This course is one of the required core courses for ISEC students. It provides a bridge between the conceptual study of international relations and international security as a subfield of IR, and applies that knowledge to contemporary issues. Historically the field has focused on the phenomenon of war; we will consider the wars as well as a spectrum of issues including coercion, the threat of force, and the deployment of militaries in contingencies other than war.

Among the topics to be covered in this course are:

- post-WWII strategic thinking – definitions and setting course objectives
- strategic policies from the dawn of the nuclear age
- the Vietnam war and the limits of conventional force
- small wars, civil wars, and peace operations
- counterinsurgency – theory and practice
- post-Cold War strategic concepts
- terrorism and wars in Afghanistan and Iraq
- nuclear issues revisited in the 21st century
- rise of China and a new Cold War?
- The international “order” in the 21st century

The course will progress along these themes in roughly chronological order. All students will read the essential readings of four books and 15-20 major journal articles and official government documents. In addition, students will be assigned oral briefings on selected supplementary readings. The frequency of these oral briefings for each student will be determined by the size of the class.

Requirements for grading will include:
2 quizzes (10% each)
2 short papers (20% each)
Class presentations (15%)
Final Exam (25%)

Readings

BOOKS (*all students will read, without * some students will be assigned)
*American Force: Dangers, Delusions and Dilemmas in National Security, by Richard Betts
Columbia University Press 2012

How Wars End: Why we Always Fight the Last Battle, by Gideon Rose
Simon and Schuster, paperback 2011

*Coercive Inducement, by Donald Daniels and Bradd Hayes
USIP, 1999

Why we Lost: A General’s Inside Account of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, by Daniel Bolger
First Mariners Book, paperback 2015

Basic Books, 1990

Ghost Wars OR Directorate S, by Steve Coll. (both about the war on terrorism and Afghanistan)

The Fighters, by CJ Chivers

Green on Blue, by Elliott Ackerman (novel)
The Things they Carried, by Tim O’Brien (novel)

Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam, by John Nagl
University of Chicago, paperback edition 2005

The Marines: Counterinsurgency and Strategic Culture, by Jeannie Johnson
Georgetown University Press, 2018

*Asia’s Latent Nuclear Powers: Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, by Mark Fitzpatrick
Routledge, IISS, 2016

ARTICLES, MONOGRAPHS, REPORTS (Selected)

Thomas Schelling, “Controlled Response and Strategic Warfare,” Adelphi Paper 19 (1965)
Reprinted in IISS volume The Evolution of Strategic Thought 2008


**Session One**
**Introduction, Overview, Definitions**
Readings:
Betts, Chapters 1 and 2
Walt, 1991

**Session Two**
**The Dawn of the Nuclear Age**
Readings:
Schelling
Steinbruner

**Session Three**
**Vietnam**
Readings:
Selected students to brief on readings to be assigned

**Sessions Four and Five**
**Small Wars, Civil Wars, Peace Operations**
Readings:
Betts, 3
Daniels and Hayes
Walt 1989
QUIZ

Sessions Six and Seven
Counterinsurgency
Readings:
Selected students to brief Johnson, Nagl, Ackerman
US Army materials
Betts, 6
FIRST PAPER DUE

Session Eight
End of the Cold War
Kaplan
Mathews

Sessions Nine and Ten
Iraq and Afghanistan – lessons?
Readings:
Betts 7
Coll, Bolger, others to be assigned for student briefings
QUIZ

Session Eleven
Nuclear Issues Revisited
Readings:
Fitzpatrick
Think tank reports to be assigned on DPRK, Iran
SECOND PAPER DUE

Session Twelve
Rise of China? Asia as new Strategic Arena
Readings:
Brand
Betts, 8 and 10

Session Thirteen
The International Order Debate
Readings:
Kagan
Others to be assigned