

**America Abroad:
Debating the U.S. and the World since 1789**

IR200X

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Course Location: CAS 227

Course Time: MWF 9:05-9:55 AM

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Introduction

It is hackneyed to say that the United States' role in world affairs is contested. Today, policymakers and analysts vigorously debate the ideal international course and purpose for the United States in a world affected by great power competition, economic change, human rights concerns, and technological shifts. To what extent does the U.S. have an obligation to play an active role in affecting others' policies on these key issue? Can – or should – the U.S. disengage on these matters to focus its resources closer to home? In short: how can the United States and its citizens chart a path in world politics given the external constraints and opportunities at hand?

This is not the first time Americans have assessed different approaches to international affairs and, especially, U.S. policy towards core issues involving war and peace, economic exchange, and the promotion of U.S. values. Since the earliest days of the Republic, American policymakers and citizens have hotly debated the merits of different *strategies* – theories of cause and effect, linking U.S. interests with the tools to pursue those interests – to guide the United States in global affairs. Through the 1800s, for instance, U.S. policymakers divided over whether the country was best-served aligning with one of the European great powers (e.g., Britain, France), or seeking neutrality. Likewise, the aftermath of World War Two saw an intense debate over how the U.S. could best obtain security and preserve the “American way of life” in a complex world. After the Cold War, meanwhile, an array of options ranging from attempts to dominate international politics to isolationism were actively discussed. In short, *both the past and present of American action in the world has witnessed an ongoing and interactive debate over the United States' role abroad.*

Accordingly, this class investigates past debates over the United States' role abroad and uses them to inform current deliberations. It does so, broadly, in five parts. The class first introduces core concepts central to making sense of these debates, and flags the contemporary strategy deliberation to motivate our historical and conceptual engagement. Next, it examines American actions in the long period during which the United States emerged as a North American great power (roughly 1789 through 1900). Subsequently, we will turn our attention to U.S. policy amid the geopolitical tumult of the first half of the twentieth century, before examining U.S. efforts during the Cold War with the Soviet Union. Finally, the course dissects U.S. engagement in the post-Cold War era – a period of American “unipolarity” – and returns to the contemporary debate over U.S. policy.

Throughout, it seeks to understand the course and drivers of deliberations over the U.S. role abroad, the outcomes that obtained, and to apply such insights to sharpen and advance current deliberations. To do so, the class will (1) introduce students to range of debates over America's role in world affairs since the late 18th century; (2) explore the reasoning behind such debates; (3) draw connections between prior deliberations and contemporary concerns, (4) encourage participants to use this rigorous study of the past to inform present debates, and (5) discuss and dissect the range of social science concepts and arguments used to explain the course and conduct of U.S. foreign policy. Ultimately, students should leave the course with an appreciation for the historical legacy of current policy debates; equipped with fuller awareness of the array of strategic approaches the United States has employed across time and space; and prepared to deploy this knowledge to make sense of contemporary deliberations over the purpose of American engagement overseas.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

This class fulfills the BU Hub's Historical Consciousness and Social Inquiry I requirements. More specifically, by the time the course is over, students will:

- Discover how to engage and evaluate primary and secondary texts discussing the course and conduct of U.S. policy in world affairs since the late 1700s.
 - In doing so, they will analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources and construct narratives surrounding the course of U.S. foreign policy in relation to the appropriate geopolitical context (Historical Consciousness LO #1, 2)
- Synthesize this material to engage contemporary debates over the U.S. role in the world, while connecting past approaches to current concerns (Historical Consciousness LO #1, 2)
- Determine whether and to what extent historical debates and outcomes – and, if so, which ones – provide useful guidance to inform contemporary policy discussions, constructing historical arguments along the way (Historical Consciousness LO #1, 3)
- Assess the political, socio-economic, and international sources of change and continuity in U.S. approaches to world affairs (Historical Consciousness LO #3)
- Identify the political, social-economic, & international forces driving debates and changes in U.S. engagement, and apply insights into these forces to understand the trajectory and rationale for U.S. foreign relations both past and present (Social Inquiry LO 1)
 - Along the way, students will engage the social science concepts used to analyze these forces and the resulting outcomes (Social Inquiry LO #1). These concepts include but are not limited to:
 - *Force/war vs. diplomacy*
 - *Isolationism vs. engagement*
 - *Restraint vs. activism*
 - *Cooperation vs. unilateralism*
 - *Security/Power vs. values*
 - *Unilateralism vs. alliances*
- Discover how the nature of these forces and their associated intellectual paradigms have changed over time to shape the trajectory of U.S. foreign policy (Social Inquiry LO #1)

