

THE FP SURVEY: THE IVORY TOWER

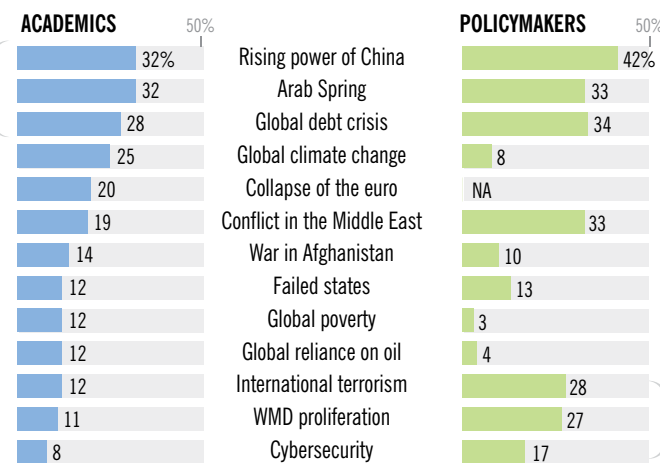
By Paul C. Avey, Michael C. Desch, James D. Long, Daniel Maliniak, Susan Peterson, and Michael J. Tierney

Amid all the doom and gloom about declining U.S. power and respect abroad, Americans can take solace in the fact that their university system remains the envy of the world. But at a time when the United States faces a host of new challenges—from the Arab Spring to the global financial crisis—does anyone in power care what the academy thinks? A small circle of scholars makes their views known in op-eds and blog posts, or by taking sabbaticals inside the Beltway, but the views of most academics remain unheard in Washington.

So what does the Ivory Tower think about the pressing issues of the day? Below are some highlights of our 2011 survey of international relations scholars at U.S. universities. This year, for the first time, we also separately surveyed practitioners who have worked on national-security issues within the U.S. government—the people who run America's foreign-policy machine. And from global warming to the rise of China, we found that the academics and the policymakers don't always see eye to eye.

Top Foreign-Policy Problems Facing the United States

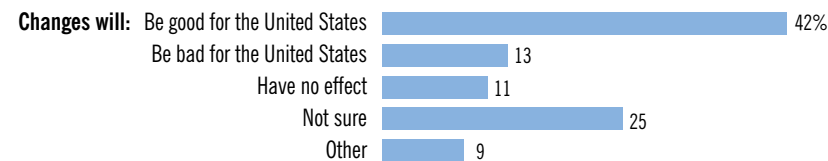
IR scholars take a broad view of the most important foreign-policy issues facing the United States. Thirty-two percent think this shortlist includes the **rising power of China**, up from 23 percent in our 2008 survey. Another 32 percent of academics rank the **Arab Spring** among the top three. But concerns about the global economy and **monetary regulations**, including the global debt crisis and the euro's collapse, loom large.



Practitioners are even more alarmed than scholars about the **rise of China**, with 42 percent listing it as one of the most important issues facing the United States today and 54 percent regarding it as a pressing issue in 10 years. More policymakers than scholars worry about the **global debt crisis**, while the **Arab Spring** makes the list of the top three problems. But some **security concerns** remain more salient for policymakers than for scholars.

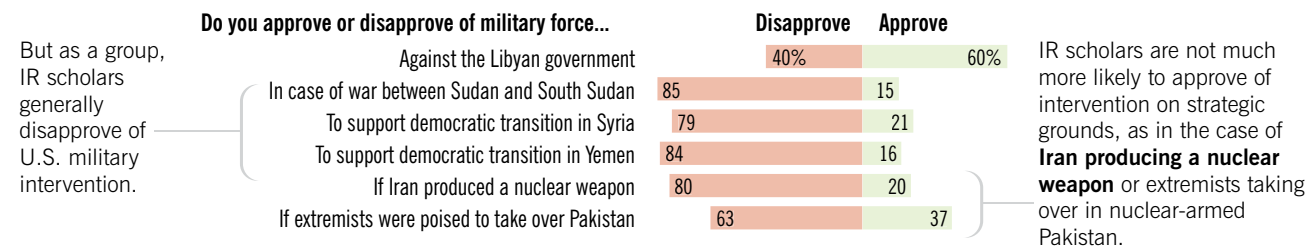
Arab Spring: Too Early to Tell

Despite the consensus among academics on the importance of the events of the Arab Spring for U.S. foreign policy, for much of the Ivory Tower it's still too early to tell what the outcome of the Middle Eastern uprisings will be.



