

IAFS 4500-003: Recent US Diplomatic History  
Spring 2020, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:10-12:25  
EKLC E1B20

Professor Tom Zeiler  
Office: University Club 214  
Tuesdays/Thursdays, 12:30-1:30 and by appointment  
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This course explores the diplomacy of the United States in the world from the post-Vietnam War period to the present. We will study the economic, social, intellectual, moral, technological, and political bases of U.S. foreign relations as the nation emerged as a global leader, and as it maintained that status during and after the Cold War. You will examine the history armed with professional historians' models, and will draw on both secondary and primary sources to make your arguments. The course will explore how and why decisions were made and apply this information, and the lessons of history, to contemporary affairs. We will ask questions, many of them: was there a distinctive American foreign policy? Has America been a force for good or ill in the world? Who hold the power to make decisions in foreign policy? What were the internal debates over foreign policy and how were they resolved? What was the reception abroad of U.S. ideas, policies, and power? How were the domestic and international arenas linked? And, what does it all mean for today?

**Purposes:**

- To explore the ways in which the relationship between the United States and the world changed over time
- To investigate several aspects of international relations, including the relationship between states/governments and non-state actors, the relationship between politics and economics, and the role that individual people – including diplomats – play in the day-to-day conduct of international affairs
- To familiarize students with the basic chronology of U.S. history, particularly in the realm of international affairs
- To think about international affairs in a way that does not place the (nation-)state at the center of the analysis
- To develop skills for understanding and analyzing primary sources
- To increase student exposure to scholarly interpretation
- To improve writing skills, particularly in formulating, organizing, and supporting an argument

## CU REGULATIONS

### CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

### REQUIREMENTS FOR COVID-19

As a matter of public health and safety due to the pandemic, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements, and public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. Required safety measures at CU Boulder relevant to the classroom setting include:

- maintain 6-foot distancing when possible,
- wear a face covering in public indoor spaces and outdoors while on campus consistent with state and county health orders,
- clean local work area,
- practice hand hygiene,
- follow public health orders, and
- if sick and you live off campus, do not come onto campus (unless instructed by a CU Healthcare professional), or if you live on-campus, please alert [CU Boulder Medical Services](#).

Students who fail to adhere to these requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to [Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](#). For more information, see the policies on [COVID-19 Health and Safety](#) and [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#). If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please see the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

All students who are new to campus must complete the [COVID-19 Student Health and Expectations Course](#). Before coming to campus each day, all students are required to complete the [Buff Pass](#).

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19, have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for or had symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home. In this class, if you are sick or quarantined, simply email or otherwise notify me. Student privacy laws are in effect, so you are not required to reveal the nature of your illness, and do not need a doctor's note, though if you feel comfortable, it would be good to know so we can alert the campus authorities for contact tracing and the like.

\*\*See **ZOOM** requirements below, in Attendance and Team Debate section.

#### ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITIES

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.

#### PREFERRED STUDENT NAMES AND PRONOUNS

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

#### HONOR CODE

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-492-5550). Students found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).

**Plagiarism:** If it is determined that you have utilized or copied material (from ANY source, including the web), you will be reported for academic dishonesty, and the sanctions can range from a failing grade to expulsion from any further University of Colorado courses. Your assignments will make it fairly difficult to plagiarize but we are experts, nonetheless, at checking for cheating. Good rule: better to do your own work no

matter how boring and or average the product is than cheat with supposedly exciting, original, and A+ work. We will run papers through a plagiarism check service to ensure that everyone is doing honest labor.

#### SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND/OR RELATED RETALIATION

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, or protected-class discrimination or harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](#), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#). Please know that faculty and graduate instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, dating and domestic violence, stalking, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

#### RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, simply let me know beforehand about your absence or requirements. See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

**GRADING:** NOTE: You must complete all assignments (readings, discussions, and Briefing paper), as well as take vigorous part in discussions, or you will FAIL this course. There are no late penalties; should you not appear for an exam, you will fail the course. Should you be late for a class in which a discussion is occurring, your participation grade will suffer.

