The primary purpose of this graduate course is to expose Ph.D. students majoring in Political Science, and those interested in the new PSC Security Studies Minor, to the controversies and debates in contemporary security studies. Ph.D. graduate students from other departments and MA students in Political Science, International Relations, and other programs are welcome to take the course insofar as they are interested in the academic field of security studies and international relations theory.

The course will focus on various perspectives and approaches for studying international security and foreign security policy, and on a number of ‘hot’ security debates in the subfield. The course is organized thematically and will cover security issues across multiple regions and time periods. The course will encourage students to begin thinking about areas for future research and topics of interest for the Ph.D. dissertation. Although there are no prerequisites for the course, it is expected that students are coming into it with a basic familiarity with the general approaches and debates in international relations theory. The course is not intended to serve as a review or substitute for the IR field survey course (PSC 651). Students who have not yet taken the field survey course may need to do additional background readings in order to keep up with some of the course material.

In the first part of the course, we will consider the different and similar ways in which scholars and practitioners evaluate contemporary international and national security and how Security Studies has been delineated as a distinct subfield. We will consider work at the international level-of-analysis, focusing on inter-state interaction and the relevance of power and material capabilities, and work at the domestic and individual levels-of-analysis which emphasizes the importance of leaders and decision making, identities and ideas, and institutional configurations.

In the second part of the course, we will cover a number of debates in the subfield, and consider how various theoretical approaches are applied by academics and policymakers to specific security topics, such as terrorism; contested territory and strategic rivalries; insurgency and counter-insurgency; grand strategy; humanitarian intervention; and modernized warfare. Students will also have the opportunity to select and present an off-syllabus topic.
The course readings will primarily focus on contemporary literature published in the last 5 years, rather than on classic texts covered in the IR field survey course.

**Course Layout: Student-Driven Discussions**

As a graduate seminar, the course will center on open discussions of the material. A careful reading of MOST (and preferably all) of the required materials for each week will put you in good shape for contributing effectively to our discussions. (Please do not attempt to ‘wing it’, as doing so is usually quite painfully obvious).

Prior to our discussion of the weekly readings, one or two students will present the material and identify key themes and problems (see below, Class Leader assignment).

**Readings**

The syllabus contains required and recommended readings. Although I will refer students to recommended literature (noted on the syllabus, as well as others) for the purposes of this course you are only obligated to read the REQUIRED material on the syllabus.

There are approximately 250 pages of reading assigned for each week.

**Seven books are included in the REQUIRED reading.** They have been ordered by the SU bookstore. All these books can be purchased in paperback. Should you prefer to do so, you may also purchase the books directly from the publishers, from Amazon, or from another distributor. Most of the books are also available as e-books. (Note: if you purchase an e-book you may bring your laptop to class on that day).


Most of the journal articles that are assigned each week are accessible online via the SU library e-journal system through JSTOR, Ebsco etc. Those readings not available in SU’s library holdings, or through Google Scholar, will be uploaded in advance onto the course Blackboard as scanned PDF files (under “Content”).

Each week, please bring hard copies of the readings to class. We will often refer to specific pages, and notes on the material will not suffice. (Those students purchasing e-books may bring laptops or e-book electronic readers to class)

Requirements

(1) **Final Essay/Exam**
Due date: Tuesday May 5

Students will write an answer to one essay question designed to cover the readings and class discussions for the semester. The questions will be very similar in style to those that appear in the International Security subsection of the IR Qualifying Exam and on the Security Studies minor exam.

The essay should be approximately 10 to 12 pages in length (double spaced, reasonable margins).

Questions will be handed out on the last class (Thursday April 23). Note: you should select a question that enables you to cover topics and readings other than those you covered in your Reading Review Essay (see below).

The essay is due to the Political Science Department by 4:30pm on May 5. Please make sure to have the office staff sign and date your paper before leaving it in my mailbox. (Please do not slip papers under my office door!).

I prefer not to receive papers via email. If you cannot drop off a hard copy on the due date due to your summer travel plans, you should plan to turn the paper in early. I do except late papers due to an emergency or illness. However, in the interest of fairness, I will need to see documentation of the emergency/illness; otherwise, points will be deducted for late papers.

