Course Description
This course will broaden your understanding of American foreign policy by examining the range of elements that comprise foreign policy. We will engage with the diverse actors who help to determine foreign policy and examine various events to understand the different roles that the United States can play in its relations with the world. We will discuss both historic and current pressures on the United States to gain an understanding of changes in foreign policy.

To understand change we will also evaluate theories relating to the formulation and development of American foreign policy. Our course will examine theories from international relations, history and other areas to provide you with a survey of the scholarship relating to development of American foreign policy. We will confront works with alternative explanations for the outcomes we examine. Your job will be to think critically about the evidence presented and evaluate the validity of the claims set forward. Readings, class discussions, and assignments will all contribute to this process.

Course Objectives
- Identify and describe the key historical events and major ideational trends in U.S. foreign policy
- Identity and employ the major theories and concepts of international politics and foreign policy studies
- Engage with the key debates in contemporary U.S. foreign policy and international politics
- Analyze the process and practice of U.S. foreign policy formulation and implementation
- Demonstrate analytical skills (both written and oral) needed to assess and articulate contemporary foreign policy challenges facing the United States
Learning Outcomes
Upon completing this course, students will be able to:
 Develop policy recommendations on current foreign policy issues
 Identify key moments where the foreign policy of the United States changed
 Clearly understand the different actors who exert influence on policy formation and how this influence is expressed
 Synthesize historical events in American history into foreign policy lessons for decision makers

Course Requirements

Attendance
Attendance is expected. If you have to miss class for an emergency or medical problem, please notify me. If you miss class, I encourage you to meet with me to chat about the class you. The Washington Internship Institute's official polices is as follows:

The courses offered through the Washington Internship Institute are integral to the academic internship program we offer. Further, these courses often feature site visits or guest speakers--one-of-a-kind opportunities that benefit students enormously. Since course meetings occur only once a week, missing a course meeting has deleterious effects on the student’s progress and access to these opportunities in the course. Therefore, attendance in class is mandatory. However, to accommodate the unexpected as well as the student’s internship experience, two excused absences are allowed. Excused absences include an absence due to illness, an emergency, or a mandatory event connected to their internship. Absences will only be considered excused if the faculty member is notified in advance or by the end of the scheduled class meeting time.

As such, any unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your final grade by one letter grade. If your internship or health require more than two excused absences, we will discuss how to offset these missed classes.

Participation (20% of grade)
This course is designed to be very interactive. As a result, it is necessary for each person in the class to be an active participant in our group discussions. A lively class conversation is an opportunity for us to interact with the readings we do, as well as with your classmates and the instructor. Towards that end, you will be required to submit at least two discussion questions about each week’s readings to the instructor via email by 09:00 pm on the day before class. This can be a comparison of the texts, a criticism of one or more of the texts, a request for clarification of a point or argument made in the texts, or any other topic for discussion. Please be thoughtful.
**Readings Presentation (20% of grade)**
In addition to daily participation, each student will be asked to give a 10 to 15 minute presentation at the beginning of class once during the semester. A sign-up sheet will be passed around early in the semester to choose which week each student will present. The presentation should not simply summarize the readings. Rather, they should aim to introduce the class to the topics at hand by discussing what the literature for that week is trying to accomplish, how the theoretical approach of each piece fits with the broader literature, and most importantly, what weaknesses, limitations, or debates are evident in the readings. The presentation should set the tone for the discussion and debate during class time.

**Response Papers (30% of grade)**
You will write two brief two-page double-spaced response papers. The papers should focus on one (or two readings in some cases) that you find particularly interesting. You should not simply summarize the reading. You should “respond” to it; for example, by highlighting a point that you think is of particular interest, discussing an argument with which you agree or disagree, comparing readings, or linking the readings to discussions, films, or current events. Submit your response as a hard copy to me. Response papers for a reading are due the day for which the reading is assigned and only one response is allowed per week. Please don’t wait until the last week to complete your response papers.

**Strategic Policy Memo (30% of grade)**
Producing a useful policy memo is a key skill for those involved in the U.S. foreign policy decision-making process. This assignment asks you to prepare a maximum 5-page policy memo related to a foreign policy issue the United States is current confronting. This memo is due on week 12. Please do not wait until the week before to complete this task. I am available to speak with you about your topics, and/or review a draft if you choose. The guidelines for writing an effective memo are included at the end of your syllabus.