Instructional Format and Approach to Learning

To pursue these objectives, this course combines active and case-based learning with interactive lecturing and structured debates. Some sessions – particularly early each week when introducing new topics – the instructor will provide background, context, and expansion of class materials while posing questions to the class to ensure student engagement. Otherwise, students will be engaged in an active dialogue employing Socratic discussion thematic and application questions to facilitate student engagement with core concepts, examples, and contemporary applications; indeed, we have set aside time for two classroom simulations in which students will play the part of advisors to senior U.S. leaders, charged with recommending and justifying courses of action (leveraging theory and past experience along the way).

The ultimate goal is for students to embrace a range of interpretations and examples over America’s past role(s) in global affairs, to apply these insights to current discussions, and to prepare students for future research and analysis. To this end, lectures and discussions will focus on “so what?” questions – why rigorous examination of the past through a social science lens matters for contemporary discussions – that will aid students’ ability to apply course content to contemporary debates, social science discussions, and undertake research that expands upon assigned materials.

Notably, a substantial portion of the class is designed around particular cases covering prior moments in which U.S. engagement in the world was up for debate. Readings – including primary sources – were selected to cover the range of views represented in these debates, as well as to discuss why the cases “ended up” as they did. In doing so, the point is to highlight that (1) American engagement in the world is often contingent and contested, (2) explaining why debates and events evolved in a particular manner requires digging into the interaction of complex forces, and (3) contemporary debates thus have analogs in the past. Lectures and class discussions will reflect this material. *Students should thus read with the idea of identifying the views represented in the episodes, linking the views to outcomes in the cases, and considering “roads not taken” – outcomes that may have obtained had a different policy been pursued. Students should ask themselves what the origins (e.g., different sources of threat or solutions to threats) of these debates entail, what linkages across class topics they perceive, and which conceptual arguments they find most useful in understanding a given issue.* Read actively – don’t take the readings as providing an “answer” per se, but as providing entry into deliberations of America’s role abroad that are contested and – often – ongoing!

Requirements, Assignments, and Grading

The workload for this course is challenging. There are roughly 60-100 pages of reading each week, and you are expected to complete it all. The material encompasses a range of theoretical readings, contemporary policy discussions, scholarly work on U.S. policy from both political science and history, and primary sources. Collectively, this work is designed to ensure familiarity with core concepts, historical debates, and contemporary discussions, and to provide a framework for synthesizing such materials. *It requires sustained effort to absorb* – you will need to be both diligent readers and good time managers. Plan accordingly.

Grades are assessed in four areas: attendance & participation, online posts, reading quizzes, simulation presentations and strategy memoranda, and a final.

Attendance, Participation, and Online Posts (12.5 percent of course grade)

Attendance

- It should go without saying that students are required to attend each class session except for a documented excuse (see below on attendance policy). Students may have two unexcused absences without any penalty. After the second absence, you will be docked 5 points from the final class grade for EACH additional unexcused absence. Attendance will be taken, and students are expected to be present and on time for class sessions.

Participation

- This class operates as an interactive lecture with significant structured debate set aside both within class meetings and on particular class meetings set aside for debate/discussion. It *cannot* succeed if students have not engaged course materials. Accordingly, students are expected to attend each class session having read, internalize, and interrogated assigned materials. While there is no one way to meet class participation, students are generally expected to (1) consume class readings, (2) come prepared to discuss and reflect on the arguments, and (3) actively participate in classroom debates and simulations (see below); I am confident that we can have a productive conversation!
- To ensure students are comfortable with class materials, we will also spend time during our first week discussing how to engage historiographic and social science materials, as well as interpret primary sources. These issues will be reinforced in other graded assignments (Social Inquiry I; Historical Consciousness Learning Outcomes 2-3). In interpreting primary source documents, we are particularly invested in asking (1) who wrote or compiled the relevant document and what was their position when doing so; (2) identifying the relevant argument(s) in the document; and (3) relating the author and argument to the relevant political and international context.

