GOV 312L: U.S. Foreign Policy
Texas Common Number: GOVT 2302

Course Format: Online, Self-Paced

Course Authors: Patrick MacDonald, Ph.D. and Robert Moser, Ph.D.

Course Facilitator: Megan Moeller, M.S. Contact using the Inbox tool in Canvas.

Course Credits: 3

Prerequisites: None

Course Overview:
Since its founding, the United States has played a central role in shaping the larger international political order. American victories in World War I, World War II, and the Cold War coupled with its support for democracy and open global markets stand at the heart of this legacy. At the same time, external pressures in the form of war, globalization, and the spread of transnational ideological movements have stressed American institutions and shaped an evolving American national identity. This course explores this mutually interactive relationship by examining the making of American foreign policy over the past two centuries more broadly. It explores such topics as American entry into World Wars I and II, the role of Congress in foreign policy making, the construction of the national security state in the twentieth century, competing partisan conceptions of America’s national interest, the Cold War, nuclear deterrence and proliferation, territorial expansion, trade liberalization, nation building, humanitarian intervention, and more recent challenges like terrorism. As part of this broad overview, the course will also explore the moral and ethical dilemmas of many foreign policy challenges faced by the United States. Should the United States ever use torture when combatting its enemies? Does the U.S. have an interest or even an obligation to promote democracy abroad? When is military intervention justified?

This course is an introduction to United States Foreign Policy. It includes lecture videos delivered by University of Texas professors Patrick McDonald and Robert Moser, interviews with experts in the fields of government and political science, and readings authored by prominent scholars studying foreign policy.

This course is independent study, which means that you can take it from anywhere, anytime. No classrooms—no set hours to sit down and do the work. Essentially, you will work at your own pace. This gives you a great deal of freedom as to when and where you’ll study, which means a great deal of responsibility for your own progress. Your instructor won’t be in a classroom to keep you on track, so you must motivate yourself to study, learn, and turn in your assignments.

The course materials are the resources you’ll have to help you learn about United States Foreign Policy. You’ll probably need to read the texts and view the videos more carefully than you would for a traditional course, perhaps even engaging with the material more than once. If you have questions, such as difficult concepts or the timing of submitting your lessons, don’t hesitate to contact your instructor.
Required Materials:
There is no textbook for this class. The readings come from a variety of sources, including academic journals, magazines, and news outlets. You will be able to find all of them through the UT Austin Libraries online reserve or, occasionally, through links within the course.

Technical Requirements:
All students are required to have access to an internet-enabled laptop or desktop computer. Tablets and smartphones are not supported. Computers should meet the following requirements:
- RAM: at least 2GB
- Operating System: Modern (last 2-3 years) and updated operating system (MacOS or Windows)
- Browsers: Chrome is highly recommended (if using Safari or Firefox, be prepared to use Chrome as a backup)

Course Organization:
The course is organized into Modules, which are units of course material that cover specific topics. Each module contains an overview video, reading assignments, lecture slides, lecture videos, one or two quiz activities, and some modules contain a short essay assignment. To view the organization of this course, click on Home in the left menu and scroll down through the list of modules. You should view and complete the Modules and Module components in sequential order.

Each module contains a set of common components, which includes:
- an overview video
- reading assignments
- lecture slides
- lecture videos
- computer-graded quiz activities
- Some modules, but not all, have instructor-graded short essay assignments.

The assignments and their sequencing are designed to actively engage students’ interaction with the self-paced online format.

There will be two in-person proctored exams. In addition to the exams, grades will be derived from quiz activities and short essays aimed at reinforcing students’ knowledge base, and should be thought of as a roadmap to help prepare for the exams.

The following groups of assignments will constitute the graded work of the course. Final grades will be calculated using the percentages as group weights.

**Exams** 25% per exam

Students will take two in-person exams. The exams are proctored, paper-based exams that you will take at an approved testing center. You are eligible to apply to take the exams when you have submitted all of your quizzes and short answer assignments up to that point in the course.
These exams are NOT cumulative. The midterm exam will cover the reading and lecture material from Modules 1-10, and the final exam will cover the material from Modules 11-24. The exams will consist of two question types: (1) term identifications, where you’ll define and give the significance to a set of terms; and (2) short answer questions.

**Instructor-Graded Short Essays 35%**

Students will write seven short essays of 400-600 words in length that address a given prompt on a specific topic in U.S. foreign policy covered in class and in the readings. Strong essays will make a clear argument and defend that argument succinctly—with specific illustrations, concepts, claims, or examples from lectures AND readings. You will be graded on organization, spelling, and proper grammar. Unsubstantiated claims will lower your grade. Your grade will also depend on the accuracy, thoughtfulness, and the details you include to support your answer and demonstrate (i.e., provide evidence) that you have read, understood, and can apply the information from the course material presented in the modules.

Essay assignments are submitted in Canvas. You can expect to receive a score and feedback from your instructor within three business days.

**Computer-Graded Quiz Activities 15%**

You will complete regular computer-graded quiz activities in each module associated with the lecture segments and the readings. These quizzes contain about five multiple-choice questions that cover lecture and reading content and are designed to reinforce your understanding of the course material. Although you will be free to access lecture material, lecture slides, and your readings as you complete these activities, you are expected to work alone.

**Course Outline:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assessments</th>
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| 1      | The US Foreign Policy Apparatus and the National Interest | ▪ Computer-Graded Activity 1  
▪ Computer-Graded Activity 2 |
| 2      | Grand Strategy I and Isolationism | ▪ Computer-Graded Activity 3 |
| 3      | Grand Strategy II: Selective Engagement, Liberal Internationalism and Primacy | ▪ Computer-Graded Activity 4  
▪ Computer-Graded Activity 5  
▪ Short Essay #1 |
| 4      | The President in Foreign Policy | ▪ Computer-Graded Activity 6 |
| 5      | Congress in Foreign Policy | ▪ Computer-Graded Activity 7  
▪ Computer-Graded Activity 8 |
| 6      | The American Public and US Foreign Policy | ▪ Computer-Graded Activity 9  
▪ Short Essay #2 |
| 7      | Historical Overview of US Foreign Policy – Independence to Monroe Doctrine | ▪ Computer-Graded Activity 10  
▪ Computer-Graded Activity 11 |
| 8      | Historical Overview of US Foreign Policy – Manifest Destiny to World War I | ▪ Computer-Graded Activity 12  
▪ Computer-Graded Activity 13 |
<p>| 9      | Historical Overview of US Foreign Policy – Versailles | ▪ Computer-Graded Activity 14 |</p>
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<th>Lesson</th>
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<td>Treaty to Origins of the Cold War</td>
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<td>MIDTERM EXAM</td>
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**Grade Calculation:**
Final grades will be calculated using the assignment group weights below:

- Computer-graded assignments: 15%
- Instructor-graded assignments: 35%
- Midterm: 25%
Final: 25%

You must pass the final exam to pass this course. You must also earn enough points from graded assignments and the exams to achieve a passing grade:

- A 100-93%
- B+ 89-87%
- C+ 79-77%
- D+ 69-67%
- F 59-0%
- A- 92-90%
- B 86-83%
- C 76-73%
- D 66-63%
- B- 82-80%
- C- 72-70%
- D- 62-60%

Pacing Your Work:
While this course is self-paced in terms of when you complete the work and submit assignments, periodic midpoint assessments are critical to ensuring that students receive adequate support and are able to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Thus, this course is designed such that the modules must be completed in order, and students will not be able to move forward until they have received a grade and feedback on all assessments within a given module.

Computer-graded assignments are scored immediately. Students should expect to receive feedback on instructor-graded assignments within three business days following submission. This does not include weekends or holidays. Requests for expedited grading will be ignored, so please plan accordingly. During certain times (end of semester, spring break, etc.), Course Facilitators may experience higher-than-usual demands on their time and may need additional time for evaluation. Students should reach out to University Extension at uex@austin.utexas.edu with any concerns.

Course Deadline:
Students have five months from their date of enrollment in which to complete their coursework. If all other coursework is complete and the final exam has been requested through the course exam manager by the student’s designated completion date, an additional 30 days will be granted in which to take that exam. If the final exam has not been requested by the completion date, the student will be dropped from the course.

University Extension strongly advises students to be aware of when they may need a course grade to be recorded on their transcript. It can take up to two weeks after the final exam is complete for a grade to be officially recorded.

Getting Help:
Tech Support: gatewaytechsupport@austin.utexas.edu

For content questions or questions about assignment and grades, use the Inbox tool within Canvas to contact the course facilitator.

For other questions (registration, exam proctoring, transcripts, etc), contact University Extension.
University Extension Policies:
Full University Extension policies for self-paced courses may be found on the University Extension website.

Scholastic Dishonesty:
Students in this course are expected to work independently, without direct supervision, and to conduct themselves responsibly in accordance with that freedom. To obtain the greatest benefit from their course work, and for the sake of everyone enrolled in our courses, students must demonstrate the willingness to exercise self-discipline, personal responsibility, and scholastic integrity.

We expect the course work and exams that you submit for course credit to be yours and yours alone. Plagiarism and other forms of scholastic dishonesty are serious academic violations that will not be tolerated. The penalties for scholastic dishonesty include the possibility of failure in the course. Scholastic dishonesty in examinations will automatically result in a grade of F on the exam and an F in the course.

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