

Path to the Future: The US in the 21st Century World
LSHV-378-01
Georgetown University
Liberal Studies Degree Program
Spring 2017

DRAFT SYLLABUS
Weekly topics and readings as well as dates
subject to revision

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...the world stage is not a popularity contest. As a nation, we have vital interests, and we will do what is necessary always to defend this country we love -- even if it's unpopular. But make no mistake, how we're viewed in the world has consequences -- for our national security and for your lives. ...Today, we can say with confidence and pride the United States is stronger and safer and more respected in the world...We have to build on it. You have to build on it. Let's start by putting aside the tired notion that says our influence has waned or that America is in decline...never bet against the United States of America. And one of the reasons is that the United States has been, and will always be, the one indispensable nation in world affairs. It's one of the many examples of why America is exceptional. It's why I firmly believe that if we rise to this moment in history, if we meet our responsibilities, then -- just like the 20th century -- the 21st century will be another great American Century. That's the future I see....

Barack Obama, Air Force Academy Commencement, May 23, 2012

At times in our history U.S. foreign policy has been wise and decent beyond hope - but America is hardly the City on a Hill dreamt of by its Puritan founders. At times American behavior has been foolish or brutal – but America is hardly a great Satan...Much of the time we have simply been human, pursuing our short-term self-interest more or less skillfully, and the rest of the world be damned.

Walter McDougall. *Promised Land, Crusader State* (p. 2)

Course Description

In 1941, the publisher Henry Luce predicted the coming of what he called the “American Century.” According to Luce, the time had arrived for Americans “to accept wholeheartedly our duty and our opportunity as the most powerful and vital nation of the world and in consequence to assert upon the world the full impact of our influence, for such means as we see fit.” In the decades that followed, many Americans enthusiastically accepted this challenge and the remaining decades of the 20th century bore witness to their efforts. But what have been the

consequences for the United States, and the world, in the “present”? Although much of the attention directed toward US foreign policy in the last several years has been focused the “War on Terrorism,” a vast number of other significant issues also present the United States with challenges and opportunities in the 21st century. While not ignoring “terrorism,” this course also will examine some of the other areas of policy as a means of assessing the current global status of the United States and providing insight regarding its “path to the future.”

Course Requirements

I. Discussion Sessions

The class will feature weekly student-led discussions based on the assigned reading(s). The purpose of the discussion sessions is to provide opportunities for students to exchange opinions, interpretations, and ideas about the readings and the topics they address. A good discussion is one where the participants feel that they have learned something new, something that they would not have learned by simply reading the materials on their own. Note - the value of each discussion section ultimately rests on a willingness to come prepared to talk. Thus, all students are expected to do all of the assigned readings. Failure to do so will impair your ability to follow, benefit from, and actively participate in discussion, as well as diminish the value of the session for those students who are prepared.

Active, informed, thoughtful and constructive class participation is a critical part of the assessment criteria for the course. Students are expected to come to class fully prepared to engage in a critical analysis of the assigned readings. Strong and effective class participation is characterized by:

- Demonstrated mastery of the assigned material;
- Critical examination of the assumptions and implications of the assigned readings;
- Ability to identify key issues, synthesize information (including making connections or exploring contrasts with previously assigned readings); and
- Respectful but probing examination of the contributions of your peers and effective facilitation in clarifying different points of view, thereby contributing to the learning of the whole group.

Guide for Leading Discussions

As discussion leader it is your responsibility to create the environment described above. You will begin with a brief presentation (approximately 7 to 10 minutes) to introduce one of the readings. The briefing should consist of the following:

- It should begin with an introduction that provides a very brief overview of the contents of the reading and your evaluation of the reading.
- Next, you should provide a concise summary of the main points of the reading.
- Who are (or were) the authors? What, if any, training or experience qualified them to write about these issues? If the reading is a book, you might note how it has been received and if there are similar or competing books.
- Next, you should evaluate the quality and consistency of the author’s argument. Your evaluation should include discussion of the sources the author used. Examine the references in the footnotes or endnotes and the bibliography. Upon what types of sources is the book based? How extensive is each author’s research? What is the range of sources consulted by each author?

