PUAF 780: The American Foreign Policymaking Process
Monday 1:30-4:00 pm
Spring 2015

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OBJECTIVES

This course explores the theory and practice of U.S. foreign policymaking, focusing on the processes by which international economic and security decisions are made. It examines the actors and institutions that drive U.S. security and economic policy making and how policy making processes affect policy outcomes. The course also aims to demonstrate how U.S. leaders compete for influence at home even as they seek it abroad and how decision-making processes are being shaped at least as much by personalities and political/societal trends as by institutional and constitutional prerogatives.

To encourage specific understanding about the practice of U.S. foreign policymaking, the course presents a mix of historical cases and analyses of the policy process in general (models, the executive branch, Congress). After three introductory weeks centered mainly on general models and institutions, we will move to examination of economic and national security policymaking in particular administrations, beginning with those of John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. Students will examine the roles and inter-relationships of key officials, and how they addressed major international security and economic issues. In so doing, we will explore repeatedly the relevance of theory to understanding what actually happens. Readings will include contemporary documents, retrospective accounts by participants, and academic analyses.

Readings, revisions in this syllabus, course notices, and other relevant materials will be posted on Canvas (elms.umd.edu), a web interface open to all students taking the course. You are expected to read communications that are distributed via Canvas.
REQUIREMENTS

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(1) Writing Assignments

Students will write two memos and one short paper on a single policy episode of their choice. This must be an actual issue addressed by a post-1945 President and his senior advisors—it is recommended that it be one in an administration treated in the course. Pertinent examples include decisions to impose sanctions against Japan on automobile trade in 1995, abandon support of the dollar in 1971, intervene in Libya’s civil war in 2011, negotiate on nuclear weapons with North Korea in 1994 or 2005, begin or end the Gulf War in 1991, withdraw troops from Lebanon in 1984, drive down the dollar in 1985, go to war in Iraq in 2003, agree to permanent normal trade relations with China in 2000, etc.

In writing the memos, a student should assume the role of a staff aide to a senior official (“your boss”), such as the secretary of state or defense. You should write as if working for that official at the time the issue was being considered. You should not, therefore, include information that was not available until after the decision was reached.

Memo #1. The first memo is an information memo: it should provide the necessary background concerning the issue, including all the relevant factors needed to arrive at a decision. It may be addressed to your “boss” or to a decision group (e.g., National Security Council). It should not include recommendations, and should be sufficiently objective that it will be viewed as such by officials with differing points of view.

Memo #2. The second will be a briefing and advocacy memo, addressed to your boss, a Cabinet member or agency head. This should be written to prepare her/him for a meeting (whether historically real or assumed) at which the issue will be decided. This memo should take the information provided in the first memo as given and focus on preparing the agency head for the decision-making meeting by:
(a) describing the state of play on the issue within the Administration;
(b) suggesting the position the agency head should take;
(c) presenting a strategy to enhance the prospect that the issue will be decided as your memo recommends.

Alternatively, this second memo can be written for someone outside the Executive Branch, e.g., a congressman concerned with the issue or the head of an NGO or private business with interests at stake. In that case, the memo should describe the state of play on the issue within the Administration and Congress, recommend a specific policy choice, and present a strategy for getting that choice adopted.

All memos should be no more than three pages in length (Courier 12 point, single-spaced, double-spaced between paragraphs), within 1" margins. The first memo is to be revised in response to feedback from the instructor and resubmitted as an attachment to the second memo.

There is no one right way to draft a memo, but a few words about style and format are appropriate. First and most important, the writing should be direct and terse (in contrast to the discursive style of an essay). The central message should be conveyed at the outset, with details to follow. Both sentences and paragraphs should be short. Key points should be highlighted. Major sections should have headings. Pages should be numbered. Throughout, think of yourself as writing for a busy senior official—you must engage her interest, and keep it

**Short paper.** The third writing assignment will be a short analytic paper (about 5 pages, double-spaced, no longer than 1,700 words) that relates the chosen issue and the decision process thereon to at least one theoretical proposition drawn from course readings.

This assignment will require you to change your role from that of participant/advocate to that of analyst, exploring the substantive decision taken and/or the process by which it was reached. You must draw seriously on at least one of the theoretical readings from the initial weeks of the course. How you do this is up to you, but the essay is expected to relate theory to practice, and vice versa.

Possibilities include:

Using a theoretical framework (bureaucratic politics, two-level games, etc.) to shed light on why a particular policy was chosen, why an official took a particular stand, etc.

