

U.S. Foreign Policy

University of California Washington Center, Room 317, Thursdays, 6:30-9:30 pm

Instructor: Christopher A. Preble

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 5:00 - 6:00 pm (UCDC Rm. 336); or By Appointment (at Cato)

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Overview:

This course examines contemporary issues in U.S. foreign policy, focusing primarily on a series of regional case studies including U.S.-Iranian relations; U.S., Japan, the Koreas & East Asia; and the U.S. in Central Asia (Afghanistan/Pakistan). Although the course is organized on a regional basis, we will explore a number of recurring themes including: nuclear proliferation; the problems of weak and failing states; promoting democracy and political reform; relations with China and Russia; terrorism and counterterrorism; resource competition; the importance of culture and national identity; transnational threats; and the economics of national security.

About the Instructor:

I am the vice president for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute. In this capacity, I have written two books (on U.S. foreign policy/grand strategy) and edited four others (on U.S. foreign policy choices, Iraq, counterterrorism, and threat perception). I've also written a number of shorter papers and book chapters (on, for example, the Middle East, nuclear weapons, the defense budget, intelligence assessment, fixing failed states, and U.S.-Japan relations). Before joining Cato in February 2003, I taught at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota; and at Temple University, where I earned my PhD in History. I earned my BA (also in History) at George Washington University, and served for four years in the U.S. Navy, including a little more than three years on the USS TICONDEROGA (CG 47).

Books (The A List):

- Ian Bremmer, *Superpower: Three Choices for America's Role in the World* (Portfolio/Penguin, 2015)
- Bruce W. Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, Fifth Edition (Norton, 2013) (*Optional*)

Because I want the course to be focused on contemporary issues, I may augment the readings from the books with short articles or think tank papers published within the last year. Nearly all of these will be easily accessible on the Internet, and I'll always distribute such readings via email. In addition to the required readings, you are encouraged to explore areas of particular interest to you and be prepared to discuss them in class.

I will also be taking advantage of our unique location here in the city, and you should do the same. Several guest speakers will visit the class during the term. In addition, each student will be expected to attend **at least one foreign policy-related event** somewhere in DC during the quarter and to report briefly to the class on what he or she learned.

Assignments:

All students must complete the following:

1) The first exam will test your understanding of the material discussed in Jentleson, Bremmer and President Trump’s foreign policy. The exam is due no later than the beginning of class on ***Thursday, April 18th.***

2) Book report on your chosen “optional” book (From the B List – at the end of the syllabus). This assignment enables you to focus on one of the regional case studies that is of particular interest to you, or which has special relevance to your other studies. The written portion is a paper, in two parts. Part one summarizes the book’s main themes and considers how these themes fit with Bremmer and Jentleson. Part two is in the form of a memo or letter to President Trump that begins: “*Mr. President, you should read this book because...*” In this section, you will describe how material in the book either confirms to or contradicts elements of the National Security Strategy. What would President Trump learn from reading this book? Which of his policies, if any, might change based on what he would learn from this book? This assignment is due no later than ***Thursday, May 9th.***

For the second portion of this assignment, you are expected to serve as a “go-to expert” for the relevant class, and this will be considered as part of your class participation grade.

3) The final exam will test your understanding of the material discussed throughout the course. The exam is due no later than **9 am (Eastern Time) on Monday, June 10th.**

4) Participate in class. This class consists of some lectures, but is mostly discussion-based. Participation in these discussions is essential to helping you understand the themes of the course and is therefore an important part of your grade. Of course, good *attendance* is also crucial, since you cannot participate if you are not present. It is also important to be prepared; you should complete, and be ready to discuss, the week’s reading assignment *before* you come to class. Prepare by completing the reading notes form handed out at the beginning of class. Lastly, your “field trip” in the city also counts as part of your class participation grade.