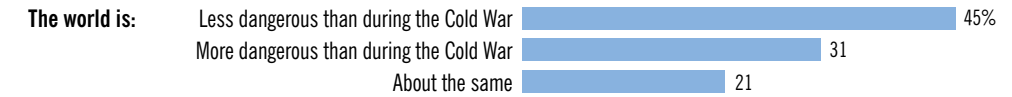
Intervention Skeptics

A majority of IR scholars supported the use of military force in Libya that contributed to the fall of Muammar al-Qaddafi's regime.



A Safer America

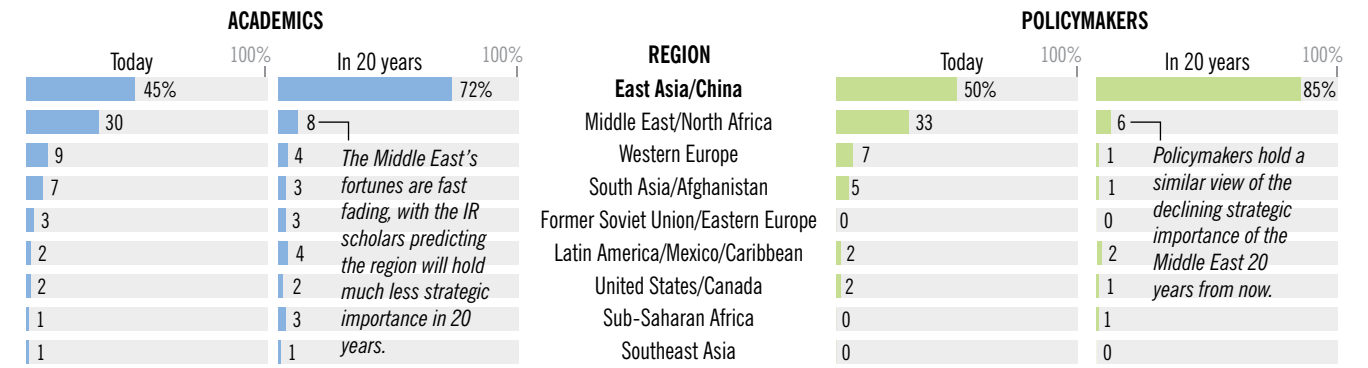
IR scholars believe that the United States is a safer place than in the recent past. A 60 percent majority of academics surveyed believe that terrorists' ability to strike the U.S. homeland is lower than it was prior to Sept. 11, 2001, and only 2 percent of respondents believe it is greater.



Fading Camel, Rising Dragon?

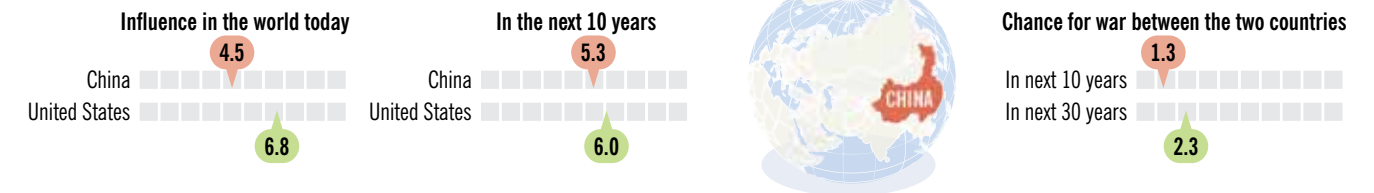
Although the Middle East may get all the headlines, IR scholars pick **East Asia as the region of greatest strategic importance to the United States today**, with 45 percent identifying it as the most significant area, up from 30 percent who did so in 2008.

Policymakers are in line with the professors: Half of the practitioners surveyed agree with this assessment today, and 85 percent think **East Asia will be the most important strategic region** for the United States in 20 years.



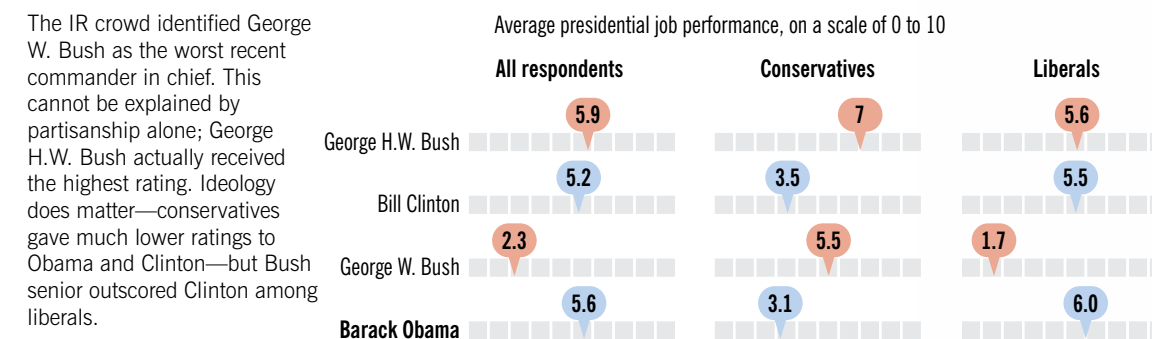
War With China?

