

SIS 653-010: U.S. National Security Strategy Fall 2011

Wednesday 8:10-10:40
Classroom location: TBA
Office hours (SIS 309): Tues 2:15-5:15, and by appointment

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1. Course Description and Objectives

How does the United States formulate national security strategy? What challenges do presidents and other officials face in the development and implementation of strategy? What grand strategies has America pursued, and are any of them applicable to today's world? How should the United States deal with autocracies, the rise of China, nuclear threats, terrorism, and other contemporary challenges? These questions are the focus of this course.

The objectives of the course are to:

- Examine the process of formulating and implementing national security strategy
- Explore alternative U.S. grand strategies in depth
- Analyze competing arguments about contemporary strategies

2. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, I expect students to have achieved the following outcomes:

- Understood how national security strategy is formulated and implemented, as well as the challenges facing policymakers in this effort
- Learned the nuances of alternative U.S. grand strategies
- Evaluated competing arguments about contemporary national security strategy
- Demonstrated strong analytical reading, thinking, and writing skills
- Synthesized course concepts and information
- Written an original policy memo
- Delivered an effective oral policy briefing

3. Readings and Course Schedule

Four books that are required reading are available for purchase at the campus bookstore:

John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*, Revised and Expanded Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)

Gordon Goldstein, *Lessons in Disaster: McGeorge Bundy and the Path to War in Vietnam* (New York: Times Books, 2008)

Robert Kagan, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008)

Bob Woodward, *Obama's Wars* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010)

The rest of the required readings will be available on Blackboard or the Web.

Week 1: August 31

Introduction

Williamson Murray and Mark Grimsley, "Introduction: On Strategy," in Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox and Alvin Bernstein, editors, *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Chapter 1

Week 2: September 7

The Making and Implementation of National Security Strategy

Jordan, Taylor, et al., *American National Security*, Chapter 10

Presidential Policy Directive No.1, "Organization of the National Security Council System." Available at <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/ppd/ppd-1.pdf>

National Security Council Memorandum, "The 21st Century Interagency Process," March 18, 2009. Available at www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/ppd/nsc031909.pdf

Ivo H. Daalder and I. M. Destler, "In the Shadow of the Oval Office: The Next National Security Adviser," *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2009), pages 114-129

Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2003-2005* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), pages 58-84

Project on National Security Reform, *Forging a New Shield* (December 2008), Executive Summary

Aaron L. Friedberg, "Strengthening U.S. Strategic Planning," in Daniel W. Drezner, editor, *Avoiding Trivia: The Role of Strategic Planning in American Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2009), pages 84-97

Lynn E. Davis and Melanie W. Sisson, *A Strategic Planning Approach: Defining Alternative Counterterrorism Strategies as an Illustration* (RAND Corporation Occasional Paper, 2009)

Skim the following readings:

Barack Obama, National Security Strategy (May 2010), pages 1-16

U.S. Department of State, *Leading through Civilian Power*, Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, December 2010, Executive Summary

Recommended additional readings:

Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Who Killed Iraq?" *Foreign Policy* (September/October 2006), pages 36-43

Dov S. Zakheim, "Confessions of a Vulcan," *Foreign Policy* (May 13, 2011)

Week 3: September 14

The Making of National Security Strategy: LBJ and Vietnam

Goldstein, *Lessons in Disaster*, All

James C. Thomson, Jr., "How Could Vietnam Happen? An Autopsy," in G. John Ikenberry, editor, *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays*, Fourth Edition (New York: Longman, 2002), pages 454-463

Week 4: September 21

The Making of National Security Strategy: Obama and Afghanistan

Woodward, *Obama's Wars*, pages 32-47, 62-73, 79-90, 94-114, 117-345

Analytical paper due (in hard copy) at beginning of class on September 21

Week 5: September 28

Strategies of Containment

John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*, Revised and Expanded Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), Chapters 2-4

Week 6: October 5
Strategies of Containment

Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, Chapters 11-12

Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "Who Won the Cold War?" *Foreign Policy*, Number 87 (Summer 1992), pages 123-138

Ian Shapiro, *Containment: Rebuilding a Strategy against Global Terror* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pages 32-53

Michael Anton, "Iran and the Costs of Containment," *National Review Online* (May 3, 2010). Available at <http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/229663/iran-and-costs-containment-michael-anton>

Week 7: October 12
Strategy under George W. Bush, and the Debate over Anti-U.S. Balancing

President George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States Of America* (September 2002), Opening letter, pages 1-16

Ivo Daalder and James Steinberg, "The Future of Preemption," *The American Interest* (Winter 2005), pages 30-39

Robert A. Pape, "Soft Balancing against the United States," *International Security*, Volume 30, Number 1 (Summer 2005), pages 7-45

Kier Lieber and Gerard Alexander, "Waiting for Balancing: Why the World Is Not Pushing Back," *International Security*, Volume 30, Number 1 (Summer 2005), pages 109-139

George W. Bush, Second Inaugural Address (January 20, 2005)

James Traub, *The Freedom Agenda: Why America Must Spread Democracy (Just Not the Way George Bush Did)* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008), pages 99-152

