GOV 745 International Security  
(Draft as of 18 July 2020)  
Fall 2020  
Wednesdays, 7:20 PM

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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

Due to COVID-19 restrictions the course will be taught via Zoom. Students will receive instructions via Blackboard on the Zoom login passwords to be used. These instructions will go out no later than the Sunday afternoon prior to the next upcoming class session.

If University policy changes later in the semester allowing in-class instruction to resume, students will be informed which classroom will be utilized.

Requirements for grading will include:

■ 2 take home quizzes (20% each)  
■ Final paper (50 %)  
■ Class participation (10 %)  
■ Example paper topics:
  ○ Nuclear deterrence  
  ○ U.S. (including coalition) decisions to engage in conflict  
  ○ Small wars/counterinsurgency  
  ○ U.S. government interagency issues in international security
For purposes of this course, the grades of A or A- are reserved for sustained excellence and outstanding performance on all aspects of the course. The grades of B and B+ are used to denote mastery of the material and very good performance on all aspects of the course. The grade of B- denotes marginal quality work that is not quite up to graduate student level standards. The grade of C denotes work that may be adequate for undergraduate performance, it is not acceptable at the graduate level. The grade of F denotes the failure to perform adequately on course assignments.

Attendance is required and will be taken into account in evaluation of the student’s performance. While it is possible that the requirements of full-time jobs may occasionally conflict with class times, missing more than two class sessions will make it difficult to earn a grade better than B for the course. Missing more than three sessions will make a grade of C likely.

Even if you do not regularly use your GMU e-mail account, be sure to open it and place a forwarding address to the account that you regularly use so that you can get GMU, Schar School, and class announcements. Also be sure to empty your account occasionally, because if you do not and it exceeds the limit, you will not receive incoming e-mail until you have cleared the space.

Written Assignments

Each of your written assignments (quizzes and final paper) must be submitted in hard copy, but an electronic copy must be submitted in addition so that it can be checked through the School’s data base service that surveys published and non-published papers, articles, and books for possible plagiarism. Papers may be stapled or placed in plastic covers. All papers must be in at least 12-point font, 1.5 spaced, and on standard 8.5 x 11 inch paper.

Take home Quizzes

The quizzes will be based on the readings and in-class discussions. Students will have several questions to select from. Content and writing style will be evaluated.

Research Paper

The final paper will be an assessment of an appropriate international security topic. Students can select a topic that fits within the list provided above. Proposed topics will be submitted to the instructor no later than the fifth class session. The final paper will be no more than 15 pages, not including end notes, maps, and bibliography.
**Class Format**

The class will use a discussion and lecture format. Students are expected to do all the readings assigned for each class period and be prepared to discuss them. The lectures will complement and add to the material covered in the readings. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in the class discussions, recognizing that Zoom will be used, perhaps for the entire semester.

**Required books:**


In addition to the required books, students will access a large number of on line articles during the course, per the weekly readings on the syllabus.

**Class sessions**

**Session One: Course Introduction and Overview**

This class will set the stage for the course. The purpose and objectives of the class will be reviewed. An overview of the topic of International Security will be discussed. Initial guidance for the papers will be provided.

**Session Two: Key Issues in International Security**

This class will provide additional foundation on the subject of International Security and a preview of topics that will follow later in the course. The organization key of U.S. security structures will be examined.

**Readings:**


**Session Three: Overview of Pre-Cold War U.S. Strategy and Security Policy**

This class will be an overview of U.S. strategy from 1900 to 1945 will be provided so students understand how the U.S.’s strategic role changed from the early 20th Century to the end of World War II. One of the two required books will be discussed.

**Readings:**

“US Entry into World War 1”, https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-i/u-s-entry-into-world-war-i-1


“Germany First: The Basic Concept of Allied Strategy in World War II”, https://history.army.mil/books/70-7_01.htm

Session Four: The Early Cold War Period 1949-1960
This class session will examine the first years of the Cold War when the U.S. had become a superpower with a vastly different role in the world compared to the pre-WW II period. The rising tension between the U.S. and the communist block will be reviewed as well as the creation of the major Cold War alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The Korean War will be discussed.