Online Posts

- Of course, not everyone is comfortable speaking up in class. Moreover, there is great value in having time to reflect and discuss a particular idea or concept. To this end, students are responsible for posting a *short* (NO MORE THAN 150 WORDS, i.e., a long paragraph) reaction to Blackboard under the “Discussions” tab in response to class readings at **least TWICE during the semester (on different sessions)** [sign ups will occur the second week of class]. The task here is simple: pick an argument or idea from one of the readings that you found particularly insightful/interesting/policy relevant, unpack what it says and how it relates to other reading(s), and then explain why you find it provocative, disagreeable, essential, or otherwise worth noting; *crucially, at least one of the reactions must discuss one or more of the primary sources assigned in the class. Posts should be uploaded to*

the “Discussions” tab on Blackboard no later than 3 PM on the day before class for which the reading is assigned (e.g., by 3 PM on Sunday for a Monday class; note that there is no retrospective posting, though you can certainly reference prior readings in your comments/question).

- The fun does not stop there. In addition to posting, each student is also responsible for composing a *reaction* to a colleague’s online post at least **TWICE** each semester (again, on at least two different class sessions). The job here is to stir up as much debate and discussion as possible on the board for that class. You can do this by disagreeing with others’ reactions; promoting an alternate frame for discussion; challenging underlying assumptions; bringing new facts or research to bear; or posting otherwise (intellectually) provocative material. You will have until **8 AM** on the day of class to do this. Note that *you do not have to respond to everything in the original post*, but it does require engaging on the substance and bringing your own insights to bear.
- This exercise encourages students to evaluate interpretations using historical evidence, interpret primary sources on their own merits and/or in dialogue with scholarly arguments, and reinforce student awareness of changing American power and purpose in the world. As such, it addresses Historical Consciousness Learning Outcomes 1-3.
- Please note that posts and reactions may only be fulfilled on class session for which there is reading [i.e., not during simulation, briefing, or debate days]

Simulation Presentations & Papers (55 percent of course grade combined)

There will be two in-class simulations in which students will be assigned to teams and tasked with debating, selecting, and justifying a course of action (i.e., a strategy) for the United States in world affairs. Each simulation involves a group presentation and an individual student paper. *NOTE: additional details on the simulations will be provided closer to the exercises.*

- *Simulation 1 (25 percent of course grade):* The first simulation will run from March 23 – April 1. Students will be assigned to teams to discuss what they – taking the role of advisors to the U.S. leadership in early 1950 – would recommend for U.S. priorities after World War Two, focusing on whether the U.S. should pursue a quid pro quo with the Soviet Union, contain the USSR, or seek to roll back Soviet power and influence.

Teams should decide not only which of the strategic options is preferable, but why they recommend this course of action given international/domestic events of the time and prior U.S. experience while applying the concepts covered in the course; in doing so, they must also make explicit mention of the arguments embedded in the primary source documents assigned for the relevant class sessions, agreeing or disagreeing with their propositions as appropriate. In other words, the focus is not just on articulating coherent positions, but mobilizing evidence, logic, and arguments from the material covered in the class thus far to elucidate upon your position(s).

In support of this exercise, teams are required to prepare a 10-minute briefing to present the results of their discussions, explain and justify their recommended strategy, and elaborate why the alternate strategies were rejected. There will then be a 5-10 minute period

for audience members to ask questions of the presenters (asking questions of presenters will affect your class participation grade – see above). Grades will reflect the clarity, professionalism, and logic of the presentation, as well as the coherence of the responses to audience queries. This briefing is worth *10 percent of the course grade, and will be graded collectively*.

In addition, each student is required to submit a **2-page** memorandum that offers their own perspective on the debate – citing *at least two primary sources along the way, and leveraging the social science concepts used to discuss and explain U.S. foreign relations* – elaborating and justifying one of the strategies. Students should feel free to depart from the course of action recommended by their team and select a different approach - the focus is on using the team discussion to define, refine, and explain one's own perspective. Papers are due by **5 PM on Wednesday, April 1**. (email to jris@bu.edu). *This paper is worth 15 percent of the course grade.*

- *Simulation 2 (30 percent of course grade)* The second simulation will run from April 17-27. Students will be assigned to teams to discuss what they – taking the role of advisors to the U.S. leadership TODAY – would recommend for U.S. priorities in world affairs. At stake is whether the U.S. should continue to play an activist role in global affairs, or accept a more restrained approach. As before, *teams should decide not only which of the strategic options is preferable, but why they recommend this course of action given international and domestic events of the time and prior U.S. experience while applying the concepts covered in the course.* In other words, the focus is not just on articulating coherent positions, but mobilizing evidence, logic, and arguments from the material covered in the class thus far to elucidate upon your position(s).