Week 8: October 19
Strategy Under Barack Obama

Peter Baker, "Obama Puts His Own Mark on Foreign Policy Issues," *New York Times* (April 13, 2010)

Obama National Security Strategy (May 2010), pages 1-16

James Traub, "The World According to Barack Obama," *Foreign Policy* (June 1, 2010)

Lawrence J. Korb and Alexander H. Rothman, "Reclaiming and Rebuilding American Power," in *Obama in Office*, edited by James A. Thurber (Paradigm Publishers, 2011), pages 269-280

Thomas Wright, "Strategic Engagement's Track Record," *Washington Quarterly* (July 2010)

Daniel W. Drezner, "Does Obama Have a Grand Strategy?" *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2011), pages 57-68

Ryan Lizza, "The Consequentialist," *The New Yorker* (May 2, 2011), pages 44-55

Barack Obama, "Remarks on the Middle East and North Africa" (May 19, 2011)

David E. Sanger, "Half a Doctrine Will Have To Do," *New York Times* (May 22, 2011)

Shadi Hamid, "The Pitfalls of 'Splitting the Middle' in the Middle East," *The Atlantic* (August 16, 2011)

Fareed Zakaria, "Stop Searching for an Obama Doctrine," *Washington Post* (July 6, 2011)

Recommended:

Martha Crenshaw, "The Obama Administration and Counterterrorism," in *Obama in Office*, edited by James A. Thurber (Paradigm Publishers, 2011), pages 243-253

Week 9: October 26

Competing Contemporary Strategic Ideas

Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security*, Volume 21, Number 3 (Winter 1996/97), pages 5-53

William Kristol and Robert Kagan, "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 1996), pages 18-32

Charles Krauthammer, "Decline Is a Choice: The New Liberalism and the End of American Ascendancy," *The Weekly Standard* (October 19, 2009)

Benjamin Schwarz and Christopher Layne, "A New Grand Strategy," *The Atlantic* (January 2002), pages 36-42

Stephen Walt, "Taming American Power," *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2005), pages 105-120

Strategy memo due on October 31 at 10 AM to tama@american.edu.

Week 10: November 2

Competing Contemporary Strategic Ideas

G. John Ikenberry, "Introduction," in Ikenberry, Thomas J. Knock, Anne-Marie Slaughter, and Tony Smith, *The Crisis of American Foreign Policy: Wilsonianism in the Twenty-first Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), pages 1-24

Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Soft Power and American Foreign Policy," *Political Science Quarterly*, Volume 119, Number 2 (2004), pages 255-270

Suzanne Nossel, "Smart Power," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2004), pages 131-142

G. John Ikenberry and Anne-Marie Slaughter, *Forging a World of Liberty under Law: U.S. National Security in the 21st Century*, Final Report of the Princeton Project on National Security (2006), pages 6-32

G. John Ikenberry, "A World of Our Making," *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas* (Summer 2011), pages 78-90

Mr. Y, "A National Strategic Narrative," Woodrow Wilson Center (2011)

Melvin Leffler and Jeffrey Legro, "Dilemmas of Strategy," in Leffler and Legro, eds., *After the Bush Doctrine: National Security Strategy of a New Administration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pages 250-276

Week 11: November 9

Nuclear weapons strategy

Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., Michael J. Meese, and Suzanne C. Nielsen, *American National Security*, Sixth Edition (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), Chapter 17

Patrick M. Morgan, *Deterrence Now* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pages 1-41, 238-284

Various authors, White Paper on the Necessity of the U.S. Nuclear Deterrent (August 15, 2007)

Ivo Daalder and Jan Lodal, "The Logic of Zero," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2008)

Barry Blechman and Alex Bollfrass, "5 Myths about Getting Rid of the Bomb," *Washington Post* (June 27, 2010)

Week 12: November 16
Dealing with Autocratic States and the Rise of China

Robert Kagan, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams* (New York: Vintage Books), All

Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "The Myth of the Autocratic Revival: Why Liberal Democracy Will Prevail" *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2009), pages 77-93

Aaron L. Friedberg, "The Future of U.S.-China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?" *International Security*, Volume 30, Number 2 (Fall 2005), pages 7-45

Andrew J. Nathan, "What China Wants," *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2011), pages 153-158

John Pomfret, "U.S. Takes a Tougher Tone with China," *Washington Post* (July 30, 2010)

Recommended:

Minxin Pei, "Think Again: Asia's Rise," *Foreign Policy* (July/August 2009), pages 32-36

No class on November 23

Week 13: November 30
Group strategy briefings

Richard K. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion?" *International Security*, Volume 25, Number 2 (Fall 2000), pages 5-50

Week 14: December 7
Group strategy briefings

Final paper due on December 14 at 5 PM to tama@american.edu.

4. Course Requirements and Assignments

I will sometimes post on blackboard or e-mail to you announcements related to the course. You are responsible for checking the blackboard site and your AU e-mail regularly and reading any announcements from me. I will also post course materials on blackboard.

