

**Senior Capstone:
Geopolitics and America's Role in the World**
DePaul University

Scott W. Hibbard
Office: Room 2105, 990 W Fullerton
Tel: (773) 325-7542
Office Hrs: Tues 1:30-4:30 PM and by appointment
shibbar1@depaul.edu

PSC 390, Sec 301
Spring 2016
Arts and Letters Hall, 306
Mon - Wed, 1:00-2:30 pm

Course Description:

In this class, we will be reading a series of books and articles related to international relations, American foreign policy and geopolitics. The central theme of the course will be how the United States government pursues (and ought to pursue) both its interests and its values in a changing international context. The course will be run as a graduate school seminar, with an emphasis on dialogue and discussion. Insofar as the Capstone course is meant to be a culmination of your undergraduate education, this seminar will allow you to bring the ideas and insights derived from other courses to bear on a new set of readings. Part of the class will be dedicated to thinking strategically – that is, from a geopolitical perspective – about contemporary inter-state relations and the role of the United States in the world.

Course Requirements:

Each student is expected to read the assigned material before class and to be prepared to discuss its contents each week. Class attendance and participation is mandatory, and will comprise 10 percent of your grade. Part of the participation requirement will include student presentations/directed discussion in the latter part of the course. There will also be a midterm exam, and a take home final exam (each worth 40 percent of your grade). Finally, there is a reflective writing assignment (5 to 7 pages) worth 10 percent of your grade. More on the writing assignment can be found on the course D2L website.

Required Reading

The texts listed below are available in the school bookstore. Asterisked readings (*) will be available electronically through the course D2L site.

Books to purchase:

- Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*
- Andrew Bacevich, *The Imperial Tense: Prospects and Problems of American Empire*
- Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership (selections)*.
- George Friedman, *The Next Decade: Empire and Republic in a Changing World*

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the effort to pass someone else's work off as one's own. This includes turning in papers that you did not write, cutting and pasting material from the internet without proper citation, or turning in a paper that you purchased either on-line or from another source. Any paper submitted with plagiarized material will result in a failing grade for the assignment. More than one infraction will lead to your failing the course. For more on the University policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty, see the DePaul Student Handbook, which is available on the DePaul University Website.

Learning Disabilities: For students with learning disabilities, please contact me at the beginning of the course. The school has a clear policy on this issue, and I am happy to accommodate students with legitimate needs. All conversations along these lines will remain in confidence. You should also be in touch with the CSD Program office, which is located in the Student Center (Room 370).

Technology: The use of cell phones, tablets and laptops is prohibited in the classroom without prior permission.

About the Capstone: The capstone course is intended to provide graduating seniors an opportunity to reflect upon their college experience, and to review various issues and ideas from earlier classes within the context of a particular topic. As a Political Science Capstone, the goal of this particular course is to examine the dynamics of international politics from a broader perspective. This course, in short, is meant to look at the 'big picture' in inter-state relations, and America's role in the world. A second feature of the class will be to think about the nature of a liberal arts education, which will be taken up in Week 8. This will also be the topic of your paper assignment.

In short, the goal of the Capstone is to help you make the connections between the courses that you have taken within your major and their relation to (1) your education writ large and (2) your life beyond DePaul. This idea is embodied in the three learning outcomes identified by the University for all Capstone courses:

1. Apply one or more theories or concepts from courses within the major to an analysis of a particular issue relevant to the major.
2. Identify an idea, method, or concept from a discipline outside the major field of study and apply it within the context of their major field of study.
3. Examine how previous coursework, including Liberal Studies courses, has contributed to the intellectual development of students and/or their post-graduation plans.

Students must receive at least a C- in order to get credit for the capstone course and, hence, to graduate.

Schedule and Readings

Week 1: Introduction (March 28, 30)

Class 1: Introduction

Class 2: Geo-Politics Part I

-*The Geopolitics Reader*, pp. 1 – 31

Week 2: Geopolitics (Part II) (April 4, 6)

Class 1: German Geopolitical Thought

-*The Geopolitics Reader*, pp. 33 - 43

-Geoffrey Parker, *Origins of Western Geopolitical Thought*, Chapters 5.*

Class 2: The Liberal (American) Alternative

-Henry Luce, “The American Century,” *Life Magazine*, February 17, 1941.*

-*The Geopolitics Reader*, pp. 32.

-H.G. Wells (et. al.), *The Idea of A League of Nations* (pp. 3-16 only)

-John Ikenberry, “Liberal Internationalism 3.0: America and the Dilemmas of Liberal World Order,” *Perspectives on Politics*, March 2009.*

Week 3: Cold War (and Post-Cold War) Geopolitics (April 11, 13)

-*The Geopolitics Reader*, pp. 47 – 65, 69 – 73, 78 – 111, 131 – 135, and 155 – 158.*

-Charles Krauthammer, “Unipolar Moment Revisited,” in Bacevich, *The Imperial Tense*.

Week 4: Niebuhr (April 18, 20)

Class 1 & 2: Niebuhr

Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and The Children of Darkness*, Introduction, Chapters 1, 4 and 5.

Week 5: America and Empire (April 25, 27)

Class 1 & 2: America and Empire

-Andrew Bacevich, ed., *The Imperial Tense: Prospects and Problems of American Empire*. Class 1: Chapters by Bush, Lal, North, Bender and Bacevich. Class 2: Chapters by Chace, Maier, Rosen and Kurth.

Week 6: Midterm Week (May 2, 4)

-Midterm exam on May 4. No class on May 2.

Week 7: Brezinski (May 9, 11)

Class 1 & 2: Zbigniew Brezinski

- Zbigniew Brezinski, *The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership* (selections).

Week 8: Liberal Education (May 16, 18)

Class 1 & 2: Liberal Arts Education

-Louis Menand, “Live and Learn: Why We have College,” *The New Yorker*, June 6, 2011.*

-Chop, Frost and Weiss, *Remaking College: Innovation and the Liberal Arts* (Johns

Hopkins University Press, 2014), Chapters 1 and 3.*

-Tamar Lewan, "As Interest Fades in the Humanities, Colleges Worry," *The New York Times*, October 30, 2013.*

-Gov. McCrory (R-NC) critique of Liberal Arts Education.*

-Pew Research Center, *The Rising Cost of Not Going to College* (2014), Overview only.*

-Harvard Taskforce Report on Liberal Education.*

-DePaul Liberal Studies Program Description and Supporting Material.*

Week 9: George Friedman (May 23, 24)

Class 1 & 2: George Friedman

-George Friedman, *The Next Decade: Empire and Republic in a Changing World*, Introduction, Chapters 1 – 5, 7, 8.

Week 10: George Friedman (May 30, June 1)

Class 1: No Class Meeting (Memorial Day)

Class 2: Bacevich vs. Kagan

-George Friedman, *The Next Decade*, Chapters 10, 13, 14.

-Robert Kagan, "Superpowers Don't Get to Retire," *The New Republic*, May 26, 2014.*

-Andrew Bacevich, "The Duplicity of the Ideologues," *Commonweal*, June 4, 2014.*

Last Day of Classes for the Spring Quarter: June 3.

Take Home Final Exam: Due on Wednesday, June 8, 2016, 5:00 pm. Final Papers are due on Friday, May 10, 2016, 5:00 pm.