

US Foreign Policy in Action

An Innovative Teaching Text

Second Edition



Jeffrey S. Lantis
and Patrick Homan



Praise for the Second Edition of *US Foreign Policy in Action*

Lantis and Homan understand the challenge and the craft of teaching contemporary U.S. foreign policy. Consequently, *US Foreign Policy in Action* is a highly engaging and pedagogically sensitive survey of the actors, interests, and politics that shape U.S. foreign policy decisions, actions, and issues. Through interesting, structured debates, discussion questions, case studies, and other appealing features, *US Foreign Policy in Action* brings the foreign policy process alive, allowing readers to put themselves in the shoes of policy-makers without sharing their ulcers. Instructors and students will enjoy using this well-written and interactive textbook.

Christopher M. Jones, *Bradley University*

I love this textbook! While there are many worthwhile texts on the market focused on U.S. foreign policy, this one surveys all the key historical, institutional, and policy process aspects of U.S. foreign policy for an undergraduate-level course. It also incorporates imaginative and highly effective active learning assignments for the classroom on key issues that really engage students and help instructors make important connections between the conceptual and the practical. Smoothly written, highly accessible, with relevant and interesting new cases, Lantis and Homan have done an excellent job with this updated edition of *US Foreign Policy in Action*. I loved the first edition; I can't wait to use this new edition the next time I teach U.S. Foreign Policy.

Mary K. Meyer McAleese, *Eckerd College*

Lantis and Homan enliven U.S. foreign policy with their innovative pedagogical approach. This engaging text is chock-full of activities designed to deepen student learning of concepts and issues as well as promote critical thinking, research, and communication skills. The variety of interactive learning activities will have wide appeal among students and instructors alike. Especially exciting are the Learning through Technology exercises that employ various platforms to facilitate students' exploration of political issues, actors, and processes. The authors do not disappoint in their promise to bring foreign policy to life!

Kirsten Taylor, *Berry College*

PROOF

US Foreign Policy in Action

This book represents a timely exploration of the dynamics of U.S. foreign policy development. It introduces historical developments and theories of U.S. foreign policy and engages students in the politics and debates of the foreign policy process (both directly and by proxy) through innovative learning exercises. This book offers a rich understanding of the politics behind clashing perspectives towards contemporary foreign policy challenges ranging from immigration policy controversies to COVID-19 pandemic responses, climate change to the China trade war. All of these issues are presented in dynamic ways that focus on activism and engagement in the policy process—and so this text speaks directly to a new generation of college students who have mobilized to political activism. The book is intended to serve as a core text for classes on U.S. foreign policy at the 200-level or above and will appeal to a broad audience.

New to the Second Edition:

- Provides insights on contemporary foreign policy challenges facing the Biden administration and future presidents, such as climate change, the rise of China, sanctions and trade policies, and changing U.S. engagement in the Middle East.
- Offers stronger theoretical foundations for the study of domestic constraints in the foreign policy decision-making process, including the power of interest groups and political polarization in Congress.
- Explains pedagogical treatments of online and hybrid learning applications, along with presenting new exercises to engage students both in person in the classroom and online.
- Presents more detailed and critical historical analyses of U.S. foreign policy, including greater attention to the U.S. as an imperial power and its implications for politics and society.
- Creates new and exciting active learning exercises for instructors and students, including role-playing simulations of global public health crisis management and group research projects on cybersecurity and immigration policy.
- Enriches the graphics and illustrations of foreign policy actors and processes in a full-color presentation.
- Analyzes contemporary foreign policy issues in the Trump and Biden administrations.
- Adds new web components and features, some authored by undergraduate students who are becoming experts in U.S. foreign policy.
- Includes new writing exercises and assignments designed to promote creative and critical thinking about foreign policy actors and processes.

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Jeffrey S. Lantis and Patrick Homan

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Contents

<i>List of Boxes</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>xii</i>
<i>List of Maps</i>	<i>xiii</i>
<i>List of Photos</i>	<i>xiv</i>
<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>xvi</i>
<i>Online Support Material for Teaching and Learning</i>	<i>xvii</i>
<i>Preface and Acknowledgments</i>	<i>xviii</i>
1 Introduction to the Politics of U.S. Foreign Policy	1
<i>Historical Foundations</i>	4
<i>Foreign Policy Challenges in the Biden Administration</i>	6
<i>The U.S. and the World: Foreign Policy-Making in Perspective</i>	7
<i>Major Actors in the Foreign Policy Process</i>	8
<i>Pedagogical Approach: How to Use This Book</i>	10
<i>Overview of the Book</i>	12
<i>Discussion Questions</i>	13
<i>Key Terms</i>	13
2 U.S. Foreign Policy and Grand Strategy	16
<i>What Is Grand Strategy?</i>	17
<i>Alternative Grand Strategy Frames for U.S. Foreign Policy Positions</i>	18
<i>Hegemony/Unilateralism</i>	19
<i>Multilateralism</i>	23
<i>Restraint/Isolationism/Parochialism</i>	27
<i>Formulating Grand Strategy for the 21st Century</i>	31
<i>Conclusion</i>	33
<i>Discussion Questions</i>	33
<i>Key Terms</i>	33

3	History of U.S. Foreign Policy: A Noble Struggle?	37
	<i>Revolutionary Values</i> 38	
	<i>The Struggle to Define the New Nation</i> 41	
	<i>Manifest Destiny?</i> 46	
	<i>The Civil War</i> 47	
	<i>Rise to Globalism</i> 51	
	<i>The “American Century” and World Wars</i> 56	
	<i>Conclusion</i> 61	
	<i>Discussion Questions</i> 61	
	<i>Key Terms</i> 62	
4	Modern History of U.S. Foreign Policy	65
	<i>The Post-World War II Era</i> 66	
	<i>The Cold War: Values and Interests</i> 68	
	<i>The Truman Doctrine</i> 70	
	<i>Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam</i> 72	
	<i>The End of the Cold War</i> 79	
	<i>Enlargement and Engagement</i> 82	
	<i>Interests versus Values? The War on Terrorism</i> 84	
	<i>Contemporary Challenges: Obama, Trump, and Biden</i> 86	
	<i>Conclusion</i> 90	
	<i>Discussion Questions</i> 91	
	<i>Key Terms</i> 91	
5	Key Institutions: Branches of Government	94
	<i>Constitutional Authority and the “Invitation to Struggle”</i> 95	
	<i>The President and the Executive Branch</i> 96	
	<i>Presidential Influence</i> 97	
	<i>Instruments of Presidential Power</i> 108	
	<i>Congress: The Legislative Branch</i> 110	
	<i>The Courts: The Judicial Branch</i> 122	
	<i>Conclusion</i> 125	
	<i>Discussion Questions</i> 126	
	<i>Key Terms</i> 126	
6	Leadership in Action: Debating American Engagement with the World	130
	<i>Structured Debate Guidelines and Rules of Procedure</i> 131	
	<i>Structured Debate 1: Leadership in Action and the Use of Military Force</i> 132	
	<i>Structured Debate 2: Should the U.S. Pursue an “America First” Grand Strategy?</i> 144	
	<i>Key Terms</i> 154	

