

**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**POL 281.01**  
**AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY**  
**CREDIT HOURS: 3**  
**FALL, 2007**

LOCATION OF CLASS MEETING: AB1 306

CLASS MEETING TIMES: 2T

INSTRUCTOR: DR. WILLIAM E. CARROLL

OFFICE LOCATION: AB1 315D

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION: PHONE – 41469; [pol\\_wec@shsu.edu](mailto:pol_wec@shsu.edu)

OFFICE HOURS: 11-12 MTWTH

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is the introductory, survey course in American foreign policy. Put in simple, general terms we will study: what US foreign policy is, who makes, and how and towards whom. In other words, we will study the actors – president, national security officials, congressional actors, think tanks - and processes involved in the formulation and conduct of US foreign policy. And since historical context is critical, we will also trace the evolution of US foreign policy from its roots in the early Republic, through world wars and cold war, to the immediate post-Cold War era. As will be obvious from the assigned texts, however, much of our discussions and focus will be on the challenges facing American foreign policy and foreign policy makers, post-9-11 and Iraq. Some of these challenges are enduring and perennial, some are new. We will examine the ideological and strategic premises of the Bush Administration's foreign policy, how it has fared in achieving its goals, and the consequences for American diplomacy and security raised by a "unilateralist" foreign policy and by the debacle in Iraq. Two text specific themes will run throughout: the role of the National Security Council, and domestic and global challenges to U.S. power.

**Approach/Method of Instruction:** Lectures are meant to provide background knowledge, both substantive knowledge and theoretical and practical insights into the subject. My lectures occasionally follow an outline format, but are more typically discursive. Discussion is always encouraged, as are questions at any time, as this brings out points needing clarification or worth elaboration.

**Prerequisite:** POL 261

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- Factual knowledge: of the key individuals and institutions, and processes, as well as the specifics of US foreign policy

- Critical thinking: understanding and evaluating foreign policy, learning to build on factual knowledge, challenging assumptions, and posing “critical” questions

#### REQUIRED TEXTS:

Rothkopf, David Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power

Walt, Stephen M. Taming American Power: The Global Response to U.S. Primacy

Additional readings, mostly general and for reference, will fill in any gaps. The library subscribes to major journals in foreign policy: Foreign Affairs, FP, Foreign Policy, and World Politics, and others; various journals are available through one of the library’s electronic journal bases. Of course, keep up with current events through the major news sources (newspapers, radio/TV, on-line sources).

#### ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Class attendance is required, following general university guidelines. Repeated absences result in a grade penalty. Make-up exams are available only for verified and excused absences, and are given at the discretion of the instructor.

#### ASSIGNMENTS:

In addition to the exams, there will be one out-of-class assignment, the details of which will be explained in class and a separate handout provided.

#### EXAMS AND GRADING PLAN:

There will be four exams, the final being the fourth. They will be primarily objective, though there may be some written content. Exams will constitute 80% of the final grade. The out-of-class written assignment will count 10% of the final grade; attendance and participation in class will comprise the remaining 10% of the final grade.

The normal grading scale is used: 90 and above, A; 80 – 89, B; 70 – 79, C; 60 – 69, D; and 50 and below, F.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** University regulations apply. Cheating, plagiarism, etc. will result in disciplinary action.

**CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT:** University regulations apply. Disruptive behavior, such as intentionally disrupting class, persistent talking at inappropriate times, disrespectful behavior toward classmates or instructor, etc. will result in a directive to leave class and possibly referral to the Dean of Students.

**VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM:** If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

I. U.S. Foreign Policy from Washington to FDR: Isolationism and Imperialism, Neutrality and War

Reading: Rothkopf, chapter 2; readings on reserve and e-reserve

**FIRST EXAM**

II. US Foreign Policy: WWII and Cold War – Truman to Reagan

Reading: Rothkopf, chapters 3-8; handouts; readings on reserve

**SECOND EXAM**

III. U.S. Foreign Policy: post-Cold War – Bush to Clinton to Bush

Reading: Rothkopf, chapters 9-13; handouts; readings on reserve

**THIRD EXAM**

IV. Global Challenges to American Power: Issues and Cases

- a. Terrorism: Clinton, Bush, and Osama Bin Laden
- b. Bush doctrine and US intervention in Iraq
- c. Arab-Israeli conflict
- d. North Korea: avoiding a worst-case scenario
- e. Kyoto and climate change
- f. International Criminal Court
- g. Rights of detainees

Readings: Walt, all chapters; handouts; readings on reserve

## FINAL EXAM

**STUDY TIPS:** Students are strongly advised to take class notes. It also helps to keep up with the reading as we cover each topic in class. Keeping up with the reading also presents questions that can be addressed in class and brought into class discussion. Questions and class discussion make the lectures more informative and allow me to address points needing clarification or elaboration – and give the student the opportunity to engage the topics.

**INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS:** Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation toward the end of the semester.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES** will be accommodated in any way possible. Please let me know early in the semester.

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:** Any student who needs to miss a class due to observance of a religious holiday will be accommodated in any way possible. Please let me know early in the semester.

Syllabus is subject to change if circumstances dictate. This would happen only if, for example, we needed to shift material between exams for student convenience, or to add an additional topic if there were time or if there were a major issue or crisis developing during the semester.

