

INR 3102–U01 (13014) International Relations of the United States  
Time: T/R 1700-1815, Spring 2011, Place: GC279B. Drop Date: March 4, 2011.  
Enrollment cap: 45  
Prof. Thomas A. Breslin  
Office: SIPA 428  
Office Hours: Thursday, 10 to Noon and 3-5 PM  
Tel: 305-348-2556/2304  
E-mail address: [thomas.breslin@fiu.edu](mailto:thomas.breslin@fiu.edu)

This course will survey the international relations of the United States of America since the beginning of the republic down to the present day. Since foreign policy is heavily influenced by domestic events, we will study foreign policy in that context. The official distillation of foreign policy and domestic events is the President's Annual Message to Congress on the state of the Union. These messages will be the bedrock and primary study material for the course.

There are **no prerequisites** for this course. Your objectives will be three: to learn a great deal about the United States and its international relations across the history of the republic; to fashion better questions to ask of the data you read and otherwise acquire; to present well both orally and in writing your new knowledge.

Ready knowledge is valuable but quickly exhausted unless replenished by diligent study and persistent, skilled questioning. You will have to read a lot and think a lot. You will write a short essay of about 500 words on each of your presentation topics. You will become more practiced in public speaking and the use of the Department's grading matrix, which is designed to promote clarity of both written and oral expression.

**Required Readings:** There is **no textbook** for this course. Students must study very carefully the annual messages of the president to Congress that are required by Article 2, Section 3 of the United States Constitution. Therein they will find the President's summary report on the foreign and domestic affairs of the United States for each year. You can find the annual messages on the World Wide Web at [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/#27EF29](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/#27EF29).

**Recommended Readings:** You will need to know about the historical background of the presidential messages. For the period down to 1875, annual reports from Executive Departments can be accessed at [memory.loc.gov/ammem/aml#27D7C9](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aml#27D7C9). For the period 1860 to 1960 you can find back up primary documentation on the foreign relations of the United States at the University of Wisconsin's website: [digital.library.wisc.edu#27EBE7](http://digital.library.wisc.edu#27EBE7). The FIU library has more recent volumes of this series. The journal *Diplomatic History* is a source of excellent information about the history of American foreign relations. It is also in the FIU library. Of course, there are numerous books and journal articles about each president, about American history in general, and about American foreign relations in particular. Many of them are in the FIU library. You will need to consult them for the

background information needed for your presentations. Please be considerate of your fellow students in your use of the library collection.

You will be making several classroom presentations in this course. Practice makes perfect. So follow the matrix in preparing your talk and practice, out loud, over and over before your classroom presentations. Get used to hearing yourself talking out loud and to talking in front of others. If you haven't already done so, you should consider taking a course in public speaking or in theater (drama), especially if you look forward a career in law, diplomacy, or politics. Such a course is not a prerequisite for this course. This course has no prerequisites.

**Classes:** After the first two classes, in each class certain students will present a succinct synopsis of American foreign policy as described in a given president's annual messages and the background to that policy as explained by various historians. Some of these students will function as partisan advocates for that president and his policies; some of them will represent the critics and present the case(s) against that president's foreign policy, as explained by various historians. *Each student will also turn in that day a short essay of about 500 words on the subject of her or his presentation.*

The presentations will be sequential from George Washington (1) to G. W. Bush (43). In each class, we usually should be able to cover two presidents. There are some exceptions. The case for each president's foreign policy will be covered in 12 minutes; the case against, in 12 minutes. Each side will be allotted 3 additional minutes to discuss the sources used to support its case. Since there are multiple students on one side or the other, students may form a team and divide the work. I encourage teamwork but in any event you will have to read a lot and think hard for yourself and your presentation will have to be succinct.

The last digit of your student ID number *normally* determines the Presidents whose foreign policy you will present and comment on, pro or con. Students whose student ID ends with a 1 will present and comment on the foreign policy of the first, eleventh, twenty-first, and thirty-first presidents; with a 2, the second, twelfth, twenty-second, and thirty-second; and so on. Students whose ID number ends with 0 will present and comment on the foreign policy of the tenth, twentieth, thirtieth, and fortieth presidents. **Note well:** Because William H. Harrison, the ninth president, and Garfield, the twentieth president, died before submitting an annual message, students whose ID ends with a 9 will be responsible instead for George H. W. Bush, the 41<sup>st</sup> president, and students whose ID ends with a 0 will be responsible instead for William Clinton, the 42<sup>nd</sup> president. The case of George W. Bush will be handled last in open discussion. If time permits, we will discuss President Obama's foreign policy.

