Defending our Nation against its enemies is the first and fundamental commitment of the Federal Government. Today, that task has changed dramatically. Enemies in the past needed great armies and great industrial capabilities to endanger America. Now, shadowy networks of individuals can bring great chaos and suffering to our shores for less than it costs to purchase a single tank.


Course Description: This course examines the changing meaning of international security—with a special focus on the United States—and is divided into three sections: (1) the traditional security concerns of great power war and nuclear deterrence; (2) these traditional security concerns applied today, such as the effect of American primacy on great power politics and the proliferation of nuclear weapons; and (3) the broadening of the understanding of national security to incorporate “new” threats, such as terrorism, cyberwar, humanitarian crises, the spread of disease, and global climate change.

Required Reading: All readings on the syllabus and all course documents are available on Blackboard (http://blackboard.wm.edu). You are expected to read a major newspaper on a daily basis. You are also encouraged to read other relevant periodicals, such as the Economist, National Interest, Atlantic Monthly, New Republic, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Survival, Orbis, etc.

Course Requirements: You are expected to attend class, complete the readings before the class for which they were assigned, and participate in class discussions. Graded assignments include two exams and an 5-7 page final policy memo. Each exam will include a take-home essay and an in-class exam. They will test your ability to think creatively and critically about course material. The take-home essay question will be distributed one week before each exam. Take-home essays will be due at the start of the class during which the in-class portion of the exam will be given. A description of the policy memo assignment is attached to the syllabus. No student can pass the course without completing all assignments.

Students are also encouraged to participate in the Omnibus Project. The Omnibus Project is a collaborative subject pool for survey and experimental research conducted by students and faculty. Students will have the opportunity to participate as a subject in one or more research projects this semester. An alternative writing assignment will be offered to students who do not want to participate in the Omnibus Project or are not old enough to participate. The total time required will be approximately one hour. Five percentage points will be added to the participation grade of students who take part in one session or complete the alternative assignment before the end of the classes (December 4).
Grading: Your participation in class discussions and performance on the exams and policy memo will determine your final grade. They are weighted as follows:

- Participation: 5%
- Extra credit for Omnibus Project: 5% added to participation grade
- Midterm: 30%
- Final Exam: 30%
- Policy memo: 35%

Numeric grades translate into letter grades in the following manner:

- 100-94: A
- 93-90: A-
- 89-87: B+
- 86-84: B
- 83-80: B-, etc.

Late Assignments: You are expected to take the exams at the times indicated. Failure to take an exam at the scheduled time will result in a zero for that exam. Rescheduling an exam or receiving a paper extension because of an absence requires advance notice and/or documentation from the Dean of Students. Late take-home exam essays will be penalized one letter grade for each day they are late. Late final papers will be penalized one-third of a letter grade for each day they are late (i.e., the grade for a paper that is one day late will be lowered, for example, from an A- to a B+).

Academic Honesty: You are expected to adhere to the tenets of the Honor Code when completing course assignments; they will be strictly enforced. If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism (e.g., the rules for properly attributing cited material or how to paraphrase), please ask for clarification from me before handing in your work.
Part I: Theoretical and Conceptual Tools

August 27: Introduction


Question: * How has the concept of security changed over time?

September 1: Theories of international relations: a review


Question: * What are the consequences of anarchy for state behavior according to realists, liberals, and constructivists?

September 3 and 8: What is security?

* Arnold Wolfers, “‘National Security’ as an Ambiguous Symbol,” *Political Science Quarterly* (December 1952).

Questions: * What is security? How do decision makers determine the national interest? Is the national interest a useful guide for making security policy? Should the concept of “human security” replace “national security”?

Part II: Traditional Challenges to International Security

September 10: Great power politics: sources of conflict and war


Questions: * What causes interstate war, according to offensive realists? What is the offense-defense balance and how does it increase the probability of war?
September 15: Managing great power relations: realist prescriptions

Readings:

Questions:
* What is the balance of power? Do states balance? If so, why and when? Does balancing prevent war? How does Jervis, a realist, explain the emergence of concert systems?