(2) **Reading Review Essay**
Rolling due dates

Students should write one essay that critically engages one of the weekly topics of their choice.
Note: the week you select to write on must be different from the one you choose to present as Class Leader (see below).

The essay should summarize the central security issues at hand; compare and contrast across readings; highlight theoretical and/or empirical problems and puzzles; and offer suggestions for further research. The essays should thus read much like a review essay (and may later be revised into one that can be submitted to a journal).

Each essay should be 10-12 pages in length (double spaced, reasonable margins).

The essay is due at the start of class for the week that you select.

(3) Opinion-Editorials
Rolling due dates (at least one prior to midterm)

Students should submit two single-spaced 800-1,000 word op-eds related to the topic and readings for three different weeks. Any two weeks may be selected, but students should plan on submitting one of these writing assignments before Week 8.

The op-eds should include a title, address a contemporary and/or historical security event or development, and draw on the theoretical material covered for the week selected.

The op-eds are due at the start of class for the weeks that you select.

Note: you may submit an op-ed on the week you choose to be Class Leader and/or the week you write your Reading Review Essay.

(4) Class Leader
Rolling due dates

Each week, one student (or two depending on final enrollment) will begin the class by making a 15 to 20 minute presentation on the weekly readings. The presentation should briefly:

- summarize the readings (puzzles; main arguments; evidence and methodologies used; findings);
- assess the strengths and weaknesses of the readings; and,
- highlight the overarching themes across the readings, including areas of agreement and disagreement.

Students can create a powerpoint slide show for their presentation if they wish.
In the discussion following the presentation, the class leader/s should help keep the class conversation moving. It is expected that class leader/s will participate more than usual in the class discussion for that week.

Class leader/s should submit 3 discussion questions via email to me by 2:00pm on the day of the class.

Class leader/s should also bring 1 or 2 op-eds or blogs by practitioners, journalists, analysts, or academics on the topic (max 1000 words) to class. The op-eds may be from either print or online sources and, while they must be published in English, they need not be US-based. Please make sufficient copies for the class.

Note: in cases where 2 students are designated class leaders, please coordinate together to present a 20 minute presentation. You should also coordinate to submit 3 discussion questions, and 2 op-eds or blogs.

(5) **Class Presentation and Reading Summaries**

*Week 14 and 15 (last two classes of the semester)*

Early in the semester, you should select a topic in contemporary security studies that interests you and research it further. The topic you select should be on a topic that has not been covered extensively on the course syllabus. Suggested topics off-syllabus include:

- Empire
- Peacekeeping
- The International Dimensions of Ethnic Conflict and Civil War
- Nuclear Proliferation Risks
- Alliances and Regional Security
- Civil-Military Relations
- Deterrence Theory and Crisis Bargaining
- Reputation, Signaling and War
- Regional Security Systems
- Diversionary War Theory
- Religion, War and Conflict Resolution
- Bargaining Models of War
- Privatization of the Military
- War Termination
- Military Innovation
- Cybersecurity
- Conflict Resolution and Prevention
- Gender and War
- Military Effectiveness
- Demography, Refugees, Migration and War
- Intelligence Failures
Environmental Scarcity, Climate Change and Conflict
Arms Races and War
Militarized Interstate Disputes
Economic Interdependence, Trade and War
Offense/Defense Theory and War
Collective Security and Security Communities
Military and Strategic Culture

The topic you select should be broader than a contemporary policy issue, and should span multiple regions (a specific reading you select, however, may focus on a particular country or region). Feel free to clear a topic with me before you proceed to collect reading materials on it.

As a rough guide, once you have selected a topic, you should choose:

(a) 1 university press book and 2 to 3 journal articles on the topic; or
(b) 7 to 9 journal articles on the topic; and
(c) 2-3 op-eds and/or blogs on the topic

Certain topics tend to be top-heavy in journal articles; others tend to have the lion’s share of research represented in monographs. It is up to you to create a reading list.

Note: You can include edited volumes. Books published by commercial presses may be suitable for inclusion, but clear them with me first. Although it may be appropriate to include articles from regional and area-studies journals, you should steer clear of essays that are solely empirical. Articles from the top or second tier journals in international relations and security studies (and general political science) are preferred, although good and interesting articles from cognate disciplines might also be used.