The consensus among IR scholars is that there is still time before China overtakes the United States in political influence. On a scale from 0 to 10, IR scholars rate the two countries:

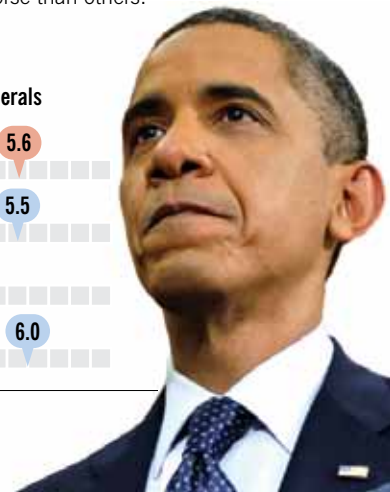


Change They Can Believe In

While the public may not be thrilled with President Barack Obama's job performance on the economy, IR scholars believe he is doing quite well in his role as commander in chief. Obama scores higher than both George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, but not as high as George H.W. Bush, who was at the helm during the collapse of the Soviet Union. Some of Obama's predecessors fare worse than others:

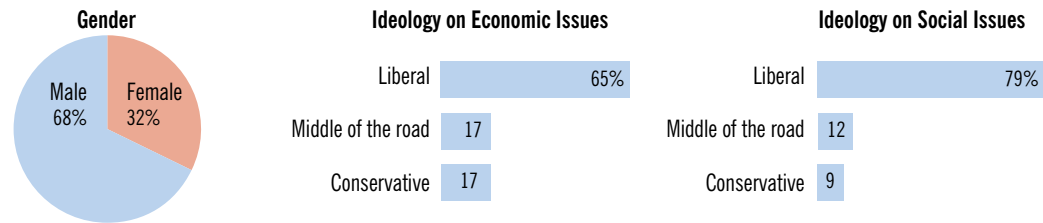


GETTY IMAGES



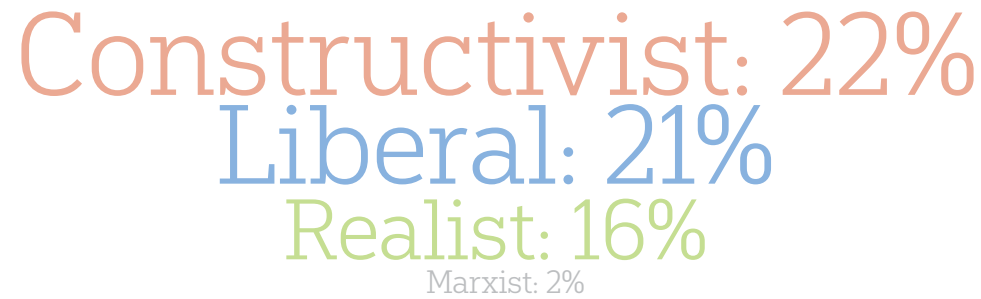
Who Inhabits the Ivory Tower?

While the academy is still dominated by men, the number of women in the Ivory Tower is increasing rapidly. In 2006, only 23 percent of our respondents were women. Today, that figure has risen to 32 percent, and increasingly women show up on the lists of scholars doing the “most interesting” work. In 2011, three of the top 10 scholars on that list were women, including George Washington University’s Martha Finnemore, who is ranked No. 1 by her peers.



Theoretical Schools of Thought

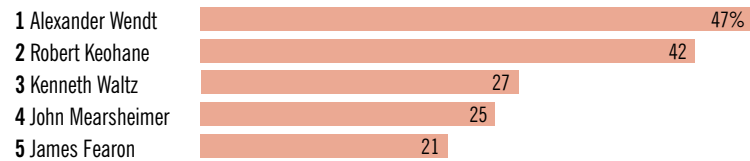
The year 2011 represented a changing of the guard in more ways than one. For the first time, more scholars adopted a constructivist approach than either a realist or liberal framework. The surge in constructivist work, which focuses on the role of ideas and identity in shaping state preferences and international outcomes, started in the 1990s and shows no signs of leveling off.



