

PLS 233 - U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

Course Description

This course examines U.S. foreign policy, with a focus on the challenges the United States has faced since WWII. Students analyze the goals of policy-makers and the obstacles encountered as they attempt to achieve those goals. Issues for in-depth analysis include: cold war foreign policy; terrorism and fundamentalism; foreign policy responses to recent trends of economic globalization; WMD, arms control and non-proliferation issues; the U.S. invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq; a rising China and the challenges this presents to U.S. hegemony; and many others. This course uses political science models to analyze real world events in U.S. foreign policy. Group 1 course. Recommended competencies: Placement into MTH 23 and ENG 11/111.

Credit Hours

3

Contact Hours

3

Lecture Hours

3

Recommended Prerequisites or Skills Competencies

PLS 101 or PLS 211. Recommended competencies: Placement into MTH 23 and ENG 11/111.

General Education Outcomes supported by this course

Communications - Direct, Critical Thinking - Direct

Course Learning Outcomes

Knowledge:

- The paradigms that have characterized foreign policy decision-makers at various times.
- Key historical developments that have driven US foreign policy (e.g., increased international trade in goods and services).
- The history of the changing nature of security threats faced by the US and other states.
- The role of a complex bureaucracy in formulating and implementing foreign policy in the US and other states.
- The role of the executive and legislative branches in formulating and implementing foreign policy.

Application:

- Analyze foreign policy formulation and implementation.
- Describe international conflict and cooperation from the perspectives of many different international actors.
- Judge the success of American foreign policy from both an American-centric perspective and from a global perspective.
- Judge how to properly balance moral and ethical considerations with self-interested actions.

Integration:

- Compare their own economic future as it relates to America's economic future.
- Discern their ability to address problems through the formulation and implementation of policies.

Human Dimension:

- Discuss how interconnected all human beings are in the world of today because of the technologies (military, communications, transportation, agricultural, industrial, etc.) that drive globalization and the world economy.
- Recognize the great importance of paying close attention to world affairs.
- Appreciate the complexity of group decision-making in the realm of foreign policy.
- Reflect upon their own sense of security from threat.
- Express their ethical concern for others who have security interests of their own.

Caring - Civic Learning:

- Demonstrate a thoughtful approach to foreign policy by investigating legitimate claims and concerns of others in the international arena.
- Recognize their civic responsibility to be informed of foreign policy and the diplomatic corps and military corps that implement those policies.

Learning How to Learn:

- Engage in class discussions, group projects, and written analyses of case studies.
- Recognize that understanding future foreign policy is the task at hand and that predicting and/or anticipating future foreign policy developments will only be possible if they become capable of their own original analysis.