A list of the readings you have complied is due in class on March 5.
I will make further recommendations if necessary. (Note: duplication of topics is OK, provided that the selected readings are different. The goal is for students to focus on topics that they are most interested in exploring further. If need be, I may ask you to switch out a reading to avoid overlap with other student selections).

On March 5, along with a reading list, please provide a copy of 1 op-ed/blog and 1 journal article or 1 book chapter that you would like the class to read in advance of your class presentation.

Class Presentation

Your classmates will have read the article/book chapter you designate prior to your class presentation at the end of the semester. We will spend approximately 30 minutes on your topic.
Prepare a 20 minute presentation that will, ideally, do some of the items below:
   a) introduce the topic, and how it fits into the subfield of security studies
   b) highlight the key issues and debates surrounding the topic
   c) identify strengths and weaknesses in the readings you covered
   d) highlight the points of disagreement and consensus in the readings
   e) identify empirical or theoretical problems
   f) critically assess the readings: what grabbed you? what annoyed you?
   g) suggest what else should be done in the study of the topic

Feel free to prepare a powerpoint slideshow for your presentation. You can also distribute handouts, if you wish.

Following your presentation, we will have a general discussion on your topic—we will ask you questions, and you can generate questions for the discussion as well.

I will arrange the presentations based on synergy among the topics selected.

Reading Summaries

**In addition to the presentation, you should prepare stapled packets of summaries of the readings you completed for distribution in class.** Summaries of each reading should be no longer than 1 page, single spaced. In the summaries, you should primarily highlight the main themes, argument, empirical tests, and findings of each reading. Criticism and reflection should be reserved for your oral presentation. The packets will be distributed at the time of your presentation—be sure to bring sufficient copies for everyone.

(6) **Participation**

It is expected that students will have read, and be prepared to discuss, the readings for each week. Please do not attempt to ‘wing it’ during class discussions. Students must actively participate in our weekly discussion of the readings. Participation will count as an integral part of the final grade. (Note: the class leader assignment and class presentation at the end of the semester will be considered separately from this overall participation component).

**Note on Requirements**

It is expected that all work (both written and oral) submitted for a grade must be original material completed for this course. Do not attempt to submit work that you completed for another course. While it is permissible, and indeed encouraged, that you build on prior work, ‘double dipping’ is considered plagiarism and is unacceptable.
Topics and Readings


Week 1, January 15
Course Introductions
International and National Security, 2015 and Beyond: Reflections on Theory and Policy


Recommended:


Week 2, January 22
Defining the Field of Security Studies


**Recommended:**


**Week 3, January 29**

**Security Studies: the International Level-of-Analysis**


Recommended:


Week 4, February 5

Security Studies: the Domestic Level-of-Analysis

Jennifer L.P. Weeks, *Dictators at War and Peace* (Cornell University Press, 2014), chapters TBA


**Recommended:**


Week 5, February 12
Security Studies: the Individual Level-of-Analysis

Elizabeth Saunders, *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions* (Cornell University Press), chapters TBA


David Rothkopf, “Can Obama’s Foreign Policy Be Saved?” *Foreign Policy*, September/October 2014, pp. 45-51

Recommended:


**II. “Hot” Topics and Debates in Security Studies**

Week 6, February 19

Terrorism

Michael Brown et al., *Contending with Terrorism* (The MIT Press, 2010), chapters TBA


**Recommended:**


**Week 7, February 26**

**Asymmetric Conflict: Insurgency, Counter-insurgency, and Military Occupation**

David Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency* (Oxford University Press, 2010), chapters TBA


**Recommended:**


Week 8, March 5
Humanitarian Intervention and Noncombatants in War


Recommended:


Week 9, No class: Enjoy Spring Break!
Week 10, March 19
Territorial Conflicts, States, and War


Ron E. Hassner, “‘To Have and to Hold’: Conflicts Over Sacred Space and the problem of Indivisibility,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (Summer 2003): 1-33

Recommended:


**Week 11, March 26**

**Grand Strategy: The Balance and Balancing of Power**


**Recommended:**


Week 12, April 2, class cancelled

Week 13, April 9
The New Way of Warfare and the Modern Military


Recommended:


III. Trends and Research Agendas in Security Studies

Week 14, April 16
Class presentations
(Readings TBA)

Week 15, April 23 (last class)
Class presentations
(Readings TBA)