Using your policy episode to test a theory (Did where X stood depend on where he sat? Did Congresswoman Y play the sort of role that one of the analysts of Congress would have predicted? etc.)

Analyzing whether the process employed for your decision was consistent with the model
(e.g., collegial) for that administration set forth by George and Stern, or if not covered there, one of the three models they present. (You may also wish to assess its consistency with the process portrayed in Daalder and Destler, but that should not be your sole analytic referent).

(2) Policy making exercises. To enhance insight into the process of policy making, students will participate in two policy making exercises throughout the semester—one focused on an international security problem, the other on an international economic problem. Each exercise will run over a three-week period—one in the middle of the semester and the other toward the end. The exercise will be run during class time but will require students to prepare and complete written work outside of class as part of the assignment.

For each exercise, the class will be divided into two groups, each effectively constituting a presidential “administration.” The exercises will require each student to take on the role of a senior U.S. official and work with other officials in his or her administration to address a policy challenge provided by the instructor. During each of the first two weeks of each exercise, students will conduct 1-hour “national security council meetings” with their administrations. During the first meetings, the administrations will have to define the challenge it is facing given the set of events and circumstances. The second meetings will require the administrations to make a decision about what policy and action to pursue. The third week of the exercises will be used for the class to debrief and for students to critique each other’s “performances.”

Each student will be required to submit two 1-to-2-page memos, and a 1-page debriefing paper as part of his or her participation in each exercise. This amounts to four 1-to-2-page memos and two 1-page debriefing papers for both exercises. In addition, consistent, informed participation in the exercises—and in the overall discussion—will contribute to your overall participation grade.

(3) Class structure and participation. The class will be run as a seminar. The instructor will have an agenda of topics—built off of the week’s readings—to address during the each class, but the majority of class will be student driven, not lecture. As such, students are expected to contribute their ideas and questions about the readings and about the U.S. foreign policy process in general.

To facilitate discussion, each class session will require students to prepare in two ways, in addition to completing the assigned reading:

- The first is to be aware of recent foreign policy news and events—both security and economic related. This will involve reading, watching, or listening to news coverage of world affairs throughout the semester. The first 5-10 minutes of each class will be spent discussing a recent event, decision, crisis, and how it relates to the theory and practice reviewed in the class.
The second is for each student to submit 2-3 questions that he or she has after completing the week’s assigned readings. These questions should be submitted in written form, via email, by 9 am on the morning of each class session. The questions need not be long, but they should be analytical in nature and they should be mostly unanswered in your mind.

Examples of appropriate questions include: How would the Cuban Missile Crisis have worked out if Kennedy’s foreign policy making process had been structured like Eisenhower’s? Why would any member of the U.S. security policy apparatus not support George H. W. Bush’s push to obtain UN backing for the U.S.-led 1991 Gulf War? What role did domestic political concerns play in the Nixon administration’s decision to going off of the gold standard? Etc.

These questions will help steer class discussion, but questions will not be connected directly with any one student. In other words, the questions will be for all intents and purposes anonymous. The questions will not be graded and feedback will not be provided. Instead, the overall analytical quality of all of a student’s questions and whether questions have been submitted for each class will feed into class participation grades.

(4) Grading. Course grades will be based on grades for the assignments and tasks described above and will be divided as such:

Memos and short paper – **50 percent** of grade
Simulation materials – **30 percent** of grade
Class participation and other – **20 percent** of grade

The memos and short paper will be weighted and averaged (assuming improvement, the second memo assignment will count double the weight of the first). Each of the 6 exercise materials will be weighted equally. This base grade will then be adjusted, upward or downward, based on a student’s participation (including their participation in the exercises) and submission of discussion questions.

MISCELLANEOUS

Students are expected to comply with the University of Maryland’s Code of Academic Integrity and Code of Student Conduct throughout this course. The University is legally obligated to provide accommodations to students with disabilities. In order to obtain accommodations, students need to acquire an accommodation letter from the university’s Disability Support Service and present it to the instructor by the drop/add date of the semester in question.
Class sessions - Readings

The following books are required reading for the course and should be purchased.


Many of the readings are available as PDF files via Canvas. Those on electronic reserve are labeled Canvas CR. Urls are included next to those readings available via links. Two case studies (at guisd.org) must be ordered directly due to copyright restrictions.

