

US Foreign Policy

Rand Blimes

346 MARB, TTH 8:00 – 9:15

Office: SWKT 770

Office hours: Tues 9:30–10:30, Thurs 1:30–2:30, and by appointment

rand.blimes@byu.edu

About the Course

This course analyzes US foreign policy from both a historical and an analytical standpoint. The course consists of three major components. First we will examine the history of US foreign policy, focusing mainly on the 20th century; second we will discuss the sources of US foreign policy including the president, congress, public opinion and the media; third we will discuss important contemporary issues including the war on terror, the global environment, nuclear proliferation, and civil and human rights.

Materials

There are four required books for this class along with several articles (which you will be able to access in electronic form). The required books are:

Carter, Ralph G, *Contemporary Cases in US Foreign Policy: from Trade to Terrorism*

Gardner, Lloyd C, *Pay Any Price: Lyndon Johnson and the Wars for Vietnam*

Jervis, Robert, *American Foreign Policy in a New Era*

Schulzinger, Robert D, *US Diplomacy Since 1900*

The books are available in the bookstore; the articles will be made available to you online.

Expectations

This will be a demanding class. There is a great deal of reading, and I will also expect you to put some serious thought into applying the theoretical concepts we cover into analyzing the case studies. There will also be a great deal of discussion that occurs in this class, and I will expect you to be prepared to participate each day.

This class is not about simply memorizing facts that can be spit back out for tests or discussion. I expect you to put in some time thinking about the topics we will cover and form your own opinions. These opinions will come out both in class discussion and in the paper you will write.

Grading

Your grade for this class will be made up of the following.

2 Exams 50%

Reaction papers 10%

Class participation 10%

Weekly briefs 10%

Op-ed 20%

Exams. Each exam will last one hour and will consist of short identification and essay questions. The mid-term exam will be a take-home test. The final will be given in class on the date the university has scheduled.

Reaction papers. Each day you will be required to turn in a very short (one-page, double-spaced) reaction to the day's reading. You should focus on **one** aspect of the reading that stood out to you. These papers will provide topics for class discussion. You must be present in class to turn in your reaction papers.

Participation. This class will consist of a significant amount of discussion. Your participation in discussions is absolutely critical to your learning experience. While I expect (hope) there will be times in this class where you disagree with your fellow classmates or me, I do expect everyone to be polite. Any rudeness (including whispering while another is talking) will be grounds for loss of participation points. Sleeping, texting, surfing the internet, reading the paper, etc. will result in the loss of ALL participation points.

Weekly briefs. Each of you will be assigned to a group covering a particular region of the world. Your responsibility is to keep up on events that are important from a US foreign policy standpoint. Each week your group will submit a *brief* summary of these events. You will email this summary to me as a word document by noon on Wednesday each week. I will then compile these briefs into one document and email them out to the class. We will spend some time each week discussing important events.

Op-ed. You will write an op-ed about some aspect of (currently relevant) US foreign policy. If you are not familiar with op-eds, start looking at the New York Times op-ed section and start reading the ones that are published. A good op-ed has several aspects. You should 1) have an opinion, 2) get to the point quickly, 3) make a logical argument, 4) use some evidence, 5) keep it simple (you are writing for a general audience), 3) entertain if at all possible. And you will have to do all of that in absolutely no more than 3 pages, double-spaced! If you go onto a fourth page, I won't read it (many newspapers have space concerns with op-eds)!

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty in fulfilling any assignment will be grounds for failing the course. Thus, for instance, you must not represent someone else's work as your own in carrying out your paper assignment. And, when presenting another person's ideas or data, you must provide explicit citation to acknowledge your intellectual debt. Quotation marks must be used when you are quoting someone. Minor changes that try to paraphrase someone else's ideas do not relieve you of the responsibility of acknowledging your intellectual debt. When in doubt, you should err on the conservative side (that is, by citing your sources) or you should at least consult with me. You are responsible to learn about the Honor Code adopted by the University. You can find relevant information at the following website:

http://www.byu.edu/honorcode/honor_code.htm#HONESTY

Special Considerations

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. BYU's policy regarding sexual harassment extends to students as well as faculty. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 378-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 378-2847.

If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (378-2767).