

Government 1790: American Foreign Policy

Spring 2016
Tues/Thurs 10 AM - 11 AM
Classroom: Harvard Hall 201
Harvard University

PROFESSOR: Joshua D. Kertzer
EMAIL: jkertzer@gov.harvard.edu
CGIS K206
OFFICE HOURS: Thurs 2-4 PM, or by appointment

TEACHING FELLOWS' CONTACT INFORMATION AND OFFICE HOURS

Sergio Imparato
sergioimparato@fas.harvard.edu
Wed 3:30-5:30 PM, Lamont cafe

C. Peter Kim
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Mon 10:00 AM-12:00 PM, CGIS cafe

Preliminary syllabus - contents may change (February 22, 2016)

Course description

This course explores America's role in international politics, aiming to teach students some of the major theoretical perspectives in International Relations, and how to critically analyze the major dynamics shaping American foreign policy today. What would happen if the United States stopped trying to play such an active role in world politics, and focused more on problems at home? Is China on the rise, and what does Chinese growth mean for the United States? How much of an effect does the media have on how Americans think about the world around them? Do nuclear weapons make us safer? Is there an "Obama Doctrine", and if so, what does it entail?

Should I take this class?

Ultimately, the question of America's role in global politics is an enormous one, and deserves far more time than the twelve weeks allotted to us: an entire semester could be spent on each and every one of the issues we'll look at. Accordingly, the class is structured as a *survey class*, and is thus similar to a buffet, presenting a smorgasbord of topics in the hopes that you may decide to study some of them further in one of the many other Government courses offered here at Harvard. Because the class is structured as a survey, there are no prerequisites, apart from an interest in the subject matter. In previous years, the class has attracted a mix of students ranging from freshmen who have never taken an IR class before, to senior Government concentrators with a diverse repertoire of classes under their belt.

Although we'll frequently turn to historical examples to make sense of the current political situation, this class *is not* a course on the history of American foreign relations. Similarly,

although we'll analyze some of the most pressing issues facing US foreign policy today – e.g. how to understand the rise of ISIS, or Russia's recent actions in Crimea – the class *is not* simply a discussion of current events. Our focus with the class is less on memorizing details of particular cases, and more about acquiring a vocabulary and set of theoretical frameworks we can use to make sense of the world around us as political scientists. Contemporary decision-makers in Washington face a large number of normative questions about how the United States should conduct its foreign affairs, but underlying many of these debates are sets of assumptions about how the world works. By the end of the semester, my hope is that you'll be able to interrogate those assumptions directly.

The class has been set up in two parts. The first half of the course begins with an introduction to International Relations (IR) theory and American grand strategy, before exploring the inputs of the American foreign policy process: the President and Congress, bureaucratic politics, public opinion, the media, and interest groups. This half of the class will foster an understanding of why the United States behaves the way it does, all the while exploring questions like the conditions under which leaders matter, the institutional causes of “intelligence failure,” and why some interest groups exert more sway than others.

If the first half of the class focuses on the inputs to US foreign policy, the second half focuses on the outputs, as we analyze some of the most pressing issues in US foreign policy today. This portion of the course begins with questions about international order and the rise and fall of great powers. We'll look at the challenges associated with American hegemony, and one potential reaction to it, anti-Americanism. We'll also examine two other great powers that may or may not pose a challenge to the American-led order: the rise of China, and Russia. We'll then turn to a triptych of political violence: terrorism, (counter)insurgency, and civil wars, all of which loom especially large on the American foreign policy agenda in the wake of the war on terror, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the ongoing conflagration in Syria. Finally, having explored a number of ways in which the world is a mess, we'll then turn to two domains where there are glimmers of cooperation, but where challenges remain: cybersecurity, and nuclear (de)proliferation. We'll then conclude by bringing everything together, and asking what the future of US foreign policy holds.

Required texts

There are no required texts to purchase for this class; all readings are available electronically on the course website, <https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/10052/files>, and consist of a mix of academic and policy articles and book chapters. Please refer to the reading guide posted on course website, which contains both general strategic advice about how to read for Gov 1790, and guiding questions for each week. These guiding questions for each set of readings will be posted on the course website around a week ahead of each class, to help you prioritize and focus on what you should be taking away from each piece.

Course requirements and grading

10% Active participation in sections

15% In-class exam on IR theory and US grand strategy: February 16, 2016

20% In-class exam on sources of US foreign policy: March 10, 2016

25% Research paper: due before the start of class on April 14, 2016

30% Final exam on contemporary issues in US foreign policy on May 5, 2016

Lectures will be held from 10 AM - 11 AM on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Harvard Hall 201. Note that because of the short class time, each class will begin exactly at 10:07 AM. Note that the class is graded A-F, and is not offered pass/fail.