Although a surplus of students with the same last digit may result in reassignment, the normal assignment pattern follows below:

- 1: Washington, Polk, Arthur, Hoover
- 2: John Adams, Taylor, Cleveland (1<sup>st</sup> term), FDR
- 3: Jefferson, Fillmore, Benjamin Harrison, Truman

4. Madison, Pierce, Cleveland (2<sup>nd</sup> term), Eisenhower
5. Monroe, Buchanan, McKinley, Kennedy
6. J. Quincy Adams, Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Lyndon Johnson
7. Jackson, Andrew Johnson, Taft, Nixon
8. Van Buren, Grant, Wilson, Ford
9. Hayes, Harding, Carter, George H. W. Bush
0. Tyler, Coolidge, Reagan, Clinton

Normally, the first digit of your student ID number determines whether you will be an advocate or a critic. Those whose student ID number begins with an even number (including 0) will be advocates. Those whose student ID begins with an odd number will be critics. Again, a surplus of odd or even numbers will result in a shift in student roles; my teaching assistant, Mr. Adam Johnson, and I will manage those shifts.

Each case presentation should succinctly state the overall theme of the president's foreign policy, the international circumstances, the president's choice(s) for Secretary of State, key congressional players, key policy decisions and their consequences. An additional 3 minutes is allotted to mention background sources and summarily evaluate the sources for viewpoint, dependability, and utility. If historians cannot agree about some important aspect of your subject's foreign policy, briefly sum up the debate.

All the presentations will be scored by the professor and separately by the entire class in accordance with the attached matrix. In the case of unexcused absences, there will be no makeup presentations or examinations.

Course grade: Thirty percent of your course grade will be the average of your three highest presentation grades awarded by the professor. The professor will use the attached standard grading matrix to grade both the presentations and the examination.

Ten percent of your course grade will be the average of your three highest average presentation grades awarded anonymously by your fellow students. You and your fellow students will use the italicized portions of the attached standard grading matrix to score the presentations.

Twenty percent of your course grade will come from a paper that you ***write and turn in on or before April 19***. The topic of the paper will be: "Of the four presidents I presented, President \_\_\_\_\_'s foreign policy benefited the USA most and harmed it least." The paper should be no more than ten (10) pages in length. It must be your own work. You should refer to the Student Handbook to refresh your understanding of the University's policy on plagiarism.

Twenty percent of your course grade will come from your essays.

Twenty percent of your course grade will come from your grade on the final examination. Answer in three to four bluebook pages, **one** of the following two questions. Please write clearly.

**What one question, if answered adequately, would yield the clearest understanding of the history of America's foreign relations? Justify your answer.**

Or

**Considering the 130 or 140-year span from the first to the last president you presented in class, what are the main continuities and the significant changes, if any, in American foreign relations during that period? Justify your answer in detail.**

Tentative Class Schedule:

Class 1: Orientation; self-introductions; foreign relations in the northern hemisphere during the Little Ice Age, 1300-1850; man vs. disease; Machiavellianism and anti-Machiavellianism; state vs. church; the classical balance of power.

Class 2: The struggle for North America: rum and whiskey vs. brandy; rebellion vs. colonial restrictions; confederation and the diplomacy of the United States under the Confederation.

Class 3: The Presidency of George Washington (1)  
The Presidency of John Adams (2)

Class 4: The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson (3)  
The Presidency of James Madison (4)

Class 5: The Presidency of James Monroe (5)  
The Presidency of John Quincy Adams (6)

Class 6 The Presidency of Andrew Jackson (7)  
The Presidency of Martin Van Buren (8)

Class 7 The Presidency of W. H. Harrison (9) (no messages)—instead cover the  
Presidency of G.H.W. Bush later  
The Presidency of John Tyler (10)  
The Presidency of James K. Polk (11)

Class 8 The Presidency of Zachary Taylor (12)  
The Presidency of Millard Fillmore (13)

Class 9 The Presidency of Franklin Pierce (14)  
The Presidency of James Buchanan (15)

Class 10 The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln (16)

Class 11 The Presidency of Andrew Johnson (17)  
The Presidency of Ulysses S. Grant (18)

