

17.403 / Van Evera, Carter, Gabbittas, Lischer, and Twomey // November 9, 2000

SECOND PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Select an episode in American foreign policy from the following list, and write a short paper that evaluates the policy, or a major element of the policy (that is, a major decision or set of decisions, or a major idea or set of ideas). In offering your evaluation, please comment on (a) the validity or falsehood of the factual and theoretical assumptions that produced the policy; and/or (b) the results the policy produced--were they those that policymakers sought to produce? Were they good or bad? If you argue that a policy was mistaken, identify the alternative policy that you prefer. You are also invited to identify prescriptions for current policy that follow from your analysis, if any do. Use deductive logic and historical evidence to support your argument.

If the evidence available in the assigned readings is too thin to allow you to fully evaluate the policy or policy element that you have chosen to discuss, please say so and describe the information that you would need to perform a more thorough evaluation. Alternately, you might consult one or two works listed in the "further readings" section of the syllabus: those noted with ## are on reserve at Dewey. (Extra reading is not mandatory, but we encourage it if your paper seems to call for it.)

1. U.S. entry into and/or conduct of the Korean War.
2. The national security policies¹ of the Eisenhower Administration (1953-1961).
3. U.S. policies in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.
4. U.S. policies in Indochina, 1945-1975.
5. Any other U.S. intervention in the Third World.
6. Another U.S. foreign policy of your own choosing.

Your paper should be 8 typed doublespaced pages (with normal 1" margins and normal-size typeface, i.e., 10-12 characters per inch). Don't forget to start your paper with a short summary introduction that states your question(s) and distills your answer(s).

Your paper is due on Tuesday, December 5 at 11:00 a.m. (class time). You can hand it to your TA in class, or deliver it to your TA's mailbox at the MIT Center for International Studies, 6th floor of building E38 (at 292 Main Street, across from the Marriott Hotel).

Your TA will give you early feedback on your paper if you give her/him an outline or rough draft before you submit your final draft. Get moving soon to leave time for this.

You are encouraged to consult with each other as you prepare this paper.

Late papers will be penalized unless extensions are granted well in advance of the paper deadline. Extensions will not be granted except in emergency situations.

Before writing your papers, please familiarize yourself with the rules of citing sources (handed out in class) and make sure you follow them. Failure to cite sources properly is plagiarism.

¹ "National security policy" refers to policies to protect national sovereignty and physical safety; these include national grand strategy, general military policy, and more specific foreign policies.