

**POLISCI 312 | INTLPOL 211 | REES 219**

**A New Cold War?  
Great Power Relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Term:** Spring 2026

**Units:** 3-5 units (undergraduates enroll for 5 units)

**Instructor:** Michael McFaul

**Room:** 160-323, Wallenberg Hall, Main Quad

**Time:** Mondays

**Course Description**

When the Cold War ended in 1991, it was a glorious moment to be an American, multilateralist, and liberal democrat. The Soviet Union disintegrated, and it seemed like the whole world wanted to become a democracy and join the democratic community of states. The United States was the only superpower in the world. And the liberal international order, punctuated by the U.S.-led war against Iraq to restore Kuwaiti sovereignty, seemed to be working.

Today, great power competition is back, with many analysts describing our current era as a “New Cold War” between the United States, China, and Russia. How did we go from euphoria surrounding democracy, globalization, and the West three decades ago to current uncertainty about democracy and the liberal international order and fear about the rise of illiberal great powers? Is the Cold War label an illuminating or distorting analogy, and how stable or enduring is this current moment of global confrontation? The course seeks to answer these questions and analyze contemporary great power relations more broadly.

We will begin by reviewing major theories that explain relations between great powers. The second part of the course traces the historical origins of the U.S.-Russia and U.S.-China relations, examining the interplay between three central drivers of international relations—power, regime types, and leaders—over time. In the third part of the course, we will assess the similarities and differences between the Cold War and U.S.-Russia relations and U.S.-China relations today along three dimensions in the international system: (1) power, (2) ideology, and (3) competing conceptions of global order. The fourth and final part of the course will discuss future scenarios and policy recommendations for how U.S. leaders can meet the challenge of great power competition in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The main text for this course is *Autocrats vs. Democrats: China, Russia, America, and the New World Disorder*, along with accompanying books and articles.

**Office Hours:**

Thursday afternoons and by appointment only.

## Assignments

Students are expected to attend every class and complete all required readings before each session, which we will use to stimulate discussion. Because this course is a seminar, sessions will be highly participatory. You must come prepared to participate actively in all sessions. **At a minimum, to receive full participation points, you should be prepared to make at least one substantive comment or ask one substantive question every session.**

Students with an excused absence must notify the course assistant in writing before the start of class.

From weeks five to eight, students will start off the discussion by presenting their short papers (3-5 pages). You need to define key terms (e.g., power and ideology) and reference the political theory we studied in class. Short papers must be completed and uploaded on Canvas **on Saturday at 11:59 pm before the seminar**, during which you are scheduled to present. This will give everyone a day to read these short papers. We will assign paper topics during the second session of the course.

For the final paper, you have two options: (1) a theoretical essay explaining great power competition or (2) a research paper on one aspect of great power competition. Your paper, no matter which option you choose, must reference the theories we studied in class and be up to 15 pages in length, double-spaced. The deadline for the final paper is June 8, 2026, at 11:59 pm.

If you use AI in writing your final paper, please explain in an appendix exactly how you did so.

## Evaluation

30%: class participation

20%: presentation and midterm paper

50%: final paper

## Academic Accommodations

Students who need academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with the required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty. Unless the student has a temporary disability, Accommodation Letters are issued for the entire academic year. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 650-723-1066, <https://oae.stanford.edu/>).

## Course Materials

*Autocrats vs. Democrats* is available for purchase the bookstore. Chapters of *Autocrats vs. Democrats* and select readings will be posted on Canvas. You can access academic articles as well as articles from major media with your Stanford login. See [here](#) and [here](#).

# COURSE SCHEDULE

## Week 1: Introduction

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Date: Monday, March 30, 2026

### Required:

Chapter 1 – Introduction: New Cold War?

National Security Strategy of the United States of America. Washington, DC: The White House, November 2025. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-National-Security-Strategy.pdf>.

McFaul, Michael. “How I Teach at Stanford.” *McFaul’s World*. September 25, 2025. <https://michaelmcfaul.substack.com/p/how-i-teach-at-stanford>.

McFaul, Michael. “Can You Be a Social Scientist and a Policy Advocate at the Same Time?” *McFaul’s World*. January 11, 2023. <https://michaelmcfaul.substack.com/p/can-you-be-a-social-scientist-and>

### Recommended:

Christensen, Thomas J. “There Will Not Be a New Cold War: The Limits of U.S.-Chinese Competition.” *Foreign Affairs*, March 24, 2021. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-03-24/there-will-not-be-new-cold-war>.