Part One: Policy Making for National Security Issues

January 26:  *National Security: Models and Organization*


February 2:  *President and Congress*

**Readings:**  Daalder and Destler, *In the Shadow of the Oval Office* (Simon and Schuster, 2009), chap. 1 (pp. 1-11).  Book for purchase


Public Law 93-148, November 7, 1973. **Canvas CR**


**February 9:** *The role of interest groups, news media, and public opinion*

**Readings:**

**February 16:** *Kennedy Administration*

**Readings:**
- Daalder and Destler, *In The Shadow of the Oval Office*, chap. 2.


Selected Kennedy Documents **Canvas link**
- Bundy to Kennedy, hand-written note, no date (probably May 1961)
Bundy to Kennedy, June 22, 1961;  
Bundy to O'Donnell, January 5, 1962;  
Bundy to Kennedy re: “Chester Bowles’ speech,” September 17, 1962

Memo #1 due  
Introduction to first policy making exercise.

February 23: Nixon Administration  
Readings: Daalder and Destler, chap. 3.  
George and Stern, pp. 212-14.  
Henry A. Kissinger, White House Years, Little, Brown, 1979, pp. 17-53. Canvas files. (Chapter 1, optional reading, is both amusing and illuminating.)  
Selected Nixon Documents Available at: http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v02/ch1  
-Henry A. Kissinger, "Memorandum for the President-Elect," December 27, 1968, et. seq.  [Read Documents 1, 7, and 8--skim those in between.]  
-Tony Lake, “Memorandum for Henry A. Kissinger” on “Relations with the State Department,” November 14, 1969, with attachments. [Document 86]

Policy-making exercise #1 – Day 1

March 2: Reagan Administration  
Readings: Daalder and Destler, chap. 5.  
Report of the President’s Special Review Board (The Tower Commission), February 26, 1987, Parts I through V. Canvas file.
George and Stern, pp. 222-34.

George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State*, (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1993), pp. 863-78.  Canvas CR

**Policy-making exercise #1 – Day 2**

**March 9:**  
*George H.W. Administration: National Security*  
**Readings:** Haass, *War of Necessity, War of Choice*, chapters 1,2,3,4.

Daalder and Destler, chap. 6.

Canvas file

George and Stern, pp. 234-41.


**Policy-making exercise #1 – Day 3**

**March 16:**  
*Spring Break – No Class*  

**March 23:**  
*Clinton Administration: National Security*  
**Readings:** Daalder and Destler, chap. 7.


George and Stern, pp. 241-61.

James M. Goldgeier, “NATO Expansion,” in Wittkopf and McCormick, *Domestic Sources*.  Canvas CR

March 30  
**George W. Bush Administration: National Security**  
**Readings:** Appropriate chapters of Haass, *War of Necessity, War of Choice*.

Daalder and Destler, chap. 8.


Public Law 107-40, September 18, 2001. To Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces against those responsible for the recent attacks launched against the United States. **Canvas CR.**

Public Law 107-243, October 16, 2002. To Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq. **Canvas CR.**


**Memo #2 due**

**Part Two: Policy Making for International Economic Issues**

April 6:  
**Foreign Economic Policymaking**  


April 13: *Nixon Administration*


Joanne Gowa, "The Role of Structure and Process" (pp. 88-125), and "The Camp David Meeting" (pp. 147-70), in *Closing the Gold Window: Domestic Politics and the End of Bretton Woods*, (Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 88-125, 147-170. Canvas CR


April 20: *Carter Administration*


OPTIONAL: Daalder and Destler, In the Shadow of the Oval Office, chap. 4.

**Policy-making exercise #2 – Day 1**
April 27:  
**Reagan and Bush (41) Administrations**

**Readings:**  
Dryden, "A New Heaven and a New Earth" and "The Turning Point" (pp. 279-329) and "Superwoman Meets Her Match" (pp. 355-80), in Trade Warriors. **Canvas CR**

Volcker and Gyohten, "Taking On Inflation" (pp. 174-84) and "Bringing Down Superdollar" in Changing Fortunes. **Canvas CR**


**Policy-making exercise #2 – Day 2**

May 4:  
**Clinton Administration**

**Readings:**  
Presidential Executive Order 12835 and PDD/NEC-2 **Canvas CR**


**Policy-making exercise #2 – Day 3**

May 11:  
**Obama and the Future** [readings to be revised]

**Readings:**  
Daalder and Destler, chap. 9.


May 15: **Short paper due**