Readings:


“The Warsaw Pact is Formed”, https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-warsaw-pact-is-formed

“Cold War”, https://www.britannica.com/event/Cold-War


Session Five: Vietnam, 1960-1972
The Vietnam period will be the focus of this class. The U.S. Grand Strategy of Containment, and its relationship to the Vietnam experience, will also be discussed. The effect the Vietnam experience had on subsequent U.S. policy will be reviewed.
Readings:

“The Two Cold War Superpowers”,
https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1057%2F9780333981276_2.pdf

https://www.jstor.org/stable/2538764?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents


“What We Should Learn from Vietnam”, https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/01/02/what-we-should-learn-from-vietnam/

“Cold War in Asia, the American Experience in Vietnam”.
http://sageamericanhistory.net/coldwar/korea_vietnam/vietnamwar.html

“The Vietnam Syndrome”,

Final Paper topics due.

First quiz passed out.


The years from the U.S. departure from Vietnam to the end of the Soviet Union will be reviewed. The conventional and nuclear balance between U.S./NATO and the USSR/Warsaw Pact will be discussed. The strategic implications of the end of the USSR will figure prominently in this week’s discussion.

Readings:


“Assessing the Conventional Balance: The 3:1 Rule and its Critics,”

“NATO’s Strategic Choices: Defense Planning and Conventional Force Modernization”,
https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/papers/2006/P7184.pdf
“The Collapse of the Soviet Union”,
https://www.jstor.org/stable/2538764?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

“Consequences of the Collapse of the Soviet Union”, https://online.norwich.edu/academic-programs/resources/consequences-of-the-collapse-of-the-soviet-union

First quiz due.


Readings:


“The Dustbin of History: Mutual Assured Destruction”,

“The Outcomes of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm”,
“Network-Centric Warfare, Its Origins and Future”,
https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/

“Network Centric Warfare Offers Warfighting Advantages”,
https://www.afcea.org/content/network-centric-warfare-offers-warfighting-advantage

“Operation Allied Force: Lessons for the Future”,
https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB75.html

Session Eight: U.S. Actions and Strategy Following 9/11

U.S. strategy in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks will be discussed. The implications of the redirection of U.S. attention and resources toward this new challenge will be examined. The effect of the post-9/11 environment on U.S. regional policy will be explored.

Readings:

“Blindsided? September 11 and the Origins of Strategic Surprise”,
https://www.jstor.org/stable/3792594?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents


Session Nine: The New Russian Threat

The challenge of a resurgent Russia is the focus of this course. The changing U.S. relationship toward its traditional European allies given Russia’s actions will be discussed.

Readings:

“Responding to Russia’s Resurgence”, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2017-10-16/responding-russias-resurgence

“European Relations with Russia”, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR1500/RR1579/RAND_RR1579.pdf


Session Ten: The Rise of China

Even more challenging that the resurgence of Russia is the rise of Chinese power and influence in Asia and elsewhere in the world. This class will focus on the issue of Chinese power and its implications for international security and the global balance of power.

Readings:

Session Eleven: Weapons of Mass Destruction

The different types of WMD will be reviewed. The international security implications of the proliferation of this class of weapons will be discussed.

Readings:


Second quiz passed out.

Session Twelve: U.S. Strategy and Security Challenges in the 2020s

This class will review the current and possible security challenges for the U.S.

Readings:


“Is America Still the World’s Only Superpower, or Is China a Real Rival”, [https://online.norwich.edu/academic-programs/resources/consequences-of-the-collapse-of-the-soviet-union](https://online.norwich.edu/academic-programs/resources/consequences-of-the-collapse-of-the-soviet-union)


“US National Military Strategy”

Second quiz due.

Session 13: Course Overview and Review of Future International Security Issues

This class session will be a review of the course. There key points from the earlier class sessions will be discussed.

Final paper due date: TBD

Plagiarism

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the Schar School. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable. Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas presented as one’s own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another’s work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined. Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one’s professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of the Schar School takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of “F.” This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student’s transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (eg. F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

To help enforce the Schar School policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The Schar School policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it.
Citations for Research Papers

The purposes of scholarly citations are several:

1) To show the source for a direct quote or fact not commonly known.
2) To give credit for an idea to the author of a work
3) To show the reader that you are familiar with other scholarship on your topic or to indicate where further information or analysis can be found.
4) You may also use endnotes to explain something in the text or comment on the source. The intention is to give the reader enough information to find the source you are using so that he or she can see if you have quoted it correctly, interpreted it soundly, done justice to the author cited, or do further research on the topic in question themselves.

Format: use the standard Chicago Manual of Style format, also known as “Turabian.” (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), or most recent edition.

Books: author, title (place of publication: publisher, date), page number(s). [Titles of books should be in italics or underlined.] Example:


2. Kingdon, Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies, page number(s).

Articles: author, title, name of journal (volume, number), page number(s). [Titles of articles should be enclosed in quotation marks, names of journals underlined or in italics.] Example: