

Graduate Program in International Affairs

Title of course/seminar: The New US Foreign Policy: Assessing Challenges and Prospects

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Instructor: Dr. Michaela C. Hertkorn

Class meetings: ***Mondays***, 8 – 9.50 pm

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Methodology and objectives

The arrival of the new Obama administration in Washington, DC put new emphasis on a growing list of pressing international issues on America's foreign policy agenda. Those foreign policy challenges range from achieving energy independence, tackling global warming, to the strengthening of old alliances, redefining relations with countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, and Russia and creating a new impetus for peace in the Middle East. Will the loss of international credibility during the Bush administration years translate into a sustained dimming of American power? Will the historic victory of the first African American president and a return to a foreign policy that seems to be based more on pragmatism and idealism - instead of ideology - allow American exceptionalism to persevere after all? Students will explore both policy issues and case studies in diplomacy and examine in depth the first months of the Obama administration and its agencies, while assessing the challenges and prospects for the US to restore its leadership in matters of international security and peace when working together with international organizations.

Basis for grade:

All students: Your learning will be measured by

- Written final research paper on a case study or grounded-theory study of your choice, 20 pages, 40 %;
- Mid-term paper (approximately 7 – 9 pages) – topic to be provided in class, 30 %;
- Knowledgeable participation in class, including regular participation in in-class discussions and group presentation, 30 %.

Texts and readings:

We will use the following textbooks. To actively participate in class in a knowledgeable way, students need to obtain the **required** textbooks.

Additional texts may be provided in class and as e-reserves. We will also make use of web sources in search for scholars and policy makers whose work centers on issues of relevance to international negotiation and conflict resolution. All our textbooks were ordered through the New School bookstore. Students are free to obtain the textbooks directly from United States Institute for Peace, www.usip.org, or through another source.

I. Required textbooks:

1. Derek Chollet & James Goldgeier (2008), *America Between the Wars. From 11/9 to 9/11. The Misunderstood Years between the Fall of the Berlin Wall and the Start of the War on Terror* (Public Affairs Books);
2. Leslie H. Gelb (2009), *Power Rules. How Common Sense Can Rescue American Foreign Policy* (Harper Collins: NY);
3. Richard N. Haass (2009), *War of Necessity. War of Choice. A Memoir of Two Iraq Wars* (Simon & Schuster: NY);
4. Bruce W. Jentleson (2007, latest edition), *American Foreign Policy. The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century* (W. W. Norton & Company): used editions of the book can be bought at www.amazon.com and www.barnesandnoble.com
5. David E. Sanger (2009), *The Inheritance. The World Obama Confronts and the Challenges to American Power* (Harmony Books: New York, NY).

II. Recommended textbooks:

6. Andrew J. Bacevich (2008), *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism*;
7. Rosemary Foot, S. Neil MacFarlane, & Michael Mastanduno (2003), *US Hegemony and International Organizations* (Oxford University Press).

Assignments by class and week:

Date of session	Topic	Readings
Week 1	<i>Introduction session</i>	No reading required. Please make obtain your required books.

8/31 (M)		
9/7	Labor Day Weekend	No class
Week 2 9/14	On Foreign Policy Theory and Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1, The Strategic Context: Foreign Policy Strategy and the Essence of Choice, in: Jentleson, pages 2 – 30; • ‘Great Debates in Foreign Policy Politics’, in: Chapter 3, The Historical Context: Great Debates in American Foreign Policy: 1789 – 1949, in: Jentleson, pages 97 – 109.
Week 3 9/21	On Historical Epochs: From the Cold War to the Post-Cold War Era	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4, The Cold War Context: Origins and First Stages, in: Jentleson, pages 109 – 146; • ‘The Vietnam War: America’s Most Profound Foreign Policy Setback’, in: Chapter 4, in: Jentleson, pages 147 – 157.
Week 4 9/28	The End of the Cold War and its Impact on US Foreign Policy I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6, Foreign Policy Strategy and Foreign Policy Politics in a New Era, pages 288 – 316; • ‘The Lone Superpower Adrift’, in: Chollet & Goldgeier, pages 1 – 29.
Week 5 10/5	The End of the Cold War and its Impact on US Foreign Policy II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Ethnic and Other Deadly Conflicts’, in: Chapter 8, in: Jentleson, pages 461 – 469; • ‘The United States as a Peace Broker’, <i>ibid</i>, pages 469 – 477; • ‘Liberal Bombs, Conservative Shields’, in: Chollet & Goldgeier, pages 210 – 244.
Week 6 10/12	The Polity Level in Foreign Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Foreign Policy Politics: Diplomacy Begins at Home’, in: Chapter 6, pages 316 – 344; • <u>Please choose one of the institutions / actors in chapter 2, The Domestic Context: Foreign Policy Politics and the Process of Choice</u>, in: Jentleson: a) The President, Congress, and ‘Pennsylvania Avenue Diplomacy’, b) Executive-Branch Politics, c) Interest Groups and Their Influence, d) The Impact of the News Media, e) The Nature and Influence of Public Opinion.
Week 7 10/19	The Power Factor: Still the Name of the Game?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Haass, ‘The Clinton Interregnum’, in: Haass, pages 154 – 168; • ‘Power in the 21st Century’, chapter 7, in: Jentleson, page 350; • ‘Geopolitics: Major Powers and Regional Conflicts’, in: Jentleson, pages 351 – 374;

Week 8 10/26	The Impact of Globalization Mid-term paper due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The Indispensable Nation in a Globalizing World', in: Chollet & Goldgeier, pages 146 – 178; • 'Introduction: American Foreign Policy in an Era of Globalization', in: Jentleson, page 493; • 'The Globalization Debate', in: Jentleson, page 493.
Week 9 11/2	From the 20 th Century into the 21 st : The Global War on Terror	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The War on Terrorism', in: Chapter 7, in: Jentleson, pages 398 – 421; • 'New World Disorder', in Chollet & Goldgeier, pages 244 – 280; • 'The End of the Modern Interwar Years', <i>ibid</i>, pages 280 – 313.
Week 10 11/9	September 11, 2001 and its Legacy on US Foreign Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haass, 'The 9/11 Presidency', in: Haass, pages 168 – 202; • <i>Ibid</i>, 'Prelude to War', <i>ibid</i>, pages 202 – 233.
Week 11 11/16	The Impact of War in Iraq	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haass, 'War of Choice', in: Haass, pages 233 – 267; • <i>Ibid</i>, 'Takeaways from Two Wars', pages 267 – 279.
Week 12 11/23	Challenges for the New Administration – Foreign Policy Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Please choose two of the following case studies in: Sanger, <i>The Inheritance</i></u>: a) Part I: Iran. The Mullahs Manhattan Project; b) Part II: Afghanistan. How the Good War Went Bad; c) Part III: Pakistan. 'How Do You Invade and Ally?' d) Part IV: North Korea. The Nuclear Renegade That Got Away; e) Part V: China. New Torch, Old Dragons.
Week 13 11/30	Challenges for the New Administration – The Way Forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanger, Part VI. The Three Vulnerabilities, pages 397 – 445; • 'Introduction: Democracy and the US National Interest', in: Chapter 10, in: Jentleson, pages 547-562; • 'Global Democracy and Human Rights: Status and Prospects', in: Jentleson, pages 562 – 568.
Week 14 12/7	Group presentations	No additional reading
Week 15 12/14	Group presentations	No additional reading
Week 16 12/21	Final session Final papers due	No additional reading