



## University of International Business and Economics International Summer School

### PSC 203 US Foreign Policy Current Trends and Future under Trump

**Instructor: Dr. Kirill M. Bumin**

**Email: kirill.bumin@uncp.edu**

**Credit: 2 units**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to introduce students to the foreign policy of the United States with particular attention and an emphasis on post-Cold War topics. The course is divided into four segments. First, we will explore key concepts, such as the national interest and identity, and cover the major schools of thought on US foreign policy. The second part of the class will examine the individuals, the institutions, and the processes that guide foreign policy agenda-setting and implementation. The third portion of the course will review some of the more salient foreign policy challenges facing the US in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including particular focus on geographic regions. Finally, we will attempt to draw some preliminary inferences about the direction and the priorities of the US foreign policy under President Donald J. Trump.

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of this course, students will:

- ✧ Develop a working knowledge of the history of US foreign policy and an understanding of the roles played by relevant actors.
- ✧ Understand the American foreign policy making process and be able to analyze its outcomes.
- ✧ Develop practical knowledge of several pressing US foreign policy challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> and be able to assess strategies for managing these issue areas.
- ✧ Have a basic understanding of the direction of the US foreign policy under President Trump.
- ✧ Be able to evaluate foreign policy recommendations as historically informed, theoretically sophisticated citizens, scholars, and (perhaps) future policymakers.

#### **ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR**

Dr. Bumin grew up in the former Soviet Union and immigrated to the United States in the mid-1990s. He received his doctorate in comparative politics and international relations from the University of Kentucky. He currently serves as an Assistant Dean of the Graduate School and an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration in the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. Prior to coming to the UNC Pembroke, Dr. Bumin taught at the Center for International Studies in Georgia Southern University. Dr. Bumin specializes in post-communist politics, with particular focus on political transitions, ethnic conflict, and comparative judicial politics.



## **REQUIRED READINGS**

I will email PowerPoint lectures and provide handouts in advance of every class meeting. Students are expected to read the material and be prepared to discuss it in class. Your grade will in part depend on frequency and quality of your contribution to class discussions.

Also, it is important that students keep up with the contemporary international events. Doing so will provide relevant examples for our in-class discussion and enhance your awareness of the important issues. Please get in the habit of regularly checking international news.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- ◇ Comprehensive final exam (60%)
- ◇ Group presentation (15%)
- ◇ In-class participation (15%)
- ◇ Attendance (10%)

## **COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM**

There will be one examination at the end of the course. It will constitute 60% of the course grade. The final exam is comprehensive and cumulative, meaning that you will be responsible for the material covered over the entire duration of the course. You will be evaluated on your knowledge of the lectures and assigned readings. The exams will include a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, identification/definition, and/or short answer questions. I also reserve the right to add to the exams. We will discuss the details concerning each examination at least one week prior to the exam.

## **GROUP PRESENTATION**

In order to enable you to become an effective “consumer” of foreign policy decisions and outcomes, students will prepare a “US Foreign Policy in the News” presentation to the class. This will encourage students to critically analyze a news story, relate it to the course material, and explain how it impacts the US, as well as other countries/regions/topics identified in the selected news article. Given the number of students in the class, this will be a group exercise, and it will count for 15% of the course grade.

During the first week of the course, students will be placed into presentation groups and assigned a date to present. Each group will need to provide the instructor with either a link to a foreign policy article or a printed copy of the article for approval on a specified date. The article can be a reported news story, or a blog post or an Op Ed. The selected article must be in English. All team members are expected to participate in preparation of the presentation and in the oral presentation in class.

During class, each team will have 10-15 minutes to present the article (followed by about 5 minutes of class discussion). Team members should prepare a few well-crafted PowerPoint slides (no more than 7-8) to aid your talk (load these on the class computer before class or bring



a thumb drive). Keep the text brief, use imagery/maps to your advantage, and make your arguments easy to remember.

Students should not simply read from the PPT slides but instead, prepare a well-rehearsed talk to engage the audience:

- a. Summarize the article's main points.
- b. Critique the article. Do you agree with the findings/conclusions? What makes this topic difficult (or maybe, not difficult, in your estimate)?
- c. Relate the article to the class lectures. Does the article point out new challenges vis-à-vis the class lectures?
- d. What implications does the article have for future US foreign policy research? Present 3-4 questions that you think the article raises for students of US foreign policy to consider to spark a brief discussion.

### **PARTICIPATION POLICY**

You are expected to keep up with the current events around the world, lecture material, and actively participate in class discussions. Your participation grade will comprise 10% of your course grade and will depend on my evaluation of the quality and frequency of your participation (e.g., how often you contribute to the discussion of news; how often you ask to clarify things that you do not understand well or provide thoughtful comments on assigned readings).

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

It is of the utmost importance that you regularly attend class. Critical organization policies will be announced during class time, and attending class will allow you to see first-hand what material is emphasized and most likely to appear on the final examination. It will be very difficult to make a good grade in this class without regular attendance. Class attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class session and will count toward your course grade (10% of your course grade). If you do not sign the attendance sheet, I will count you as absent for the day.