Political Science 4931, Section 2757
Contemporary Issues in US National Security Policy

This course will examine current security challenges, as well as the potential range of US actions to meet those challenges. The main topics include:

- Terrorism
- Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Non-Proliferation and Counter-Proliferation
- Alliances and international cooperation
- Revolution in Military Affairs
- Adaptation of national security institutions

The course is organized in a series of two week sections that delve into specific questions within each of the above topics. For example, is there a firm distinction between the “old” and “new” forms of terrorism? What strategies have worked in the past to defeat terrorist organizations and what lessons can be applied in the current context? What is the appropriate balance between law enforcement, intelligence and military tools of counter-terrorism? We will start with a look at the theoretical and historical approaches to each issue and then move to the policy ramifications.

Required Reading

To save you money, most of the course readings are available off of my website and linked to the on-line syllabus, which can be found at http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/zselden/

I strongly suggest that you download and burn a CD of the readings in case there are server problems or other issues that prevent you from getting to the website when you need to do the reading for that week. There are some additional readings available in a course reader that is available from Orange and Blue Textbooks (309 NW 13th). Those readings are marked in bold type in the syllabus.

In addition to the readings described above, students will write a 1000 word review of one of the following books:

The review will outline the major arguments of the book and offer an assessment of its strengths and weaknesses. All of those books can be purchased at a major bookstore or from Amazon. The review is due no later than 5:00 on Friday November 16.

Grading
Midterm: 25%
Book review: 25%
Final exam: 35%
Participation: 15%

Writing assignments for this course are intentionally short. This is not make them easy; to the contrary, is often difficult to compact a good argument into a few pages that make every word count. There are also few instances in a course of this nature when there is a right or a wrong answer. Essays will be evaluated on how well they marshal evidence to support the argument, the degree to which they take into account potential weaknesses of the argument, and the overall clarity of the writing.

Students will also participate in a role-playing exercise on November 12, 14 and 16 in which each student will take on the role of a cabinet member confronting a national security crisis. You will have to work together to craft a viable solution. Your participation and written evaluation of the exercise will constitute a significant part of your class participation grade. If you know that you will not be able to attend class on those days, please see me well in advance so we can arrange an alternate assignment. This exercise will take approximately three class sessions to complete. The remainder of your class participation grade will be determined by your attendance and participation in class discussions.

Other Business
Make-up exams and late paper submissions can be arranged with advanced notice. Make-up exams will be granted at my discretion with a valid excuse. In case of illness, a doctor’s written excuse will be required. In the case of a known/planned absence please see me WELL IN ADVANCE.

Cheating and plagiarism will be dealt with severely. The use of plagiarized material will earn the student an F for that exam or paper. I never treat my students like fools, so please return the favor. If you have a question as to what constitutes plagiarism, please ask.
**Week 1-2: Defense policy as a subset of foreign policy**

Key questions: What is consistent in US foreign policy since the end of the Cold War and what has changed? What is the range of grand strategic options? Are the changes in strategy since 9-11 radical breaks with the past or more changes in emphasis? What are the historical antecedents?

**Reading**

*August 22*

Introduction

*August 24*


*August 27*


*August 29*


*August 31 NO CLASS*

*September 5*


**Week 3-4: Terrorism**

Key questions: Is there a firm distinction between the “old” and “new” forms of terrorism? What strategies have worked in the past to defeat terrorist organizations and what lessons can be applied in the current context? What is the appropriate balance between law enforcement, intelligence and military tools of counter-terrorism?
Reading:

September 7

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY MONDAY SEPTEMBER 5

September 10
Walter Laqueur, No End to War, Chapter 1

September 12
Bruce Hoffman, Inside Terrorism, Chapter 1

September 14
Walter Laqueur, No End to War, Chapter 2

September 17
Bruce Hoffman, Inside Terrorism, Chapter 7

September 19
Bruce Hoffman, Inside Terrorism, Chapter 7

Week 5-6: Proliferation, arms control, and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

Key questions: What regimes have worked to slow the spread of dangerous materials and weapons? Are Cold War regimes relevant to the current situation? What new regimes are being created to cope with non-state actors? What are the characteristics of different types of WMD and what is the range of appropriate responses to the threats they pose?

Reading

September 21
Henry Sokolski (ed.), Taming the Next Set of Strategic Weapons Threats (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute 2005) Chp. 3.

September 24

Fred Ikle, “Nuclear Abolition: A Reverie,” The National Interest, September/October 2009, pp. 4-7


September 26


**October 1**

“Are We Prepared? Four WMD Crises that could transform US Security” National Defense University, June 2009, pp. 93-120

**October 3**


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**Week 7-8: Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) and Homeland Security**

Key questions: What constitutes an RMA? What are the historical precedents? Is the current transformation a radical break with the past or a continuation of a trend? How has new technology changed military operations? Is there an over-reliance on technology that can be exploited by adversaries?

**Reading:**

**October 5**

Andrew Krepinevich, “From Cavalry to Computer: The Pattern of Military Revolutions,” *The National Interest*, Fall 1994

**October 8**


**October 10**


**Week 9-10: Alliances and international cooperation**

Key questions: How has the relationship with allies changed since the end of the Cold War? What role does NATO play and is it an obsolete concept for current threats? How does the integration of Europe affect the alliance?

**Reading:**

October 12

October 15


October 17


October 19

October 21

October 24

**IN CLASS MID-TERM EXAM FRIDAY OCTOBER 26**

**Week 11-12: Adaptation of US national security institutions (Nov. 6-20)**

Key questions: How is the military transforming itself to be better suited to current and likely future missions? What lessons are learned from ongoing operations?

**Reading**

October 28

October 31
November 2

November 5
Collins, 90-110


November 7


November 9  HOMECOMING HOLIDAY

In class crisis simulation November 12, 14 and 16

**Week 13-15: Thinking about the future**

Key questions: How can we gauge potential threats? Are there potential challengers to US hegemony and what is the range of potential responses? How has the concept of security changed in the past few years and is it likely to evolve further? Is there a global trend toward democracy and what should be the American response?

November 19


November 26

November 28
Charles Glaser, "Will China’s Rise lead to War?" Foreign Affairs, March/April 2011.


November 30


December 3


Charles Kupchan, Sorry Mitt, It Won’t Be an American Century,” Foreign Policy, February 6, 2012, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/02/06/it_won_t_be_an_american_century

December 5
Review

Take Home Final Exam Due December 14 no later than 5:00 pm.