

DRAFT SYLLABUS – UDATED AUGUST 3, 2020

PUBP 505
Politics and Practice of International Security Policy
Fall 2020
Mondays, 7:20 PM
ONLINE

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description:

This class is a core course in the master's program in international security. Drawing on current and historical cases, the course provides deep understanding about how policies about international security are conceptualized, decided and implemented. The course is organized around two major topics: the role of institutions in national security policymaking, and presidential decision-making, which involves specific cases from history and contemporary issues.

Course Goals:

Effective participation in international security analysis and policy action requires a range of skills. Individuals must be able to assess and evaluate the threat environment and the drivers of international security challenges and crises. They must understand how decisions are made, and what are the constraints on decision makers, from domestic and international sources. They also need to address how strategies are developed, and what mechanisms monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of various strategies. The course complements other core courses in the ISEC program by focusing on domestic institutions and their bureaucratic behavior, and the political factors that shape or limit presidents as they are faced with key decisions about international security and US engagements overseas.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students should have acquired:

- fundamental knowledge about the institutions and processes that comprise the US national security system
- improved understanding of the evolution of the threat environment that sets the international security policy agenda

- improved critical reasoning skills regarding the decision making process and the motivations and behavior of participants in domestic and international security forums
- expanded skills in communicating in written and oral formats about major international security issues
- enhanced ability to work collaboratively

Online Course Approach

This course is entirely online, and will utilize several Blackboard tools. The rhythm of each week and each topic will be as follows:

Formal Class time is **Mondays at 7:20 PM**. Students are expected to be available with audio and video capacity to participate for 90 minute sessions. You can inform the professor privately by email if there are any impediments to your ability to fully participate.

Course content for each week will be posted on **Tuesdays**. I will use **BB Course Content and BB Discussion Boards** to provide you short video lectures, links to various writings and media sources, and the assigned readings. Students should work at their own pace to read and watch assigned materials, and **post 200-300 word responses to questions posed**. (These posted responses are part of your “participation” grade, along with oral class discussions. The posts need to be completed **before** the Monday class time.)

The Monday class on screen will be the culmination of each topic, and students will be expected to be familiar with the readings and be ready to actively engage in discussion on the topic. Tuesday classes will end with a short preview of the next topic.

On several occasions, a portion of our Monday meetings will involve small group discussions. Students will be divided into groups of five to work together on various topics, and present them to the full class, all via the BB Collaborate Ultra technology. If desired, groups can meet on Collaborate at other times. Sometimes groups will all discuss the same readings, and then be brought into the full class for discussion; on other occasions, each group will have a separate reading assignment and will then brief the full class.

Course Materials

In addition to four full-length books, the course will draw on case studies available on line and for purchase from the Harvard Kennedy School and the Georgetown Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, supplemented by think tank essays and monographs and other online materials. These readings, with links provided, can be found under each session.

Required Books:

Textbook:

The National Security Enterprise: Navigating the Labyrinth. Eds Roger George and Harvey Rishikof, Georgetown University Press, 2nd edition, 2017.

Suez:

Ike's Gamble: America's Rise to Dominance in the Middle East, by Michael Doran, Free Press, 2016

Cuba:

Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know, by Julia Sweig, Oxford University Press, 2016

North Korea:

The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future, by Victor Cha, updated edition, Ecco paperback edition, 2018.

Requirements and Grading:

Class members are required to complete all assigned readings prior to class meetings; to class prepared to participate fully and thoughtfully, to contribute constructively to discussions and exercises, and to complete all required writing assignments prior to the beginning of class meetings. Writing assignments will be framed either as brief policy memos based on case materials, or as analytic comparisons of two or more cases, or two or more conceptual or operational problems.

Grading for the class will break down roughly as follows:

Participation in class discussion:	25%
Individual Analytic Memos (2):	50% (25% each)
Final Exam	25%

Course grading is not a curve; class members are not competing with each other for marks.

Academic Accommodations for a Disability:

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

Schar School Policy on Plagiarism:

The following is Schar School policy on plagiarism:

“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 (e.g., F-1, J-1, 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 Codes; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it. (<http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook>)”

Schedule:

Session One (8/24/20) (Readings posted 8/18)

Overview of the **National Security Council**

The National Security Enterprise (eds George and Rishikof) Introduction and Chapter One

The National Security Act of 1947

<https://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/9780195385168/resources/chapter10/nsa/nsa.pdf>

Recent Reform Proposals – read at least one

<https://www.cfr.org/event/reforming-national-security-council-whats-necessary>

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/a-new-nsc-for-a-new-administration/>

<http://www.heritage.org/defense/report/memo-new-president-how-best-organize-the-national-security-council>

Session Two (8/31/20) (readings and videos posted by 8/25)

Congress and the Judiciary: Roles in National Security

The National Security Enterprise – Chapter 13 (Congress: the Other Branch) and Chapter 14 (The Supreme Court)

Congress and the President over Use of Force

<http://www.loufisher.org/docs/ci/challengetopresidentialwars.pdf>

Session Three (NO CLASS ON LABOR DAY – 9/7/20)

Class on 9/14/20 Assignments for Sept 14 will be posted on September 8

Class will be divided into six groups of five, each assigned one major national security player:

State Department

Defense Department (civilian leadership – office of the Secretary)

Military Services

Office of the Director of National Intelligence and CIA

Treasury

Department of Homeland Security

Each group will 1) read the relevant chapter in the *National Security Enterprise*, 2) study the website and major speeches/statements by each Cabinet official, and 3) identify at least 3 independent articles or analyses about challenges and issues facing the department. Groups will be able to meet on Collaborate if they wish before the next class, but we will also allocate time on September 14 for groups to meet and prepare their remarks to the class.