Ferguson, Niall. “The New Cold War? It’s With China, and It Has Already Begun.” *The New York Times*, December 2, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/02/opinion/china-cold-war.html>.

Fu, Ying. “Cooperative Competition Is Possible Between China and the U.S.” *The New York Times*, November 24, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/opinion/china-us-biden.html>.

Karabell, Zachary. “There’s No Cold War with China.” *Foreign Policy*, August 14, 2020. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/08/14/cold-war-china-misuse-of-history-united-states-soviet-union/>.

Kim, Patricia, Matt Turpin, Joseph S. Nye Jr., Jessica Chen Weiss, Eun A. Jo, Ryan Hass, and Emilie Kimball. “Should the United States Pursue a New Cold War with China?” *Brookings Institution*, September 1, 2023. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/should-the-us-pursue-a-new-cold-war-with-china/>.

McMaster, H. R. “Testimony Before the U.S. House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party.” February 28, 2023.

<https://www.congress.gov/118/meeting/house/115402/witnesses/HHRG-118-ZS00-Wstate-McMasterH-20230228.pdf>.

Polyakova, Alina. "Are the United States and Russia in a New Cold War?" *Brookings Institution*, January 20, 2019. <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/are-u-s-and-russia-in-a-new-cold-war/>.

Yang, Jiemian. "The Ideological Origins and Theoretical Basis of the United States' Perception of China as a 'Major Threat'" [美国视中国为《主要威胁》的思想溯源和理论依据]. *International Outlook* 1, no. 1 (January 2023). English translation available via *Sinification* Substack.

Zhang, Weiwei. "Creating Chaos and Turmoil, the Myth of American Democracy Is Shattered—The United States Incites 'Color Revolutions' and Endangers World Peace and Stability" [制造混乱动荡，美式民主神话破灭—美国煽动“颜色革命”危害世界和平稳定]. *People's Daily* [人民日报], September 20, 2022. In [English](#). In [Mandarin](#).

## Week 2: Realism

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Date: Monday, April 6, 2026

### Required:

Mearsheimer, John J. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014.

- Chapter 1: "Introduction."
- Chapter 2: "Anarchy and the Struggle for Power."

Krasner, Stephen D. *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978.

- Chapter 1.
- "Conclusions and Prospects."

Fearon, James D. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995): 379–414.

Holsti, Ole R. "Models of International Relations and Foreign Policy." In *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays*, edited by G. John Ikenberry and Peter L. Trubowitz, 13–34. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Waltz, Kenneth N. "Anarchic Orders and Balances of Power." In *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays*, edited by G. John Ikenberry and Peter L. Trubowitz, 55–72. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Snyder, Jack. "One World, Rival Theories." *Foreign Policy*, October 26, 2009.  
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/26/one-world-rival-theories/>.

Goldgeier, James, and Michael McFaul. "A Tale of Two Worlds: Core and Periphery in the Post–Cold War Era." *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 467–491.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300027788>.

### **Recommended:**

Nau, Henry R. *Perspectives on International Relations: Power, Institutions, and Ideas*. 6th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press, 2019.  
[https://ocd.lcwu.edu.pk/cfiles/Political%20Science/EC/Pol.Sc-501/Henry\\_R.\\_Nau\\_Perspectives\\_on\\_International\\_Relatz-lib2.org1.pdf](https://ocd.lcwu.edu.pk/cfiles/Political%20Science/EC/Pol.Sc-501/Henry_R._Nau_Perspectives_on_International_Relatz-lib2.org1.pdf)

- Chapter 5: "How to Think about International Relations: Perspectives, Levels of Analysis, and Causal Arrows."

Jervis, Robert. "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma." *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (January 1978): 167–214.  
[https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/wpot30&div=13&g\\_sent=1&casa\\_token=&collection=journals](https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/wpot30&div=13&g_sent=1&casa_token=&collection=journals)

Schweller, Randall L., and William C. Wohlforth. "Power Test: Evaluating Realism in Response to the End of the Cold War." *Security Studies* 9, no. 3 (2000): 60–107.  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09636410008429406>

Wagner, R. Harrison. *War and the State: The Theory of International Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.224944>.

Morgenthau, Hans J. *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2005.