7	Bureaucracies and Unelected Actors	157
	<i>Bureaucracies and Foreign Policy</i>	158
	<i>Key Characteristics of Bureaucracies</i>	158
	<i>The Theory of Bureaucratic Politics</i>	160
	<i>The Department of Defense</i>	163
	<i>The Department of State</i>	171
	<i>Intelligence Bureaucracies</i>	177
	<i>Conclusion</i>	185
	<i>Discussion Questions</i>	185
	<i>Key Terms</i>	185
8	Bureaucracies in Action: A National Security Council Simulation	188
	<i>Simulation Overview</i>	189
	<i>Simulation Scenario: Pandemic Response and Foreign Policy</i>	190
	<i>Pandemics and Global Health: Background Information</i>	191
	<i>Class Meeting 1</i>	200
	<i>Class Meeting 2</i>	200
	<i>Class Meeting 3</i>	201
	<i>Draft Policy Statement Template</i>	202
	<i>Policy Directive Template</i>	203
	<i>Role Assignments</i>	204
	<i>Key Terms</i>	208
9	Interest Groups and Political Parties	210
	<i>The Power of Unelected Actors</i>	211
	<i>Interest Groups</i>	211
	<i>What Do You Want? How to Lobby Effectively</i>	214
	<i>Types of Interest Groups</i>	218
	<i>Political Parties</i>	225
	<i>Conclusion</i>	232
	<i>Discussion Questions</i>	233
	<i>Key Terms</i>	233
10	Interest Groups in Action: Case Studies	236
	<i>Case Study 1: Environmental Policy: Interest Groups and Climate Change</i>	237
	<i>Case Study 2: Trade Policy: Interest Groups and the Price of Free Trade</i>	246
	<i>Key Terms</i>	255
11	Public Opinion and the Media	258
	<i>Reaching the Masses? Public Opinion and the Media</i>	259
	<i>Public Attitudes and Foreign Policy: A Direct Line?</i>	265

	<i>Media and Foreign Policy</i>	268
	<i>The Functions of the Media</i>	270
	<i>Contemporary Trends in Media Coverage</i>	274
	<i>Conclusion</i>	276
	<i>Discussion Questions</i>	277
	<i>Key Terms</i>	277
12	Public Opinion and the Media in Action	281
	<i>Public Opinion and the Media in Action: Problem-Based Cooperative Learning</i>	281
	<i>Research Project 1: Alternative News Media and Foreign Policy: Educating the Public?</i>	282
	<i>Research Project 2: The Media and National Security: Is There a Public "Right to Know"?</i>	286
	<i>Research Project 3: Fake News, Social Media, and Political Bias</i>	290
	<i>Key Terms</i>	295
13	Blended and Hybrid Approaches to Studying Contemporary U.S. Foreign Policy	299
	<i>Introduction to Blended Learning</i>	300
	<i>Global Cybersecurity</i>	301
	<i>Cybersecurity and U.S. Interests</i>	302
	<i>Cybersecurity and Grand Strategy</i>	304
	<i>Blended Learning Approaches and Cybersecurity</i>	306
	<i>Global Health Security</i>	310
	<i>Health Security and Grand Strategy</i>	311
	<i>Key Actors in Formulating Public Health Policy</i>	312
	<i>Blended Learning Approaches and Global Public Health</i>	316
	<i>Epilogue</i>	319
	<i>Key Terms</i>	320
	<i>Bibliography</i>	323
	<i>Index</i>	351

Boxes

2.1	Case in Point: How the World Views the U.S.	26
3.1	Learning through Technology: Foreign Policy and History Online	48
3.2	Case in Point: Revisiting Racism and the Founding of the U.S.	50
3.3	Case in Point: Critical Reflection on U.S. Imperialism—a Student's Perspective	53
4.1	Exploring Further: Espionage and the Cold War	73
4.2	Exploring Further: Learning through Popular Culture and Films	76
4.3	Case in Point: President Ronald Reagan's "Evil Empire" Speech	80
4.4	Case in Point: The National Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement	84
5.1	Case in Point: George W. Bush and the War on Terror	103
5.2	Learning through Technology: Congressional Hearings – Charting a Policy Debate	117
6.1	Case in Point: President Obama, Address on Syria	138
6.2	Case in Point: President Trump Inaugural Address	148
6.3	Case in Point: Greta Thunberg, Speech to the UN Climate Action Summit	152
7.1	Learning through Technology: Interview a Policy-Maker Using Web 2.0 Technology	171
7.2	Case in Point: Becoming a Foreign Service Officer	174
7.3	Case in Point: Secret Wiretapping: An Intelligence Debate	182
8.1	Simulation: News Flash: The Crisis	199
9.1	Exploring Further: President Dwight D. Eisenhower Farewell Address	212
9.2	Case in Point: Latinx Power in U.S. Politics	220
9.3	Learning through Technology: Hear from the Experts	224
9.4	Case in Point: Red or Blue Nation?	231
10.1	Exploring Further: President Obama and U.S. Support for the Paris Climate Accord	242
11.1	Case in Point: Extreme Public Opinion?	262
11.2	Case in Point: "Embedded Journalists" and the News	273
12.1	Exercise: Worksheet for Research Group 1: The Media and Foreign Policy	284
12.2	Exercise: Worksheet for Research Group 2: The Media and Government Secrecy	289
12.3	Exercise: Worksheet for Research Group 3: The Media and Political Bias	294
13.1	Learning through Technology: Researching Cybersecurity Online	309
13.2	Learning through Technology: Progressive Debate on Flipgrid and Classroom Reflection	319