There will be an 10 page research paper due for all undergraduate students in the course; in it, you'll critically engage with an issue in US foreign policy and analyze it from a number of theoretical perspectives. The paper (to be submitted online through the course website, before the start of class) will give you the opportunity to research an issue that interests you about the US in world politics, and demonstrate understanding of the different schools of thought on the issue amongst political scientists. Graduate students will complete a longer research paper on a topic of their choice, with the aim of eventual submission for publication in a peer reviewed journal. More information on the paper will be presented several weeks into the course.

The exams will consist of a combination of essays, short answers, and multiple choice. All exams will be based on the readings and the material presented in class. The first exam will cover the introduction to IR theory and American grand strategy from the first two and a half weeks of class; the second exam will cover the sources of US foreign policy presented over the next four weeks. The final exam will cover the material on the contemporary sources of foreign policy presented after spring break. Any student who needs to miss an exam needs to discuss this with me *prior* to the actual exam. If an emergency arises and you are unable to contact the instructor prior to the exam, please contact me as soon as possible. Also, be aware that you will be asked to produce adequate documentation (a doctor's note, for example) if an exam is unexpectedly missed before any makeup exam will be given.

A note about the second exam: students writing senior theses in the Government department this year will note that the senior thesis deadline has been scheduled for the day before the second Gov 1790 exam. Although we encourage senior thesis writers to take the exam with the rest of the class on March 10, we are also offering thesis writers the option of taking a 72 hour extension and writing an alternate exam on the morning of Sunday, March 13. Senior thesis writers interested in pursuing this alternate exam session should notify their TF two weeks in advance.

10% of the final grade will be based on active participation in sections, described in further

detail below.

Finally, because the class has been explicitly designed to touch upon controversial topics in US foreign policy circles, it is inevitable that some of the discussions will get heated. It is important, however, to maintain a respectful atmosphere in class, recognizing that many of these topics are so controversial precisely because they're the sorts of issues about which reasonable people can disagree.

Section information

10% of the final grade will be based on active participation in sections, which will meet every week for an hour beginning in the third week of the class. Electronic sectioning will begin at noon on Tuesday, February 2 and end on Friday, February 5; sections will be announced via email on Monday, February 8, and the first sections will take place that week; the email will also provide additional information on section times and locations. Note that because of how Harvard's new sectioning system works, we may not be able to accommodate *ex-post* sectioning switching requests apart from exceptional circumstances. The participation grade will be based on a number of factors: showing up to section, but also having completed the readings, and being ready to ask questions, provide reactions, and critically engage with the course material. Participation grades will be based on the quality of participation rather than quantity, but you can't participate if you aren't there, so not only will multiple absences affect your participation grade negatively, but material discussed in class will feature prominently in the exams, so it is crucial for students to do the readings and come to class prepared to discuss the material. Some students tend to be less comfortable with speaking up in class than their peers; if this is something you're worried about, please contact your TF so that we can find other ways of calculating your participation grade.

Key dates for sections	
Friday, January 29	Study Card Day
Tuesday, February 2 - Friday, February 5	Electronic sectioning
Monday, February 8	Sections announced via email
Week of February 8	First section meeting

Section information		
Time	Location	TF
Tuesday 11-12	Emerson 106	Sergio
Thursday 11-12	CGIS K450	Sergio
Thursday 4-5	CGIS K107	Peter
Thursday 5-6	CGIS K108	Peter

Gov 1790 lunches

Gov 1790 tends to be a big class. Its size has advantages: more of you can bring your energy, ideas, and enthusiasm to class, and we don't need to resort to a lottery to determine who's allowed in. Its size also has its disadvantages, though, in that bigger classes tend to be more impersonal, and afford less of an opportunity for one-on-one interaction.

To try to retain the accessibility associated with a smaller class experience, I'll be holding regular lunches in Annenberg and the undergraduate house dining halls throughout the semester, typically in small groups of 4-8. The purposes of the lunches are simply for me to find out more about you, and to give you the chance to chat about the class, International Relations, and whatever you might be interested in.

These lunches are, of course, entirely optional: some of you would likely rather eat cardboard than eat with your professors (and for some of you, eating in Harvard dining halls isn't all that different from eating cardboard), but for those of you who want the chance to break out of the large lecture-hall model of classroom interaction, these lunches are one way of doing so.

More information will be circulated about how to sign up for lunches early in the semester.

