

University of Toronto
Syllabus
POL327H 2 Winter 2025
U.S. Foreign Policy in a Complex World

Instructor: Dr. Arnd Jürgensen, Office: Sidney Smith Bldg. 3112; Office Hours: Wednesdays 8 to 9 PM by appointment e-mail: arnd.jurgensen@utoronto.ca

Course Objectives

This course explores the foreign policy of the U.S. through a series of regional and thematic case studies. It begins with a historical review of U.S. foreign policy in the evolution of the U.S. as a major global power, prior to WWII. Among the case studies of U.S. foreign policy included are international organization and law, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, China/East Asia, Africa and Russia.

Format and Requirements

This class meets for two hours once a week. Students will be responsible for the materials covered in the lectures as well as the readings (which are meant to complement each other and will not always cover the same material). An effort will be made to link class discussions to current events, wherever possible. It is therefore recommended that students keep themselves informed of current developments by reading the New York Times or Washington Post as well as Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy etc..

Mid-term test:	20% (Feb. 2, one hour in class)
Research Paper	40% (Due March 9)
Final Examination	40% (2 hours, date TBD)

Topics for research papers can be chosen by students but must be related to some aspect of the implementation of U.S. foreign policy. Students are encouraged to submit a proposal including a topic, research question, a tentative hypothesis and bibliography by February 2 (no more than 250 words) in order to receive early feedback on their research projects. The proposals are not mandatory and will not receive a grade. If you choose not to take advantage of this opportunity, such feedback can not be guaranteed later. The length of the paper should not exceed 2500 words (not including references). Late papers will be penalized at the rate of 2% per day including weekends. Extensions will be granted only with documentary evidence of illness or other emergencies. Students are required to keep a copy of all submitted work.

Required Texts

Michael Cox and Doug Stokes; U.S. Foreign Policy, third edition; Oxford University Press 2018; <https://redshelf.com/book/927489/us-foreign-policy-927489-9780192521330>

Course Reader: available through the library course reserve system. Additional readings may be announced in class and posted on the course reserve system.

Recommended readings are identified by *

Lecture Topics and Readings for Fall Term by Week

Jan.5: **Introduction**
Readings: Cox & Stokes: chapter 1

Jan.12: **Continuity and Change in U.S. Foreign Policy**
Readings: Cox & Stokes: chapter 2

Patrick Porter; *Why America's Grand Strategy Has Not Changed*, *International Security*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Spring 2018), pp. 9–46

Jan. 19: **Historical Patterns I: From Colony to Great Power**
Readings: Cox & Stokes: chapter 4
Hans J. Morgenthau, "The Mainsprings of American Foreign Policy", In *Defense of the National Interest: A Critical Examination of American Foreign Policy*, 1951.
Jeffery A. Frieden; "Sectoral Conflict and U.S.Foreign Economic Policy,1914-1940", *International Organization*, 42:1 (Winter 1988), pp.59-90

Jan. 26: **Historical Patterns II: From Superpower to Global Hegemon**
Readings: Cox & Stokes: chapter 5 & 6
William Appleman Williams; "Introduction: History and the Transcendence of the Tragic" in A.W.Williams; *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, W.W. Norton, 1972, Pg. 1-16
Fred Block, "Economic Instability and Military Strength: The Paradoxes of the 1950 Rearmament Decision", *Politics and Society*, 10:1, 1980, pp.35-58
National Security Strategy of the United States of America; November 2025

Feb. 2: **Midterm Test** (one hour in class)
United Nations, Human Rights, Humanitarian Intervention and the International Criminal Court

Readings: Cox & Stokes chapter 22
Charles A. Kupchan, Peter L. Turbowitz; Dead Center: The Demise of Liberal Internationalism in the United States; *International Security*, Vol.32, No.2, 7-44

Feb. 9: **U.S. foreign policy toward Europe**

Readings: Cox & Stokes: chapter 13
John J. Mearsheimer; "Europe's Bleak Future" Address delivered at the European Parliament Nov. 10 2025, *American Conservative*, Nov. 18, 2025

Feb. 16: **Reading Week**

Feb. 23: **U.S. foreign policy toward Latin America: Promoting Human Rights and Democracy?**

Readings: Cox & Stokes: chapter 16
Peres Milani, L. (2022). U.S. Hegemony in Latin America during an Age of Challenges: The Perception of Threats by the U.S Southern Command. *Latin American Perspectives*, 0(0).
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X221140418>
*Lars Schoultz; Blessings of Liberty: The United States and the Promotion of Democracy in Cuba; *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 34 (2002) 397-425

March 2: **U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East: Stability?**