In support of this exercise, teams are required to prepare a 10-minute briefing to present the results of their discussions, explain and justify their recommended strategy, and elaborate why the alternate strategies were rejected. There will then be a 5-10 minute period for audience members to ask questions of the presenters (asking questions of presenters will affect your class participation grade – see above). Grades will reflect the clarity, professionalism, and logic of the presentation, as well as the coherence of the responses to audience queries. This briefing is worth *15 percent of the course grade, and will be graded collectively*.

In addition, each student is required to submit a **3-4 page** memorandum that offers their own perspective on the debate – citing *at least two primary sources along the way, and leveraging the social science concepts used to discuss and explain U.S. foreign relations* – explaining and justifying one of the strategies. As before, students may depart from the course of action recommended by their team. Papers are due by 5 PM on Monday, April 27. *This paper is worth 15 percent of the course grade.*

Combined, these exercises encourage students to craft and interpret historical narratives, mobilize history and logic in support of policy arguments, interpret and debate the logic/context/rationales of different primary sources both verbally and in written form, and appreciate the socio-political contexts in which U.S. strategy has evolved across time and space. As such, they bear on Historical Consciousness Learning Outcomes #1-3. Moreover, by pushing students to consider the importance of concepts such as alliances, force, diplomacy, and unilateralism in U.S. strategy,

students are introduced to and apply core elements in the international relations (and thus social science) canon. As such, the assignments also bear on the learning outcome for Social Inquiry I.

Reading Quizzes (12.5 percent of course grade)

- There will be three *short* reading quizzes given during the semester to ensure students are engaging and internalizing the required material. Quizzes will be given in-class **on the dates marked on the syllabus**, and there will be no make-ups. However, students are allowed to drop their lowest score: the overall reading quiz grade will reflect the average of the best two scores. In practice, this means that if you are absent for one of the quizzes, you *must* be in-class for the other two assignments or risk receiving a 0 on one of the two quizzes that count towards your grade.
- In evaluating student attention to and awareness of core arguments in the material, reading quizzes reinforce student knowledge of the variety of arguments surrounding the history of U.S. engagement in world affairs and the social science concepts used to explain/understand these developments. It thus reinforces the learning outcome associated with Social Science I, as well as Historical Consciousness Learning Outcome 3.

Final (20 percent of course grade)

- Students will complete a final essay asking students to synthesize the historical material and concepts covered in the class in support of an overarching historically-informed social science narrative. As such, it reinforces Historical Consciousness Learning Objectives 1 and 3, as well as Social Inquiry I. The date and time for the final will be determined at a later date.

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
64-69	D
63 and below	F

In general, an “A” grade of some kind reflects excellent work and mastery of content. A “B” reflects good work and solid command of concepts; a “C” captures adequate work and sufficient understanding of concepts; a “D” is given to poor work evincing little understanding of core concepts; and an F captures little to no work with minimal or no conceptual understanding.

Books and Other Course Materials

All class materials are posted on Blackboard and/or are available via the BU Library. However, we will regularly utilize two texts that students may wish to purchase:

- Walter McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1997)
- John Thompson, *A Sense of Power* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015)

Courseware

All class materials are posted on Blackboard.

Office Hours and Meetings

As noted above, I will have office hours as listed at the top of this syllabus, and by appointment. Students are encouraged to reach out with questions, comments, or concerns with the course or class materials. As noted, students will also be required to schedule several meetings with the instructor at points during the semester to review written work and discuss class participating. Sign up sheets will be made available to facilitate this process.

Email Policy

Students should also feel free to email the instructor with questions or comments. Although I try to be diligent with email, travel, research, and other obligations may delay a response. Accordingly, please allow *24-48 hours* for a response to any particular email. Students should plan accordingly: if seeking advice on a paper, it is not practical to email the night before!

Academic Integrity

All members of the University are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity, and the BU Academic Conduct Code will be strictly enforced. We must and shall hold one another to this standard. The Conduct Code can be found at: <http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>.

Statement on Equal Access

Boston University is committed to providing equal access to our coursework and programs to all students, including those with disabilities. In order to be sure that accommodations can be made in time for all exams and assignments, please plan to turn in your accommodations letter as soon as possible after the first class to the instructor. After you turn in your letter, please meet with me to discuss the plan for accommodations so that we can be sure that they are adequate and you are supported in your learning. If you have further questions or need additional support, please contact the Office of Disability Services (access@bu.edu).