Grading:

Grades will be based on the following percentages:

First Exam	25%
Book Report	25%
Final Exam	35%
Class Participation	15%

General Notes on Written Assignments and Grading:

Written assignments, including the mid-term and final exams, and the book report, must be typewritten, double-spaced, with one-inch margins in a standard 10- or 12-point font. All papers should have the student’s name at the top right-hand corner of the paper, the date, and the total word count. Due dates for assignments will be strictly enforced. Papers must be handed in at the *beginning of class* on the given due date. Late papers will automatically receive a full letter grade deduction, and additional deductions for every additional day they are late.

Policy on Academic Misconduct

UCDC has a zero-tolerance policy for cheating, plagiarism, and any other form of dishonesty. Students should refer to their home campus Student Code of Conduct for the regulations that apply to them. The burden is on each student to know what behaviors constitute cheating and plagiarism. Ignorance of these behaviors is not an adequate defense.

Academic honesty affirms our regard for each other and the nature of our work together. Students should review closely and follow in both letter and spirit the principles expressed on academic integrity. (For example, see UC-Davis's Code of Academic Conduct, <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html>.)

I take plagiarism, in particular, very seriously. Do not plagiarize. I will never penalize you for doing research and citing your references. Do not pass off someone else's work as your own. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to raise them with me. Plagiarized work will result in failure and referral to the appropriate campus administrative office.

Statement on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

The University of California is committed to creating and maintaining a community where all individuals who participate in University programs and activities can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Every member of the community should be aware that the University prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence, and that such behavior violates both law and University policy. The University will respond promptly and effectively to reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence, and will take appropriate action to prevent, to correct, and when necessary, to discipline behavior that violates this policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence.

Students who wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct should contact UCDC's Counseling Services at UCDCCounseling@gmail.com. To report sexual misconduct to ask questions about UCDC policies and procedures regarding sexual misconduct, please contact the UCDC Title IX administrator, Josh Brimmeier (202-974-6214 or josh.brimmeier@ucdc.edu). Because the University of California is legally obligated to investigate reports of sexual misconduct, the confidentiality of reported misconduct cannot be guaranteed.

Statement on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

In compliance with the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Public Law 93- 112) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336), University of California policy prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability in its programs, services, and activities. The full text of the policy can be found here:

<http://policy.ucop.edu/doc/2710534/PACAOS-140>

If you require accommodation for class, please let me know at our first meeting (if not earlier) so the necessary arrangements can be made.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Lectures will address the major topics and themes of the course and will correspond with assigned readings. You should complete the assigned readings *before* the beginning of class and be prepared to participate in the class discussion.

Pre-Class Exercise: *Before* the first class, take the survey. Are your views closest to Independent America, Moneyball America, or Indispensable America? Or somewhere in between? Find out by completing the survey sent via email.

Week One (3/28) – Course Introduction and Overview - Choice vs. Necessity

Read – Bremmer, *Superpower*, Introduction, and Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 1-46); Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, Chapter 1 - The Strategic Context: Foreign Policy Strategy and the Essence of Choice (pp. 2-26); Readings 1.1 through 1.4 (pp. 216-33) (Available in Dropbox).

Week Two (4/4) - Foreign Policy Strategy in the 21st Century

Read - Bremmer, *Superpower*, Chapters 3-5 (pp. 47-162)
(Optional) Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, Chapter 7 - Grand Strategy for a New Era: (I) Power and Peace (pp. 286-331)

Week Three (4/11) – Part I: Debating Bremmer: Independent, Moneyball, or Indispensable?

Read - Bremmer, *Superpower*, Chapter 6 and Conclusion (pp. 163-204)
(Optional) Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, Chapter 8 - Grand Strategy for a New Era: (II) Prosperity and Principles (pp. 332-84)

Part II: Debating Donald Trump’s Foreign Policy

Read – [Remarks by President Trump to the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly](#), September 19, 2017; and The White House, [The National Security Strategy of the United States](#), December 2017.