Readings: Cox & Stokes: chapter 12 & 18
Stephen Walt; America is a Root Cause of Israel and Palestine's Latest War, *Foreign Policy*, https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/10/18/america-root-cause-war-israel-gaza-palestine/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=October%20Subscribers%20Picks%20-%2010312023&utm_term=subscribers_picks

March 9: **U.S. foreign policy toward Asia: Beyond Vietnam**

Readings: Cox & Stokes: chapter 12 & 23
Henrik Stalhane Hiim & Oystein Tunsjo; The U.S.-China Stability-

Instability Paradox: Limited War in East Asia; International Security, Vol.50, no.1 summer 2025, pp.152-181

Nicholas D. Anderson & Daryl G. Press; Access Denied? The Sino-American Contest for Military Primacy in Asia, International Security, Vol.50, no.1, Summer 2025, pp.118-151

Victor D. Cha; The Origins of the U.S. Alliance System in Asia; International Security, Winter 2010, Vol. 34, No. 3, 158-196

*Nina Silove; The Pivot before the Pivot: U.S. Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia, International Security, Spring 2016, Vol.40 No.4, Pg.45-88

*Yuen Foong Khong; Primacy or World Order? The United States and China's Rise- A Review Essay; International Security, Vol. 38, no.3, (winter 2013/14), pp.153-175.

Research Papers Due

March 16: **U.S. Foreign Policy toward Africa**
Cox & Stokes: chapter 17

March 23:
Readings: **U.S. foreign policy toward Russia**
Cox & Stokes: chapter 14
*Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shiffrin; Deal or No Deal? The End of the Cold War and the U.S. Offer to Limit NATO Expansion; International Security, Vol.40, No.4 (Spring 2016) pp.7-44
*Ronald D. Asmus; Europe's Eastern Promise: Rethinking NATO and EU Enlargement; Foreign Affairs, January/February 2008
*George Kennan; The Sources of Soviet Conduct, Foreign Affairs,, 25.4 July 1947
*Graham Allison and Owen Conto Jr. et. al.; Avoiding Nuclear Anarchy, excerpt pg 3-17, 1996
*Mary Elise Sarotte; Perpetuating U.S. Preeminence: The 1990 Deal to "Bribe the Soviets Out" and Move NATO In; International Security, Summer 2010, Vol. 35, No.1:110-137
*Robert Legvold; The Russia File: How to Move toward a Strategic Partnership; Foreign Affairs 88.4, July-August 2009, p.78

March 30:
Readings: **Conclusions**
Cox & Stokes: chapters 24 & 25

Alexander Stubb; The West's Last Chance: How to build a New Global Order Before It's Too Late, Foreign Affairs, Dec. 2, 2025

*Patrick Porter: Why America's Grand Strategy Has Not Changed: Power, Habit, and the U.S. Foreign Policy Establishment; International Security, Vol 42, No.4, Spring 2018, pp 9-46

*Michael Beckley; The Myth of Entangling Alliances: Reassessing the Security Risks of U.S. Defense Pacts; International Security, Vol.39, no.4, Spring 2015, pp-7-48.

A WARNING ABOUT PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is an academic offence with a severe penalty.

It is essential that you understand what plagiarism is and that you do not commit it. In essence, it is the theft of the thoughts or words of others, without giving proper credit. You must put others' words in quotation marks and cite your source(s). You must give citations when using others' ideas, even if those ideas are paraphrased in your own words. Plagiarism is unacceptable in a university.

The University of Toronto provides a process that faculty members must initiate when they suspect a case of plagiarism. In the Department of Political Science, suspected evidence of plagiarism must be reported to the Chairman.

A faculty member may not mark an assignment or assess a penalty if he or she finds evidence of plagiarism – the matter must be reported. The Chairman, or Dean, will assess the penalty.

The following are some examples of plagiarism:

1. Submitting as your own an assignment written by someone else.
2. Quoting an author without indicating the source of the words.
3. Using words, sentences, or paragraphs written by someone else and failing to place quotation marks around the material and reference the source and author. **Using either quotation marks or reference alone is not sufficient. Both must be used!**
4. Adapting an author's ideas or theme and using it as your own without referencing the original source.
5. Seeking assistance from a friend or family member in respect to work you claim as your own.

If you are not sure whether you have committed plagiarism, it is better to ask a faculty member than risk discovery and be forced to accept an academic penalty.

Plagiarism is **cheating**. It is considered a **serious offence** against intellectual honesty and intellectual property. Penalties for an undergraduate can be **severe**.

At a minimum, a student is likely to receive a “0” mark for the assignment or test in question. But a further penalty is often assessed, such as a further reduction from the course mark or placing a permanent notation of the incident on an academic record.

Some website listed below on avoiding plagiarism:

‘How to Use Sources and Avoid Plagiarism’ - available at:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>

and <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/document.html>

Other Advisory Material available at:

www.utoronto.ca/writing