Online and in-class discussions; attendance = 50 pts

Weekly paper (Weeks 3-12) = 30 pts (10 of them, worth 1, 2, or 3 pts)

Team discussion = 20 pts

Briefing paper = 50 pts

*Foreign Affairs* review, 10 pt

Prospectus, 5 pts

Bibliography, 5 pts

Presentation, 5 pt

Feedback (on all other Briefing Paper presentations), 5pts

Final Briefing Paper, 20 pts

**Debates:** Because this is a seminar, and because you are now veterans of scholarship in your major, the discussions are weighted heavily – actually, half your grade. There is no requirement to talk in class, but you must participate with your team, as well as hand in a weekly written assignment. So, the Discussion assignment has TWO PARTS:

1. **Weekly ESSAY:** 500-words (2-pages, double-spaced essay on the **FILM** + *Foreign Affairs* article, due each Monday morning at 9:00 am. Get in the habit!!

*The Goal:* Use one of the three interpretations and support your response with evidence from the film and article to answer the DEBATE topic posed each week. Check out the **DEBATE** document on CANVAS for more information.

Is online discussion required? YES! MANDATORY – ALL of THEM! Failure to hand in 15 discussions = NO CREDIT for this category, a loss of the entire Discussion grade!

NOTE that the discussions are unlocked, then locked (from Tuesday to Monday morning at 9:00 a.m.). I notice when somebody participates at the last moment, just to get credit. Be smart and conscientious!!

**LATE PENALTY:** at 9:01 am, you lose 1 point; at 10:00 am, you lost both points.

2. **ATTENDANCE and TEAM DEBATE:** attendance will be taken. You are allowed TWO unexcused absences, that is, you simply don't show up. A third unexcused or inexcusable absence will result in a 0 for the attendance category = a deduction of 5 pts from the 30 pts of the discussion grade. Four or more unexcused absences will result in FAILURE of the COURSE. Show up – it's fun and instructive!

**\*\*ZOOM:** Because this is a seminar, in which participation is critical, I will require FULL participation on Zoom (when we are remote). This means especially that your VIDEO and AUDIO must *ALWAYS* be on. I will contact you privately, at first, if this is not the case. You will also be penalized for an unexcused absence should you not be on video or muted. I understand the need for a bathroom break, but let's make a habit of, literally, showing up. I also understand how difficult and mind-numbing a Zoom class can be. But as a famous person once said, it is what it is. Be respectful to everyone in this class.

**TEAM DEBATE:** Based on *READINGS* (Herring, *Foreign Affairs* article, Film) – in the team debate. You will be assigned to one of three teams (**Red, Green, Blue**) and engage in a debate on a weekly basis. Each team is assigned one of our three interpretations – these will rotate. I will judge which team was most effective in arguing

the interpretation, which members of the teams participated sufficiently, etc. So, you need to show up for your team – don't let down your friends!!

I will know everyone in this class, so I will know who is participating – in smart, meaningful ways – and who is not. Come to class prepared and you will be able to participate, even if you are shy or your neighbor seems intimidating.

Each team needs TWO Co-Captains who organize the team's response, assign readings to discuss, record the argument and evidence, and make sure EVERYONE participates. See *Debate Team instructions* document on Canvas.

### **Foreign Affairs Essay/Briefing Paper TOPICS**

To access *Foreign Affairs*: <https://www-jstor-org.colorado.idm.oclc.org/journal/foreignaffairs> then scroll down to relevant decades/years OR for our readings, go to CANVAS under Readings

You will write a 4-page (1000), double-spaced essay based on an article from the journal *Foreign Affairs*, on your Briefing Paper topic. Or, test out a topic by writing an essay on it. These must be written from the point of view of a Progressive, Nationalist, or Realist. See ***Foreign Affairs Essay instructions*** in CANVAS.