## **Week 3: Liberalism (and a little Marxism & Constructivism)**

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Date: Monday, April 13, 2026

### **Required:**

Ikenberry, G. John. *A World Safe for Democracy: Liberal Internationalism and the Crises of Global Order*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020.  
<https://www-degruyter-com.stanford.idm.oclc.org/document/doi/10.12987/9780300256093/html>

- Chapter 1: "Cracks in the Liberal World Order."
- Chapter 2: "Liberal Democracy and International Relations."
- Chapter 8: "The Crisis of the Post–Cold War Liberal Order."

Hyde, Susan D., and Elizabeth N. Saunders. "Recapturing Regime Type in International Relations: Leaders, Institutions, and Agency Space." *International Organization* 74, no. 2 (2020): 363–395.

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/E1CD35C02F0A247A67D9E7BE361A5FC7/S0020818319000365a.pdf/div-class-title-recapturing-regime-type-in-international-relations-leaders-institutions-and-agency-space-div.pdf>

Owen, John M. "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace." *International Security* 19, no. 2 (Fall 1994): 87–125.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2539197?origin=crossref>

Doyle, Michael W. "Liberalism and World Politics." *American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (December 1986): 1151–1169.

Moravcsik, Andrew. "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics." *International Organization* 51, no. 4 (1997).

[https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/04527E00D02130C6DCCB57A98EFB6AD3/S0020818397440171a.pdf/taking\\_preferences\\_seriously\\_a\\_liberal\\_theory\\_of\\_international\\_politics.pdf](https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/04527E00D02130C6DCCB57A98EFB6AD3/S0020818397440171a.pdf/taking_preferences_seriously_a_liberal_theory_of_international_politics.pdf)

Gartzke, Erik, and Jiakun Jack Zhang. "Trade and War." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Political Economy of International Trade*, edited by Lisa L. Martin. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

<https://academic.oup.com/edited-volume/34472/chapter/292501066>

Farrell, Henry, and Abraham L. Newman. "Weaponized Interdependence: How Global Economic Networks Shape State Coercion." *International Security* 44, no. 1 (Summer 2019): 42–79.

<https://direct.mit.edu/isec/article/44/1/42/12237/Weaponized-Interdependence-How-Global-Economic>

Pal, Maia. "Introducing Marxism in International Relations Theory." *E-International Relations*, February 2018.

<https://www.e-ir.info/pdf/72866>

### **Recommended:**

Lipsy, Phillip Y., and Jiajia Zhou. "Institutional Racism in International Relations." *International Organization*. Published online March 3, 2026.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818326000033>

Finnemore, Martha, and Alexander Wendt. "When 'Old' Constructivism Was New: Reflections on Classical Constructivism." *Perspectives on Politics* 22, no. 4 (2024): 1248–1268.

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/when-old->

[constructivism-was-new-reflections-on-classical-constructivism/C0A9B4D33AD576B4CDBFE6BC71F1D2EB](#)

Haas, Mark L. “Ideological Polarity and Balancing in Great Power Politics.” *Security Studies* 23, no. 4 (October 2014): 715–753.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. “The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16, no. 4 (1974): 387–415.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/178015.pdf>

Keohane, Robert O., and Joseph S. Nye Jr. *Power and Interdependence*. New York: Pearson, 2011.

Nye, Joseph S. “Soft Power.” *Foreign Policy*, no. 80 (1990): 153–171.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/1148580>

Lenin, Vladimir I. *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*. 1916.

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/>

Gartzke, Erik. “The Capitalist Peace.” *American Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 1 (2007): 166–191.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4122913>

Voeten, Erik. *Ideology and International Institutions*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021, 17–28.

<https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9780691207339/html>

Allison, Graham. “The Myth of the Liberal Order.” *Foreign Affairs*, June 14, 2018.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/myth-liberal-order>

Barbieri, Katherine, and Jack S. Levy. “Sleeping with the Enemy: The Impact of War on Trade.” *Journal of Peace Research* 36, no. 4 (1999): 463–479.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/425299>

Davis, Christina L., and Tyler Pratt. “The Forces of Attraction: How Security Interests Shape Membership in Economic Institutions.” *Review of International Organizations* (2020).