Figures

1.1	The Process of Foreign Policy-Making	10
2.1	Western Europeans' Confidence in U.S. President Surges as Biden Enters Office	27
2.2	Grand Strategies in a Venn Diagram	31
4.1	Arab Spring Results	88
5.1	Concentric Circles Model, Actors in Foreign Policy Process	98
5.2	President Nixon Advising Model	100
5.3	President Carter Advising Model	100
5.4	President George H.W. Bush Advising Model	102
7.1	Department of Defense's Spending on Military Programs (1962–2025)	165
8.1	Pandemic Planning Phases Chart	193
9.1	Polarization and U.S. Political Parties	230
10.1	U.S. Public's Views of Climate Change	244
10.2	U.S. Trade Balances, 1970–2020	248
10.3	U.S. Trade with China	252
11.1	A Graphic Depiction of Major Media Sources and Political Bias	271
12.1	Partisan Views about Social Media Companies	292
13.1	U.S. Public Opinion on Cyberattacks	301
13.2	The U.S. Role in Global Health	313
13.3	Organization of U.S. Global Health Efforts	315

Maps

3.1	The Louisiana Purchase and Enlarged U.S.	45
4.1	The Iron Curtain during the Cold War	69

PROOF

Photos

1.1	President Biden at G7 Summit	1
1.2	Conductor with a World Map	4
1.3	President Trump Confronted by Allies	6
2.1	U.S. Soldier Greets Afghan Child	16
2.2	U.S. Aircraft Carrier <i>Theodore Roosevelt</i> in the Pacific Ocean	20
2.3	U.S. Sends COVID-19 Vaccine to Kenya	24
2.4	Anti-War Demonstration in New York City	30
3.1	George Washington during the American Revolution	37
3.2	Painting of the Continental Congress	40
3.3	Closeup of the U.S. Constitution	42
3.4	Statue of Abolitionist Frederick Douglass	50
3.5	Rally for Puerto Rican Statehood at the U.S. Capitol	55
3.6	“Big Four” Leaders at Paris Peace Conference	58
4.1	President Reagan at Brandenburg Gate, Berlin, Germany	65
4.2	“Big Three” Meeting at Potsdam Conference	70
4.3	President Truman Speaking	71
4.4	Soviet Missile in Cuba	75
4.5	Chiseling of Berlin Wall	81
4.6	President Clinton Commemorates Srebrenica Massacre during Yugoslav Civil War	83
5.1	The White House	94
5.2	President Joe Biden Welcomes Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany to the White House amidst Growing Tensions with Russia in Its Troop Build-Up on the Ukraine Border	99
5.3	President Biden and Members of the Cabinet	107
5.4	Capitol Building	112
5.5	Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)	119
5.6	U.S. Supreme Court Building	124
6.1	Attendees at a Rally for President Trump	130
6.2	Damage from Civil War in Aleppo, Syria	133
6.3	U.S. Troops in Syria	142
7.1	The Pentagon	157
7.2	President Kennedy Gets Advice during the Cuban Missile Crisis	162
7.3	Crowd Welcomes Soldiers Home	166

7.4	Pentagon Press Briefing with Secretary of State Austin and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Milley	168
7.5	U.S. Embassy in Berlin, Germany	173
7.6	CIA Director Gina Haspel	180
7.7	Cyber Command and NSA Headquarters	183
8.1	President Biden and Vice President Harris in Briefing with National Security Team	188
8.2	Warnings during the Spanish Flu Outbreak	192
8.3	Press Conference with Dr. Anthony Fauci	195
8.4	Anti-Mask Protest during COVID Pandemic in the U.S.	198
9.1	Pro-Immigration Interest Groups Protest at Rally to Defend DACA	210
9.2	Representative Elaine Luria (D-VA) Speaks at AIPAC Conference	216
9.3	Vice President Harris Attends United Auto Workers Strike	219
9.4	Cuban-American Rally	221
9.5	House Republicans Speaking Outside U.S. Capitol	227
10.1	Climate Change Protest	236
10.2	UN Climate Action Summit	241
10.3	U.S. and Chinese Currency Display	250
11.1	Reporters Interview Senator Tim Scott (D-SC)	258
11.2	Anti-Vaccine Protest	261
11.3	President Biden with Media at Arlington National Cemetery	266
11.4	Reporter on Location in a Foreign Country	269
12.1	WikiLeaks Protest	281
12.2	John Oliver Show Wins Emmy Award	283
12.3	Drone Operations Control Room	288
12.4	Baby Trump Balloon at Women's March in Los Angeles	293
13.1	Model United Nations Conference	299
13.2	Cybersecurity and Election Security	303

Tables

2.1	Grand Strategy Orientations	19
2.2	Major U.S. Interventions in Latin America	22
3.1	Chronological List of U.S. Expansion	54
3.2	Wilson's Fourteen Points Summarized	59
4.1	Articles I and II of the UN Charter	67
5.1	Examples of U.S. Presidential Doctrines	108
5.2	Executive–Legislative Balances of Power	113
5.3	Major Foreign Policy Committees in Congress	116
6.1	U.S. Formal Declarations of War	140
6.2	Major WPR Cases and Issues in the Post-Cold War Era	143
7.1	Recent U.S. Secretaries of State	175
7.2	U.S. Intelligence Community	181
9.1	Think Tanks: Examples of Policy Institute Programs on Foreign Affairs	223
9.2	A Brief History of U.S. Political Parties	229
11.1	Stable Public Attitudes toward Foreign Affairs	264
11.2	Highs and Lows of Public Approval Ratings	267
12.1	Satirical or Soft News Shows	284
13.1	Four Major Cybersecurity Challenges for the U.S. Government	306

Online Support Material for Teaching and Learning

- I.A. Introduction to Active Teaching and Learning
- I.B. How to Organize Structured Debates for the Classroom
- I.C. How to Organize Role-Playing Simulations for the Classroom
- I.D. Case Teaching and Problem-Based Learning for the Classroom
- I.E. How to Organize Group Research Presentations for the Classroom
- I.F. Teaching with Film
- I.G. Online Resources
- I.H. Blended and Hybrid Learning
- II.A. Syrian Civil War Supplement
- II.B. Interest Groups and Trade Supplement

Preface and Acknowledgments

This is the second edition of *US Foreign Policy in Action*, and in the eight years between editions there has been no shortage of major challenges to the nation. During the presidencies of Donald Trump and Joe Biden, the United States (U.S.) has faced a wide range of challenges. For example, even as the country commemorated the 20th anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks, the government was also struggling to extricate itself from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Biden administration moved forward with a massive public health program designed to overcome the existential challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, which killed nearly a million Americans, and to reset an economy that had been largely put on pause. It was also launching an international vaccine distribution program as the novel coronavirus continued to threaten other countries, especially developing nations. At the same time, U.S.–China trade relations were tenuous, and U.S. diplomats sought to promote cooperation on critical transnational concerns such as climate change, the rights of women and indigenous peoples, and support for liberal democracy.

