

Session Four
U.S. Grand Strategy in the post-
Cold War World
The Cases for Alternative Grand
Strategies:
Isolationism
Selective Engagement / Offshore
Balancing
23 March 2017

Objectives

- Isolationism
 - Benefits and costs
- Selective Engagement/Offshore Balancing
 - Benefits and costs

Isolationism

- **Interests**
 - U.S. is Best Protected When It Ends Military Commitments to Other Countries
 - Present Allies Are Strong Enough Can Take Care of Themselves
- **Threats**
 - Few, if any, Threats. The U.S. Is Fundamentally Secure
 - No Concern over Credibility
- **Means**
 - Military Strong Enough to Maintain Borders, Keep Nuclear Weapons
 - Reduce Intelligence Community
 - Strong Economy

Isolationism

Benefits and Costs

- Benefits
 - No Need to Confront China, Russia
 - Much Smaller Military and Intelligence Community, so Smaller Government
 - Reduced Terrorist Threat
 - Greatly Reduced Concern over Proliferation
- Costs
 - Greatly Reduced Influence
 - More Wars Likely
 - Replacement by New Dominant State (e.g. China)

Selective Engagement and Offshore Balancing

- Interests
 - U.S. is Best Protected When It Dominates Centers of Economic Might (North America, Europe, Northeast Asia, not Middle East, although Selective Engagers debate the importance of the ME)
 - Should Stay Out of Less Developed Countries (e.g. Iraq)
- Threats
 - The Rise of Peer Competitors like China
 - Still Concern about Great Powers like Russia
 - Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction
 - Concern Over Credibility Less Important
- Means
 - Large Military, but much less than Primacy
 - Intelligence Community, much less than Primacy
 - Strong Economy

Selective Engagement and Offshore Balancing Benefits and Costs

- Benefits
 - No Need to Confront China for Offshore Balancing, Still Need to do so if Selective Engagement
 - Much Smaller Military and Intelligence Community, so Smaller Government
 - Reduced Terrorist Threat
 - Greatly Reduced Concern over Proliferation
- Costs
 - Greatly Reduced Influence
 - More Wars Likely
 - Replacement by New Dominant State (e.g. China)