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11558-020-09395-w>

Lascurettes, Kyle M. J. *Orders of Exclusion: Great Powers and the Strategic Sources of Foundational Rules in International Relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

<https://academic.oup.com/book/36872>

Oneal, John R., and Bruce Russett. “The Kantian Peace: The Pacific Benefits of Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations, 1885–1992.” *World Politics* 52, no. 1 (1999):

1–37.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/25054099>

Post, Paul, and Johannes Urpelainen. “How International Organizations Support Democratization: Preventing Authoritarian Reversals or Promoting Consolidation?” *World Politics* 67, no. 1 (January 2015): 72–113.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/24578339>

Vincent, R. J. *Non-Intervention and International Order*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974.

- Chapter 9.

## **Week 4: Leaders, Bureaucratic Politics, and Culture**

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Date: Monday, April 20, 2026

### **Required:**

Allison, Graham T. “Conceptual Models of the Cuban Missile Crisis.” *American Political Science Review* 63, no. 3 (September 1969): 689–718.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/1954423?origin=crossref>

Saunders, Elizabeth N. “Transformative Choices: Leaders and the Origins of Intervention Strategy.” *International Security* 34, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 119–161.

<https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.2009.34.2.119>

McFaul, Michael. “Putin, Putinism, and the Domestic Determinants of Russian Foreign Policy.” *International Security* 45, no. 2 (Fall 2020): 95–123.

<https://direct.mit.edu/isec/article/45/2/95/95260/Putin-Putinism-and-the-Domestic-Determinants-of>

Huntington, Samuel P. “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993).

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/1993-06-01/clash-civilizations>

### **Recommended:**

Zvobgo, Kelebogile, and Meredith Loken. “Why Race Matters in International Relations.” *Foreign Policy*, July 1, 2020.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/06/19/why-race-matters-international-relations-ir/>

Reus-Smit, Christian. “International Relations Theory Doesn’t Understand Culture.” *Foreign Policy*, March 21, 2019.

Goldgeier, James, and Philip E. Tetlock. “Psychological Approaches.” In *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, edited by Chris Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal, chapter 27: 462–480. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Jervis, Robert. “Do Leaders Matter and How Would We Know?” *Security Studies* 22, no. 2 (April 2013): 153–179.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09636412.2013.786909>

Tomz, Michael, and Jessica L. P. Weeks. “Public Opinion and the Democratic Peace.” *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 4 (November 2013): 849–865.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055413000488>

Weeks, Jessica L. “Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict.” *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 2 (May 2012): 326–347.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055412000111>

Drezner, Daniel W. “Ideas, Bureaucratic Politics, and the Crafting of Foreign Policy.” *American Journal of Political Science* 44, no. 4 (October 2000): 733–749.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2669278>

Schultz, Kenneth A. “Domestic Politics and International Relations.” In *Handbook of International Relations*, edited by Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth Simmons, 478–502. London: Sage Publications, 2013.

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/stanford-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1046504>

## *China*

Economy, Elizabeth C. *The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping and the New Chinese State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

- “Introduction,” 1–19.
- “The Lion Awakens,” 186–230.

Ye, Min. “Fragmentation and Mobilization: Domestic Politics of the Belt and Road in China.” *Journal of Contemporary China* (February 2019): 1–16.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2019.1580428>

Cabestan, Jean-Pierre. “China’s Foreign and Security Policy Institutions and Decision-Making under Xi Jinping.” *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 23, no. 2 (2021): 319–336.

Taylor, Matthew, and Jessica Garlick. “‘Flexible’ versus ‘Fragmented’ Authoritarianism: Evidence from Chinese Foreign Policy during the Xi Jinping Era.” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 79, no. 2 (2025): 189–208.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2024.2437035>

McFaul, Cole. “Win-Win Cooperation for Who? The Political Economy of State-Business Relations in Global China.” MA thesis, Stanford University, 2023, chapter one.

## *Russia*

Gurganus, Julia, and Eugene Rumer. "Russia's Global Ambitions in Perspective." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 20, 2019.  
<https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/02/20/russia-s-global-ambitions-in-perspective-pub-78067>

Lavrov, Sergey. "Russia's Foreign Policy in a Historical Perspective." *Russia in Global Affairs*, March 2016.  
<https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/Russias-Foreign-Policy-in-a-Historical-Perspective-18067>

Taylor, Brian D. *The Code of Putinism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

- "Introduction" and "Putinism Decoded," 1–41.  
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/stanford-ebooks/detail.action?docID=5400953>

Dugin, Alexander. *Foundations of Geopolitics*. 1997.

