IR 380 – United States Foreign Policy: Principle, Practice and Process
Fall 2016: Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-2:00  CAS 225

Professor: Ambassador Robert Loftis
152 Bay State Road, Room 225
617-353-9390, rgloftis@bu.edu

Office Hours
Tuesday: 2:30-4:00
Wednesday: 10:00-12:00
Thursday: 2:30-4:00
Other days and times by appointment

COURSE SUMMARY

U.S. foreign policy is meant to protect and promote America’s interests in the world. This simple statement hides a myriad of challenges. First and foremost, what are America’s interests and who decides what they are? Which interests are the most important? Where will the resources come from to implement our foreign policy? What are the sources of American power and how are they best used?

This course examines how American foreign policy is made. A principal objective is to help students understand why a broad strategy, a more specific policy, or a narrowly focused decision was adopted. With the benefit of hindsight, some actions appear to have been poorly thought out or implemented, or even to have been against the national interest. Why was that the case? In other words, the course tries to increase appreciation of the real world in which U.S. policy is made. To do this, the course looks at past, current and potential future policy decisions and the practical considerations that influenced or will influence those making the decisions or attempting to put strategies into effect.

The course will include a brief history of U.S. foreign policy to set the context and to emphasize that America has never been as isolated from the rest of the world as our popular mythology holds. We will examine the changing global political and economic environment before looking at the institutions and factors that make and influence foreign policy, from the President and the NSC system to Congress, the media, interest groups and the public. With that foundation, the course will examine how all of this is put into practice, including through the use of force, sanctions, intervention, nation building, and trade. Finally, we will attempt to look ahead at the future of American foreign policy.
The instructor draws on his experience as an American diplomat to offer a practitioner’s view of the policy process in Washington and by discussing the role of American ambassadors and embassies in the making of policy. Students are encouraged to think of foreign policy problems as practitioners think of them and will be offered practical experience in writing the kind of paper used as the basis for decision-making in government.

**Special Remarks**
We will start each day with a short discussion of the “events of the day” and their applicability to the lesson. **Pay particular attention to the presidential election campaign, as you will be required to write three “issues papers” for the candidates (see below).** Therefore, students should scan a quality daily, such as *the New York Times* or *Washington Post*, and weekly (such as *The Economist* or *Foreign Affairs*) to productively participate in class activities. Access to periodicals is available on-line or through the Mugar library. **Be prepared to discuss the relevance of any issue you raise and to be called upon to contribute a news item for discussion. Some of this material will find its way into the quizzes and exams. Moreover, keeping abreast of the news will be invaluable as you decide on your paper topics.** Students should do the required reading **in advance**, as they will provide the context and point of departure for the day’s discussion. Lecture notes, including any PowerPoint presentations, will be posted on Blackboard after the lesson. (Note: lecture notes merely serve as guidelines and reminders. They will not substitute for attendance.)

Students are expected to attend all classes except in case of a valid excuse (i.e. personal illness). Please e-mail me in advance of any absence.

**Academic Misconduct**
All class members are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and integrity. You are expected to provide citations in papers for all quotations, paraphrases, and ideas taken from any source other than your own original thoughts. Boston University has very strict standards for intellectual integrity, and punishment for plagiarism is severe, and can include permanent expulsion from the university. For more on the definition of plagiarism and the standards to which you will be held, see the CAS Academic Conduct Code, available at [http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/](http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/)

**Students with Documented Disabilities**
If you have a disability that requires extra time for exams or any other accommodations, please bring a note from the BU Office of Disabilities Services at least two weeks before the first quiz so that I can make arrangements for reasonable accommodations.
**REQUIRED TEXTS**

The course will draw heavily from the following two books, which are available from the BU Barnes and Noble bookstore or through other booksellers.

Cox, Michael and Stokes, Doug  
*U.S. Foreign Policy (2nd edition)*  
Oxford University Press, 2012 – Cox

Hook, Steven W. and John Spanier  
*American Foreign Policy Since World War II, 20th Edition,*  
Washington, CQ Press, 2016 - Hook

*Readings will also be drawn from the following books.* The assigned readings are reproduced in Blackboard.

