Administrative Unit: History and Social Sciences Department

Course Prefix and Number: POSC 360

Course Title: U.S. Foreign Policy

Number of Credit Hours: 3 Lecture Hours: 3 Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: This course will examine the historical context of U.S. foreign policy, the institutions and processes of foreign policy-making and contemporary foreign policy issues and challenges. Prerequisite: POSC 292 or permission of the instructor. Offered even Spring.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): POSC 292 or permission of the instructor.

Text(s): Most current editions of the following:

Carter, Ralph. Contemporary Cases in U.S. Foreign Policy. CQ Press.

Kegley and Boyer. American Foreign Policy. Wadsworth.


Rourke, John, ed. Taking Sides: Clashing View on Controversial Issues in American Foreign Policy. Dushkin/McGraw-Hill.

McCormick, James M. American Foreign Policy and Process. Wadsworth.

Course Objectives:

• To explore major historical tension in American foreign policy, such as isolationism vs. interventionism and realism vs. idealism.
• To understand the institutions and process of foreign policy-making.
• To investigate the role of non-governmental actors and public opinion on the making of foreign policy.
• To interpret and evaluate contemporary foreign policy issues.

Measurable Learning Outcomes

• Describe major foreign policies and doctrines of the United States, including the Monroe Doctrine, the Roosevelt Corollary, Truman Doctrine, Containment, Nixon Doctrine, Carter Doctrine, Reagan Doctrine and Bush Doctrine.
• Explain the tension between isolationism and idealism, as well as between realism and idealism in U.S. foreign policy.
• Explain major concepts and events from the Cold War, including the policy of nuclear deterrence, the
Cold War consensus, the Cuban missile crisis, Domino theory, the Vietnam War, détente and Iran-Contra.

- Evaluate the foreign policies of post-Cold War presidents and explain significant events, such as the Persian Gulf War; interventions in Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo; and the Iraq War of 2003.
- Explain and evaluate competing theoretical models of foreign-policy making.
- Describe and explain the role of the executive, Congress and the Courts in the making of foreign policy.
- Describe and explain the role of non-governmental actors, such as the media, interest groups and public opinion in the making of foreign policy.
- Describe and explain the activities of agencies, including the Sate Department, National Security Council, intelligence agencies and the Defense Department in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy.
- Compare and contrast tools of foreign policy-making, including diplomacy, economic incentives and sanctions, deterrence and compellence.

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):

Note: A significant, intensive writing component is required for this course. The requirement may be satisfied by a single type-written paper of twelve pages in length or more, properly cited, or by multiple assignments of equivalent length.

- Historical development of U.S. foreign policy
- The Government Framework of Foreign Policy-Making
- Outside Influences on the Policy Process
- Contemporary Issues and Challenges

Material from this course may be tested on the Major Field Test (MFT) administered during the Culminating Experience course for the degree.

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 25

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

Prepared by: Brian Kessel
Name ____________________________ Signature ____________________________

Date: February 28, 2005

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged
to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

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