

MGIMO University
School of Government and International Affairs

Syllabus approved
Dean, The MGIMO School of Government and International Affairs
Mikhail Troitskiy
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US Foreign Policy toward the Middle East since 1979

Undergraduate Course Syllabus

Instructor
Prof. Michael Reynolds
Princeton University
mar123@princeton.edu

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This syllabus is designed in accordance with the MGIMO Educational Standard for the Bachelor Program in International Affairs.

Author _____ Prof. Michael Reynolds

Director MGIMO Library _____ Marina Reshetnikova

This seminar examines the course of US policy in the Middle East from 1979 to the present day. The use or threat of military force dominated American foreign policy throughout this period and. This seminar seeks to answer the following questions: what have been the fundamental objectives of America in the Middle East? What explains Washington's liberal use of force in the Middle East? How successful has American policy and strategy been? What are the possible alternatives?

Course Requirements: Regular class attendance is required. Those who incur miss more than two absences will put themselves in jeopardy. Students should come to class having done the reading and prepared to discuss it. Student performance will be evaluated according to the following formula:

Quizzes (2):	30%
Final Exam:	50%
Class Participation:	20%

Week 1: Introduction and Orientation: How to think about Foreign Policy

Andrew Bacevich, *America's War for the Greater Middle East: A Military History* (New York: Random House, 2016): Ch 1. "War of Choice," 4-32.

Recommended Reading:

Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, [1954] 2001): Ch. 1, 2, 4, 6, Conclusion. [1-42, 80-123; 159-186; 224-239]

Walter McDougall, *The Tragedy of U.S. Foreign Policy: How America's Civil Religion Betrayed the National Interest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 1-32.

Week 2: 1979, I: The Iranian Revolution and the Seizure of the Grand Mosque

Bacevich, *America's War*, Ch. 2, 33-49.

Jimmy Carter, Address on Energy and National Goals (15 July 1979). (also watch on Youtube)

Jimmy Carter, State of the Union Address (1980)

George Ball, "Reflections on a Heavy Year," *Foreign Affairs* vol. 59 no. 3 (1980): 474-499.

Recommended Reading:

Michael Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran: A History of the Islamic Republic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 76-132.

Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 21-37.

Robert Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015) [e-book] 15-33, skim 34-109.

Week 3: 1979 II, Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan.

Bacevich, *America's War*, Ch. 3 Arsenal of Theocracy, 50-61.

Lyakhovskiy – Decision to send troops into Afghanistan (1979). Excerpted from A.A. Liakhovskii, *Tragediia i doblest' Afgana* (Moscow: GPI Iskona, 1995).

Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Reflections on Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan." (26 December 1979)

Brzezinski, NSC 63 (15 January 1981)

Recommended reading:

Vladislav Zubok, "Détente's Decline and Soviet Overreach," in *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 227-264.

Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005): Ch. 8 "The Islamist Defiance: Iran and Afghanistan," 288-330.

McDougall, *The Tragedy of U.S. Foreign Policy*, 321-337.

Week 4: The Iran-Iraq War

Ray Takeyh and Steven Simon *The Pragmatic Superpower: Winning the Cold War in the Middle East* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2016) Ch. 9, "The Iran-Iraq War." 269-298. (e-book available via Firestone Catalog)

Week 5: Policing the Middle East: Lebanon and Libya

Bacevich, *America's War*, 62-86.

Ronald Reagan, National Security Directive No. 64, "Next Steps in Lebanon." (28 October 1982).

National Security Directive No. 103. "Strategy for Lebanon" (10 September 1983).

National Security Directive No. 109, "Responding to the Lebanon Crisis" (23 October 1983).

National Security Directive No. 111, "Next Steps Toward Progress in Lebanon and the Middle East." (28 October 1983).

National Security Directive No. 114, "US Policy Toward the Iran-Iraq War." (26 November 1983).

National Security Directive No. 117, "Lebanon." (5 December 1983).

National Security Directive No. 128, "Lebanon." (26 February 1984)

National Security Directive No. 141, "Escalation in Iran-Iraq War" (25 May 1984).

National Security Directive No. 166, "U.S. Policy, Programs, and Strategy in Afghanistan." (27 March 1985).

National Security Directive No. 270, "Afghanistan," (1 May 1987).

Recommended Reading:

James Mann, *The Rise of the Vulcans* (New York: Penguin, 2004) Ch. 5 "Enter the Persian Gulf," 79-94.

Martin Van Creveld, *The Sword and the Olive* (New York: Public Affairs, [1998] 2002), 285-306.

Quiz #1

Week 6: America Unbound: The End of the Cold War and Gulf War I

Bacevich, *America's War*, 87-134.

George H.W. Bush NSC 26 "U.S. Policy Toward the Persian Gulf," (2 October 1989)

Recommended Reading:

Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest* No. 16 (Summer 1989): 3-18.

Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* vol. 70 no. 1 (1990-91): 23-33.

Week 7: Between Humanitarianism and Empire

Senator Warner and Senator Levin, *Review of the Circumstances Surrounding the Ranger Raid on October 3-4, 1993 in Mogadishu, Somalia* (1995): Background (13-15); Conclusions and Final comment (46-51).

Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic Monthly* (September, 1990).

Week 8: Dual Containment: Iran and Iraq

Bacevich, *America's War*, 137-161.

Recommended Reading:

Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," *Foreign Affairs* vol. 73 no. 2 (Mar-Apr 1994): 45-55.

