

In accordance with university policy, final grades will changed only in the event of a clerical error, not a reevaluation of existing work or submission of additional material.

**I. HOW AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY IS MADE** (April 2-11)

**Introduction** (April 2)

**Public Opinion and the Media** (April 4)

**Congress** (April 4)

**Bureaucratic Politics** (April 9)

**Presidential Management Systems** (April 11)


Kenneth M. Pollack, “Spies, lies, and weapons: what went wrong: how could we have been so far off in our estimates of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs? A leading Iraq expert and intelligence analyst in the Clinton Administration--whose book The Threatening Storm proved deeply influential in the run-up to the war--gives a detailed account of how and why we erred.” *The Atlantic Monthly* Jan-Feb 2004 v293 issue 1 pp.78ff.
Beliefs and Perceptions (April 11)

II. ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR (April 16-May 7)

Roosevelt’s Grand Design (April 16)
Larson, Origins of Containment, pp. 3-23, 66-76.

The Wartime Conferences (April 18)

Getting Tough with Russia (April 18)
Larson, Origins of Containment, pp. 126-212.

Truman Doctrine (April 23)

The Marshall Plan (April 25)

The Berlin Blockade (April 25)

NSC-68 (April 30)

MIDTERM May 2

Korean War (May 7)

Chinese Intervention (May 7)

II. EISENHOWER: NUCLEAR DIPLOMACY (May 9-14)

The New Look, Massive Retaliation, and Asia (May 9)

Gelb and Betts, The Irony of Vietnam, pp. 50-60.

The 1958 Berlin Crisis (May 14)
Larson, Anatomy of Mistrust, pp. 74-81, 86-91, 93-96, 100-104.
III. KENNEDY’S CONFRONTATION WITH KHRUSHCHEV (May 14-21)

Kennedy, the Missile Gap and Flexible Response (May 14)

The 1961 Berlin Crisis (May 16)

The Cuban Missile Crisis and the Test Ban (May 21)

PAPER DUE MAY 16

IV. THE VIETNAM WAR (May 21-28)

The U.S. Commitment to Diem (May 21)

Johnson’s Escalation of the War (May 23)
Gelb and Betts, The Irony of Vietnam, pp. 96-143.

Johnson’s Partial Bombing Halt (May 28)
Gelb and Betts, The Irony of Vietnam, pp. 144-78.

V. THE NIXON-KISSINGER DÉTENTE STRATEGY (May 28)

Nixon-Kissinger’s Grand Strategy (May 28)

Nixon’s Vietnamization Policy and War Termination (May 30)


VI. REAGAN AND THE END OF THE COLD WAR (June 4)

Reagan and Gorbachev (June 4)

Bush and Clinton (June 4)

Bush and Obama (June 6)