Check *Foreign Affairs* as soon as you can. The following topics – related to US in the WORLD - are candidates for essays and the Briefing Paper:

1. Dealing with autocracies (pick one)
2. China: economic and/or military threat
3. Free trade and/or protectionism; globalization; corporate power
4. Human rights
5. Nuclear arms
6. Law and institutions
7. Alliance politics and diplomacy; EU and integration/Brexit
8. Regional institutions
9. Russia and Putin
10. Environmental diplomacy
11. Latin America and democracy/development
12. Media
13. Middle East peace, stability – Iran, Iraq
14. Oil politics and economics
15. Terrorism
16. Immigration and migration; demographic change
17. White nationalism and populism
18. Technology
19. Individual leader/analyst/intellectual in history
20. Health/pandemics

**Briefing paper:** The paper is 15-20 pages (bibliography and footnotes/endnotes included), narrowly focused on a topic, and presented to a generic president of the United States as a persuasive policy document. You will choose a topic of interest that is a current event and trace the history and policies around that event, movement, person, etc. Argue your case as a Secretary of State to the current president. Topics must be cleared by me – they may include discussion of a crisis, broad policy goals, a look at a region or country. The paper must deal with the period within the years 1970-2020

Note: The paper will be based on secondary sources and at least 2 primary sources (newspaper articles, documents, etc.) from the period under review, perhaps even documents from *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*. *FRUS* is the diplomatic record of the USA, and can be accessed online at <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/about-frus> at the Office of the Historian of the US Department of State. Check out that website.

Also, check out *The American Presidency Project*, for all speeches by EVERY president, vice president, political party platforms – and they throw in press secretaries and cabinet members – going back to George Washington and forward to the present: <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/>. You can search with key words and find out how your topic was covered in history, and even if its terminology changed.

The paper will include a bibliography, and Executive Summary, and at least one image (map, photo, etc.).

See CANVAS for **BRIEFING PAPER Guidelines** and **PROSPECTUS** instructions, and check out the due dates below.

**NOTE:** Week 6 is totally devoted to Briefing Paper preparation, consultations, etc – a **WORKSHOP**. I will ask each of you to present your proposal.

**Presentation:** And the last two weeks of this course are devoted to you briefing me, the President, in class with a 10-12 minute presentation. I encourage you to use audio/visual aids, including PPT. See Briefing **Paper Presentation** instructions on CANVAS.

**Feedback:** Your classmates will also assess the project, both at the **WORKSHOP** in Week 6 and at your presentation at the end of the course. In Canvas, see **Feedback** form in Assignments, and also **Feedback Form** in WORD under Files.

## Readings

George C. Herring, *The American Century & Beyond: U.S. Foreign Relations, 1893-2014*, Oxford University Press, 2017 (online)

*Foreign Affairs* articles are found in CANVAS – Files then Readings

## SCHEDULE

### WEEK 1 (Thursday, Jan 14) Roots: Introduction

### WEEK 2 (Jan 19, 21) Interpretations and Cold War

#### Monday, 9:00 am

*INTERPRETATIONS* (in CANVAS) paragraph

#### Tuesday

READ: Herring, *The American Century*, chps. 7, 8, 9.

Film: *CNN Vietnam AND CNN Backyard*

#### Thursday

DEBATE TOPIC: Where do you stand – progressive/revisionist, realist, or nationalist?  
(SUBMIT ON CANVAS but doesn't count as a debate essay)

### WEEK 3 (Jan 26, 28) End of the American Century?

#### Monday, 9:00 am

DEBATE ESSAY (SUBMIT ON CANVAS): Détente gave away American power.

#### Tuesday

READ: Herring, *The American Century*, chp. 10; *Foreign Affairs* article: Cohen, *Recognizing China*.

Film: *CNN Détente*

#### Thursday

TEAM DEBATE

**Red**: Nationalist

**Green**: Progressive/Revisionist

**Blue**: Realist

### WEEK 4 (Feb 2, 4) Malaise Then Morning

#### Monday, 9:00 am

DEBATE ESSAY (SUBMIT ON CANVAS): Just bluster and recklessness, Ronald Reagan and his aggressive approach to the Cold War.

*FOREIGN AFFAIRS* ESSAY (SUBMIT ON CANVAS on your Briefing Paper topic) due

#### Tuesday

READ: Herring, *The American Century*, chp. 11; *Foreign Affairs* article: Hyland, U.S.-Soviet Relations



Film: *CNN Star Wars* AND *CNN Backyard* (again!)