Gregory Gause III, "The Illogic of Dual Containment," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73 no. 2 (Mar-Apr, 1994): 56-66.

Daniel Byman, "After the Storm: U.S. Policy toward Iraq since 1991," *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 115 no. 4 (Winter, 2000-2001): 493-516.

Week 9: The Eagle Stung: Al-Qaida

Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* vol. 72 no. 3 (Summer, 1993): 22-49.

Usama Bin Ladin, "Bin Ladin Declares Jihad on Americans," "Fatwa Urging Jihad Against Americans," *FBIS Report: Compilation of Usama Bin Ladin Statements, 1994-January 2004*: 13-28, 56.

Richard Clarke (NSC), "Strategy for Eliminating the Threat from the Jihadist Networks of al-Qida [sic]: Status and Prospects." (January 2001). (13 pp.).

Recommended Reading:

Michael Scott Doran, "Somebody Else's Civil War," *Foreign Affairs* vol. 81 no. 2 (January-February 2002): 22-41.

Week 10: The Invasion of Afghanistan

Bacevich, *America's War*, Ch. 12 "Changing the Way They Live," 201-238.

Recommended Reading:

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Thomas H. Kean, and Lee Hamilton. 2004. *The 9/11 Commission report: final report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States*. (Washington, D.C.: National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004), 38-70, 361-380.

James Risen, "In Denial: Oil, Terrorism, and Saudi Arabia," in *State of War: The Secret History of the CIA and the Bush Administration* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 173-191.

Week 11: Gulf War II and the Invasion of Iraq

Bacevich, *America's War*, Ch. 13 "Kicking Down the Door," 239-294.

George W. Bush, "Second Inaugural Address," 20 January 2005.

Recommended Reading:

Michael A. Reynolds, "The Wars' Entangled Roots: Regional Realities and Washington's Vision," in *Understanding the U.S. Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan* Ed. Beth Bailey and Richard H. Immerman (New York: New York University, 2015), 21-53.

Max Boot, "The Case for American Empire," *The Weekly Standard* (15 October, 2001).

Robert M. Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Knopf, 2014), 171-193 (Syria and Iran).

Michael Desch, "America's Liberal Illiberalism: The Ideological Origins of Overreaction in U.S. Foreign Policy," *International Security* vol. 32 no. 3 (Winter, 2007/2008): 7-43.

Dona J. Stewart, "The Greater Middle East and Reform in the Bush Administration's Ideological Imagination," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 95, No. 3, New Geographies of the Middle East (July, 2005): 400-424.

Quiz #3

Week 12: Obama's Wars

Bacevich, *America's War*, Ch. 15-16, 295-341.

Barak Obama, "Inaugural Address," (20 January 2009).

Barak Obama, "Remarks by the President at Cairo University," (4 June 2009).

Recommended Reading:

Alan J. Kuperman, "Obama's Libya Debacle," *Foreign Affairs* vol. 94 no. 2 (March/April 2015): 66-77.

Scott Horton, "The Path to Quasi-War: Libya and Syria," *Lords of Secrecy*, 153-173.

Ben Rhodes, *The World As It Is* (New York: Random House, 2018), 109-124, 274-278.

Gates, *Duty*, 335-386 (Afghanistan), 517-523 (Libya).

Week 13: Iran, the Gulf, and the Nuclear Question

Gary Sick, "The United States in the Persian Gulf: From Twin Pillars to Dual Containment"; and F. Gregory Gause III, "From 'Over the Horizon' to 'Into the Backyard': The US-Saudi Relationship in the Gulf," in *The Middle East and the United States: History, Politics, and Ideologies* ed. David W. Lesch and Mark L. Haas (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, [2012] 2014), 309-325, 344-358.

Recommended Reading:

Thomas Hegghammer, "'Classical' and 'Global' Jihadism in Saudi Arabia," in *Saudi Arabia in Transition* Ed. Bernard Haykel and Thomas Hegghammer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 207-230.

Mark Bowden, "Among the Hostage-Takers," *The Atlantic Monthly* (December 2004).

Trita Parsi, "Iranian Hegemony is a Figment of America's Imagination," *Foreign Policy* (25 January 2017).

David Samuels, "The Aspiring Novelist Who Became Obama's Foreign Policy Guru," *New York Times Magazine* (5 May 2016).

Rhodes, *The World As It Is*, 322-333, 364-371.

Week 14: ISIS and Syria's Civil Wars

Marc Lynch, *The New Arab Wars: Uprisings and Anarchy in the Middle East* (New York: Public Affairs, 2016), 189-224.

Recommended Reading:

McDougall, *The Tragedy of U.S. Foreign Policy*, 339-368.

Dexter Filkins, "The Shadow Commander," *The New Yorker* (30 September 2013)

Will McCants, *The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State* (New York: St. Martins, 2015), 1-30.

Week 15: Sense or Nonsense? What Drives American Policy?

Michael Glennon, *National Security and Double Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). Ch. 1-2, 1-28

Recommended Reading:

Stephen Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions: America's Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2018), 1-19.

Week 16: Conclusion

Glennon, *National Security and Double Government*, Ch. 13 Conclusion, 113-118.

Steve Coll and Adam Entous, "The Secret History of the U.S. Diplomatic Failure in Afghanistan," *The New Yorker* (10 December 2021).

Final Exam