

PA 5890 Session 003
Topics in Foreign Policy and International Affairs
US Foreign Policy: The Institutional Basis
Fall 2015

Professor: Mary T. Curtin

Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursday, 1:00pm-2:15pm, Room 30 Humphrey School

Office: 143 Humphrey

Office Hours: Wednesday from 10:00-11:00 and Fridays from 10:00-12:00 or by appointment.

Contact: mtcurtin@umn.edu

Overview

This course will examine the institutions that shape, influence and manage U.S. foreign policy. Through a combination of readings, classroom lectures and discussions, and policy-making simulations, it will provide students with a foundation of knowledge about the institutions, their origins, and culture. During the semester, the instructor, a 25-year veteran of the Foreign Service, will guide students as they delve into the way key foreign policy institutions work, including the State Department decision-making process; how institutions relate to one another, including through the National Security Council; the changing role of institutions like the Department of Defense, intelligence agencies, and the Department of Homeland Security in foreign policy; and examine academic and policy critiques of these evolving institutional realities. The course will also look at the role played by Congress, the media, and the public, including non-governmental organizations and lobbying groups, as they seek to influence Executive Branch foreign policy institutions. Students will have the opportunity several times during the semester to meet virtually with Washington policy-makers who will join the class via Skype to provide their insights on real time issues and institutional realities.

The goal of the course is to give students a strong understanding of how the Washington foreign policy process works by coming to know how its key institutions are designed to work to advance policy and by coming to understand how institutional structures impact decision-making and outcomes. Students will have the chance to engage in practical exercises that will deepen their understanding of policy processes. In addition, they will be exposed to key academic and policy critiques of the evolution of foreign policy processes and institutions, and the weaknesses as well as strengths in recent changes in the roles played by key institutions, starting with the Department of State and the White House (through the National Security Council), but including the Department of Defense and the military; the intelligence agencies; the Department of Homeland Security; and development, economic and trade agencies. The course will also examine the institutional role of Congress in foreign policy; and look briefly at some uniquely American institutions, including the press, lobbyists, ethnic groups, and think tanks in the foreign policy process. We also will review the role that international organizations like the United Nations play in influencing the policy choices of the United States Government. And, we will look at how these institutions cooperate and compete in what is known as the inter-agency system, coordinated by the National Security Council staff.

Much of the learning will focus on coming to an understanding of the institutions, the role they play, how they work, rather than on international relations theory or a history of U.S. foreign policy *per se*. However, students will be exposed to some key academic explorations of the sources of U.S. foreign policy; of the nature of institutions and bureaucracies; and of the current health of U.S. foreign policy institutions. By the end of the semester, students should have a strong foundation in the academic and policy critiques of the institutions that shape and influence U.S. foreign policy, be able to think critically about how an individual professional might operate in one of those institutions, and understand how they as individual professionals might operate within those institutions to help shape and implement policy.

We will use a variety of pedagogical devices to illuminate the orientations of the institutions and missions in play. For example, students may be called upon to represent bureaus within the State Department in preparing a decision memo to the Secretary of State, clearing the memo with other bureaus and agencies before it can be sent forward, or to create a media issue that must be responded to on an urgent basis for a press briefing, and participate in a meeting with a member of Congress on an issue that has not yet been decided within government. Each student will be responsible for researching the role and institutional culture of one U.S. department or agency involved in the foreign policy process and presenting that to the class at the appropriate time. The classroom goal is to help students develop the knowledge base and skills to operate in a fast-paced environment and to gain an understanding of the institutional cultures that participate in the policy process.

Course Requirements

Students will be graded on an A-F basis. Grading will be as follows:

25% Mid-Term Exam—A written exam will be held on October 20, with three essay questions related to the course materials and lessons learned to date.

45% Class Participation—Students will be expected to participate fully in class discussions, offering their own informed opinions, role playing, and making formal presentations as required.

30% Final Paper--A final paper will be due on the final class day. It will be no more than 10 pages double-spaced. Students will select an institution and research a specific policy position or operational action taken, reflecting the influence of the institutional culture and mission of the agency, bureau, department, or international organization.

Course Schedule

See Attached

University Policies

Student Conduct Code:

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the

University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see:

http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf.

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom:

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference: <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html>.

Scholastic Dishonesty:

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code:

http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html>.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty:

<http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html>. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class-e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences:

Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. For complete information, please see:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html>.

Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials:

Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html>.

Grading and Transcripts:

The University utilizes plus and minus grading on a 4.000 cumulative grade point scale in accordance with the following:

- A 4.000 - Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements*
- A- 3.667*
- B+ 3.333*
- B 3.000 - Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements*
- B- 2.667*
- C+ 2.333*
- C 2.000 - Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect*
- C- 1.667*
- D 1.333*
- +*
- D 1.000 - Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements*
- S Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.*

For additional information, please refer to:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html>.

Sexual Harassment

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information,

please consult Board of Regents Policy:

<http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/SexHarassment.pdf>

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action:

The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf

Disability Accommodations:

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DS at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with DS and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact your instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

For more information, please see the DS website, <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/>.

Mental Health and Stress Management:

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>.

Academic Freedom and Responsibility: for courses that do not involve students in research

*Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.**

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

** Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students".*