The outcome of any one of these foreign policy matters was far from preordained. Indeed, this book explores the many different external and internal factors that help shape U.S. engagement in the world. On any given day, officials are trying to garner the support of allies, send signals to deter potential rivals, and build coalitions in international organizations. Key actors in the U.S. policy-making process, including the president, Congress, bureaucracies, the media, interest groups, and the public, are also engaged in lively debates about foreign policy initiatives.

This text is designed to provide a fresh perspective on critical themes in foreign policy analysis. It blends the attributes of traditional textbook coverage—of major theories, historical surveys, illustrations, and data—with interactive learning components that will promote a deeper sense of engagement with the politics of U.S. foreign policy. Material presented throughout the text is designed to stir interest with provocative questions, competing answers, and the nuances of debates that pervade the real-world policy process.

This edition of the text includes many new contributions and sections, including:

- insights on contemporary foreign policy challenges facing the Biden administration and future presidents, such as climate change, the rise of China, sanctions and trade policies, and changing U.S. engagement in the Middle East;
- stronger theoretical foundations for the study of domestic constraints in the foreign policy decision-making process, including the power of interest groups and political polarization in Congress;

- pedagogical treatments of online and hybrid learning applications, along with new exercises to engage students both in person in the classroom and online;
- more detailed and critical historical analyses of U.S. foreign policy, including greater attention to the U.S. as an imperial power and its implications for politics and society;
- new and exciting active learning exercises for instructors and students, including role-playing simulations of global public health crisis management and group research projects on cybersecurity and immigration policy;
- enriched graphics and illustrations of foreign policy actors and processes;
- analysis of contemporary foreign policy issues in the Trump and Biden administrations;
- new web components and features authored by undergraduate students who are becoming experts in U.S. foreign policy;
- new writing exercises and assignments designed to promote creative and critical thinking about foreign policy actors and processes.

Jeffrey Lantis has many people to thank for assistance in production of the first and second editions of this book. The project began with an invitation from the Wiley-Blackwell series editor, John Ishiyama, to contribute to this innovative new series focused on effective pedagogy. This was an intriguing opportunity given Jeffrey's commitment to active teaching and learning and personal fascination with the politics of U.S. foreign policy development. He is also grateful to Jennifer Knerr, the Taylor & Francis/Routledge editor who encouraged him to develop a new edition to capture the latest exciting trends in foreign policy analysis. In addition, anonymous reviewers of the manuscript offered a number of helpful suggestions.

Patrick Homan would also like to thank Jennifer Knerr at Taylor & Francis/Routledge for her energetic support of this project as well as the anonymous reviewers for their valuable feedback on the initial draft manuscript. He is also grateful for the institutional funding he received from Dominican University to work on this book, and the students from his fall 2019 section of American foreign policy who gave comments on the first edition and what they would like to see in a new version of the textbook. Patrick is forever appreciative of the patience and support of his wife, Vimla. Most of all, he would like to thank his co-author for the generous invitation to work on this second edition and his hard work and leadership throughout the project.

Together, we thank a number of student research assistants who have contributed greatly to the development of this project. Laura Shaw, Lilia Eisenstein, and Emily Hasecke all provided invaluable editorial and research assistance in the assembly of the manuscript, as well as outstanding work on web content. Student assistants for the first edition, including Isabelle Howes, Kathryn Craig, Tess Morrissey, and Emily Keizer, all helped to launch the project in the early 2010s and have gone on to successful and interesting careers of their own. Finally, we are grateful to hundreds of students who have enrolled in our United States Foreign Policy classes at The College of Wooster and Dominican University. They have approached this subject with enthusiasm and engaged in valuable critical exchanges with us every semester. This book is dedicated to serious students everywhere.

PROOF

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the Politics of U.S. Foreign Policy



PHOTO 1.1 President Biden at G7 Summit

Source: Leon Neal/PA Wire URN:60304416 (Press Association, via AP Images), www.apimages.com/metadata/Index/G7-Summit/da37f8e452a846bc988a7f53436d0f33/307/0.

The purpose of foreign policy is not to provide an outlet for our own sentiments of hope or indignation, it is to shape real events in a real world.

President John F. Kennedy (1963)¹

America is back. Diplomacy is back at the center of our foreign policy ... American leadership must meet this new moment of accelerating global challenges, from the pandemic to the climate crisis to nuclear proliferation ... but we can't do it alone. We must start with diplomacy rooted in America's most cherished democratic

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values: defending freedom, championing opportunity, upholding universal rights, respecting the rule of law, and treating every person with dignity ... That's our inexhaustible source of strength. That's America's abiding advantage.

President Joseph Biden (2021)²

U.S. foreign policy is a fast-moving, important, and exciting realm of political science that we all need to better understand. Anyone who tracks global news through newsfeeds or social media might reasonably conclude that we face a never-ending stream of developments that could impact the health, prosperity, and security of Americans. But in this world of seemingly perpetual motion, it is critical that we also take opportunities to pause and reflect, to learn more about the actors, factors, and conditions that shape U.S. foreign policy and global reactions to it, and to begin to understand them in a more systematic way. And through this learning process, we can become more engaged citizens in critical processes of policy-making.

One of those moments for reflection for people in the U.S. and around the world occurred on September 11, 2021, when they marked the 20th anniversary of the tragic terror attacks that killed nearly 3,000 Americans. This was significant, not only for commemorating those who died in the attacks, but also for what it represented: a chance to try to come to terms with all of the difficult circumstances that have affected the U.S. at home and abroad. For example, at the very same time, U.S. military leaders were beginning to make sense of the lessons of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that had led to the deaths of more than 7,000 service members and injuries to tens of thousands more. The U.S. was also struggling under the weight of a devastating pandemic that fundamentally reshaped our society and economy. President Joe Biden and his advisors were working with Congress to change the nature and scope of U.S. foreign policy commitments around the world.

Think about how the world has changed just in our lifetimes. When you were born, the U.S. was leading a global War on Terror after decades of competition with the Soviet Union in the Cold War. Rapid economic **globalization** was under way, and many considered the U.S. to be the single dominant power in the world. But over the past two decades, everything seemed to change: China's economic and political might has reordered the global **balance of power**, the Arab Spring brought both peaceful changes and intense conflicts to the Middle East, the evidence of climate change has become more acute, and immigration/refugee crises have pushed the limits of authority and legitimacy. U.S. soldiers also fought and sacrificed their lives to bring the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to a close. Even as the U.S. tried to reckon with these and other challenges, new and dire threats arose in the form of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic retrenchment, and social unrest.