Attendance & Absences

Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory, save in cases of a documented medical, family/personal, or religious exception (for additional details on BU's Absence Policy and Policy on Religious Observance, see: <https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/attendance/> and <https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/absence-for-religious-reasons/>).

If an absence is excused, the instructor may provide the student an opportunity to make up work that contributes to the final grade by a date agreed upon by the student and instructor; however, the make-up work must be completed in a timeframe not to exceed 30 calendar days from the last day of the initial absence.

Unexcused absences will result in significant deductions to your class participation grade. *Late arrivals* to class are also unacceptable and will be similarly penalized.

Please notify your instructor via email well in advance (i.e., at least 24 hours) of any absences.

Assignment Completion and Late Work

You are responsible for submitting your work on time (again, all assignments can be email to the instructor at jris@bu.edu). Whether this means crawling out of bed with the flu or having a friend deliver a paper, the onus is upon you. In the real world, as in this class, there are serious consequences for failing to meet your job requirements. Unless there is a documented medical or exigent personal circumstance, late assignments will be severely penalized: for each 24 hour period (starting immediately when the assignment is due) an assignment is late, I will reduce your grade by 10 points. This means that if your paper was due at 5 PM and you deliver an assignment at 6 PM, the best you can do on the paper is a 90. If you deliver a paper at 6 PM the NEXT day, that's 20 points off (at best an 80). Obviously, it is better to receive a heavily penalized grade than to not hand in an assignment at all and receive a 0, but I STRONGLY recommend you plan to hand in your assignments on time to avoid the resulting penalties. I want you all to do well in this course!

Caveat Emptor!

There is no one way to entirely cover American engagement in world affairs. Some scholars focus on the big theories; others, on particular debates, themes, or questions. This class is broadly focused on why and how the United States has sought to obtain security for itself in a complex, sometimes-threatening world - occasionally employing violence along the way - the consequences of U.S. decisions for the nation, its citizens, and other actors in world affairs. Some topics are necessarily given shorter shrift than others in the process; no one course can do true justice to the array of issues involved in the broad sweep of U.S. history! If, however, students are interested in exploring topics missing from this syllabus – or seek a deeper dive on topics only briefly touched upon – please let the instructor know and he will happily provide suggestions! Above all, feel free to challenge the perspective advanced in the course material – I welcome the dialogue and opportunity to explore new topics.

In addition, changes to the syllabus may be necessary throughout the semester. I reserve the right to make said changes. I will give you as much notice as possible if change is needed. Ultimately, this syllabus is not a legal contract between the Instructor and the students and is not to be construed as such. The Instructor reserves the right to make such changes in this syllabus as he deems necessary in the best interest of the class.

Reading List and Calendar

*an * indicates a primary source. Some of the scholarly worked assigned for contemporary debates is, in fact, a primary source in its own right.*

Part I: Concepts and Motivations

1. Wednesday, Jan. 22 – Introduction: The Past and Present of America in the World

- Congressional Research Service, *U.S. Role in the World: Background and Issues for Congress*, September 25, 2019, R44891, pp. 1-15 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R44891.pdf>
- Bruce Jentleson, “Apart, Atop, Amidst: America in the World,” *War on the Rocks*, January 12, 2017, <https://warontherocks.com/2017/01/apart-atop-amidst-america-in-the-world/>
- Stephen Wertheim, “A Clash is Coming Over America’s Place in the World,” *New York Times*, February 26, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/26/opinion/2020-foreign-policy.html>

2. Friday, Jan. 24 – Overview: Issues in Contention and How to Engage Them

- Walter McDougall, “Back to Bedrock: The Eight Traditions of American Statecraft,” *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 2 (March/April 1997), pp. 134-146.
- Amelia Hoover Green, “How to Read Political Science: A Guide in Four Steps,” 2013, <https://www.ameliahoovergreen.com/uploads/9/3/0/9/93091546/howtoread.pdf>.
- College of William and Mary, “Reading and Writing about Primary Sources,” 2019, <https://www.wm.edu/as/history/undergraduateprogram/hwrc/handouts/primarysources/index.php>

3. Monday, Jan. 27 – Issues in Contention: Values & Power

- Stephen Walt, “US Grand Strategy after the Cold War: Can Realism Explain It? Should Realism Guide It?” *International Relations* 32, no. 1 (2018), pp. 3-4, 7-18
- Samuel Huntington, “American Ideals versus American Institutions,” *Political Science Quarterly* 97, no. 1 (Spring 1982), pp. 1-2, 18-23

