Grand strategy represents a nation’s high-level, long-term goals. It normally includes the application of all aspects of national power, including diplomatic, economic, informational, and military. In the case of the U.S., grand strategy is often supplemented with more detailed, subordinate regional strategies.

This course is intended to provide students with a thorough understanding of the concept of grand strategy, how it is developed, examples of how this process takes place, and the tools that are available to national leaders to accomplish high-level strategic objectives. The goal is to gain an in-depth understanding of past effective and ineffective grand strategies so as to inform U.S. policy, or the policies of other countries, in the future. The course will consist of
a mixture of theory and historical case studies.

**Readings:**

The following books are required for the course:


**Class Format**

The course will be conducted in both lecture and in class discussion. It is important that students read each week’s assignments prior to arriving in class. Active class participation is strongly encouraged.

**Objectives:**

This course will help to prepare students for professional positions in public service, including in the executive or legislative branches of U.S.
government at the federal (both military and civilian), state or local levels; private sector businesses dealing with public policy; non-profit organizations concerned with public policy; non-US governments; and international organizations. This advanced seminar tackles the challenging task of building an effective grand strategy in both theory and practice. It will prepare students for positions that involve the development of effective national strategy and policy.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who complete this course will have a good understanding of the concept of grand strategy, how strategies have been developed in the past, good and bad examples of grand strategy, and

Course Evaluation

This course will rely heavily upon extensive reading, active class participation, one take-home quiz, and a final paper (14-15 pages; 12 point font; 1.5 spacing; tables, photos, maps, footnotes, and bibliography will not count against the page limit).

Final Paper

The final paper will be a case study of why and how a strategy was developed. Students will evaluate the case in terms of the historical context when the strategy was developed, the key players involved, the strategic choices that were available, what decisions were reached and why, and how effective (or not) the strategy was in actual execution.

Grading will be done according to the following criteria:

- Class participation 20%
- Mid-term quiz 35%
- Final paper 45%

Unless there is prior approval by the instructor, late papers are subject to a reduction of one grade level for each day that they are delayed. For example, a paper due on Monday that is not turned in until
Wednesday could be reduced from an A to a B+.

Mobile Phones must be turned off during class. Taking notes on your laptop is allowed, but please refrain from using a laptop for non-class-related purposes while in the classroom.

Students who need to miss class must let the instructor know prior to class. In general, students should plan on missing no more than two classes during the semester.

**Students with Special Needs**

If you are a student with a disability and need academic accommodations, please inform the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

**Weekly Schedule:**

**Class 1: Course Introduction**

This class will be an overview of the course objectives and content, and will include a review of military terminology and basic concepts. The value (or lack thereof) of strategy will be discussed.


Class 2: The Nature of Grand Strategy

Early thinking about strategy will be described, primarily using two classic 19th Century theorists, the German Carl von Clausewitz and Antoine-Henri Jomini. The elements of grand strategy and national power will be discussed including diplomacy, information, military power, and economics. The relationship of grand strategy to military strategy, operations, and tactics will be reviewed.


Class 3: Early Examples of Strategy and Grand Strategy

Historical examples from the 17th to 19th Centuries will be examined. European and American cases will be reviewed.


(Blackboard)

**Class 4: The American Civil War**

This class session will review the strategy developed by both the North and South during the Civil War, reviewing how both sides attempted to craft a course of action that would lead to success.

• Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command*, pp. 1-51


**Class 5: The First World War**

The development of national grand strategies before and during the First World War will be the focus of this class. The assumptions various nations made about their strategic situations, and the understanding key nations had of the military potential of their own forces and those of their opponents will be reviewed. How grand strategies evolved over time as the war progressed will be evaluated.

• Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command*, pp. 52-94.

• Holger H. Herwig, “Total Rhetoric, Limited War: Germany’s U-Boat Campaign 1917-1918,” *Journal of Military and
Strategic Studies, Vol 1, No 1 (1998) at
http://www.jmss.org/jmss/index.php/jmss/article/view/19/18


Class 6: Development of Strategy in the Interwar Period, the 1920s and 1930s

Following the carnage of World War I, many nations found themselves in very different strategic situations compared to the pre-1914 period. New strategies were needed. Additionally, military technology was evolving rapidly, which had an effect on strategic thinking.


• Steven Pedler, “Institutional Politics and the US Military’s War Plan Orange”,
https://etd.ohiolink.edu/rws_etd/document/get/bgsu1182351613/inline

Class 7: Grand Strategy in World War II – Part 1

World War II was the largest, most devastating conflict in human history. Waged for nearly six years by the most advanced industrial nations of that era, the war saw the bringing together of various military concepts, new technologies, and the different
strategic goals of the participants. This class will focus on the European theater.


**Class 8: Grand Strategy in World War II – Part 2**

As a continuation of the WW II discussion, this class will concentrate on the Pacific theater.


**Class 9: The Cold War – Conventional and Nuclear**

Following the end of World War II a new strategic reality was in place, with the US and USSR having emerged as the dominant global powers. The end of the Second World War also included the emergence of nuclear weapons, which had a major influence on strategic thinking.

- *Makers of Modern Strategy*, pp. 735-814
Class 10: Revolutionary Warfare

The end of World War II also saw much greater importance attached to what has become known as “irregular” or “revolutionary” warfare. The threat of nuclear devastation often led the major powers, particularly the USSR and Communist China, to use this approach, which was also favored by Third World nationalists seeking to overthrow European colonial regimes in the years after 1945. The move toward this form of conflict had a major influence on strategic thinking.


Class 11: Post-Cold War Challenges – Nation States

The end of the generally bi-polar Cold War brought significant changes to the strategic environment. The grand strategic implications of regional powers in the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union will be examined.

Class 12: Post-Cold War Challenges – Non-State Entities

The rise of non-state actors who have local, regional, or global influence is a new grand strategic reality that US policy makers have to contend with.


- The Strategic Blunder Behind the War on Terror, http://www.newsweek.com/2015/01/23/paris-massacre-was-declaration-new-kind-war-298810.html

Class 13: Future U.S. Grand Strategy

Near and mid-term challenges to US interest will be reviewed including the rise of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and the reemergence of Russian power. How the U.S. might cope with these and other challenges will be discussed.

• China’s Rising Military Might, a Grand Strategic Surprise?, http://nationalinterest.org/feature/chinas-rising-military-might-grand-strategy-surprise-10640


• Resurgent Russia is Already Starting to Show Worrying Signs of Decline, http://www.forbes.com/sites/markadomanis/2015/10/13/resurgent-russia-is-actually-starting-to-show-worrying-signs-of-decline/#758bc6d7b634


Class 14: Final Class

The final class will be a review of the key points from the course.

Final papers are due the day the Exam is scheduled for this course.

GMU Plagiarism Statement

Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting.
Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions for this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may not be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful, to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly." In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism. (statement of English Department at George Mason University.

**Plagiarism and the Internet**

Copyright rules also apply to users of the Internet who cite from Internet sources. Information and graphics accessed electronically must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's e-mail without permission), newsgroup material, information from Web sites, including graphics. Even if you give credit, you must get permission from the original source to put any graphic that you did not create on your web page. Shareware graphics are not free. Freeware clipart is available for you to freely use. If the material does not say "free," assume it is not. Putting someone else's Internet material on your web page is stealing intellectual property. Making links to a site is, at this time, okay, but getting permission is strongly advised, since many Web sites have their own requirements for linking to their material.
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