Week Four (4/18) - The United States, Europe, and Russia

Read – TBD
(Optional) Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, Chapter 12 - Old Friends, Old Enemy: Twenty-First-Century Relations with Europe and Russia (pp. 503-40).

B List Books – Hill and Gaddy, *Mr. Putin*

McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace*

Merritt, *Slippery Slope*

Meyers, *The New Tsar*

Verhofstadt, *Europe's Last Chance*

The first exam is due at the *beginning* of class.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments (Continued)

Week Five (4/25) – The United States in Asia: Japan, the Two Koreas and China

Read - TBD

(Optional) Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, Chapter 10 - Asia's Rising Strategic Importance: Relations with China and in the Asia-Pacific Region (pp. 419-54)

B List Books – Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?*
Campbell, *The Pivot*

McGregor, *Asia's Reckoning: China, Japan, and the Fate of U.S. Power in the Pacific Century*

Shambaugh, *China's Future*

Snyder, *South Korea at the Crossroads: Autonomy and Alliance in an Era of Rival Powers*

Week Six (5/2) - Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Problem of Failed States

Read – [Remarks by President Trump on the Strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia](#), August 21, 2017; Barnett Rubin, [“Negotiations Are the Best Way to End the War in Afghanistan,”](#) Foreign Affairs, March 1, 2019; Dominic Tierney, [“A Jabberwocky Peace in Afghanistan,”](#) The Atlantic, January 31, 2019

B List Books – Abbas, *Pakistan's Nuclear Bomb*

Bacevich, *America's War for the Greater Middle East: A Military History*

Chivers, *The Fighters*

Coll, *Directorate S*

Gall, *The Wrong Enemy*

Week Seven (5/9) – The United States and Africa: Aid, Trade, and Counterterrorism

Read – TBD

(Optional) Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, Chapter 14 - Africa: Persisting Old Issues, Pressing Newer Ones (pp. 567-94)

B List Books – Bright and Hruby, *The Next Africa*

Dwyer, *Soldiers in Revolt*

Jowell, *Peacekeeping in Africa*

Sun, *The Next Factory of the World*

Thurston, *Boko Haram*

The book review on your chosen B List book is due at the *beginning* of class.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments (Continued)

Week Eight (5/16) – Iran, Iraq, and the Greater Middle East

Read – Azmat Khan and Anand Gopal, "[The Uncounted](#)," *New York Times*, November 16, 2017
(Optional) Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, Chapter 11 - War, Peace, Terrorism, Democracy: Old and New Challenges in the Middle East (pp. 455-83)

B List Books – Malkasian, *Illusions of Victory*
Parsi, *Losing an Enemy*
Riedel, *Kings and Presidents*
Sky, *The Unraveling*
Solomon, *The Iran Wars*

Week Nine (5/23) – The Arab Reform Movements and The Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

Read – Simon Tisdale, "[The Epic Failure of Our Age: How the West Let Down Syria](#)," *The Guardian* (UK), February 10, 2018; and Peter Beinart, "[Striking the Syrian Regime Is Not Legitimate](#)," *The Atlantic* (Online), April 13, 2018.
(Optional) Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, Chapter 11 - War, Peace, Terrorism, Democracy: Old and New Challenges in the Middle East (pp. 483-502)

B List Books – Abouzeid, *No Turning Back: Life, Loss, and Hope in Wartime Syria*
Bayat, *Revolution without Revolutionaries*
Lynch, *The New Arab Wars*
Muasher, *The Second Arab Awakening*
Warrick, *Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS*

Week Ten (5/30) – The United States and the Western Hemisphere

Read – Rocio Cara Labrador, "[Backgrounder: Venezuela: The Rise and Fall of a Petrostate](#)," Council on Foreign Relations; Francisco Toro, "[With U.S. Military Action, Venezuela Could Become the Libya of the Caribbean](#)," *Washington Post*, February 25, 2019;

(Optional) Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, Chapter 13 - The Americas: Relations with Latin America and Canada (pp. 541-66).