America faces many foreign policy opportunities and challenges today, and how we make sense of them matters. Questions of how the U.S. will respond to them—and whether the country will even be a major player in global politics in the future—are more open-ended than one might think. Foreign policy issues often involve differing interpretations of primary values and interests, along with plenty of experimentation and adaptation to circumstances. This can be surprisingly divisive, and these issues demand that key players engage in struggles over allocations of government resources and commitments. Senator Arthur Vandenberg (R-MI) knew this when he called for partisan disagreements to stop “at the water’s edge”. Only speaking with one voice could boost America’s image and power in global politics, many believe. But even if the U.S. government adopted a **bipartisan** approach to foreign policy issues during the Cold War, today skeptics wonder whether the country can ever again “speak with one voice” on such matters.

Debates over U.S. foreign policy typically involve actors with vested interests in determining policy scope and direction. The framers of the Constitution deliberated over which branch of government should have the most authority in foreign affairs, for example. After World War I, leaders in Congress and the White House debated whether the U.S. should retreat from engagement in global affairs. Later, events like the Vietnam War and immigration policy divided the American people and their elected representatives in Washington. More recently, officials and large segments of the private sector have questioned U.S. commitments to treaties, free trade, and the future of U.S.–China relations.

Foreign policy is defined as the actions and strategies that guide government relations with the rest of the world. Foreign policy includes actions taken by states, such as providing aid, making official statements of support for another democracy, or even deploying military troops. Foreign policy is also shaped by strategies behind this behavior, such as official doctrines or policies formulated to achieve key national security interests. These actions and strategies are typically developed by elected representatives, especially the president and members of Congress. They are also influenced by unelected actors ranging from civil servants in government agencies and lobbyists to bloggers and average citizens who share information or participate directly in the process. This broad definition underscores how foreign policy is the product of a complex mix of actors and actions. It also highlights the degree of surprise, drama, and unpredictability in the **foreign policy process**.

Most foreign policy decisions are the result of elaborate decision-making processes. These processes can be noble, such as when government officials respectfully disagree over the best path for future policies and patiently exchange views in an effort to find reasonable compromise. They can be also complicated, like when players consider both short- and long-term implications of their actions in relation to political commitments. Or they can be tough political street fights in which powerful groups line up on both sides of a controversial issue in an attempt to shape the final outcome, creating clear winners and losers.

In many ways, the COVID-19 pandemic and the dramatic shock that it posed to the global community also pushed us to rethink foreign policy commitments and the pros and cons of “business as usual”. Former Director of the Centers for Disease Control Dr. Tom Frieden called the struggle that ensued “World War C” to denote its significance.³ Efforts to respond to the spread of a deadly virus pushed all countries to experimentation and rapid adaptation: international travel ground to a halt, trade was interrupted, treaties were ruptured, and our ways of operating had to be radically overhauled. As devastating as this crisis was, though, it was also a moment for reflection on what values and commitments would endure for the U.S. and its allies. It underscored the power of innovation and experimentation in the face of adversity, and this book highlights how these lessons carry over from the White House to the United Nations system to the classroom.

This book is designed to bring the politics of U.S. foreign policy to life. It describes the historical foundations that have made this country what it is today, but it also encourages us to question some aspects of the system, institutions, and processes. It uses the prism of political debate and discourse as a foundation to consider the grand experiment of U.S. foreign policy that is underway *today* and will develop *tomorrow* in potentially new and unforeseen ways. By offering a synthesis of traditional content (theoretical frameworks and historical coverage) and interactive exercises, it encourages critical reflection on contending perspectives in political debates and allows us to learn more about foreign policy dilemmas through engagement.

This book also leverages some of the best trends in both politics and pedagogy—including increased access to information in the digital age, reactions to fast-changing circumstances,



PHOTO 1.2 Conductor with a World Map

Source: Ikon Images, via AP Images, www.apimages.com/metadata/Index/11591937/8240ceacb89641279b98ca5a884a8d49/134/0.

and innovative critical dialogues—to help us critically analyze the foreign policy decision-making process. Blended and hybrid learning exercises, along with group research projects and policy briefings, help us to understand foreign policy tradeoffs through debate, exchange, and experimentation. And our hope is that the level of knowledge and engagement that students gain will help promote political participation and active global citizenship.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

The history of the United States of America includes many common reference points, but it is not a singular story. Instead, it might best be understood from the founding to today as defined by a set of competing narratives and values, and debates over interpretation of those values in a changing world. Actors with convictions formulate foreign policy. These many actors—women and men, philosophers and pundits, students and diplomats, voters and civil servants—are all stewards of U.S. foreign policy. They have personally vested themselves in the foreign policy process to achieve desired ends. Moreover, they frequently disagree over historical narratives and the proper conduct of foreign policy. These differences matter.⁴

U.S. history began well before the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the adoption of the Constitution in 1787. The first settlers arrived in the New World over a century

earlier and launched what would become a grand and complex experiment. And like the generations that followed, these stewards disagreed over the values and principles that would define our nation, offering contending narratives on the meaning and purpose of the new nation. Fast-forward from the founding of the country to other formative developments that featured contested narratives: President Abraham Lincoln (1861–1865) had to manage scores of foreign policy challenges during the Civil War, while at the same time managing significant dissent inside his own Cabinet. Nearly a century later, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his advisors struggled over how to respond to a global economic depression before the U.S. plunged into yet another major war. Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson struggled with Congress over the limits of U.S. **containment** policy. At the same time, leaders looked at the world, and how to respond to global challenges and opportunities, through the lens of their own personal convictions and knowledge of domestic political constraints.

Profound debates over U.S. foreign policy and experimentation did not end in the post-Cold War era. Far from it. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, President Bush enjoyed high public approval ratings, and Congress acted in bipartisan ways to support major foreign policy initiatives. These included backing the war in Afghanistan, passing legislation that may have curtailed civil liberties, and even authorizing the invasion of Iraq. Yet by the start of the Iraq War in March 2003, Americans had become deeply divided over the direction of U.S. foreign policy. Nearly as quickly as the Bush administration gained support for an assertive foreign policy agenda, consensus faded and the American people entered into a bitter and partisan period. Those divisions played out in the 2008 presidential election in competition for votes in “red” and “blue” states—the outcome of which was considered a referendum on the eight years of the former Bush administration.