Top Scholars

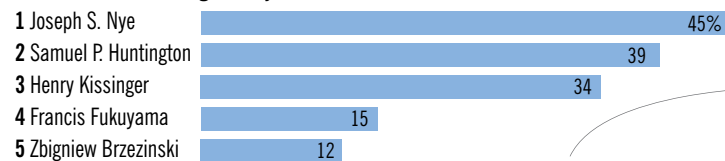
When academics and policymakers were asked to rank the contributions of IR scholars within their respective areas of expertise, there was little overlap. Scholars were asked to list their peers who have had the greatest influence on and have done the most interesting work in the field of international relations, while practitioners were asked to list the scholars with the greatest influence on U.S. foreign policy in the past 20 years.

Influence on the Field



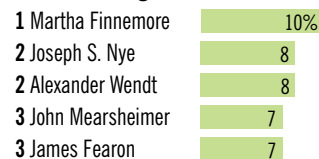
Alexander Wendt In *Social Theory of International Politics*, Wendt argues that neither realism nor liberalism is an adequate framework for understanding world politics.

Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy



Joseph S. Nye Famous for coining the term “soft power,” Harvard’s Nye predicts that it will be decades before China catches up with the United States.

Most interesting work



Martha Finnemore This George Washington University scholar’s pioneering work focuses on the role of norms, rules, and institutions in international politics.

Q: What is the top foreign-policy problem/challenge facing the United States, and why?

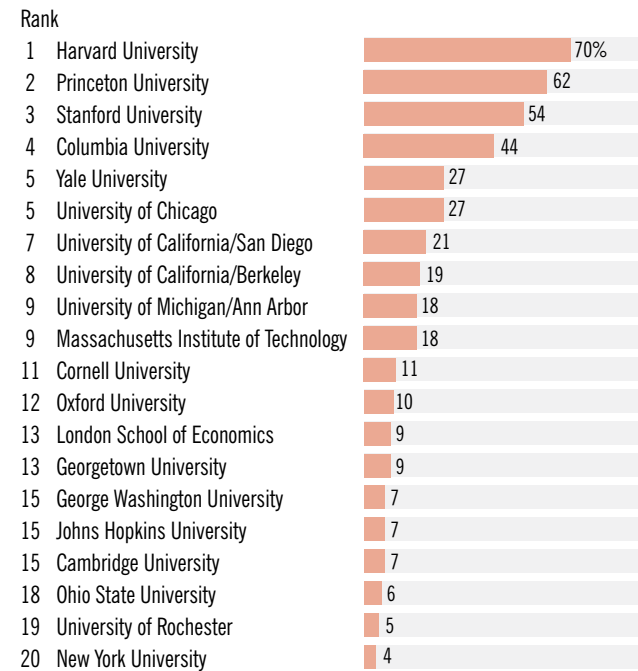
A: “Managing the rise of China in a peaceful manner. If we mess it up, it will affect everything else. And good management requires a balanced ‘Goldilocks policy’ that is neither too hot nor too cold.”

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY; RAVEENDRAN/AP/GETTY IMAGES; GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

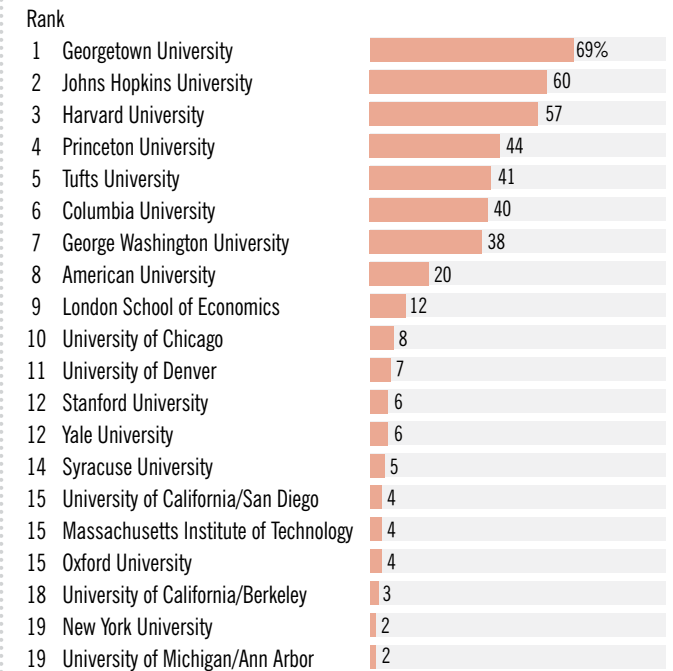
The Rankings

We asked scholars to rank the top five institutions worldwide that offer Ph.D.s, terminal master’s degrees, and undergraduate education in international relations. IR scholars know the most about top Ph.D. programs—who are the core members of the faculty, what kind of training students get, and whether graduates actually get academic jobs.