September 17: Managing great power relations: liberal prescriptions

Readings:

Questions:
* What is collective security? Why is it attractive and why is it problematic? Would a concert of democracies make a better basis for the creation of a collective security organization than, say, the United Nations?

September 22 and 24: The nuclear revolution and deterrence

Readings:
* Kenneth Waltz, “Nuclear Myths and Political Realities,” from Art and Waltz, eds. *The Use of Force*.

Questions:
* What is deterrence and how is it different from defense? What has been the effect of nuclear weapons on international politics?

Part III: Traditional Security Concerns Today

September 29: Great power politics today: the problem of American primacy?

Readings:
Questions: * Why did states fail to balance against the United States after the end of the Cold War? Are they balancing the United States now?

October 1: Great power politics today: the rise of new great powers?


Questions: * Will the rise of China destabilize the international system? Why? How will/should the United States respond to rising great powers?

October 6: Great power politics today: the future of major war


Questions: * Is war obsolete? What factors caused the obsolescence of major war? What factors might lead to a resurgence of major war?

October 8: The problem of nuclear proliferation


Questions: * Does nuclear proliferation produce stability or instability in the international system? Are you more convinced by Waltz’s deterrence model or Sagan’s bureaucratic politics model?

October 10-13: Fall break (no classes)

October 15: Preventing nuclear proliferation


Questions: * Should states try to eliminate nuclear weapons or control their spread? What would be the best strategy to prevent nuclear proliferation?
October 20: Midterm exam (take-home essay due)

October 22: Managing rogue states: containment, preventive war, and assassination

Readings:  

Questions:  
* What is a rogue state? Can rogue states be deterred? Are preventive war and assassination better strategies for dealing with rogue regimes than deterrence?

October 27: Managing rogue states: the case of Iran

Readings:  

Questions:  
* Why is Iran developing nuclear technology? What are the arguments for and against attacking Iran to prevent Tehran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability?

Part IV: New International Security Challenges

October 29: International terrorism

Readings:  

Questions:  
* What does Pape see as the strategic logic behind terrorism? Is international terrorism a threat to international security? How vulnerable is the United States?

November 3: Counterterrorism

Readings:  

Questions: * What are the critical factors in defeating a terrorist movement? Can terrorists be deterred? Is ISIS a terrorist organization?

**November 5: Cyberwar**


Questions: * What is cyberwar? To what extent does it constitute a security challenge?

**November 10: Ethnic conflict and civil war**


Question: * What challenges does intrastate conflict pose for the international community?

**November 12: Humanitarian intervention: creating a stable peace**


Question: * What are the most effective international responses to civil wars?

**November 17: Asymmetric war and counterinsurgency**


Questions: * Why do powerful states lose to weaker opponents? What are the challenges posed by modern counterinsurgencies?
November 19: The U.S. counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan


Questions:  * Does the United States tend to fail at nation-building and counterinsurgency? What are the implications of the crusade and quagmire traditions for U.S. security policy? For international security?

November 24: Climate change and epidemic disease


Questions:  * Is climate change an international security issue? What is the relationship between disease and security?

November 25-29: Thanksgiving break (no classes)

December 1 and 3: U.S. grand strategy (final paper due on December 3)

Readings:  * Christopher Layne, “From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing,” from Art and Waltz, eds., *The Use of Force*.
  * G. John Ikenberry, “America’s Imperial Ambition,” *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2002).

Questions:  * What is grand strategy? Given the range of threats to international security and the strategies available for managing them, what grand strategy should the United States pursue?