Writing: I take writing quality seriously as part of my evaluation of your written work. You should always edit your work carefully to maximize its clarity and eliminate any errors.

Late papers: Turning in your work on time is important. I will penalize a late paper by deducting 1/3 of a grade (e.g. A becomes A-) if it is late by less than 24 hours, 2/3 of a grade (A becomes B+) if it is late by more than 24 hours but less than 72 hours, a full grade (A becomes B) if it is late by more than 72 hours but less than one week, and two full grades (A becomes C) if it is late by more than one week.

Class participation (20% of grade): You are expected to attend class, and you should come to each class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. I will evaluate your participation based on your attendance and the quality of your contributions to class discussions and debates.

Approved absences are limited to absences for religious observance or for a true emergency. Please contact me if you will need to miss a class for one of those reasons.

The best contributions to class discussion are ones that demonstrate engagement with the course material, familiarity with the reading, thoughtfulness, and respect for the opinions of others.

Attentiveness in class is also an important part of participation. It is unacceptable to use a smartphone in class, and you may only use a laptop, ipad, or other type of computer with my permission. Please speak to me if you would like to use a computer in class for the purpose of taking or referring to notes.

Analytical paper (15% of grade): *How was the process used by the Obama administration to formulate strategy for Afghanistan similar to and/or different from the process used by the Johnson administration to formulate strategy for Vietnam? In each case, how did the decision-making process shape the strategy that the president chose to follow?*

Your analytical paper must answer these questions with a clear argument that is supported with evidence from assigned course readings, particularly the Goldstein and Woodward books. (The paper does not require any outside research.)

The paper should be no more than 1500 words and should be submitted in hard copy by the beginning of class on September 21.

Response paper (5% of grade): For a class session of your choice between Week 5 and Week 12, you must turn in a response paper of no more than 600 words that reflects on one or more of the readings assigned for that week. The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate that you have thought carefully about the reading prior to class. Your paper must demonstrate that you have done the reading, but the best papers will go beyond

summarizing the reading to offer your own reflections or analysis, or to connect ideas from different readings in interesting ways. The paper should be submitted to me in hard copy form at the beginning of the class for which the reading is assigned.

Strategy memo (25% of grade): This assignment is to write a memo to the U.S. National Security Advisor proposing a strategy for dealing with a contemporary national security challenge. (You will choose one of several possible challenges to write about early in the semester.)

The memo should clearly describe the nature of the challenge, the objective of your strategy, your strategy for achieving that objective, and specific proposals for implementing the strategy. The memo should also describe how your proposed strategy differs from existing U.S. policy. (Some elements of your strategy can be the same as existing policy.) In addition, the memo should consider potential domestic or international political obstacles to implementing the strategy, and should suggest how any such obstacles can be overcome.

In the memo, you may draw on concepts and knowledge from the course and from your own research on the issue. You do not need to provide citations for factual information, but you should cite a source when an idea in your memo is drawn from or inspired by it. You should also include a list of references at the end of the memo.

I will evaluate your memo based on its clarity, coherence, persuasiveness, and political feasibility.

The memo should be no more than 1250 words. It is due at 10 AM on October 31. You can submit it by e-mail to tama@american.edu.

Group strategy briefing (10% of grade): After writing the strategy memos, you will work with other students who wrote about the same challenge to prepare a 10 minute group briefing outlining a strategy on that issue. This briefing will be delivered to the class, which will be playing the role of the National Security Council, on November 30 or December 7. In preparing the briefing, each group should aim to reach consensus on a strategy so that the group can present its strategy collectively. This will almost certainly require individual group members to make compromises and modify the positions they articulated in their individual memos. If it is not possible for the group to reach consensus, groups can allocate a portion of their 10 minutes to one or more dissenting opinions, but keep in mind that a divided group will probably be less persuasive than a united group.

Each presentation will be followed by a question-and-answer session with the rest of the class. All members of the group must contribute significantly to the group's work, but you can delegate one or two people to deliver the presentation. I will expect group members who do not deliver the presentation to answer some of the questions.

Groups will be evaluated based on the quality of the briefing and responses to questions, not on whether the group strategy is similar to or different than the strategy you proposed in your individual memos. You should not begin working as a group until after you have written your memos.

Final paper (25% of grade): A final paper of no more than 2000 words will be due at 5 PM on December 14. I will distribute options for paper topics during the second half of the semester. The topics will require you to synthesize and analyze material from different parts of the course. In grading the papers, I will be assessing both your understanding of course material and your ability to formulate and defend a persuasive argument in response to the question you choose to answer.

5. Academic Integrity

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University's Academic Integrity Code. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by it. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur. Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Academic Integrity Code in general or as they relate to particular requirements for this course.

6. Support Services and Disabilities

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please don't hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of SIS, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

Academic Support Center (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities. Writing support is available in the ASC Writing Lab or in the Writing Center, Battelle 228.

Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

Disability Support Services (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities.

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a timely manner with a letter from the Academic Support Center or Disability Support Services so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

7. Emergency Preparedness

In the event of a declared emergency, American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (www.prepared.american.edu) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/college-specific information.