

Political Science 3734

National Security

Fall 2014

Course Info

Instructor: Steven Wilson

Place: Rand 318

Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:10AM - 11:00AM

Office Hours: 4:00PM - 5:00PM Monday and Wednesday in 527 Major Williams Hall

Contact Info: Email: slw42@vt.edu Phone: 540-231-6425

Objectives: This course addresses theories of national security, different empirical approaches to the topic, and an intensive set of case studies of issues of national security in order to illustrate these principles in action. Students write their own case study, produce a research paper, and participate in discussion of readings and cases in order to fully master the concepts.

Textbooks

The course has two required text books, which will be supplemented by a selection of additional readings that will be available electronically throughout the semester. The two required texts are:

Sarkesian, Williams, and Cimbala.

US National Security: Policymakers, Processes, and Politics

Vipin Narang.

Nuclear Strategy in the Modern Era

Assignments & Grading

Reading will be assigned for each class. Students should come to class having read the assigned material and being ready to discuss it. Lectures will be designed to supplement the material covered in the readings. Please come to office hours (or schedule a meeting with

me if you have a conflict) if you have any trouble understanding the material, or if you have any questions about the course at all as the semester progresses.

Assignments include a research paper that will be completed in stages through the semester, a case study paper, and participation in class and virtual sections. The proportion each of these is worth to the final grade is listed below:

Virtual Sections (25%) (Online, throughout semester)

Case Study (20%) (Due Friday, October 17th)

Class Activities (10%) (Throughout semester)

Journal Entries (20%) (Throughout semester)

Final Paper (25%) (Due by the start of the final class: Wednesday, Dec 10th)

Participation & Sections

Students will be expected to participate in class. This will be measured in two ways. First, the class will be divided into *virtual sections* of a half-dozen or so students. Over the course of the semester, sections will engage in debate over case studies in forums set up on Scholar. In addition, students are expected to read the news, and keep up on current events involving international relations. Beginning in the second week of the semester, each class will begin with a short exercise based on current events.

Final Paper

The final papers will be written in stages over the course of the semester. In the first two weeks of the semester, students will identify a research question they want to answer, and turn in a summary of the question and their approach to it. Throughout the semester, students will identify scholarly literature relevant to their question, and write journal entries summarizing the arguments and how they apply to their paper. The final paper will be 2500 words. Half way through the semester, students will also turn in a 1000 word case study analyzing a particular case related to national security.

When grading papers, if you write less than the minimum length, you will be graded out of the percent of the assignment that you did. For example, if for the 1000 word assignment you only turn in a 700 word paper, I will grade you out of 70%.

Course Schedule

The schedule for the semester is listed below, reading will be assigned as we go.

Week 1: Introduction

Textbook - Chapter One: National Interests and National Security

Week 2: Historical Background

Textbook - Chapter Two: Who's Who in the International System

Week 3: Alliances

Article - Robert Powell: In the Shadow of Power Article - Gartzke and Gleditsch 2004

Week 4: State Capacity

Textbook - Chapter Three: The Conflict Spectrum

Textbook - Chapter Six: The President and the Presidency

Week 5: Soft Power

Textbook - Chapter Five: The US Political System

Week 6: Terrorism

Week 7: Arms Trade

Textbook - Chapter Four: National Security, Nuclear Weapons, and Arms Control

Textbook - Chapter Eight: The Military Establishment

Week 8: Nuclear Weapons

Vipin Narang's book

Week 9: Economic Issues

Week 10: Resources

Week 11: Ideology

Textbook - Chapter Twelve: Empowering the People

Textbook - Chapter Thirteen: Civil-Military Relations

Week 12: Humanitarianism

Week 13: Intelligence

Textbook - Chapter Nine: The Intelligence Establishment

Week 14: Thanksgiving

Week 15: Cybersecurity

Week 16: The Future

Textbook - Chapter Fourteen: Long Range Issues of National Security

Textbook - Chapter Fifteen: Making the System Work