4. Wednesday, Jan. 29 – Issues in Contention: Commitments & Alliances versus

Unilateralism

- David Fromkin, “Entangling Alliances,” *Foreign Affairs* 48, no. 4 (July 1970), pp. 688-694, 699-700
- Stephen Walt, “Why Alliances Endure or Collapse?” *Survival* 39, no. 1 (Spring 1997), pp. 156-164 ONLY
 - RECOMMENDED: John Cookson, “Does America Need Allies?” *The National Interest*, April 15, 2016, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/does-america-need-allies-15802>

5. Friday, Jan. 31 – Issues in Contention: Force versus Negotiation

- Robert Art, “The Four Functions of Force” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, ed. Robert Art and Robert Jervis (Pearson, 13th edition), pp. 195-203
 - Note: Students unfamiliar with military affairs may wish to skim Congressional Research Service, *Defense Primer: Geography, Strategy, and U.S. Force Design*, September 13, 2019, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/IF10485.pdf>
- Chas W. Freeman, “Diplomacy: A Rusting Tool of American Statecraft,” February 2018, <https://chasfreeman.net/diplomacy-a-rusting-tool-of-american-statecraft/>

6. Monday, Feb. 3 – Current Debates: Staying Involved, Seeking More, or Getting Out?

- *Hal Brands, “The Unexceptional Superpower: American Grand Strategy in the Age of Trump,” *Survival* 59, no. 6 (2017), pp. 7-40

7. Wednesday, Feb. 5 - The Case for Staying Involved

- *Stephen Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, & William Wohlforth, “Lean Forward: In Defense of American Engagement,” *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 1 (January/February 2013), pp. 130-142

8. Friday, Feb. 7 - The Case for Doing Less

- *Barry Posen, “The Case for a Less Activist Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 1 (January/February 2013), pp. 116-128.
- *Kate Kizer, “A U.S. Grand Strategy for a Values-Driven Foreign Policy,” in *New Voices in Grand Strategy*, ed. Richard Fontaine & Loren Schulman (Washington: CNAS, 2019), pp. 37-48, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.cnas.org/documents/Grand-Strategy-Report-Final-online-1.pdf?mtime=20190408141828>

Part II: Neutrality, Expansion, and Debates, 1789-1900

9. Monday, Feb. 10 – The Strategic Backdrop

- *The Federalist Papers, no. 2-5, available online: <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/documents/1786-1800/the-federalist-papers/>
- J.M. Opal, “The Republic in the World, 1783–1803” in *The Oxford Handbook of the American Revolution*, ed. Jane Kamensky and Edward Gray (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 595-612
 - RECOMMENDED: Walter McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1997), pp. 15-38

10. Wednesday, Feb. 12 – **Seeking “Neutrality?”**

- McDougall, *Promised Land*, pp. 39-56
- *Washington’s Farewell Address, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp

11. Friday, Feb. 14 – **Expansionism or Bust?**

- McDougall, *Promised Land*, pp. 76-100
- *James K. Polk- 1845 Inaugural Address, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/polk.asp

12. TUESDAY (BU MONDAY), Feb. 18 – **Roads Not Taken: Spreading Democracy/READING QUIZ 1**

- Piero Gleijeses, “The Limits of Sympathy: The United States and the Independence of Spanish America,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24, no. 3 (1992), pp. 481–505.
- Reading Quiz 1

13. Wednesday, Feb. 19 – **Seeking Explanations for U.S. Policy**

- Kinley Brauer, “The United States and British Imperial Expansion, 1815-60,” *Diplomatic History* 12, no. 1 (1988), pp. 19–37.

14. Friday, Feb. 21 – **Net Assessment: U.S. Strategy, c. 1789-1900**

- No reading. Students should come prepared to define what they see as the key features and *non-features* of U.S. policy in this era, and to debate whether the strategy was a wise course.