Final exam:

* 329.01 – Exam is scheduled for 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. on Fri., December 11 (take-home essay due)
* 329.02 – Exam is scheduled for 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. on Tues., December 15 (take-home essay due)

* COURSE SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE INSTRUCTOR*
Assignment

Write a 5-7 page memo that examines a policy challenge in contemporary international security, offering specific advice either to the U.S. president, the U.N. Secretary General, or a foreign policy decision maker in another country. Your memo should be structured as follows and use descriptive subheadings (see Blackboard for examples):

(1) A concise introduction that briefly describes the security challenge addressed in the memo, hints at why it is a threat, and identifies the policy alternatives weighed, as well as the recommended course of action;

(2) A description of the nature of the security problem addressed by the memo;

(3) An explanation for why this security challenge requires the audience’s attention and a response;

(4) A description of at least one alternative policy response—ideally the existing policy or option(s) that are often advocated by academics or analysts;

(5) A critique of the alternative policy or policies;

(6) An analysis of your preferred policy response, which explains why it is preferable to the alternative(s), why it is feasible and likely to be successful in the existing political environment (e.g., given domestic attitudes, state resources, international opinion, etc.), and anticipates and rebuts potential counterarguments; and

(7) A short conclusion that makes the final pitch for your argument.

Examples of possible policy problems on which to write memos include: (1) whether NATO should provide military assistance to bolster Ukrainian forces against a possible Russian intervention, (2) whether the United States should send troops to the Middle East to combat ISIS, (3) how Israel should manage the threat posed by a nuclear Iran, (4) the ways climate change poses a threat to international security, etc.

You might find it useful to look through past issues of International Security, Security Studies, American Interest, National Interest, and Foreign Affairs for ideas for topics or useful sources.

Deadline:

* Policy memo due on December 3 (at the start of class)
Late memos will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late (i.e., the grade for a paper that is one day late will be lowered, for example, from an A- to a B+).

Evaluation:

Evaluation of the policy memo will be based on:

* Thoroughness of research

You should draw on and cite a wide range of the best and most reliable sources. Be sure to begin your research early. Relying exclusively on JSTOR to locate articles is a mistake, as it usually identifies only a fraction of the available sources. Excellent research requires no small amount of detective work to find the most appropriate and up-to-date sources. If you find one particularly useful article, use its bibliography to track down other sources. There are many potentially useful sources of information: books, chapters in edited books, academic (peer-reviewed) journals, policy journals (e.g. Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, National Interest); reports from international and non-governmental organizations (e.g., IMF, UN, World Bank), and news and magazine periodicals. If relevant, you are also encouraged to use primary sources. The staff at the library will help you locate these sources (e.g., Lexus-Nexus, JSTOR, Web of Science, etc.).

* Quality of analysis

Your memo should not be merely descriptive, but rather should engage in thoughtful and critical analysis of your chosen topic, integrating relevant theories and concepts when applicable. A simple summary of another scholar’s arguments and findings is unacceptable. Similarly, this is not a think piece or an extended editorial. You are being asked to identify an interesting and important policy challenge and to use facts to support your conclusions.

* Quality of writing and organization

Write with clarity: be concise and avoid jargon. Pay particular attention to organization. Your memo should follow the structure outlined above and each section should be organized logically, so that ideas and arguments follow from one to the next. Please use subheadings to guide the reader through your analysis. Proofread for misspellings, grammatical errors, awkward sentences, and so on. Remember that excellent writing is usually the product of several redrafts. Even the most skilled writers need to polish their prose.

Length, format:

Policy memos should be 5-7 pages in length (not including the bibliography). They should be typed, double-spaced, and in a standard 12-point font (e.g., Times New Roman). Please number your pages and be certain that your paper is stapled before you hand it in. No electronic copies will be accepted.
Citations:

You must cite any information or ideas borrowed from someone else’s work (when in doubt, cite). Any social science citation style is acceptable as long as it is used correctly and consistently. Include a complete bibliography at the end of the policy memo. You will be able to find a number of guides in the reference section of the library that describe how to format the citations and bibliography correctly. Although I prefer full-citation endnotes to parenthetical notation, you may use the citation style with which you are the most familiar. If you have any questions about whether or how to cite material properly, please ask me for guidance.