- The briefing should end with a conclusion that ties together the issues raised in the reading and relates them to the general themes of the course.

The briefing will be followed by an open discussion led by you. As part of this, you will prepare a list of questions designed to provoke discussion on the readings (while they primarily should focus on the assigned reading, they also may consider links to previous readings as well as any recent developments). To assist your classmates in preparing for discussion, when possible your questions should include brief quotes and/or page numbers for their reference. **The questions must be posted in the “Discussion Board” of the class Blackboard site at least 48 hours before class.** Students not leading discussion are encouraged strongly to post their own questions and thoughts based on the reading(s) on Blackboard prior to class meetings.

The exact format will be determined by the student(s) leading the week’s discussion – e.g., you simply may generate discussion using the questions you have prepared; you may call on classmates to ask questions they have prepared; you may choose to use part of the class meeting to hold a debate; you may wish to impose a role playing format on a portion of your discussion to help illuminate different perceptions of the issue(s) at hand. If you choose to have your classmates present questions or participate in an activity (briefing, debate) that requires preparation, you must give them advance notice and instruction.

II. Written Assignments

Students are required to submit three written assignments (details provided in a separate handout). **Papers are due no later than the beginning of class on February 12, March 19, and April 9. Late papers will not be accepted.**

Grading

Note - more than one absence may require that the student withdraw from the course

- Discussion Participation – 30%
- Leading discussion – 5%
- Written assignments – first two papers 20% each; final paper 25%
- Regular attendance is required

Whereby an (A) is Outstanding; (A-) is Excellent; (B+) is Very Good; (B) is Good; (B-) is Acceptable; and a (C) is Minimally Passing.

Critical reading, consistent attendance, and active engagement in class discussions are all vital to your learning and the success of this course. To earn an A level grade for discussion participation, you must come well-prepared for class, consistently interact with your colleagues and move the discussion forward with your own questions, interpretations, and ideas. If you attend every session and occasionally contribute to discussion, demonstrating good preparation on the whole, you will receive a B level grade for participation. If you attend but never participate, your grade will be no higher than a B-.

Liberal Studies Program, General Learning Goals and Outcomes

The Graduate Liberal Studies Program at Georgetown University offers a course of study that engages students in reading, research, reflection, discussion, and writing. In the pursuit of the degree, students are to discern and wrestle with the content generally associated with the “liberal” arts in the root meaning of that term, namely, what it means for human beings to be endowed with freedom and what ennobles and enhances human freedom. The two general

goals of the program, therefore, are to analyze and assess human values (who are we and what ought we to do?) and to undertake such study in an interdisciplinary fashion. The program thus draws from the social sciences as well as from those fields generally defined as the humanities (e.g., theology, philosophy, literature, and art), recognizing that the moral dimension of human life embraces social, political, and economic relationships as well as personal choices. The program is to culminate in a thesis that successfully analyzes a question of value related to a student's chosen curricular field of study.

More explicitly, the program is to engage the student in examining one or more of the following topics or similar topics as they are treated in various disciplines:

- What it means to be human
- What gives ultimate meaning to human life
- What contributes to human flourishing
- Where human life is heading
- What constitutes the social dimension of humanity
- What enables genuine community
- How are human beings related to nature and creation as a whole
- Elements of personal ethics
- Principles of social justice and social ethics

Academic Integrity

MALS and DLS students are responsible for upholding the Georgetown University Honor System and adhering to the academic standards included in the Honor Code Pledge stated below:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor; and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

Required Books

1. Robert J. Lieber. *Power and Willpower in the American Future: Why the United States Is Not Destined to Decline*. Cambridge University Press (2012). ISBN-10: 052128127X; ISBN-13: 9780521281270. \$24.99
2. Walter McDougall. *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776*. Mariner Books; Reprint edition (May 15, 1998). ISBN-10: 0395901324; ISBN-13: 9780395901328. \$15 (Trade Paper)
3. Dani Rodrik. *The Globalization Paradox: Democracy and the Future of the World Economy*. W. W. Norton & Company (2011). ISBN-10: 0393071618; ISBN-13: 9780393071610. \$17.95

Discussion Schedule

Week 1 () – Course Introduction

Week 2 () – The Path to the Present

McDougall. *Promised Land, Crusader State*

Week 3 () – What to do?