Collaboration and academic integrity policy

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to discuss the material presented in the course with your classmates. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation – whether in the research paper, or the exams – is the result of your own research and writing and reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices in Political Science and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you received any help with your writing (feedback on drafts, etc), you must also acknowledge this assistance. Additional information on citation practices will be made available with the research paper instructions.

Advice from last semester's Gov 1790 students

At the end of every semester of Gov 1790, I ask some of the students whose performance placed them amongst the top of the class to write a short paragraph of advice to be handed out to students who will be taking Gov 1790 next year, with advice on how to study for the exams and write the research paper. Even though the course isn't identical each time it's offered, their advice tends to be quite helpful, and I've posted their recommendations on the course website.

Technology policy

Please ensure that your cell phones are set to silent and put away before lecture or section starts. A number of faculty here at Harvard have been banning the use of laptops, tablets and other forms of technology in classrooms because of a growing body of evidence that students [take better notes by hand](#), and perhaps more importantly, that [laptop users' tendency to "multitask" negatively affect the learning outcomes of those sitting around them](#). For the time being, students are permitted to use laptops or other technological devices in the class, but this technology is permitted *solely* for note-taking purposes. I reserve the right to ban laptops altogether if it becomes apparent that their use is producing too much of a distraction.

Special accommodations

Students requiring academic accommodations are requested to present their letter from the [Accessible Education Office \(AEO\)](#) and speak with the professor by the end of the second week of the term. Failure to make these arrangements by this date may negatively affect our ability to implement the arrangements on time.

Tentative Class Schedule

Part I: Theories of International Politics and Sources of Foreign Policy

Tuesday, January 26: Introduction to the class

Review of the syllabus and overview of the semester

A. IR theory and American grand strategy

Thursday, January 28 and Tuesday, February 2: An introduction to IR theory

Jack Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," *Foreign Policy*, Nov/Dec 2004, pp. 52-62.

John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19:3 (Winter 1994/1995), pp. 5-49.

Robert O. Keohane and Lisa L. Martin, "The Promise of Institutional Theory," *International Security* 20:1 (Summer 1995), pp. 39-51.

Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20:1 (Summer 1995), pp. 71-81.

Thursday, February 4 and Tuesday, February 9: Continuity and Change in US Foreign Policy

Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World*. (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 3-29, 79-98.

Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, "Don't Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment," *International Security*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Winter 2012/13), pp. 7-51

Barry R. Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), pp. 24-68.
Colin Dueck, *The Obama Doctrine: American Grand Strategy*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 13-39, 41-47, 91-109

B. Sources of American foreign policy

Thursday, February 11: The President and Congress

James M. Lindsay, "Deference and Defiance: The Shifting Rhythms of Executive-Legislative Relations," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (2003), pp. 530-546.
William G. Howell and Jon C. Pevehouse, "When Congress Stops Wars: Partisan Politics and Presidential Power", *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 86, No. 5 (Sep/Oct 2007), pp. 95-107
Elizabeth N. Saunders, *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), pp. 1-19, 186-211.

Tuesday, February 16

🔗 In-class exam on IR theory and American grand strategy

Thursday, February 18 and Tuesday, February 23: Bureaucratic Politics

Kevin Marsh, "Obama's Surge: A Bureaucratic Politics Analysis of the Decision to Order a Troop Surge in the Afghanistan War", *Foreign Policy Analysis* 10:3 (2013), pp. 265-288.
Deborah D. Avant, "Are the Reluctant Warriors Out of Control? Why the U.S. Military is Averse to Responding to Post-Cold War Low-Level Threats", *Security Studies* 6:2 (Winter 1996/97), pp. 51-90.
Joshua Rovner, *Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), pp. 1-35.
Robert Jervis. "Reports, politics, and intelligence failures: The case of Iraq", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2006), pp. 3 - 52.

Thursday, February 25 and Tuesday, March 1: Public Opinion

Joshua D. Kertzer, "Making Sense of Isolationism: Foreign Policy Mood as a Multilevel Phenomenon", *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (January 2013), pp. 225-240.
Brian C. Rathbun, "Steeped in International Affairs?: The Foreign Policy Views of the Tea Party", *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (January 2013), pp. 21-37.
Edward D. Mansfield, Diana C. Mutz, and Laura R. Silver, "Men, Women, Trade, and Free Markets", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (June 2015), pp. 303-315.

Thursday, March 3: The Media

Matthew A. Baum and Tim J. Groeling, *War Stories: The Causes and Consequences of Public Views of War*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 17-45.

Danny Hayes and Matt Guardino, "Whose Views Made the News? Media Coverage and the March to War in Iraq", *Political Communication*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (2010), pp. 59-87.