First 20-30 minutes – meet in groups to coordinate presentations to the full class. We'll try to complete the short (10 minutes) reports to the class this week, or may spill over to the following week.

TIME TO DECIDE ON YOUR PAPER TOPIC – DUE 9/29 – CLEAR TOPIC WITH PROFESSOR IN ADVANCE, PLS

Session Five 9/21/20 - new material posted on Course Content 9/15

We begin our case studies. First up is Cuba, which we will consider from the revolution to the present, with most emphasis on the Kennedy Administration and the Cuban Missile Crisis. I have assigned an all-purpose book by Julia Sweig that is a user-friendly overview of many issues in the relationship over time. Students will also read Georgetown and Harvard Kennedy School case studies. (You need to set up your own accounts for the case studies.)

History and Broad themes

G'town Case Study

The US and the Cuban Revolution, 1958-1960

Harvard Kennedy School study # 279.0 *Kennedy and the Bay of Pigs*

Sweig on the Missile Crisis and additional readings, videos to be posted

Session Six (9/28/20) - new material posted 9/22

Deeper Dive on the Missile Crisis – the famous 13 days and studies about the crisis that illuminate the decision-making and bureaucratic behavior

Material on Graham Allison's three models to explain the crisis to be posted

In-class role playing to elucidate different views of US national security players

FIRST PAPER DUE – INSTITUTIONS

Session 7 (10/5/20) new material posted 9/29

Two weeks on Korea – from the war (1950-53) to the present

Focus is on why Truman made the decisions he did, and the consequences of the Korean War for political-military relations, for other national security considerations.

HKS Case Study Korea and the Thirties Parts A/B

The Impossible State: North Korea Past and Future, By Victor Cha
Harper Collins ebook or paper back, updated edition 2018

Read Chapters One and Two

Session 8 (10/13/20) NOTE: CLASS MEETS ON TUESDAY, NOT MONDAY

Six Party Talks (2003-2008) and Update to Present

Groups will be assigned different chapters to brief to the class

Session 9 (10/19/20)

Suez Crisis: Eisenhower and the Allies

BBC video – allies, US, Russians, Egyptians

Ike's Gamble, by Michael Doran

Oles Smolansky. Moscow and the Suez Crisis

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2147000.pdf?refreqid=excelsior:83238102f0662e8a283ba5f1c52df1a8>

START TO CHOOSE YOUR TOPIC FOR SECOND PAPER ON PRESIDENTIAL DECISIONMAKING

Session 11 (10/26/20)

Suez Crisis: Egyptian and Russian Perspectives

Excerpts from Hussein Heikal, The Sphinx and the Commissar

https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-7207971-dt-content-rid-100729389_1/courses/81916.201770/Heikal-19-34%20and%2065-75%20-%20OCR.pdf

CIA Soviet Staff Study

https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0001408621.pdf

The Economist 2006

<http://www.economist.com/node/721867>

We will do a small in-class simulation/role-playing to illuminate different countries' perspectives of what was at stake...

Session 12 (11/2/20) NO ON SCREEN CLASS THIS WEEK DUE TO ELECTIONS

SECOND PAPER DUE – NO OTHER HOMEWORK FOR THIS CLASS

Session 13 (11/9/20)

Going to War with Iraq in 1990 and 2003: Comparing two presidential decisions

Two NSC Decision Memoranda, Fall 1990, January 1991

https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-7211606-dt-content-rid-101437700_1/courses/81916.201770/National%20Security%20Directive%2045.pdf

https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-7211607-dt-content-rid-101438533_1/courses/81916.201770/National%20Security%20Directive%2054.pdf

Genovese, Presidential Decision Making in Iraq: Bush vs. Bush/Phronesis vs. Faith
Link or hard copy to be provided

Monten and Bennett, Models of Crisis Decision Making and the 1990-1991 Gulf War

https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/bbcswebdav/pid-7211609-dt-content-rid-101438553_1/courses/81916.201770/D%27Alessandro%20-%20Groupthink.pdf

Pillar, Intelligence, Policy and the War in Iraq

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iraq/2006-03-01/intelligence-policy-and-war-iraq>

Frontline: The Iraq War Decision

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/choice2004/bush/war.html>

Session 14 (11/16/20) material will be posted 11/10

Climate-driven Crisis: Fukushima, Japan, 2011

Session 15 (12/20/20) Optional

Preparation for Final Exam: Revisiting the NSC and Institutional Issues: Final Discussion of themes and issues

FINAL EXAM DATE TO BE CONFIRMED