- Class 12      The Presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes (19)  
The Presidency of James Garfield (20) (no messages)—instead cover the  
Presidency of W.J. Clinton later.  
The Presidency of Chester Arthur (21)
- Class 13      The First Presidency of Grover Cleveland (22)  
The Presidency of Benjamin Harrison (23)
- Class 14      The Second Presidency of Grover Cleveland (24)  
The Presidency of William McKinley (25)
- Class 15      The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt (26)  
The Presidency of William Howard Taft (27)
- Class 16      The Presidency of Woodrow Wilson (28)
- Class 17      The Presidency of Warren G. Harding (29)  
The Presidency of Calvin Coolidge (30)  
The Presidency of Herbert Hoover (31)
- Class 18      The Presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt (32)
- Class 19      The Presidency of Harry S. Truman (33)
- Class 20      The Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower (34)  
The Presidency of John F. Kennedy (35)
- Class 21      The Presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson (36)  
The Presidency of Richard M. Nixon (37)
- Class 22      The Presidency of Gerald Ford (38)  
The Presidency of James E. Carter (39)
- Class 23      The Presidency of Ronald Reagan (40)
- Class 24      The Presidency of George H. W. Bush (41)—presented by #9s  
The Presidency of William J. Clinton (42)—presented by #0s
- Class 25      The Presidency of George W. Bush (43)—open discussion.  
The Presidency of Barack H. Obama

<b>MASTER SCORING RUBRIC<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Critical Evaluation</b>  Max points: 60	<i>Shows little understanding of the material. Barely addresses relevant background material, no effort to draw connections among materials. Topic chosen is irrelevant or marginally relevant to assignment.</i>  0 – 20 points	Shows general grasp of the material, but portions of paper or presentation may not address the question. <i>Covers most, but not all of the relevant or assigned materials. Makes some effort to synthesize. Topic chosen is somewhat relevant to assignment</i>  20 – 40 points	<i>Shows mastery of the material. Synthesizes and integrates all of the relevant literature. Includes a wide range of published or original research and writing, and makes interesting and insightful connections and contrasts. Topic chosen is highly relevant to assignment.</i>  40 – 60 points
<b>Organization</b>  Max points: 10	<i>Lacks coherence, few or no transitional devices, may clear topic or main idea. Information presented in unrelated bits and pieces.</i>  0 – 3 points	<i>Shows a logical progression of ideas and uses fairly sophisticated transitional devices. Some problems with clarity of topic. While the question is addressed, there may be digressions or unclear connections.</i>  4 – 6 points	<i>Clear logical structure with an introduction, body, and conclusion. Sophisticated transitional devices. Often develops one idea from the previous one or identifies their logical relations. Guides the reader or audience through a chain of reasoning.</i>  7 – 10 points
<b>Style</b> Including, presentation grammar, and spelling.  Max points: 10	Fails generally to follow directions, sloppy. Odd or no pagination and formatting. Little or no sections or subheadings. Contains <i>numerous grammatical errors</i> and typos, or poor grammar.  0 – 3 points	Generally follows directions, but one or two problems with formatting or pagination. Some poorly placed or obscure headings and subheadings. Well written but may contain <i>one or two spelling and grammatical errors</i> .  4 – 6 points	Headings or subheadings present and logically placed, all directions followed exactly. <i>No spelling or grammatical errors</i> .  7 – 10 points
<b>Follows</b>	Fails to follow	Meets some guidelines	Meets all guidelines for

<sup>1</sup> Note: this is a master scoring rubric that will be used in this format and with these point totals for all majors sampled for the purposes of measuring “critical thinking” and “written and oral communication” for the ALCs.

<p><b>guidelines</b></p> <p>Max points: 10</p>	<p>guidelines for word length, <i>delivery time</i>, minimum number of sources, accurate citation of sources. Deadline(s) not met.</p> <p>0 – 3 points</p>	<p>and does not meet others for word length, <i>delivery time</i>, minimum number of sources, accurate citation of sources.</p> <p>4 – 6 points</p>	<p>word length, <i>delivery time</i>, minimum number of sources, full and accurate citation of sources. Deadline(s) met.</p> <p>7 – 10 points</p>
<p><b>Supporting Materials</b></p> <p>Max points: 10</p>	<p>Little or no supporting materials utilized (graphics, maps, charts, tables) are used to explain and reinforce content. Accuracy and / or neatness of supporting materials may be seriously in question.</p> <p>0 – 3 points</p>	<p>Some supporting materials utilized (graphics, maps, charts, tables) are used to explain and reinforce content. Accuracy and / or neatness of supporting materials may be marginal</p> <p>4 – 6 points</p>	<p>Supporting materials utilized (graphics, maps, charts, tables) are used to explain and reinforce content. Supporting materials accurate and neatly presented.</p> <p>7 – 10 points</p>