

# PIA3130: U.S. POLITICS AND FOREIGN POLICY

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## Effective Term

Semester B 2024/25

## Part I Course Overview

### Course Title

U.S. Politics and Foreign Policy

### Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

### Course Number

3130

### Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

### College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

### Course Duration

One Semester

### Credit Units

3

### Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

### Medium of Instruction

English

### Medium of Assessment

English

### Prerequisites

Nil

### Precursors

Nil

### Equivalent Courses

AIS4130 U.S. Politics and Foreign Policy, PIA4130 U.S. Politics and Foreign Policy

### Exclusive Courses

Nil

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

This course introduces students to major political issues and institutions of U.S. politics and analyses the global impact of the U.S.'s foreign policy. It will examine the character of U.S. politics and, in particular, how it has become increasingly

polarized. Students in the course will explore the civil rights and countercultural movements of the 1960s (with the Democratic Party moving to the political left) as well as the resurgence of the religious right and economic neo-liberalism in the 1970s and 1980s (leading the Republicans to become more conservative). Such political and party divisions, in turn, reflect deep social cleavages along class, racial, gender, generational, regional, and religious lines. The course will also explore how the U.S. as a 'lonely' superpower confronts rising powers in a multipolar world. Particular focus will be put on U.S.-Chinese relations. Theories of social cleavages, political parties and movements, key political institutions (such as the presidency, the legislature and the judiciary), and international relations will be applied by students to engage in problem solving exercises of issues facing the U.S, the nature of its foreign policy and its relations with China.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

| CILOs |  | Weighting (if app.) | DEC-A1 | DEC-A2 | DEC-A3 |
|-------|--|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1     | Identify and critically evaluate key issues in U.S. politics and society   | 20                  | x      | x      | x      |
| 2     | Explain political behaviour, institutional processes, social developments, and policy outcomes using relevant theories and models. | 20                  | x      | x      | x      |
| 3     | Appraise and critique arguments about political processes and social change in the U.S.  | 20                  | x      | x      | x      |
| 4     | Discover and innovate by demonstrating an ability to apply factual and theoretical knowledge to a problem-based activity.          | 20                  | x      | x      | x      |
| 5     | Analyse and synthesise information and communicate it effectively.   | 20                  | x      | x      | x      |

#### A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

#### A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

#### A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

| LTAs | Brief Description | CILO No.  | Hours/week (if applicable) |
|------|-------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1    | CILO 1-3, 5       | Class lectures will be given about each topic with class discussions held about the lecture as well as the required readings for that week. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5              |
| 2    | CILO 2-5          | Short written assignments will be completed by students.  | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5              |
| 3    | CILO 3-4          | Each student will be assigned to a group which will make presentations.   | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5              |

|   |          |  |               |  |
|---|----------|--|---------------|--|
| 4 | CILO 1-5 | There will be a final quiz covering the course lectures, required readings and discussions at the end of the course. | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 |  |
|---|----------|--|---------------|--|

**Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)**

|   | ATs   | CILO No.      | Weighting (%) | Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use) |
|---|---|---------------|---------------|--|
| 1 | Attendance and participation in class discussions | 1, 2          | 10            |  |
| 2 | Short written assignment                          | 4             | 20            |  |
| 3 | Group presentations                               | 2, 3, 4       | 20            |  |
| 4 | Quiz  | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 | 50            |  |

**Continuous Assessment (%)**

100

**Examination (%)**

0

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)****Assessment Task**

Attendance and participation in class discussions

**Criterion**

Students are expected to attend all lectures and class discussions. Marks will be based on the quality contributions to class discussions of the lectures and the weekly required readings.

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Excellent participation in class discussions indicating outstanding understanding of the lectures and required readings.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Good participation in class discussions indicating strong understanding of the lectures and required readings.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Adequate participation in class discussions indicating some understanding of the lectures and required readings.

**Marginal (D)**

Weak participation in class discussions indicating limited understanding of the lectures and required readings.

**Failure (F)**

Lack of participation in class discussions.

**Assessment Task**

Short written assignment

**Criterion**

Ability to analyze, demonstrate critical thinking, and write clearly about an assigned topic.

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Excellent capacity to analyze, demonstrate critical thinking and write clearly about an assigned topic.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Good capacity to analyze, demonstrate critical thinking and write clearly about an assigned topic.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Adequate capacity to analyze, demonstrate critical thinking and write clearly about an assigned topic.

