

BOSTON UNIVERSITY – International Programs
Washington Semester Program – Summer 2005

HI/PO/IR 356E – *Foreign Affairs, Politics, & Presidents in the 20th Century*

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Office Hours: By appointment

The course meets Tuesdays & Thursdays from 7:00-10:00 p.m.

Course Objectives:

This is a four-credit course that meets twice a week, two-three hours per session. It aims to provide an overview of American presidents in the 20th century and how they affected American foreign policy. Along the way, the course will cover specific presidential campaigns worth noting, as well as the individuals who helped craft the modern-day American political tradition. How politics relates to foreign policy in America is very important to dissect; therefore, concepts such as isolationism, manifest destiny, American moralism, national self-interest, and the topic we are now currently all too familiar with – terrorism – will be discussed. How has our conduct overseas been shaped over the years and who were the primary players in molding this ever-expanding American foreign policy? How has presidential leadership affected our standing in the world? What can we learn from the accomplishments and mistakes of presidents past? How much power does a president possess while in office? In addition, other topics the course will cover are the media's impact on the presidency, the growth of the office, and some of the key figures surrounding the office over the years. **Foreign Affairs, Politics, & Presidents in the 20th Century** will aim to address many such questions. Time permitting, the course will include a guest speaker, a short local field trip to a presidential museum, and conclude with a thorough analysis of the current administration's potential legacy in foreign affairs.

Course Requirements:

Given that this is a rapid-fire six-week course, regular attendance is required, as is diligent preparation for class meetings. Students will be expected to attend all class sessions, participate in class discussions, complete all assigned readings, and submit assignments on time. The class has one mandatory writing assignment consisting of a short book review (five-six pages) on fairly recent scholarship regarding a presidential administration in the 20th century. Students will present their reviews to the class in a ten minute presentation. Along with a mandatory mid-term exam, students are responsible for either writing a **final paper or taking a final exam**. The optional final research paper (12-15 pages) will focus on one of the larger themes in the course. Final grades will be assessed as follows:

Book review and presentation (25%)

Mid-term Exam (20%)

Final Exam or Final Research Paper (30%)
In-class Quiz (10%)

Class participation (15%)

Required Readings for the Course:

Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace – Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (Basic Books - 2003)

John L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (Oxford University Press – 1981/2005)

Lewis L. Gould, *The Modern American Presidency* (University Press of Kansas - 2003)

Recommended Reading

Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (Oxford - 1995)

Robert Dallek, *Hail to the Chief – The Making and Unmaking of American Presidents* (Oxford – 1996/2001)

Louis Fisher, *Presidential War Power* (University Press of Kansas - 2004)

Jeffrey Record, *Making War, Thinking History – Munich, Vietnam, and Presidential Uses of Force From Korea to Kosovo* (Naval Institute Press – 2002)

The remaining readings -- consisting of articles and book excerpts -- will be provided by the instructor. These will likely focus on the foreign policies of presidents Harry S. Truman through George W. Bush. In addition, the instructor will provide a detailed list of books from which you will select one for your assigned book review. Finally, a detailed instruction sheet on your optional final research paper will be provided following the mid-term examination.

Course Outline:

I. Tuesday, 7 June 2005

Introduction: The Impact of the Presidency on the American Mindset. *How has the Office grown since George Washington's time?* Is the office too powerful? Who stands out in American memory today as the unofficial founder of American foreign affairs? The Origins of American Diplomacy as seen in Jefferson's time.

II. Thursday, 9 June

What is the American Foreign Policy Tradition? American Moralism and Manifest Destiny. William McKinley's surprising presidency and the U.S.'s first rise to prominence. The lasting impact of Theodore Roosevelt and his energetic office.

Read: Gould (McKinley, Roosevelt); Boot (chapters 1, 5, & 6)

III. Tuesday, 14 June

The ever-changing Office of the President – From T.R. to Taft to Wilson. American Imperialism...Making the World Safe for "Democracy"? The legacy of World War I,

the League of Nations, and Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points. The impact of a president in absentia.

Read: Gould (Taft and Wilson); Boot (specific pages)

Distribute List of Books for Book Reviews (due on Tuesday, 5 July)

IV. Thursday, 16 June

Back to Isolationism: the 1920s, and the Great Depression in the midst of laissez-faire presidents. Contrasting presidencies: FDR vs. Hoover. FDR's rise and the subsequent growth of presidential power and the arrival of the Modern Presidency.

Read: Gould (Harding, Coolidge, Hoover); other articles

Saturday, 18 June @ 1 p.m. -- FIELD TRIP to the Woodrow Wilson House (In Washington's Dupont Circle – 2340 S Street, N.W.)

V. Tuesday, 21 June

Franklin D. Roosevelt and World War II: An Exercise in Craftsmanship and the Art of Persuasion. The use of Television, Radio, and the Media.

Read: Gould (FDR); previously assigned articles

In-class Quiz

VI. Thursday, 23 June

Midterm Exam

Distribute Instructions and Topics for Research/Final Paper.

NO CLASS the week of 28 June – 1 July (Tuesday, 28 June and Thursday, 30 June) -- WORK ON BOOK REVIEWS

VII. Tuesday, 5 July

Truman's fateful decision and the subsequent Cold War and Containment: An Iron Curtain draped across a divided world. Nuclear Culture, War on the Korean Peninsula. *The Vice Presidency*: A Futile Office? Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's *New Look* Policy. America's early involvement in the Middle East; and, the intensifying rivalry with the Soviet Union. The 1960 Election and its Impact.

Read: Gould (Truman, Eisenhower); Gaddis (chapters 1-3); previously assigned articles

Book Reviews Due

VIII. Thursday, 7 July

Cuba, JFK, & a near-paralyzing Missile Crisis. America's Banana War Tradition. The Death of a President -- Its Impact on the American Psyche. The 1964 Election. Lured into Indochina amidst monumental changes in a most radical decade. *The Quagmire of Vietnam. Lyndon Johnson's rise & fall.* The 1968 presidential campaign and the Civil Unrest in America.

Read: Gould (Kennedy, Johnson); Boot (two Vietnam chapters); Gaddis (chapters 4-8)

IX. Tuesday, 12 July

Richard Nixon's foreign policy: Vietnam, Cambodia, Chile, China, the Middle East and Détente. Vietnamization and the Nixon Doctrine. The Ford Presidency: A Healer or Divider? The "Malaise" of the '70s: *President Carter and the U.S. in declension.* The Carter Doctrine and Camp David Accords.

Read: Gould (Nixon, Ford, Carter); Gaddis (9-10); selected articles

XII. Thursday, 14 July

Reagan vs. the Soviet Union: Détente's Demise. *An Evil Empire or Declining Power?* The Reagan Doctrine and Reaganomics. Small wars revisited (Grenada, Libya, Lebanon...Panama, Somalia...). *Bush I and the First Gulf War.* Clinton vs. Bush vs. Perot in the 1992 Election.

Read: Gould (Reagan, Bush); Gaddis (11-epilogue); assigned articles

XIII. Tuesday, 19 July

The Clinton deployments...the Middle East... and the approaching terrorism. Bush II: *A New American Foreign Policy of Preemption?* Afghanistan 2001-2002 and Operation Iraqi Freedom 2003-04. Questions and discussion on the future of American foreign policy. Concluding statements.

Review for Exam

Read: Gould (Clinton, George W. Bush); assigned articles

XIV. Thursday, 21 July

Final Exam.

Final Papers (in lieu of the Final Exam) due on Sunday, 24 July 2005