President Obama faced a number of foreign policy challenges during his eight years in office, and he had to work with Congress to adapt to difficult and unexpected circumstances. For example, the “Arab Spring” of democratic revolutions in former authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and North Africa in 2011 presented both opportunities and dilemmas for the US. As the Egyptian dictatorship of Hosni Mubarak teetered on the brink of collapse, facing a popular revolution centered in Tahrir Square in Cairo, the president faced a tough choice: Egypt was a long-time ally of the U.S., and Mubarak had served as a critical voice for moderation in the Middle East for decades. Accordingly, President Obama seemed caught between **idealism** and **pragmatism**. Should the administration back a long-time ally of the U.S. against a popular uprising, or should they pressure Mubarak to leave office? In the end, Obama chose to bet on the future and advised Mubarak to step down in February 2011.⁵ As the Arab Spring played out in complex ways in the years that followed, though, Egypt again lurched from democracy to dictatorship.

The Donald Trump administration brought debates about U.S. engagement with the world into stark relief. President Trump took office on an “America First” platform that was inherently improvisational. He pledged to challenge government “business as usual” and began pushing his advisors to make dramatic changes in foreign policy. Trump ordered dramatic new limits on immigration to the U.S., for example, and challenged cooperation with traditional allies. In 2017, the president announced U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord on climate change, and in 2018, the U.S. left the Iran nuclear deal (known as the Joint Committee Program of Action, or JCPOA). By 2019, Trump had forced resignations of a number of top administration officials who had initially tried to block or slow his policy proposals. Seemingly unfettered, the president announced U.S. withdrawal from the



PHOTO 1.3 President Trump Confronted by Allies

Source: Jesco Denzel/German Federal Government, via AP Images, www.apimages.com/metadata/Index/Germany-Merkel-4-Presidents/9f6d7a1bca2243aaadb11e14214f6ed2/751/0.

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, imposed new sanctions on China, and sharply restricted travel and immigration at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁶

FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGES IN THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

President Joe Biden inherited a number of challenges when he took office in 2021. The most immediate and severe of these was the COVID-19 pandemic along with economic and social unrest. Biden leaned in to the debate over global health policy and rejoined the World Health Organization (WHO) that Trump had left. He also oversaw the dramatic expansion of federal government involvement in COVID-19 vaccine production and distribution. Regarding foreign affairs, the president began working closely with a trusted team of advisors to consider important questions like:

- How should the U.S. work with other countries and organizations to achieve global health and prosperity?
- Should the U.S. withdraw from the WHO, for example?
- In the wake of the global economic crisis associated with COVID-19, should the U.S. liberalize or restrict its trade policies to promote economic growth?
- Should the U.S. continue to engage with Russia, especially after evidence that Russia tampered in U.S. democratic elections and threatened Ukrainian sovereignty?

- How can the U.S. balance contending pressures in relations with China, such as human rights concerns versus strengthening economic ties?
- What type of immigration policy reforms can the U.S. achieve after decades of disputes?
- How cooperative should the U.S. government be in international negotiations on the environment? Should the U.S. accept dramatic limits in greenhouse gas emission in order to become a leader on climate change solutions?
- How can the administration improve U.S. relations with developing countries? Would a rapid influx of foreign assistance funds help some countries to escape the poverty trap?

Once again, the answers to these contemporary questions must be seen as a function of both international challenges and domestic political struggle, involving a fascinating mix of players.

THE U.S. AND THE WORLD: FOREIGN POLICY-MAKING IN PERSPECTIVE

This book explores foreign policy development in the US. At the same time, it also recognizes that the U.S. is one of nearly 200 countries in the world today. All governments are continually experimenting and adapting to circumstances: they are crafting and refining their foreign policy agendas to deal with external opportunities and challenges. Scholars of **foreign policy analysis (FPA)** study the interactions of these states every day, taking the pulse of global politics in a busy world. Foreign policy analysts also compare these actions and processes in order to develop and test generalizable theories.⁷

One of the common nodes of comparison of governments and their behavior revolves around “regime type”, or the type of government system. There are different categories of regimes, including presidential democracies, parliamentary democracies, and authoritarian systems. Studies of foreign policy decision-making in democracies in comparative perspective examine a variety of actors, factors, and institutions of significance. These include leaders and executive institutions, variation in structures, institutions and decision-making processes within regime types, the interaction of agents with organizational structures, and policy development and adjustments.⁸

In some ways, the U.S. might be seen as representative of many democracies around the world, yet in others, it is distinctive. In **presidential systems** like the U.S., the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Indonesia, France, and others, the constitution grants the president significant foreign policy powers, including the authority to ensure that laws are executed or implemented. Presidents, working closely with their ministers of defense and foreign affairs, typically assert day-to-day management oversight of the military. As a result, in the U.S., presidents have made nearly all decisions about fighting wars and the deployment of soldiers in peacetime and wartime, with surprisingly little input from Congress.

Executive power and influence can take other forms in democracies, and is especially apparent in non-democracies with authoritarian leaders. Prime ministers in **parliamentary systems** enjoy formal power as the head of the majority party or coalition in government, and political parties play especially important roles in organizing political factions. Parliamentary democracies abound, in countries as diverse as the United Kingdom, Botswana, and India. These power structures vary across parliamentary systems (e.g., differences in formalized authority and offices between Australia and the United Kingdom), but they nevertheless grant substantial power to the executive.⁹ Meanwhile, leaders of **authoritarian systems** often

possess even greater executive power over foreign policy. Autocrats rule by consolidated, centralized power structures, and they exert authority that is either constitutionally or extra-constitutionally derived. Authoritarian systems provide power and control over pathways and directions for foreign policy development.¹⁰ Leaders of personalist regimes typically control all major instruments of state power (e.g., Kim Jong-un in North Korea) and eliminate rivals. Military dictatorships in countries like Thailand and Mali represent systems of strict control. Other types of authoritarian regimes can include more dispersal of power across a set of autonomous actors. These may be more common characteristics of theocratic regimes (e.g., the Islamic Republic of Iran) and systems where power is shared between civilian and military authorities.¹¹

These differences may have profound effects on foreign policy development. For example, one of the most common theoretical arguments in FPA relates to whether and how democratic states are more cooperative or conflictual in international affairs. The “**democratic peace thesis**” asserts that democratic countries are more cooperative and friendly toward other democratic states, while the relationship between democratic and authoritarian states could be equally cooperative or conflictual. These arguments represent an interesting FPA link to theories that are more complicated and debated.¹² Other interesting questions arise regarding how government leaders in different countries view their international “role”, with significant impacts on behaviors like foreign assistance contributions to developing countries, contributions to international peacekeeping operations, and mediation and conflict resolution.¹³ All of these questions are interesting in relation to our understanding of U.S. foreign policy.