**Marginal (D)**

Limited capacity to analyze, demonstrate critical thinking about, and write clearly about an assigned topic.

**Failure (F)**

Inadequate capacity to analyze, demonstrate critical thinking and write clearly about an assigned topic.

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**Assessment Task**

Group presentations

**Criterion**

A group presentation in which students will be assessed on their ability to make both a brief individual presentation and to contribute to the broader discussion of the topic.

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Excellent individual presentation and contribution to the broader group discussion.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Good individual presentation and contribution to the broader group discussion.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Fair individual presentation and contribution to the broader group discussion.

**Marginal (D)**

Marginal individual presentation and little contribution to the broader group discussion.

**Failure (F)**

Inadequate individual presentation and no contribution to the broader group discussion.

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**Assessment Task**

Quiz

**Criterion**

Need to master the topics covered in class, and a capacity to critically reflect on them.

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Excellent knowledge of the topics covered in class, and a capacity to critically reflect on them.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Good knowledge of the topics covered in class, and a capacity to critically reflect on them.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Adequate knowledge of the topics covered in class, and a capacity to critically reflect on them.

**Marginal (D)**

Limited knowledge of the topics covered in class, and a capacity to critically reflect on them.

**Failure (F)**

Inadequate knowledge of the topics covered in class, and a capacity to critically reflect on them.

**Part III Other Information****Keyword Syllabus**

U.S. politics, foreign policy, international relations, comparative politics, social cleavages, race, class, gender, religion, region, political parties, the presidency, Congress, the Supreme Court, the judiciary, interest groups, social policy.

**Reading List****Compulsory Readings**

|    | Title   |
|----|---|
| 1  | Abramowitz, A. 2018. <i>The Great Alignment: Race, Party Transformation, and the Rise of Donald Trump</i> . Yale University Press.  |
| 2  | Allison, G. 2017. <i>Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides' s Trap?</i> New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.  |
| 3  | Bartels, L. M., 2008. <i>Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age</i> . Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.  |
| 4  | Chhabra, T. 2021. <i>The China Challenge, Democracy, and U.S. Grand Strategy</i> . Foreign Policy at Brookings: <a href="https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/FP_20190311_us_grand_strategy_chhabra.pdf">https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/FP_20190311_us_grand_strategy_chhabra.pdf</a> |
| 5  | Cox, M. & Stokes, D. 2018. <i>US Foreign Policy, Third Edition</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press.   |
| 6  | Davidson, J. W. 2015. <i>A Little History of the United States</i> . Yale University Press.   |
| 7  | Graham, M. & Svobik, M. 2020. <i>Democracy in America? Partisanship, Polarization, and the Robustness of Support for Democracy in the United States</i> . <i>American Political Science Review</i> 114, 2, 392–409.   |
| 8  | Huntington, S. P., 1999. <i>The Lonely Superpower</i> . <i>Foreign Affairs</i> , 78(2), pp. 35-49.  |
| 9  | Levitsky, S. & Ziblatt, D. 2018. <i>How Democracies Die</i> . New York: Crown.  |
| 10 | McGhee, H. 2021. <i>The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together</i> . New York: One World   |
| 11 | Menza, J. & Brooks, C., 1999. <i>Social Cleavages and Political Change: Voter Alignment and U.S. Party Coalitions</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press.  |
| 12 | Skowronek, S., 2008. <i>Presidential leadership in political time: Reprise and reappraisal</i> . Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas.  |
| 13 | Zakaria, F. 2008. <i>The Post-American World</i> . New York: Norton.  |
| 14 | Zhao, M. 2019 <i>Is a New Cold War Inevitable? Chinese Perspectives on US–China Strategic Competition</i> . <i>The Chinese Journal of International Politics</i> , Volume 12, Issue 3, Autumn 2019, Pages 371–394, <a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/poz010">https://doi.org/10.1093/cjip/poz010</a>                    |

**Additional Readings**

|   | Title   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Huntington, S. P., 1983. <i>American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony</i> . Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University. |
| 2 | Lim, E., 2014. <i>The Lovers' Quarrel: The Two Foundings and American Political Development</i> Oxford: Oxford University Press.      |

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|---|---|
| 3 | Skowronek, S. 1982. <i>Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877-1990</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. |
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