**Grading Scale**

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**Late Assignments**
If you submit an assignment after the due date without prior notification and permission of the instructor, your grade will be lowered 1⁄2 a letter grade for each day the assignment is late. Late for each assignment is after 1:00 PM on the day the assignment is due.
Course Policies

Academic Honesty
All members of this academic community are expected to abide by ethical standards, both in their conduct and in their exercise of responsibilities toward other members of the community. I expect students to understand and adhere to basic standards of honesty and academic integrity. These standards include, but are not limited to, the following:

- In projects and assignments prepared independently, students never represent the ideas or the language of others as their own. Students do not destroy or alter either the work of other students or the educational resources and materials of the College.
- Students neither give nor receive assistance with examinations.
- Students do not represent work completed for one course as original work for another or deliberately disregard course rules and regulations.
- In laboratory or research projects involving the collection of data, students accurately report data observed and do not alter these data for any reason.
- If there is a dispute regarding an act of academic dishonesty, the Washington Internship Institute will convene a meeting, chaired by the President, to hear all sides of the matter and then make the final decision about action to be taken.

Cell Phone Policy
Please make sure that your cell phone is turned off during our class meetings. If you are awaiting an important call, please turn your phone to silent and exit the room quietly to take this call.

Computer Policy
The use of computers is permitted during regular class, but only for class related activities.

Students with Disabilities
If you need special accommodations to help you with this course or transportation to field visits, I encourage you to come talk to me. I am dedicated to supporting all students in my course and making this course accessible for everyone.

Required Texts

All other reading are linked in the syllabus or will be sent to you at least one week prior class meeting for which they are assigned.
Course Schedule

**Week 1:** Introductions, Course Plan and Some Basics, September 5 | Geography quiz.

**Week 2:** NO CLASS, September 12
Watch *The Battle of Algiers* (1966). This is required viewing for all defense and IR practitioners:
From the Criterion Collection: “One of the most influential political films in history, Gillo Pontecorvo’s *The Battle of Algiers* (La Bataille d’Alger) vividly re-creates a key year in the tumultuous Algerian struggle for independence from the occupying French in the 1950s...Shot in the streets of Algiers in documentary style, the film is a case study in modern warfare, with its terrorist attacks and the brutal techniques used to combat them.”

**Week 3:** The Founders and Foreign Policy, September 19
The Federalist Papers: No. 3. [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed03.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed03.asp)
The Federalist Papers: No. 4. [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed04.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed04.asp)
The Federalist Papers: No. 5. [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed05.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed05.asp)
Washington’s Farewell Address. 1796. [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp)

**Russian and Cyber-power**
Read Chapter 5 in *The Future of Power*, by Joseph Nye.

**Week 4:** International Relations Theories, September 26

**Week 5:** The United States and Military Power, October 3
Read Chapters 1 and 2 in *The Future of Power*, by Joseph Nye.

*Doomsday Scenario Planning Exercise* — Students will be divided into groups & tasked with devising a geopolitical doomsday scenario. Opposing groups will then be tasked with “solving” the doomsday scenarios using concepts discussed in class & in the readings.

**Week 6:** Soft Power and the Power of Economics, October 10
Read Chapters 3 and 4 in *The Future of Power*, by Joseph Nye.
Statement before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade On China’s Predatory Trade and Investment Strategy.”


Week 7: China and American Decline, October 17
Read Chapter 6 in The Future of Power, by Joseph Nye.

Week 8: The Politics of Dissent in the Conduct of International Relations, October 24

Assignment: Research a case of political dissent, protest and/or revolution that interests you, and come prepared to share it with your classmates for discussion.

Week 9: Saudi Arabia and the United States, October 31
Why Saudi Arabia and Iran are Bitter Rivals – be sure to click on and read all the hyperlinked bullets in the article https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42008809

Week 10: Israelis and Palestinians, November 7
What are Israel and Palestine? Why are they fighting? https://www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080002/israel-palestine-conflict-basics - Please be sure to click on all the headings and reach each article

“Peace-gaming” Exercise: Each student will be responsible for role-playing a particular-actor in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Students will be divided in groups depending on the roles that they are assigned and/or chosen. Student
will not be able to communicate with each other beyond the channels specified by the rules of the simulation. The instructor will share information with each group, which they will then be prompted to respond to. This will be a very interactive class exercise. At the end of the simulation, we will discuss how the negotiations transpired and the peaceful resolution put forth by the simulation.

**Week 11:** Terrorism and Intelligence in World Politics, November 14
Read Chapter 7 in *The Future of Power*, by Joseph Nye.
What is Terrorism? What do terrorists want? *The Conversation.*
Trump Administration's National Strategy for Counterterrorism: Overview and Comparison to the Prior Administration [https://fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/IN11027.pdf](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/IN11027.pdf)

*Counterintelligence Intelligence Exercise – Find the mole!* Students will be provided with a hypothetical set of circumstances and pieces of information and will work as a group to find “the mole.”