Wittkopf, Eugene R. et al  
*American Foreign Policy: Patterns and Process, 7th Ed,*  
Belmont CA, Thomson/Wadsworth, 2007 – Wittkopf

Bremmer, Ian  
*The J Curve*  
Simon and Schuster, 2006 - Bremmer

Smith, Rupert  
*The Utility of Force*  
Vintage Press, 2008 – Smith

Patrick, Stewart  
*Weak Links*  
Oxford University Press, 2011 – Patrick

Ikle, Fred  
*Every War Must End*  
Columbia University Press, 1971 – Ikle

Other readings are cited in the schedule below with instructions on how to gain access to them.

Websites of interest include:

- The Council on Foreign Relations: [www.cfr.org](http://www.cfr.org)
- The State and Defense Departments websites: ([www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) and [www.dod.gov](http://www.dod.gov))
- The White House: [http://www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

Finally, the instructor will send students via Blackboard Learn items of interest that come to his attention during the semester. They will be required reading.
**GRADE DISTRIBUTION**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two quizzes</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three issues papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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**Grade Scale**

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<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-93.9</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>87-89.9</td>
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<td>84-86.9</td>
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<td>80-83.9</td>
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Please note that I do not grade on a curve.

**Participation**

Classroom discussion will be an integral part of this class. Students are expected to complete the readings before class and to contribute to the discussions. There are many ways to contribute, including asking for clarification, offering informed opinions and respectfully engaging fellow students.

**Quizzes, Midterm and Final Examinations**

The midterm examination will encompass the material covered to date and will consist of short answer questions. The final examination will cover the entire class, with slightly greater emphasis on the second half, and will also consist of short answer questions. Quizzes will cover only material from the beginning of the course/last exam. Material for tests and quizzes will include the lectures, readings and discussion of current events.

**Issues Papers**

Students will be required to write three policy memoranda addressed to one of the two major presidential party candidates on a current policy problem (this is where attention to the day’s news is critical.) The paper will be a minimum of three pages and maximum of four pages. The **mandatory format** is 1.5-line spacing with Times New Roman 12 font and must consist of the following elements:
1. **Identify the problem**: Describe the problem and why and how American interests are affected.

2. **Recommend a course of action**: Describe the steps that the U.S. should take to address the issue. Include who should take the lead within the U.S. government and provide a notional idea of the resources required. Identify potential allies and domestic considerations (public support or opposition, for example).

3. **Briefly describe potential constraints/costs**: No course of action is free. At a minimum, there are opportunity costs.

**Note**: choose issues that allows you to be specific. *It is easier to deal with a single, specific decision on a particular issue, not the establishment of a broad policy, such as containment, arms control strategy, the opening to China, or a counter-terrorism strategy. The latter generally involve a series of specific decisions.* Be complete, yet succinct: clarity, grammar and spelling count. *Avoid repetition and “fluff,” as well as words like “extremely or , enormously:’ you are not appealing to my emotion. You are encouraged to discuss your papers with me over the course of the semester.* More detailed instructions and an example of the format will be provided on the first day of class and posted on Blackboard.

**Due: Paper 1: 5:00 pm Tuesday, October 4. Paper 2: 5:00 pm Thursday, November 3. Paper 3: 5:00 pm, Thursday, December 8.** Please submit them by e-mail to rgloftis@bu.edu in Word format. Make sure you get a return e-mail from confirming receipt and that I can open your document.

**COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

**Tuesday, September 6**
*Introduction*

**Thursday, September 8**
*American Exceptionalism, Competing Visions, “The Essential Nation”*

- Cox, Introduction and Chapter 1
- Cox, Chapter 2
- Hook, Chapter 1

**Tuesday, September 13**
*The Essence of Strategy*

- Guillot, Michael: “Strategic Leadership: Defining the Challenge” *Air and Space Power Journal*, Winter 2003 (Blackboard)

**Thursday, September 15**
History: The Colonial Era to the end of World War II
- Wittkopf, pages 29-37 (Blackboard)
- Cox, pages 43-58

Tuesday, September 20
History: The Cold War to Post 9/11
- Cox, pages 59-82
- Hook, Chapter 2, 7 & 8
- George Kennan’s *Long Telegram* (Blackboard)
- 2006 Bush National Security Strategy (pages 1-18)
- 2010 Obama National Security Strategy (pages 1-17)
  (Both available at [http://nssarchive.us/](http://nssarchive.us/))

Thursday, September 22
Context: The Changing Political and Economic World
- Cox, Chapter 18

Tuesday, September 27
*Discussion/Quiz 1*

Thursday, September 29
*Players: The President and the National Security Council*
  (up to Homeland Security Council)  (Blackboard)

Tuesday, October 4  
**Issue Paper 1 due at 5:00 pm**
*Players: The Department of State*
- Cox, Chapter 7

Thursday, October 6
**NO CLASS. PROFESSOR ON TRAVEL**

Tuesday, October 11
**MONDAY SCHEDULE: NO CLASS.**

Thursday, October 13
*Players: The Department of Defense: Office of the Secretary, The Chairman of the Joint
Chiefs of Staff and the Geographic Combatant Commands*
- Cox, Chapter 8

Tuesday, October 18
*Players: The Intelligence Community*
- Wittkopf, pages 107-117 (Blackboard)
Thursday, October 20  
*Players: Development and Foreign Aid Agencies, Smaller Agencies*  
- Wittkopf, pages 118-130 (Blackboard)  
- *CRS Report: Foreign Aid: An Introduction to U.S. Programs and Policy* (Blackboard)  
- Visit [www.foreignassistance.gov](http://www.foreignassistance.gov) to review where and how U.S. provides foreign assistance

Tuesday, October 25  
*MIDTERM*

Thursday, October 27  
*The Interagency Process (Making Sausages)*  
- Whitaker, pages 24-41 (Blackboard)  
- White House Memo of March 18, 2009: *The 21st Century Interagency Process* (Blackboard)

Tuesday, November 1  
*Players: Congress and the Courts, Interest Groups*  
- Cox pages 116-123  
- Cox, Chapter 11

Thursday, November 3  
**Issue Paper 2 Due at 5:00 pm**  
*Players: Public Opinion and the Media*  
- Cox, Chapter 10  

Tuesday, November 8  
*Alliances and Partnerships, the United Nations*  
- Righter, Rosemary: *Utopia Lost: The United Nations and World Order* pages 25-42 (Blackboard)  

Thursday, November 10  
*Ethics and Statecraft*  
- Saunders, Harold: “What Really Happened in Bangladesh” *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2014 (Blackboard)
Tuesday, November 15  
*Tools: The Use of Force, Intervention and Nation Building*  
- Smith, Chapter 1 (Blackboard)  
- Ikle, Chapter 1 (Blackboard)  
- Bremmer, Chapter 1 (Blackboard)  
- Patrick, Chapter 1 (Blackboard)

Thursday, November 17  
**Discussion and Quiz 2**

Tuesday, November 22  
*Tools: Sanctions and Trade*  
- Wittkopf pages 131-135 (Blackboard)  
- USTR Website: [http://www.ustr.gov](http://www.ustr.gov)

Thursday, November 24  
**THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY: NO CLASS**

Tuesday, November 29  
*Challenges: The Global War on Terrorism/Rising Powers*  
- Hook, Chapter 14  
- Cox, Chapter 21

Thursday, December 1  
*The Global Commons – The Environment*  
- Cox, Chapter 20

Tuesday, December 6  
*Challenges: Universal Values – Which Apply?/U.S.: Decline or Primacy?*  
- *The International Criminal Court: History and Role*  
  Report to the Parliament of Canada 2008 [www.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/prb0211-e.pdf](http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/prb0211-e.pdf) (Blackboard)  
- Cox, Chapter 23

Thursday, December 8  
**Issue Paper 3 due at 5:00pm**  
**Last Day of Class**  
**Discussion and Review**

**FINAL EXAMINATION: TO BE ANNOUNCED**