

# Political Science 121A: Formulation of U.S. Foreign Policy

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## Overview

In debates about American foreign policy, it is often said that “politics stops at the water’s edge.” While matters of domestic policy—taxes, welfare, regulation, crime, etc.—are legitimately contested in the political arena, foreign policy is too arcane, too distant from people’s lives, and ultimately too dangerous to embroil in the push and pull of domestic politics. In this view, foreign policy is the domain, not of politicians, but of statesmen—leaders who sit above the political fray and attempt to pursue the “national interest” in an enlightened manner. This course challenges this perspective by exploring how domestic and international pressures influence the formation and execution of U.S. foreign policy.

Some of the questions we will consider include:

1. To what extent are decisions about the use of force guided by the “national interest”? What does this term mean?
2. How do domestic political factors such as public opinion, the media, interest groups, and Congress influence presidential decisions? Does being a democracy help or hinder the conduct of American foreign policy?
3. What is the impact of important bureaucratic actors such as the Defense and State Departments?
4. What criteria should be employed when deciding whether or not to use military force?

Much of the focus is on recent and contemporary events, though some historical material is provided for background.

## Requirements and Method of Evaluation

Grades will be based on an in-class examination (40 %), a 12-15 page research paper (50 %), and participation in class discussions (10 %). It is crucial that students keep up with the weekly reading assignments, which are the basis for class discussion and average 100-150 pages per week. To complete the research paper requirement, students will select a course of action the United States pursued as a part of its foreign policy and assess, in the context of the theories learned in class, why the course of action was taken.

## Readings

The following book is available for purchase at the UCLA bookstore:

- Ralph G. Carter. 2008. *Contemporary Cases in U.S. Foreign Policy: From Terrorism to Trade*, Third Edition. Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press.

- *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*. 2004. W.W. Norton and Company.

Other readings are accessible through the course website at <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/09W/polisci121a-1/>.

## Schedule of Classes and Readings

### Introduction

- Course Overview and Expectations (Jan. 5)
- Politics and the Water's Edge (Jan. 7)
- Statesmen or Politicians? Models of Foreign Policy-Making (Jan. 9)
  - Walter Lippmann. 1955. *Essays in the Public Philosophy*. Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, pp. 14–40.
  - Miroslav Nincic. 1991. *Democracy and Foreign Policy*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 1–21.

### Domestic Influences on Foreign Policy

- Public Opinion and the Media (Jan. 12, 14)
  - Robert Y. Shapiro and Benjamin I. Page. 1988. "Foreign Policy and the Rational Public," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 32 (June 1988), pp. 211–247.
  - Henry E. Brady, James S. Fishkin, and Robert C. Luskin. 2003. "Informed Public Opinion about Foreign Policy: The Uses of Deliberative Polling," *Brookings Review*, Vol. 21 (Summer 2003), pp. 16–20
  - John Zaller. 1994. "Elite Leadership of Mass Opinion," in W. Lance Bennett and David L. Paletz, eds., *Taken by Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
  - W. Lance Bennett. "The News about Foreign Policy," in W. Lance Bennett and David L. Paletz, eds., *Taken by Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
  - Timothy Cook. "Domesticating a Crisis," in W. Lance Bennett and David L. Paletz, eds., *Taken by Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Interest Groups (Jan 16, 21)
- NOTE: No class on Jan. 19 (Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday)
  - John T. Tierny. 1993. "Interest Group Involvement in Congressional Foreign and Defense Policy," in Randall B. Ripley and James M. Lindsay, eds., *Congress Resurgent*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp. 89-111.
  - Arthur Macewan. 2003. "Is It Oil?" *Dollars and Sense* (May–June 2003), pp. 20–24.

- Michael Lind. 2002. “The Israel Lobby,” *Prospect* (April 2002).
- Adam Garfinkle. 2002. “The Israel Lobby (Part II),” *Prospect* (Sept. 2002).
- Congress (Jan 23, 26)
  - James M. Lindsay. 1993. “Congress and Foreign Policy: Why the Hill Matters,” *Political Science Quarterly* 107(4), pp. 607–628.
  - Patrick J. Haney and Walt Vanderbush. 2008. “The Helms-Burton Act: Congress and Cuba Policy,” in Carter.

## War and Peace

- The Vietnam War (Jan. 28, 30)
  - Leslie H. Gelb and Richard K. Betts. 1979. *The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked*. (Washington: Brookings Institution Press), pp. 181–226.
  - Melvin Small. 1988. *Johnson, Nixon, and the Doves*. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), pp. 162–224.
- “Humanitarian” Intervention in Somalia (Feb. 2)
  - Woods, James L. U.S. Government Decisionmaking Processes during Humanitarian Operations in Somalia. In Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst. 1997. *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp. 151-172.
  - Harry Johnston and Ted Dagne. Congress and the Somali Crisis. In Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst. 1997. *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp. 191-204.
- September 11 and the War in Afghanistan (Feb. 4, 6)
  - The 9/11 Commission Report, chs. 2, 4, 6, 10.
  - Michael O’Hanlon. 2002. “Flawed Masterpiece,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81 (May/June 2002), pp. 47–63.
- War on Terror (Feb. 9, 11, 13)
  - Ryan C. Hendrickson and Frederick Gagnon. 2008. “The United States versus Terrorism: Clinton, Bush, and Osama Bin Laden,” in Carter.
  - Louis Fisher. 2008. “NSA Eavesdropping: Unchecked or Limited Presidential Power,” in Carter.
  - Linda Cornett and Mark Gibney. 2008. “The Rights of Detainees: Determining the Limits of Law,” in Carter.
- NOTE: No class on Monday, Feb. 16 (Presidents’ Day holiday)
- **IN-CLASS MIDTERM: Wednesday, Feb. 18 and Friday, Feb. 20**
- The Iraq War (Feb. 23, 25, 27)

- Jeffrey S. Lantis and Eric Moskowitz. 2008. “The Return of the Imperial Presidency? The Bush Doctrine and U.S. Intervention in Iraq,” in Carter.
- Chaim Kaufmann. 2004. “Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War,” *International Security*, vol. 29, pp. 5–48.
- Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver, and Jason Reifler. 2005/06. “Success Matters: Casualty Sensitivity and the Iraq War,” *International Security*, vol. 30, pp. 7–46.
- Nuclear Non-Proliferation (March 2, 4)
  - Patrick James and Ozgur Ozdamar. 2008. “The United States and North Korea: Avoiding a Worst-Case Scenario,” in Carter.
  - Thomas Preston and Michael P. Infranco. 2008. “The Nuclear Standoff between the United States and Iran: Conflict, Misunderstandings, and Diplomatic Inflexibility,” in Carter.

### **Foreign Economic Policy**

- Trade and Globalization (March 6, 9)
  - Robert A. Blecker. 2008. “U.S. Steel Import Tariffs: The Politics of Global Markets,” in Carter.
  - Steven W. Hook and Franklin Barr Lebo. 2008. “U.S.-China Trade Relations: Privatizing Foreign Policy,” in Carter.

### **Foreign Environmental Policy**

- The Kyoto Protocol (March 11)
  - Rodger A. Payne and Sean Payne. 2008. “The Kyoto Protocol and Beyond: The Politics of Climate Change,” in Carter.
  - “Oh no, Kyoto,” *The Economist*, April 5, 2001.

### **Summary and Conclusions (March 13)**

**RESEARCH PAPER: Due on Friday, March 20**