PO8017
US Foreign Policy

Dr Jesse Dillon Savage
dillonsj@tcd.ie
Office Location Rm 406, 3 College Green
Office Hours: Monday 10-12

Course Description: This module offers an introduction to various factors that influence how US foreign policy is made. The course will examine how institutions such as the Presidency and Congress determine foreign policy, the role of public opinion and the media, the effect of bureaucratic politics, and lobbying by special interest groups. At the end of the course, students should be able to explain trends in US foreign policy using these lenses and tools. Many of the theories and arguments introduced in the course will also be of use explaining the foreign policy of countries other than the US.

Assessment

Participation 15%

Student participation and discussion is a central aspect of the seminar. This means that it is necessary to do the readings. Students should come prepared with topics of discussion and questions. The assessment of participation will be based on the quality of input into class discussions. To prepare for discussion you should: identify the theory or argument of the readings; identify the method used by the authors in the readings to test their arguments, and evaluate the strength of these method for testing the authors’ argument; and you should think of possible extensions or alternatives to the arguments put forward in the readings.

Along with participation in class, there will be a discussion board on Blackboard. All students are expected to make at least one comment or raise a question for discussion on this board by the day before class. Higher levels of participation are welcome.

Response Papers (800 words each) 20%

Students are required to submit two 800-word response papers each worth 10% of the student’s total mark. Students must submit one paper during the first 3 weeks and one from the remaining two weeks. These response papers should critically evaluate the readings. This means identifying a weakness or limitation in the articles and offering suggestions on how to improve the research. The critical evaluation may focus on the empirical or theoretical aspects of the readings or both.

Presentation 15%

Each student will be required to provide a 5 minute presentation on one of the readings. These presentations are intended to stimulate discussion. To this end, the presentation should provide a brief overview of the reading, highlighting the main points. Students should emphasise potential questions for discussion and, critically, why these questions are of interest. There should be no or minimal summary of the readings. Grading will be based on the quality of content and presentation of the argument. A sign up list for the presentations will be distributed in the first week of term.
Research Design Paper (2500 words) 50%, Due March 11 2019

The research design paper focuses on a potential research project related to the military and politics. Based on the course materials or other knowledge related to the topic, students should identify a question of interest or puzzle that they do not feel is adequately answered in the literature. Students should define their research question, outlining the variation they hope to explain, develop a preliminary theory to explain the variation, then detail the methods they would use to test the theory. When outlining the methods students should pay close attention to issues such as how they conceptualise their key variables (both independent and dependent variables) and the data they would use to measure them and how the methods they propose can be used to falsify their theory.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is a serious matter and must be avoided. Students should be familiar with what constitutes plagiarism. Please see http://www.tcd.ie/undergraduate-studies/general-regulations/plagiarism.php for further information regarding plagiarism and the university’s policy regarding it. Text(s): A detailed reading list is provided below
Course Outline

The weekly coverage might change as it depends on the progress of the class.

Week 1: Introduction

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:


Week 2: Presidents and Congress

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:


• Yarhi-Milo, K. (2014). *Knowing the Adversary: Leaders, Intelligence, and Assessment of Intentions in International Relations*. Princeton University Press

### Week 3: Bureaucracy

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended Reading:**


### Week 4: Public Opinion and the Media

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended Reading:**


**Week 5: Interest Groups**

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended Reading:**