Thursday, March 8: Interest Groups

Helen V. Milner and Dustin Tingley, *Sailing the Water's Edge: The Domestic Politics of American Foreign Policy*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), pp. 33-51, 77-120.

David G. Haglund and Tyson McNeil-Hay, "The 'Germany Lobby' and US Foreign Policy: what, if Anything, Does It Tell Us about the Debate over the 'Israel Lobby'?", *Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 10, No. 3-4 (September-November 2011), pp. 321-344.

Thursday, March 10

🚩 In-class exam on sources of US foreign policy

Part II: Contemporary Issues in US Foreign Policy

C. Unipolarity and its discontents

Tuesday, March 22: Hegemony and Empire

Charles P. Kindleberger, "Dominance and Leadership in the International Economy," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (1981), pp. 242-254.

Daniel H. Nexon, "What's This, Then? 'Romanes Eunt Domus'?", *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (2008), pp. 300-308.

Thursday, March 24: Anti-Americanism

Peter J. Katzenstein and Robert O. Keohane, "Varieties of Anti-Americanism: A Framework for Analysis", in Peter J. Katzenstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Anti-Americanisms in World Politics*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007), pp. 9-38.

Monti Narayan Datta, "The Decline of America's Soft Power in the United Nations", *International Studies Perspectives* 10:3 (August 2009), pp. 265-284.

Tuesday, March 29: The Rise of China

Aaron L. Friedberg, "The Future of U.S.-China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (2005), pp. 7-45.

Thomas J. Christensen, "Windows and War: Trend Analysis and Beijing's Use of Force", in Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross, Eds., *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*, pp. 50-85.

Yong Deng, "Reputation and the Security Dilemma: China Reacts to the China Threat Theory", in Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross, Eds., *New Directions in the Study of China's Foreign Policy*, pp. 186-214.

Thursday, March 31: The Rise (?) of Russia

John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 93, No. 5 (September/October 2014), pp. 77-89.

Michael McFaul, Stephen Sestanovich, and John J. Mearsheimer, "Faulty Powers: Who Started the Ukraine Crisis?", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 93, No. 6 (November/December 2014), pp. 167-178.

Andrej Krickovic and Yuval Weber, "Sources of American Conduct (in Ukraine)", working paper.

D. The logics of political violence

Tuesday, April 5 and Thursday, April 7: Terrorism

John Mueller, "Six Rather Unusual Propositions About Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (2005), pp. 487-505.

Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 3 (2003), pp. 343-361.

Max Abrahms, "What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy," *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (2008), pp. 78-105.

Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism", *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2006), pp. 49-80.

Tuesday, April 12: Counterinsurgency and Asymmetric Conflict

David J. Kilcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (2005), pp. 597-617.

Douglas Porch, "The Dangerous Myths and Dubious Promise of COIN," *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (May 2011), pp. 239-257.

Thursday, April 14: Civil Wars

📌 Paper due, to be submitted via the course website

Michael E. Brown, 2001. "The Causes of Internal Conflict: An overview." In *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. M. E. Brown, O. R. Coté Jr., S. M. Lynn-Jones and S. E. Miller. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Fotini Christia, "What Can Civil War Scholars Tell us About the Syrian Conflict?", Laia Balcells and Stathis Kalyvas, "Technology and Rebellion in the Syrian Civil War", James D. Fearon, "Syria's Civil War", David E. Cunningham, "Veto Players and the Civil War in Syria", Barbara F. Walter, "The Four Things We Know About How Civil

Wars End (And What This Tells Us About Syria)", and Alexander Downes, "Why Regime Change is a Bad Idea in Syria", all in The Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS) Studies 5: *The Political Science of Syria's War*, pp. 8-18, 26-29, 61-63.

E. Arms control-alt-delete?

Tuesday, April 19: Cyberwar

Thomas Rid, "Cyber War Will Not Take Place", *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 35:1 (February 2012), pp. 5-32.

John Stone, "Cyber War Will Take Place!", *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 36:1 (2013), pp. 101-108.

Jon R. Lindsay, "Stuxnet and the Limits of Cyber Warfare", *Security Studies* 22:3 (Summer 2013), pp. 365-404.

Thursday, April 21: Nuclear Weapons

Kenneth Waltz, "More May Be Better", in Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz. 2003. *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed*. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton. pp. 3-45.

Jacques E.C. Hymans, "The Threat of Nuclear Proliferation: Perception and Reality", *Ethics & International Affairs* Vol. 27, No. 3 (2013), pp. 281-298.

Tuesday, April 26. Conclusion

The Future of US Foreign Policy.

Thursday, May 5. Final exam

➤ Final exam on contemporary issues in US foreign policy. Time: 2 PM, Location TBA.