## **Week 5: Causes of Past Great Power Conflict and Cooperation**

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Date: Monday, April 27, 2026

### **Required:**

Chapter 2. Cooperation and Conflict with Russia

Chapter 3: Working With and Against China

Student Paper #1: Power Was the Central Driver of Past US-Russia Relations

Student Paper #2: Power Was *Not* the Central Driver of Past US-Russia Relations

Student Paper #3: Power Was the Central Driver of Past US-China Relations

Student Paper #4: Power Was *Not* the Central Driver of Past US-China Relations

### **Recommended:**

Dahl, Robert A. "The Concept of Power." *Behavioral Science* 2, no. 3 (1957): 201–215.

[https://fbaum.unc.edu/teaching/articles/Dahl\\_Power\\_1957.pdf](https://fbaum.unc.edu/teaching/articles/Dahl_Power_1957.pdf)

X [Kennan, George F.]. "The Sources of Soviet Conduct." *Foreign Affairs*, July 1947.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/1947-07-01/sources-soviet-conduct>

Anonymous. "The Longer Telegram: Toward a New American China Strategy." Atlantic Council, January 2021.

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/The-Longer-Telegram-Toward-A-New-American-China-Strategy.pdf>

Gaddis, John Lewis. *Russia, the Soviet Union, and the United States: An Interpretive History*. America & the World. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1978.

Haas, Mark L. *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789–1989*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005.

Kagan, Robert. *Dangerous Nation: America's Foreign Policy from Its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*. New York: Knopf, 2006.

Kennedy, Paul. *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*. New York: Random House, 1987.

Pomfret, John. *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom: America and China, 1776 to the Present*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2016.

Shell, Orville. "The Death of Engagement." *The Wire China*, June 7, 2020.  
<https://www.thewirechina.com/2020/06/07/the-birth-life-and-death-of-engagement/>

## **Week 6: Hard Power**

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Date: Monday, May 4, 2026

### **Required:**

Chapter 4: The End of American Hegemony

Chapter 5: The Balance of Power between the U.S. and Russia Today

Chapter 6: The Balance of Power between the U.S. and China Today

Student Paper #5: Russia Is a Great Power

Student Paper #6: Russia Is a *Not* Great Power

Student Paper #7: China Is a Great Power

Student Paper #8: China Is an *OVERRATED* Power

Student Paper #9: U.S. Is a Declining Power

Student Paper #10: U.S. Is a Rising Power

### **Recommended:**

Massicot, Dara. "How Russia Recovered." *Foreign Affairs*, October 8, 2025.  
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/russia/how-russia-recovered>

Campbell, Kurt M., and Rush Doshi. "Underestimating China: Why America Needs a New Strategy of Allied Scale to Offset Beijing's Enduring Advantages." *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2025.  
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/china/underestimating-china>

Sullivan, Jake. "The Sources of American Power." *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2023.  
<https://www-foreignaffairs-com.stanford.idm.oclc.org/united-states/sources-american-power-biden-jake-sullivan>

Allison, Graham. "China vs. America: Managing the Next Clash of Civilizations." *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2017.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2017-08-15/china-vs-america>

Bacevich, Andrew. "The Reckoning that Wasn't: Why America Remains Trapped by False Dreams of Hegemony." *Foreign Affairs*, March–April 2023, 6–21.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/andrew-bacevich-the-reckoning-that-wasnt-america-hegemony>

Chen Weiss, Jessica. "Don't Panic About Taiwan: Alarm Over a Chinese Invasion Could Become a Self-Fulfilling Prophecy." *Foreign Affairs*, March 21, 2023.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/china/taiwan-chinese-invasion-dont-panic>

Ivanov, Iskren. "Russian Military Renaissance: An Unnecessary War." *Qeios*, February 2023.

<https://www.qeios.com/read/RBQ36X>

Mastro, Oriana. "The Stealthy Superpower." *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2019, 31–39.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/china-plan-rule-asia>

Mearsheimer, John J. "Playing With Fire in Ukraine." *Foreign Affairs*, August 17, 2022.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ukraine/playing-fire-ukraine>

McFaul, Michael, Stephen Sestanovich, and John Mearsheimer. "Faulty Powers: Who Started the Ukraine Crisis?" *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 6 (November/December 2014): 167–178.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/24483933>

Allison, Graham. *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape the Thucydides Trap?* Mariner Press, 2017.

Bartles, Charles K. "Getting Gerasimov Right." *Military Review*, January–February 2016, 30–39.