- Rob Kevlihan, et. al. “Is US Humanitarian Aid Based Primarily on Need or Self-Interest?” *International Studies Quarterly*, December 2014, Vol. 58 Issue 4. **Blackboard**
- Roland Paris. “The ‘Responsibility to Protect’ and the Structural Problems of Preventive Humanitarian Intervention,” *International Peacekeeping*, Vol.21, No.5, 2014. **Blackboard**

Week 4 () - Globalization: “It’s a small world after all”

Rodrik. *The Globalization Paradox*

Week 5 () – Up for Debate I

- Simon Caney. “Two Kinds of Climate Justice: Avoiding Harm and Sharing Burdens.” *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, Volume 22, Number 2, 2014. **Blackboard**
- Christian Enemark. “Drones, Risk, and Perpetual Force,” *Ethics & International Affairs*, September 2014, Vol. 28 Issue 3. **Blackboard**

Week 6 () – “America is addicted to oil”

- *New Energy, New Geopolitics: Balancing Stability and Leverage*. A Report of the CSIS Energy and National Security Program and the Harold Brown Chair in Defense Policy Studies, Center for Strategic and International Studies (April, 2014). **Blackboard**
- Bruce Jones, David Steven, and Emily O’Brien. *Fueling a New Order? The New Geopolitical and Security Consequences of Energy*, Project on International Order and Strategy, Center for Strategic and International Studies (March, 2014). **Blackboard**

FIRST WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY

Week 7 () – China’s Century?

- Amitai Etzioni. “Accommodating China,” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, April/May 2013, Vol. 55 Issue 2. **Blackboard**
- Ashley J. Tellis. *Balancing Without Containment: An American Strategy for Managing China*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 22, 2014. **Blackboard**

Week 8 () – Up for Debate II

- Joe Santucci. “A Question of Identity: The Use of Torture in Asymmetric War,” *Journal of Military Ethics*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 23-40, 2008. **Blackboard**
- Jerome Slater. “Tragic Choices in the War on Terrorism: Should We Try to Regulate and Control Torture?” *Political Science Quarterly*, Summer 2006, Vol. 121 Issue 2. **Blackboard**

Week 9 () – Nuclear Proliferation

- Wyn Q. Bowen, Matthew Cottee and Christopher Hobbs. “Multilateral Cooperation and the Prevention of Nuclear Terrorism: Pragmatism over Idealism,” *International Affairs*. March 2012, Vol. 88 Issue 2. **Blackboard**
- Gregory D. Koblentz. *Strategic Stability in the Second Nuclear Age*, Council on Foreign Relations, Council Special Report No. 71, November 2014. **Blackboard**

March 12 – Spring Break

Week 10 () – The US & Russia: A New Cold War?

- Paul J. Saunders, ed. *Costs of a New Cold War: The U.S. Russia Confrontation over Ukraine*. Center for the National Interest (September 2014). **Blackboard**

SECOND WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE NO LATER THAN MARCH

Week 11 () – Nontraditional Threats

- *The Emerging Global Health Crisis: Noncommunicable Diseases in Low- and Middle-Income Countries*, Independent Task Force Report No. 72, Council on Foreign Relations, December 2014. **Blackboard**
- Erik Gartzke. “The Myth of Cyberwar: Bringing War in Cyberspace Back Down to Earth,” *International Security*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Fall 2013). **Blackboard**

Week 12 () – “War on Terror”

- Audrey Kurth Cronin. “The ‘War on Terrorism’: What Does it Mean to Win?” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, April 2014, Vol. 37, Issue 2. **Blackboard**
- Marc Lynch. *The Tourniquet: A Strategy for Defeating the Islamic State and Saving Syria and Iraq*, Center for a New American Security (October 16, 2014). **Blackboard**

Week 13 () – The Path to the Future

Lieber. *Power and Willpower in the American Future*

THIRD WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE NO LATER THAN APRIL