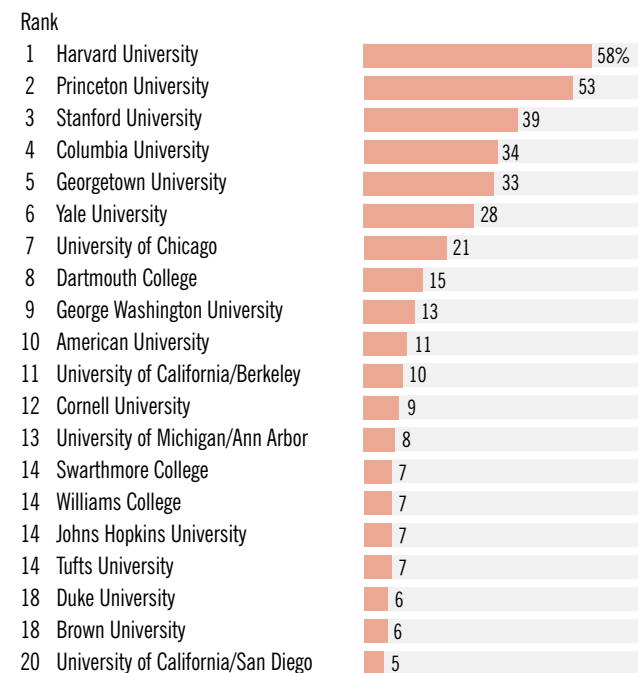
Ph.D.s



Master's

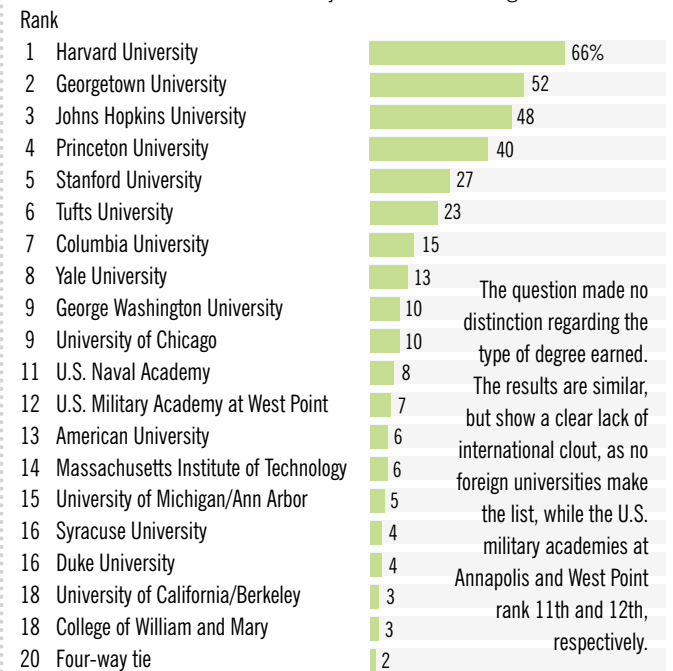


Undergraduate



Pipeline to the Beltway?

In a parallel survey, practitioners were asked to rank which schools train the best candidates for jobs with the U.S. government.



The question made no distinction regarding the type of degree earned. The results are similar, but show a clear lack of international clout, as no foreign universities make the list, while the U.S. military academies at Annapolis and West Point rank 11th and 12th, respectively.

» For the full survey results visit, ForeignPolicy.com/IvoryTower.

The authors are researchers with the Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) project at the College of William and Mary. The fourth wave of the TRIP survey explores the views of international relations (IR) faculty from every four-year college and university in the United States, as identified by *U.S. News & World Report*, for their views on various international issues. The results include the responses of 1,582 faculty members, representing more than 40 percent of IR scholars in the United States, collected between August and November 2011. The parallel survey of practitioners, devised in conjunction with researchers from the Notre Dame International Security Program, surveyed 244 current and former policymakers who served from 1989 to 2008 in national security decision-making roles at the level of assistant secretary, director, and designated policymaking groups within several U.S. government agencies.