ONLINE SUPPORT MATERIAL

Component I.A. provides a valuable introduction to the philosophy and practice of active teaching and learning. It emphasizes ways that this textbook builds on best practices in promoting student engagement and ownership of critical knowledge regarding U.S. foreign policy.

MAJOR ACTORS IN THE FOREIGN POLICY PROCESS

As exciting as comparisons of country behavior can be, this book will focus on the roles of key actors involved in formulating U.S. foreign policy. One major force shaping U.S. foreign policy is external: global political developments impact the policy process every day. Had Communist North Korean forces not invaded South Korea in June 1950, for example, President Harry Truman would not have deployed hundreds of thousands of U.S. soldiers to fight there. Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990 triggered a response by the U.S. as it felt the region’s power dynamic might threaten global energy supplies. Russian intervention in the U.S. elections in 2016 led Congress to institute major **economic sanctions**; the novel coronavirus pandemic that originated in China caused massive disruptions in foreign economic and immigration policies around the world. Indeed, there are countless ways in which world politics can impact U.S. foreign policy—from debates in the U.S. about immigration policy to responding to pressures from Middle East countries for Israel to dismantle its

nuclear weapons. Events in the international system essentially force the U.S. to grapple with some very difficult issues.

In the domestic arena, this book begins with an examination of the role of the president and the executive branch of government in foreign policy development. The U.S. has had only 46 presidents. Directly elected by the people, many presidents profoundly impact policy during their terms of office. Indeed, these leaders often make their mark on history through major foreign policy statements and decisions—such as President Jefferson’s leadership in expanding the nation’s territory at the turn of the 19th century to President Kennedy’s management of the Cuban Missile Crisis in the 1960s (see Chapters 2 and 3). The U.S. Constitution vests the president with significant foreign policy authority. The president serves as Commander-in-Chief of the armed services; presidential envoys negotiate treaties with foreign countries on issues ranging from free trade to international criminal investigations. And the president must sign and implement legislation that passes through Congress related to U.S. foreign policy.

The U.S. Congress also has a significant impact on foreign policy. In fact, the Constitution vests Congress with significant power over domestic and foreign policy. Indeed, many experts believe the framers intended Congress to have stronger policy authority than the president. Congress has the power to declare war—the ultimate foreign policy commitment—and the power to legislate, and make laws that govern behavior of our citizens and foreign relations. While the president negotiates international treaties, the U.S. Senate is given the power to ratify them with a two-thirds majority vote. Congress has other significant “checks” over presidential authority, including the right to approve the president’s nominees to top political offices and control over government spending. Perhaps most importantly, Congress has exercised these powers in relation to U.S. dealings with the world. Given that Congress is powerful in foreign affairs, and has been directly elected by voters to whom its members are beholden, this provides a channel for you to influence the foreign policy process.

The judicial branch of government is represented most visibly by the Supreme Court and a large network of federal and state-level courts throughout the US. The judicial branch has the authority to interpret the constitutionality of laws of the nation. From time to time, the courts address issues of significance in foreign affairs. The Supreme Court is made up of presidential nominees for life, and the broader judicial system often represents the people in efforts to establish boundaries for policy conduct. Recent Supreme Court decisions that have impacted foreign policy include actions on U.S. federal government policy on immigration as well as “detainees” in the War on Terror.

This text also surveys the role of unelected actors in the foreign policy process, including **bureaucracies**, **interest groups**, the media, and public opinion. For example, the U.S. Department of State employs thousands of highly trained civil servants who are involved in international negotiations on a range of issues. The Department of Energy deploys experts around the world to learn about the latest research on renewable energy supplies. The Department of Defense stations troops around the world to deter aggression and provide relief in humanitarian or natural disasters. Interest groups are fascinating organizations that try to influence the policy process by lobbying the government. Political party organizations can play powerful roles in the policy process by shaping decisions taken by elected officials at the local, state, or national levels of government. The media reports on developments in the nation and the world that might affect Americans, and its coverage can influence the policy process. Finally, scholars have studied the potential impact of public attitudes on foreign policy development, finding direct and indirect effects on policy.

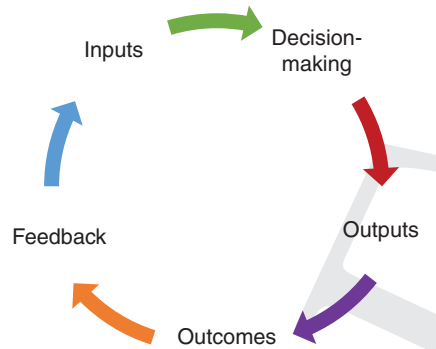


FIGURE 1.1 The Process of Foreign Policy-Making

Source: Adapted from Ralph Carter, *Making US Foreign Policy: The Essentials*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2020), p.4.

Each of these actors is a participant in this process (see Figure 1.1) and worthy of more focused consideration. And so are you. Your level of engagement in local, regional, and national politics can have a direct impact on foreign policy. Consider the ways a local candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives views a foreign policy challenge or dilemma. The candidate would appreciate your support, perhaps through volunteering for their campaign or working in their district office. Now multiply the voice of your representative by the hundreds of others that share their views and imagine the combined impact on foreign policy. Or perhaps you prefer a more direct route to influence through government service: You could excel in international studies at your university or college, score well on the Foreign Service Officer exam, and work for the U.S. Department of State. Following a few years of training and gaining experience, you could be an official representative of the U.S. engaged in international diplomacy while serving at an embassy, consulate, or mission overseas. If you prefer behind-the-scenes work, why not start by volunteering for a local group or supporting a cause you care about, like the environment or human rights. Volunteer work like this could lead to grassroots lobbying and advocacy for policy at the local, state, or national level. Right now, there are tens of thousands of young people working on campaigns, studying politics, going door-to-door for petition drives, and working in Washington. They have a significant impact on domestic and foreign policy every day.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH: HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book provides an exciting survey of the politics of U.S. foreign policy as well as innovative active learning frameworks to promote engagement with issues. In addition to presenting major theories of foreign policy and historical developments, many chapters feature interactive exercises designed to open additional avenues of investigation and deepen learning. These exercises have been used successfully and updated in accord with contemporary developments in foreign policy. In other words, the book presents exercises that are student-centered and student-tested.