**Thursday**  
TEAM DEBATE

**Red**: Realist  
**Green**: Nationalist  
**Blue**: Progressive/Revisionist

### **WEEK 5 (Feb 9, 11) Cold War Winner**

**Monday, 9:00 am**  
DEBATE ESSAY (SUBMIT ON CANVAS): America, and Reagan, won the Cold War.

**Tuesday**  
READ: Herring, *The American Century*, chp. 12; *Foreign Affairs* article: Howard, *The Springtime of Nations*.  
Film: *CNN The Wall Comes Down*

**Thursday**  
TEAM DEBATE

**Red**: Progressive/Revisionist  
**Green**: Realist  
**Blue**: Nationalist

### **WEEK 6 (Feb 16, 18) Briefing Paper WORKSHOP**

**Monday, 9:00 am**  
Briefing Paper *PROSPECTUS* Due (SUBMIT ON CANVAS)

**Tuesday**  
Prospectus (and presentation) of topic, argument, sources

**Thursday**  
library how-to research seminar

### **WEEK 7 (Feb 23, 25) Cold War to Washington Consensus**

**Monday, 9:00 am**  
DEBATE ESSAY (SUBMIT ON CANVAS): Globalization is simply American imperialism.

**Tuesday**

READ: Herring, *The American Century*, chp. 13 (discussion essay on film only)

Film: *Commanding Heights: Agony of Reform/Rules of the Game*

**Thursday**

TEAM DEBATE

**Red**: Nationalist

**Green**: Progressive/Revisionist

**Blue**: Realist

**WEEK 8 (Mar 2, 4) Terror****Monday, 9:00 am**

DEBATE ESSAY (SUBMIT ON CANVAS): The War on Terror was not only necessary but, like the Vietnam War, a noble crusade to defend the oppressed and democratize the world.

**Tuesday**

READ: Herring, *The American Century*, chp. 14.

Film: *CNN Soldiers of God*

**Thursday**

TEAM DEBATE

**Red**: Realist

**Green**: Nationalist

**Blue**: Progressive/Revisionist

**WEEK 9 (Mar 9, 11) Great Rec(Depr)ession****Monday, 9:00 am**

DEBATE ESSAY (SUBMIT ON CANVAS): American greed, irresponsibility, perhaps even imperialism came home to roost in the Great Recession.

Briefing Paper BIBLIOGRAPHY due (SUBMIT ON CANVAS)

**Tuesday**

Film: *Frontline: The Economic Meltdown*

**Thursday**

TEAM DEBATE

**Red**: Progressive/Revisionist

**Green**: Realist

**Blue**: Nationalist

**WEEK 10 (Mar 16, 18) Great Power Rivalry?****Monday, 9:00 am**

DEBATE ESSAY (SUBMIT ON CANVAS): The only true Great Power from 2000 to 2020 was America.

**Tuesday**

READ: *Foreign Affairs* article: Li, *Hopes and Doubts in Beijing*

Films: *CNN China* AND *Frontline: Putin's Revenge*.

**Thursday**

TEAM DEBATE

**Red:** Nationalist

**Green:** Progressive/Revisionist

**Blue:** Realist

**WEEK 11 (Mar 23) Internationalism? Nationalism? Populism?****Monday, 9:00 am**

DEBATE ESSAY (SUBMIT ON CANVAS): Obama retreated, Trump advanced to represent the greatness and ideals of the United States.

**Tuesday**

READ: *Obama Inaugural Address*; *Trump Inaugural Address*

Film: *Pandemic*

TEAM DEBATE

**Red:** Realist

**Green:** Nationalist

**Blue:** Progressive/Revisionist

**Thursday** (no class)

**WEEK 12 (Apr 6, 8) Conference on World Affairs and consultations with me****WEEK 13 (Apr 13, 15) Where are we headed?****Monday, 9:00 am**

DEBATE ESSAY (SUBMIT ON CANVAS): Internationalism is dead; Long Live America.

**Tuesday**

READ: *Foreign Affairs* article: Beckley, *Rogue Superpower*

**Thursday**  
TEAM DEBATE

**Red:** Progressive/Revisionist

**Green:** Realist

**Blue:** Nationalist

**WEEK 14 (Apr 20, 22) Briefing Paper Presentations/Commentary**

**WEEK 15 (Apr 27, 29) Briefing Paper Presentations/Commentary**

**BRIEFING PAPER DUE (SUBMIT ON CANVAS)**