Part III: Engaging the World? Debates and Decisions amid Geopolitical Tumult, 1914-1945

15. Monday, Feb. 24 – **The Backdrop: The U.S. as a Great Power** [*NOTE: this is the most reading heavy week of the semester – please plan appropriately!*]

- John A. Thompson, *A Sense of Power* (Ithaca: Cornell, 2015), pp. 25-55

16. Wednesday, Feb. 26 – **Making the World Safe: Power, Values and Intervention in World War One**

- Thompson, *A Sense of Power*, 56-87.
- *Woodrow Wilson, “Peace Without Victory,” January 22, 1917, <http://www-personal.umd.umich.edu/~ppennock/doc-Wilsonpeace.htm>

17. Friday, Feb. 28 – **Should I Stay or Should I Go: Debating a Permanent Peacetime Commitment**

- Thompson, *A Sense of Power*, pp. 87-109.
 - RECOMMENDED (especially for those seeking context and conceptualization): Hilde Restad, *American Exceptionalism* (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 128-137
- *Henry Cabot Lodge, “Lodge Reservations,” 1919, http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=3909 (NOTE: only read items 1-14)

18. Monday, Mar. 2 – **Limited Engagement, or Something More?** [*this week's reading is also heavy, and it is front-loaded – plan accordingly*]

- Thompson, *A Sense of Power*, pp. 110-145
 - RECOMMENDED: Restad, *American Exceptionalism*, pp. 137-145

19. Wednesday, Mar. 4 – **How Little Is Enough: The U.S. and the Coming of World War Two**

- Thompson, *A Sense of Power*, pp. 151-192
- *FDR, “Four Freedoms,” January 6, 1941 <https://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/fdr-the-four-freedoms-speech-text/> (about 7 pages of text)

20. Friday, Mar. 6 – **In-Class Debate: The Successes and Failures of U.S. Policy, 1914-1941/READING QUIZ 2**

- Students should come prepared to discuss and debate the relative successes and failures of U.S. policy in the period around the World Wars. You will be broken up into groups and tasked with advocating for or against U.S. policy.

[SPRING BREAK, March 7-15]

Part IV: Protecting the World or Seeking Power: The Cold War, 1947-1991

21. Monday, Mar. 16 – **The Backdrop: Brave, New World**

- Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power* (Stanford: Stanford, 1992), pp. 1-24

Choose ONE of the following primary documents:

- *Frederick Dunn et al., “A Security Strategy for Postwar America,” March, 8, 1945, pp. 1-7 (supplied by instructor)

Or

- *George C. Marshall to The Secretary of State, August 3, 1944 and enclosure, “Fundamental Military Factors in Relation to Discussions Concerning Territorial Trusteeships and Settlements,” in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1944: General* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1966), pp. 699-703.

22. Wednesday, Mar. 18 – **Options at Hand**

- John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (New York: Oxford, 2005), Rev. ed., pp. 3-23
- *Moscow Embassy Telegram #511 (“The Long Telegram”), February 22, 1946 available via Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Cold War International History Project, <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/116178.pdf> [NOTE: students can read either the transliterated text or the original scanned copy – the substance is identical; 9 pgs of text equivalent]

23. Friday, Mar. 20 – **Deciding for Containment**

- Christopher Hemmer, *American Pendulum* (Ithaca: Cornell, 2015), pp. 41-60
- *National Security Council, “NSC-68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security,” April 14, 1950, Sections I-IV, VII, and Conclusion ONLY, available via Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Cold War International History Project, , <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/116191.pdf?v=2699956db534c1821edefa61b8c13ffe>
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24. Monday, Mar. 23 – **Start of Classroom Simulation**

- Students will be assigned to teams to discuss and define what THEY – taking the role of advisors to the U.S. leadership in early 1950 – would recommend for U.S. priorities after World War Two. At root is the question of whether the United States should pursue a quid pro quo with the Soviet Union, containment, or seek to roll back Soviet power and influence. Teams should decide not only which of the strategic options discussed in class and the readings they prefer, but why they recommend this course of action. In other words, the focus is not just on articulating coherent positions, but mobilizing evidence and arguments from the material covered in the class thus far to justify and explain your position(s).
 - Teams are required to prepare a 10-minute briefing to present the results of their discussions, explain and justify their recommended strategy, and why the alternate strategies were rejected.
- In addition, each student is required to submit a 2-page memorandum that offers their *own* perspective on the debate, explaining and justifying one of the strategies. Please note that students can disagree with the course of action recommended by their team as a whole – the key is to use the team discussion to refine and explain one’s *own* perspective. Papers are due by **5 PM on Wednesday, April 1** (emailed to instructor [jris@bu.edu] as Word or Word-compatible document)

25. Wednesday, Mar. 25 – **Simulation Prep / CLASS CANCELLED**

- See prior class session. Students should plan on meeting with their teams during or outside of class hours.

