This course examines the processes that shape U. S. foreign policy and the environmental structures that constrain it. Unlike most other international relations courses, it is concerned not only with outcomes, but also with the way policy decisions are made, with who is responsible, and with intentions as well as results. By investigating these micro-theoretical foundations for U. S. foreign policy, the causes of broader patterns and outcomes will also become clearer. And although this course focuses specifically on U. S. policy, the types of analysis developed here should be readily applicable to other policy making contexts.

**Course Requirements**

As in any graduate seminar, active participation is essential. Required readings, indicated by an asterisk (*) on the syllabus, should always be completed before class. To facilitate participation, and as a prelude to each week’s discussion, every student is responsible for bringing a brief (2 or 3 sentences) written summary of the central points of each required reading to class. Please note that the purpose of these written summaries is not to outline the reading (you should do this separately, in your notes), but rather to identify the main argument. Students should also take notes on the major questions raised by each week’s readings. The readings summaries will be collected in class periodically, and without advance warning.

The course requires two brief (about 4 pages) review essays summarizing and criticizing the assigned readings. A review essay is not a book report: it should summarize the reviewed work only as necessary. Its objective is to state your own, original argument (reacting to the argument in the reviewed work). The course also requires a series of policy reports (most will be very short—one or two pages), which will describe aspects of the U. S. foreign policy making process. Each policy report assignment will be distributed in class, and the report will be due at the beginning of the following class (or as noted in the assignment). In producing these reports, be certain to document all sources meticulously.

All written work for this class must be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins. It should conform stylistically to the standards of a prominent international relations journal (e.g., *International Organization*, *International Studies Quarterly*, or *World Politics*). Style manuals such as Kate Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* or William Strunk and E. B. White's *The Elements of Style* may also be helpful. Papers should conform to university and professional standards for academic honesty and integrity. In particular, all students should review the relevant sections of the Student Handbook and of my website (http://www.fiu.edu/~kowert/students.html) on how to avoid plagiarism. All written work is due at the beginning of class on the assigned dates. Late papers will be accepted only at the professor's discretion and will be penalized. Grades will be determined on the basis of these course requirements as follows:

- Participation/Readings Summaries: 10%
- First Review Essay: 25%
- Second Review Essay: 25%
- Policy Reports: 40%

You are always welcome to discuss this course or other academic issues with me during my office hours. I will also be happy to make an appointment for another time if you cannot see me during office hours. Don't hesitate to ask if you have any questions or problems.
Syllabus

Week 1 (Aug. 31) — Level of Analysis and Theory in U. S. Foreign Policy


Waltz, Kenneth, Man, the State and War (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

Part I — The Decision Making Process

Week 2 (Sept. 7) — Presidents, Personality, and Leadership


### Week 3 (Sept. 14) — Emotion and Motivation


Week 4 (Sept. 21) — Information and Belief Systems


Renshon, Stanley A. and Deborah Welch Larson, Good Judgment in Foreign Policy (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003).

Week 5 (Sept. 28) — Learning


**Week 6 (Oct. 5) — Parametric Choice**


**Week 7 (Oct. 12) — Strategic Choice**


**Week 8 (Oct. 19) — Deterrence, Compellence, and Bargaining**


**Week 9 (Oct. 26) — Group Dynamics**


**Part II — Constraints on Foreign Policy Making**

**Week 10 (Nov. 2) — Bureaucracies and Organizations**

**FIRST REVIEW ESSAY DUE**


**Week 11 (Nov. 9) — Public Opinion**


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Russett, Bruce and Elizabeth Hanson, *Interest and Ideology: Foreign Policy Beliefs of American Businessmen* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1975), selections.

Week 12 (Nov. 16) — Interest Groups and the Weak American State


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Week 13 (Nov. 23) — Security Structures of the International System


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**Week 14 (Nov. 30) — Economic Structures of the International System**


**Part III — Conclusion**

**Week 15 (Dec. 7) — American Power and the Study of U. S. Foreign Policy**

**SECOND REVIEW ESSAY DUE**