Notably, some of the innovations in this text have also been inspired by adaptations during the COVID-19 pandemic and the higher education literature on blended learning

and hybrid learning to promote student engagement. Among those techniques that gained newfound attention during the pandemic were creating “blended” learning environments and “flipping” the classroom by incorporating a mix of synchronous and asynchronous activities. This book recognizes these innovations and encourages instructors to seize the “teaching moment” in their own ways and to contribute to this new burst of creativity and pedagogical innovation.

The general philosophy behind active teaching and learning focuses on the use of instructional techniques for meaningful student engagement in the discovery of knowledge.¹⁴ The conscious selection of goals for the classroom and methods for teaching help create a sense of purpose in the educational process. Active learning also means collaboration—a commitment on the part of instructors and students to enliven the educational environment. Educational objectives of these approaches include:

- promoting a deeper understanding of the concepts being taught;
- allowing students to make conceptual linkages between theory and real-world examples;
- increasing retention of knowledge.¹⁵

These exercises help promote effective learning cycles, challenging students to take risks and express their views on complex and controversial issues.¹⁶ Furthermore, this approach views learning as a both a means and an end—a process of discovery that leads to the critical construction of knowledge. Interactive exercises create positive, powerful, and effective learning environments. They promote engagement with material, encourage critical thinking, and can contribute to responsible global citizenship.¹⁷

This text is also designed to stir interest and engagement in real-world policy processes by providing fresh perspectives on critical themes in foreign policy analysis. It features provocative questions, competing answers, and numerous exercises designed to promote critical thinking and encourage reasoned argumentation.¹⁸ This approach is consistent with trends in higher education, including the desire for more creative, discussion-based styles of teaching.

This book draws from these advancements in pedagogy, and offers innovative features including:

- **Major Interactive Learning Tools:** Chapters 5–13 blend theory and narrative content with interactive exercises, including structured debates, collaborative team learning projects, teaching case studies, and a role-play simulation. Each exercise features background information, document templates, worksheets, suggested readings, and additional resources for easy implementation.
- **Learning through Technology:** The book references technology advances, including Zoom meetings, blogs, Flipgrid, Hoonuit, Twitter, and YouTube, that allow us to connect with international affairs, both as observers and participants.¹⁹ A number of chapters feature Learning through Technology exercises that promote discovery of knowledge.
- **“Exploring Further” Features:** These boxes provide transcripts of classic speeches by U.S. presidents as well as congressional declarations. These offer first-hand materials for students to read, analyze, and critically discuss.
- **“Case in Point” Features:** These boxes examine real-world illustrations of theories and issues discussed thematically in the text. They offer mini-case studies, background information on key personalities and issues in contemporary foreign policy, and additional resources and exercises.

- Discussion Questions: Many chapters include thought-provoking questions for class discussions; these also help gauge student comprehension of key theories, concepts, and historical information.
- Engaging Tables, Graphics, and Figures: These data, graphics, tables, and figures all relate to broader chapter themes, and serve to illustrate important theories. Data presented in tables and figures are relevant for discussion and critical analysis of themes in chapters.
- Online Support Material: There are numerous links throughout the text to support material hosted on the online webpage for the book. These web components complement the text and provide avenues for further exploration of important themes. The URL for this website is www.routledge.com/9780367616021. Component I features a series of active teaching guides for instructors (e.g., how to organize structured debates and create optimal conditions for group research project success). Component II materials offer additional background information and ideas to investigate specific topics.

In summary, this textbook was designed to help readers experience real-world challenges in foreign policy—and develop a deeper understanding of events. Theoretical frameworks assist us to make sense of the complexity of foreign policy decision-making, and analytical exercises provide greater depth of knowledge. Material is presented to aid students in summarizing and keeping track of various explanations of events covered from the different perspectives and levels of analysis. Furthermore, theory connections are linked to real-world developments. Taken together, these approaches will help readers become better-informed U.S. and global citizens.

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

This book is organized as both a survey of U.S. foreign policy and a vehicle for indirect engagement in the process of foreign policy development. The chapters provide an overview of major theoretical traditions in the study of U.S. foreign policy paired with historical coverage and, often, active learning exercises that engage students with complex, contemporary foreign policy problems.

Chapter 2 introduces broad questions surrounding U.S. foreign policy development through the lens of grand strategy and competing narratives for foreign policy. Chapters 3 and 4 provide an introduction to the history of U.S. foreign policy development as a noble struggle between values and interests. Next, Chapter 5 provides an introduction to the major institutions and theories, including the presidency and Congress, along with the court system. Chapter 6 features an active learning exercise on the struggle between the executive and legislative branches of government over the War on Terror. Chapter 7 introduces major theories of bureaucratic politics, both traditional and contemporary, and examines the influence of select executive branch agencies in detail, including the Departments of State, Defense, and intelligence agencies. Chapter 8 details a role-playing simulation of a National Security Council emergency meeting.

Chapters 9 and 10 of the book explore the power of interest groups and unelected actors in the policy process. They include a critical examination of contemporary lobbying practices and the role of ideology and political party organizations in shaping foreign policy patterns over time. Students also engage with the challenging question of the role of interest groups in policy-making through the teaching case method. Chapter 11 explores theories of “public” influence on foreign policy, examining the role of the media and public opinion. Chapter 12

features a fascinating set of collaborative learning exercises. Assignment topics include critical examination of the theme of “fake news”, the controversial role of “soft media” programs like Hasan Minhaj’s *Patriot Act* on Netflix or John Oliver’s *Last Week Tonight* on HBO Max in shaping public attitudes, and government secrecy debates and the public’s “right to know” about U.S. foreign policy.

Finally, Chapter 13 presents blended learning exercises to explore critical issues like cybersecurity and global public health, and it further reflects the spirit of adaptation and experimentation that permeates this book.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What do you think are the most important values that the U.S. holds dear in relation to global politics?
- 2 Who are the most important actors that shape foreign policy, and why?
- 3 How *democratic* is the U.S. foreign policy process, and how democratic should it really be?
- 4 What did the COVID-19 pandemic teach us about U.S. engagement in the world? In your opinion, should the U.S. engage more or less with the world in the future, and why?
- 5 How interested are you personally in becoming an active participant in the foreign policy process? Would you ever work for the government, for example, or participate in other ways in trying to influence foreign policy?
- 6 Finally, what is the most important foreign policy concern facing the U.S. today and in the future?

KEY TERMS

authoritarian systems
balance of power
bipartisan
bureaucracies
containment
democratic peace thesis
economic sanctions
foreign policy

foreign policy analysis
globalization
idealism
interest groups
parliamentary systems
policy process
pragmatism
presidential systems

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