**Week 12:** Latin America, Drug Wars and the United States, November 21
Drugs and Security, Latin America’s Lessons for the World
The Network Effect: Trafficking in Illicit Drugs, Money, and People in Latin America

*Assignment:*  
First round of Strategic Options memo presentations

Thanksgiving break – no class

**Week 13:** North Korea and the United States, December 5
Why are North and South Korea Divided?
North Korea profile – Timeline
How can history actually solve the south Korea-Japan crisis?

Second round of Strategic Options memo presentations

**Week 14:** Climate Change as an Emerging Cause of Conflict, December 12
Third round of Strategic Options memo presentations
Guidelines for Strategic Options Memos

Strategic Options Memos are a means of communicating policy analysis and recommendations to senior policymakers. Effective written communication is essential to success in advisory roles. The following guidelines identify the questions and criteria an effective memo must cover. Strategic Options Memos should include the following sections:

1. **Issue:** What is the policy question to be answered? A one-sentence summary of the issue facing the policymaker.

2. **Relevant National Interests:** Why do we care? What specific national interests are engaged by the issue? How much do we care? What do we care about more than other things we care about? From the perspective of the policymaker you are advising, what matters more than other things that matter?

3. **Analysis:** What is the shape of the challenge? Analysis of the dynamics of the challenge with special attention to drivers and trend lines. Not a history lesson. Instead, key facts, causal factors driving trends that the busy decision maker may not recall vividly but that are essential in examining potential interventions to advance U.S. interests.

4. **Operational Objectives:** Given interests, threats, opportunities, and the capabilities that can mobilized, in many cases, it is useful to summarize one or two operational, achievable objectives to advance national interests identified above in addressing challenge. What should we try to achieve now by intervening in current dynamics? Avoid vague or tangential goals.

5. **Strategic Options:** What are the major strategic alternative courses of action? What are the pros and cons of each? Identify at least 3 distinct strategies that could be implemented to achieve the operational objectives and advance the national interests identified earlier in the memo. Each option should have a brief label that captures its essence. Assess pros and cons of each. Each option should be realistic, feasible, and presented in its strongest form. Do not write the decision maker a “sandwich memo” in which two unreasonable options are presented, making the third option (that you recommend) the only feasible choice.

6. **Recommendation:** A concise (generally one to two sentences) summary of the option you recommend and why you recommend it.

7. **Implementation:** Brief summary of initial steps policymaker would take to implement the option recommended, for example, consultations with allies, engagement of Congress, etc. Where feasible, include indicators of effectiveness or early clues about whether the strategy is succeeding, or needs to be adapted or changed.

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1 These guidelines were developed by Graham Allison, David E. Sanger, & Derek Reveron for HKS211x: Central Challenges of American National Security, Strategy and the Press, Belfer Center, Harvard University.
As you write your outline, you should keep the following in mind:

8. **Incentive**: Let the decision maker know why he or she should address this issue now. Why is it an important issue? Why can’t it wait?

9. **Brevity**: Be brief. Don’t tell the decision maker what he or she already knows. Put yourself in the decision maker’s place: what facts and analytic insights are essential for making a sound decision? Avoid overly elaborate analysis and the temptation to show off technical skills.

10. **Bias**: You often cannot avoid having a personal point of view. But you can avoid slanting the assumptions or options.

11. **Leaks**: Memos often receive wider distribution than their authors intend. While frankness is important, consider how your memo would look on the front pages of national and/or local newspapers.

12. **Big Picture**: How does the issue relate to other issues under consideration? Will the consequences of alternative courses of action be importantly affected by developments on other fronts? Keep in mind the “Big Picture” to avoid getting bogged down in irrelevant or trivial details. Place the immediate issue in a longer-term time frame.

13. **The Boss and the Assignment**: Pay close attention throughout to the decision maker’s agenda, expectations and concerns. Answer the question asked. Make certain that you understand your assignment; seek clarifications when necessary.

14. **Tough Issues**: One of the key purposes of memo writing is to illuminate and clarify the toughest issues and address them head on. Sidestepping or blurring these issues will lead to unpleasant surprises for the decision maker—and in turn for the memo writer.

15. **Uncertainties**: Give your best estimate of probabilities. Use numbers, metaphors, or whatever best communicates your judgment about likelihoods. Instead of saying that an outcome will “probably” occur, give your best guess—do you mean “better than even,” “two out of three chance,” or “95%?” It may feel uncomfortable to attach precise estimates, but it is worse to bury your best judgment in ambiguities. It is important to be clear that these are your own best estimates based on available information.

16. **Leave the politics out, for the most part**: As a policy advisor or expert, you will be asked for your best insights into what will work in the interests of the United States or your country.

Importantly, keep in mind that the strategic options you are presenting must be in the national interests of the person you are advising.