[https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview\\_20160228\\_art001.pdf](https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20160228_art001.pdf)

Beckley, Michael. *Unrivaled: Why America Will Remain the World's Sole Superpower*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018.

<https://web.s.ebscohost.com/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook?sid=970b9444-b241-4859-89d0-d803e7b6034f%40redis&vid=0&format=EB>

Mastro, Oriana. *Upstart: How China Became a Great Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024.

Donilon, Tom. Remarks. National Security Advisor to the President. "The United States and the Asia-Pacific in 2013." The White House, March 11, 2013.

<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/03/11/remarks-tom-donilon-national-security-advisor-president-united-states-an>

Герасимов, Валерий. «Ценность науки в предвидении.» *Военно-промышленный курьер*, 2013.

[https://vpk.name/news/85159\\_cennost\\_nauki\\_v\\_predvidenii.html](https://vpk.name/news/85159_cennost_nauki_v_predvidenii.html)

Ikenberry, G. John, and Daniel Nexon. “Hegemony Studies 3.0: The Dynamics of Hegemonic Orders.” *Security Studies* 28, no. 3 (2019): 395–421.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09636412.2019.1604981>

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## **Week 7: Ideational Power**

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Date: Monday, May 11, 2026

### **Required:**

Chapter 7: The Waning of Democracy as a Universal Value

Chapter 8: Global Putinism

Chapter 9: Exporting Xi Jinping Thought

Student Paper #11: Russia Is an Ideological Power

Student Paper #12: Russia Is Not an Ideological Power

Student Paper #13: China Is an Ideological Power

Student Paper #14: China Is Not an Ideological Power

Student Paper #15: The U.S. Is an Ideological Power

Student Paper #16: The U.S. Is Not an Ideological Power

### **Recommended:**

Central Committee of the Communist Party of China's General Office. *Communiqué on the Current State of the Ideological Sphere* ("Document No. 9"). April 22, 2013. In English and Mandarin.

Russian Federation and People's Republic of China. *Joint Statement on International Relations Entering a New Era and Global Sustainable Development*. Office of the President of Russia, February 4, 2022.

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Xi, Jinping. Speech at the Ceremony Marking the Centenary of the Communist Party of China. *Qiushi [Seeking Truth]*, July 1, 2021.

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Shaipov, Artem, and Yuliia Shaipova. “It’s High Time to Decolonize Western Russia Studies.” *Foreign Policy*, February 11, 2023.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/02/11/russia-studies-war-ukraine-decolonize-imperialism-western-academics-soviet-empire-eurasia-eastern-europe-university/>

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Zhang, Weiwei [张维为]. “It Is Entirely Possible to Tell the Story of Chinese Politics in a More Accurate and Exciting Way” [完全有可能把中国政治故事讲得更透彻、更精彩]. *Beijing Daily* [北京日报], June 23, 2021. In [English](#). In [Mandarin](#).

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## **Week 8: Institutional Power**

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Date: Monday, May 18, 2026

### **Required:**

Chapter 10: The Decline of the Liberal International Order

Chapter 11: Russian Global (Dis)Order

Chapter 12: China and Global Order

Student Paper #17: Russia Seeks to Undermine the Liberal International Order

Student Paper #18: Russia Does Not Seek to Undermine the Liberal International Order

Student Paper #19: China Seeks to Undermine the Liberal International Order

Student Paper #20: China Does Not Seek to Undermine the Liberal International Order

Student Paper #21: The U.S. Seeks to Preserve the Liberal International Order

Student Paper #22: The U.S. Seeks to Withdraw from the Liberal International Order

### **Recommended:**

Doshi, Rosh. *The Long Game: China's Grand Strategy to Displace American Order*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021.

Johnston, Alastair Iain. “China in a World of Orders: Rethinking Compliance and Challenge in Beijing’s International Relations.” *International Security* 44, no. 2 (2019): 9–60.  
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<https://www.nbr.org/publication/chinas-vision-for-a-new-world-order/>

Xi, Jinping. “Full Text: Special Address by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the World Economic Forum Virtual Event of the Davos Agenda.” *Xinhua*, January 25, 2021. (7 pages)

Fomenko, T. “The ‘Clash of Civilizations’ Is Already Underway as the World Resists Westernization.” *RT*, May 4, 2023.

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<https://www-tandfonline-com.stanford.idm.oclc.org/doi/abs/10.1080/09668136.2021.1887087>

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Weiss, Jessica Chen, and Jeremy L. Wallace. “Domestic Politics, China’s Rise, and the Future of the Liberal International Order.” *International Organization* 75, Spring 2021: 635–664.