26. Friday, Mar. 27 – **Simulation Prep / CLASS CANCELLED**

- See prior class session. Students should plan on meeting with their teams during or outside of class hours.

27. Monday, Mar. 30 – **In-Class Briefings**

- Start of in-class briefings on the results of the simulation

28. Wednesday, Apr. 1 – **In-Class Briefings [PAPER 1 DUE by 5 PM]**

- End of in-class briefings on the results of the simulation

29. Friday, Apr. 3 – **Postwar Logics: Security, Values, or Something Else?**

- G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 170-210.
 - RECOMMENDED: Students are also encouraged to read Brendan Green, “Two Concepts of Liberty: U.S. Cold War Grand Strategies and the Liberal Tradition,” *International*

Security 37, no. 2 (October 2012), pp. 9-43.

30. Monday, Apr. 6 – **Postwar Excesses: Commitments and Intervention**

- George Herring, “America and Vietnam: The Unending War,” *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 5 (Winter 1991), pp. 104-119

Part V: Post-Cold War and Contemporary Debates, 1992 – present

31. Wednesday, Apr. 8 – **The Dilemmas of Dominance: What Do You Do When You’ve Won?** (note: students should read the below in the order listed)

- Jeremi Suri, “American Grand Strategy from Cold War’s End to 9/11,” *Orbis* 53, no. 4 (2009), pp. 611-621 ONLY.
- *Lawrence Eagleburger, “Parting Thoughts: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Years Ahead,” released via State Department (online via Blackboard), pp. 1-5 ONLY
- Hemmer, *American Pendulum*, pp. 111-127

32. Friday, Apr. 10 – **Post-Cold War Debates**

- Barry Posen and Andrew Ross, “Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy” *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1996-1997), pp. 5-43 ONLY
 - Note: though long, portions of this reading – especially the tables and sections related to means – can be skimmed

33. Monday, Apr. 13 – **Successes and Excesses?/READING QUIZ 3**

- Review the Hemmer reading from April 8
- Melvyn Leffler, “9/11 in Retrospect: George W. Bush’s Grand Strategy Reconsidered,” *Foreign Affairs* pp. 33-44.
- *George W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002* (Washington: White House, 2002), i-iii (front summary section)

34. Wednesday, Apr. 15 – **Where Are We Now: A Debate Renewed**

- Review the “The Case for Staying Involved” and “The Case for Doing Less” readings and notes from earlier in the semester
- *National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2035* (Washington: National Intelligence Council, 2016), online via Blackboard, pp. ix-xi, 6, 31-36.
- *Emma Ashford, “Power and Pragmatism: Reforming American Foreign Policy for the 21st Century” in Fontaine and Schulman, *New Voices*, pp. 4-10
- *Hal Brands, “The Era of American Primacy is Far from Over,” *Foreign Policy*, August 24, 2016, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-skeptics/the-era-american-primacy-far-over-17465>

35. Friday, Apr. 17 – **Simulation: Shaping U.S. Engagement Today**

- Students will be assigned to teams tasked with deciding upon a current course of action for the United States. Students must engage the contemporary debate between analysts calling for continued American activism in world affairs and those advocating a more restrained approach, deciding upon the merits and limits of each option while recommending and justifying one of

the strategies.

- Using evidence and arguments from the material covered in this class, students will craft a 10-minute briefing identifying what they see as the merits and drawbacks of each approach before arriving at (and justifying) a strategy.
- In addition, each student is responsible for composing compose a 3-4 page memo that offers their *own* perspective on the debate, explaining and justifying one of the strategies. Please note that students can disagree with the course of action recommended by their team as a whole – the key is to use the team discussion to refine and explain one’s *own* perspective. Papers are due by **5 PM on Monday, April 27** (emailed to instructor [jris@bu.edu] as Word or Word-compatible document)

[PATRIOTS DAY, Apr. 20]

36. Wednesday, Apr. 22 – **Simulation Prep**

- See prior class session. NOTE: given the Patriots Day holiday, students should plan on meeting with their teams in advance of the Wednesday session.

37. Friday, Apr. 24 – **Simulation Briefings**

- Working with their teams, students will report out the results of their discussions in 10-minute presentations.

38. Monday, Apr. 27 – **Simulation Briefings/PAPER 2 DUE**

- Working with their teams, students will report out the results of their discussions in 10-minute presentations.

39. Wednesday, Apr. 29 – **Wrap Up/Final Thoughts**