The Final Exam prompt will be handed out at the end of class, and is due no later than 9 am (Eastern Time) on Monday, June 10th.

The B List (Student Expert Books – Every student must pick one)

- Abbas, Hassan. *Pakistan's Nuclear Bomb: A Story of Defiance, Deterrence and Deviance* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2018).
- Abouzeid, Rania. *No Turning Back: Life, Loss, and Hope in Wartime Syria* (Norton, 2018).
- Allison, Graham. *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* (Houghton Mifflin, 2017).
- Bacevich, Andrew. *America's War for the Greater Middle East: A Military History* (Random House, 2016).
- Bayat, Asef. *Revolution without Revolutionaries: Making Sense of the Arab Spring* (Stanford Univ. of Press, 2017).
- Bright, Jake, and Hruby, Aubrey. *The Next Africa: An Emerging Continent Becomes a Global...* (Thomas Dunne, 2015).
- Campbell, Kurt. *The Pivot: The Future of American Statecraft in Asia* (Twelve, 2016).
- Chivers, C. J. *The Fighters* (Simon and Schuster, 2018).
- Coll, Steve. *Directorate S: The C.I.A. and America's Secret Wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan* (Penguin Press, 2018).
- Dwyer, Maggie. *Soldiers in Revolt: Army Mutinies in Africa* (Oxford University Press, 2018).
- Gall, Carlotta. *The Wrong Enemy: America in Afghanistan, 2001–2014* (Mariner, 2015).
- Hill, Fiona, and Gaddy, Clifford G. *Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin*, New and Updated (Brookings, 2015).
- Jowell, Marco. *Peacekeeping in Africa: Politics, Security and the Failure of Foreign Military Assistance* (I.B. Tauris, 2018).
- Lynch, Marc. *The New Arab Wars: Uprisings and Anarchy in the Middle East* (Public Affairs, 2016).
- Malkasian, Carter. *Illusions of Victory: The Anbar Awakening and the Rise of the Islamic State* (Oxford, 2017).
- Merritt, Giles. *Slippery Slope: Europe's Troubled Future* (Oxford, 2016).
- Meyers, Steven Lee. *The New Tsar: The Rise and Reign of Vladimir Putin* (Vintage, 2016).
- McFaul, Michael. *From Cold War to Hot Peace: An American Ambassador in Putin's Russia* (Houghton Mifflin, 2018).
- McGregor, Richard. *Asia's Reckoning: China, Japan, and the Fate of U.S. Power in the Pacific Century* (Viking, 2017).
- Muasher, Marwan. *The Second Arab Awakening: And the Battle for Pluralism* (Yale, 2014).
- Parsi, Trita. *Losing an Enemy: Obama, Iran, and the Triumph of Diplomacy* (Yale University Press, 2017).
- Riedel, Bruce. *Kings and Presidents: Saudi Arabia and the United States since FDR* (Brookings, 2017).
- Shambaugh, David. *China's Future* (Polity, 2016).
- Sky, Emma. *The Unraveling: High Hopes and Missed Opportunities in Iraq* (Public Affairs, 2015).
- Snyder, Scott. *South Korea at the Crossroads: Autonomy and Alliance in an Era of Rival Powers* (Columbia, 2018).
- Solomon, Jay. *The Iran Wars: Spy Games, Bank Battles, and the Secret Deals That Reshaped the M.E.* (Random Hse, 2016)
- Sun, Irene Yuan. *The Next Factory of the World: How Chinese Investment Is Reshaping Africa* (Harvard Bus. Rev., 2017).
- Thurston, Alexander. *Boko Haram: The History of an African Jihadist Movement* (Princeton University Press, 2017).
- Verhofstadt, Guy. *Europe's Last Chance: Why the European States Must Form a More Perfect Union* (Basic, 2017).
- Warrick, Joby. *Black Flags: The Rise of ISIS* (Anchor, 2016).