Owen, John M., IV. “Why Great Powers Compete to Control International Institutions.” *International Security* 49, no. 3 (Winter 2025): 84–121.

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Trachtenberg, Marc. “The Rules-Based International Order: A Historical Analysis.” *International Security* 50, no. 2 (Fall 2025): 7–54.

<https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC.a.11>

## **Week 9: Memorial Day: No Class Meeting (Make-up session at the end of class)**

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Date: Monday, May 25, 2026

## **Week 10: The Future: Cold War Lessons and Policy Prescriptions & Dinner at McFaul’s House**

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Class Date: Monday, June 1, 2026  
Dinner Date: Wednesday, June 3, 2026, 6-8 pm

**Required:**

Chapter 13: Learning from Cold War Mistakes  
Chapter 14: Replicating Cold War Successes  
Chapter 15: New Challenges Need New Policies  
Chapter 16: Conclusion

Vance, J.D., Vice President. "Speech at the Munich Security Conference 2025 (and reactions)." Munich Security Conference, 2025.  
[https://securityconference.org/assets/user\\_upload/MSC\\_Speeches\\_2025\\_Vol2\\_Ansicht.pdf](https://securityconference.org/assets/user_upload/MSC_Speeches_2025_Vol2_Ansicht.pdf)

Trump, Donald J., President. "Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly," September 23, 2025.  
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-united-nations-general-assembly-new-york-city-20>

Carney, Mark, Prime Minister of Canada. "Special Address at the World Economic Forum," January 20, 2026.  
<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2026/01/davos-2026-special-address-by-mark-carney-prime-minister-of-canada/>

Stubb, Alexander, President of Finland. "The West's Last Chance: How to Build a New Global Order Before It's Too Late." *Foreign Affairs*, December 2, 2025.  
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/wests-last-chance>

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What are the similarities and differences between the Cold War and our current era of great power competition?
2. Are there lessons from the Cold War for our current era of great power competition?
3. Does Trump change everything?

**Recommended:**

Schadlow, Nadia. "The Globalist Delusion: Why America Must Build a New Operating System." *Foreign Affairs*, February 17, 2026.  
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/globalist-delusion-nadia-schadlow>

Gewirtz, Julian. "When the Chips Are Down." *New York Review of Books*, February 26, 2026.  
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Ashford, Emma M., Hal Brands, Jason J. Castillo, Kate Kizer, Rebecca Friedman Lissner, and Joshua Shiffrin. "New Voices in Grand Strategy." *Michael J. Zak Grand Strategy Lectures*.

Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2019.  
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Swaine, Michael D., and Andrew Bacevich. “A Restraint Approach to U.S.-China Relations: Reversing the Slide Towards Crisis and Conflict.” *Quincy Paper No. 11*. Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, April 18, 2023.  
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The Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party. *Reset, Prevent, Build: A Strategy to Win America’s Economic Competition with the Chinese Communist Party*. Washington: U.S. Congress, 2023.  
<https://selectcommitteeontheccp.house.gov/media/policy-recommendations/reset-prevent-build-strategy-win-americas-economic-competition-chinese#:~:text=Collectively%2C%20these%20recommendations%20will%20reset,and%20partners%20while%20ensuring%20American>

Power, Samantha. “How Democracy Can Win.” *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2023), 22–37.  
<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/samantha-power-how-democracy-can-win-counter-autocracy>

Kendall-Taylor, Andrea, et al. *Identifying Russian Vulnerabilities and How to Leverage Them*. Washington: CNAS, 2023.  
<https://www.cnas.org/publications/reports/identifying-russian-vulnerabilities-and-how-to-leverage-them>

Xi, Jinping. Speech at APEC Summit 2023, Tuesday, 15 November 2023. In Mandarin with English subtitles.

Mearsheimer, John J. “War and International Politics.” *International Security* 49, no. 4 (Spring 2025): 7–36.  
[https://doi.org/10.1162/isec\\_a\\_00507](https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00507)

Weymouth, Stephen. “Digital Disintegration: Techno-Blocs and Strategic Sovereignty in the AI Era.” *International Organization* 79, no. S1 (December 2025): S57–S70.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818325101070>

Schultz, Kenneth A. “Holding the World Together? The Future of Territorial Order.” *International Organization* (published online November 20, 2025).  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818325001076>