



US National Security

SYLLABUS AY 26

**JOINT PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION PHASE I INTERMEDIATE LEVEL
COURSE**

**UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE**

**AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE
MAXWELL AFB, AL**

FOREWORD

This syllabus for the Air Command and Staff College course in *US National Security*, Academic Year 2026, provides an overview of the course narrative and objectives as well as a detailed description of each lesson to assist students in their reading and preparation for lecture and seminar. Included herein is information about course methods of evaluation, schedule, and the fulfillment of joint professional military education core goals.

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US NATIONAL SECURITY COURSE OVERVIEW

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Such relations between states are primarily the concern of the statesman, a matter of international policies; but they are also among the data which the strategist, naval as well as land, has to consider...I cannot too entirely repudiate the opinion...that external politics are of no professional concern to military men.

- Alfred T. Mahan, from *Lectures delivered at U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I., between the years 1887 and 1911*

You are about at that point in your career now . . . when you have to have a better understanding of the broader context in which you are serving. When you have to have a better understanding of what is happening on the world scene. Where you need a better understanding of how politics works...To make sure you understand the influences that are pressing on the Department and on your particular service.

- Colin S. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, speech delivered at the U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I., 1990

The teaching of national security within professional military education rests on the proposition—reflected in the above quotes—that a key element of a military leader’s professional development is an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the national security environment in which the military operates and plays a critical role. The US National Security course at ACSC, particularly, serves as a **foundational** step in this development.

The mission of ACSC is to educate and develop joint leaders who solve complex problems at the operational level of war, at least a step or two down from national level decision-making. However, even when working at the operational level, military professionals are both consumers and producers of national security “outputs,” or the assessments, strategies, policies, and decisions that proceed from the national security enterprise.

On the **consuming** side, military professionals are routinely called upon to weigh and implement national level guidance. National security guidance is shaped by a range of factors, including national interests, perceived threats, available resources, and the broader international environment. The resultant guidance is articulated through documents such as the National Security Strategy (NSS), National Defense Strategy (NDS), and National Military Strategy (NMS), which communicate overarching objectives and priorities to the Department of Defense and the joint force. As noted in JP 5-0, however, this guidance is often vague in content—too broad for detailed planning—and thus requires a degree of translation and refinement to be useful at the operational level.

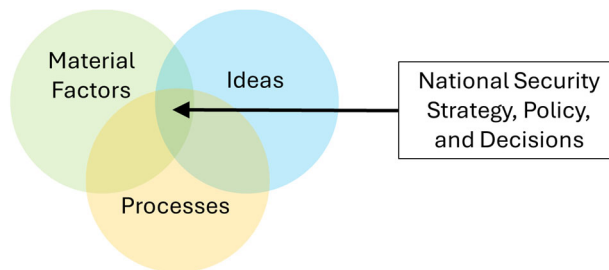
On the **producing** side, military professionals are routinely called upon to provide civilian policy makers with operational advice, plans, options, and assessments related to the use of force that in turn affect national policies and decisions. Recommendations regarding military operations are deeply interconnected with the broader national security enterprise. Military professionals must analyze the strategic context—including political aims, allied perspectives,

adversary intentions, and global trends—to ensure that proposed courses of action are relevant and feasible within the constraints and opportunities presented by the environment. Their assessments help inform clear political aims and achievable ends, bridging the gap between national interests and the use of force.

In either case (i.e., as consumer or producer), the military professional with at least a foundational understanding of the national security environment will be more effective in supporting national leadership with its application of the military instrument of power in pursuit of national security objectives.

The focus of this course is how the United States defines and pursues its national security in a complex, uncertain, and often dangerous world. While international politics certainly matters to US national security—and is a critical element of the national security environment—the “how” of US national security in this sense may reflect US history, ideology, and domestic political contestation as much as, if not more than, anything happening within the broader international context.

As a central theme, the course proposes that how the United States defines and pursues its national security—along with associated national security outputs—reflects a confluence of material factors, ideas, and domestic decision-making processes. The course accordingly seeks to provide students with a foundational understanding of each of these elements and how they interact.



COURSE MAP

Toward this end, the course consists of four blocks. The first block, “Thinking About National Security,” examines what constitutes and defines national security and then looks broadly at how states, as collective actors, make rational decisions and develop strategies in a complex and uncertain security environment.

The second block, “Foundations and Content and US National Security Strategy,” starts by outlining core tenets of realist and liberal theories of international relations, which serve as important ideational foundations for how the United States defines and pursues its national security. The block then explores various sources, types, and instruments of US national power as the material pillar of US national security before examining competing perspectives of US grand strategy, which combine theoretical underpinnings with more practical assessments of how best to apply national power in support of US interests. The block wraps up with a detailed look at the US National Security Strategy (NSS), a key source of guidance for the US military and broad basis for joint planning as articulated in JP 5-0.

The third block, “Agents and Structure of National Security Decision-Making,” kicks off by going into more depth on how states make national security-related decisions, specifically looking at three distinct decision-making models. The block then covers the roles and interactions of different agents within the US national decision-making process starting with the president and Congress, moving to the interagency intelligence community, and wrapping up with the US military. The final lesson of the block incorporates a case study of US decision-making during the Syria Red Line Crisis of 2013.

The fourth and final block, “Threats and Challenges to US National Security,” examines – as the title suggests – significant threats and challenges to US national security as reflected in recent governmental documents. The first half of the block focuses on more traditional threats associated with China and Russia. Moving beyond a nation-centric lens, the block then considers the national security challenges and opportunities linked to the development of artificial intelligence. The block, as well as the course, ends with an evaluation of a diverse set of emergent threats to the US homeland, threats that are reshaping how we think about US national security and the role of the US military.



COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through the US National Security course, students will:

- a) Understand theories that shape conceptions of national interest and influence how states pursue national security.
- b) Analyze sources and forms of US national power along with implications for US Grand Strategy.
- c) Analyze key actors and processes in national security decision-making.
- d) Analyze threats and challenges to US national security.
- e) Understand factors that influence national security guidance; evaluate how this guidance impacts joint force posture and warfighting requirements.
- f) Evaluate how military operational advice, recommendations, and assessments both affect and are affected by the broader national security environment.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

For the US National Security course, students will be graded on four items: 1) Midterm Essay, 2) Final Essay, 3) Policy Analysis Practicum, and 4) Seminar Contribution.

1. NS-600 (E): Midterm Essay

Deliverable: Three-page essay worth 25% of the overall course grade, due by course Day 8 at 0800L.

Prompt: What constitutes state power and thus what does it mean to preserve or increase state power? Given your conception of state power, what grand strategic approach (of those discussed in the course) is best suited to the goal of building power for the United States, and why?

2. NS-601 (E): Final Essay

Deliverable: Position paper worth 35% of the overall course grade, due by course Day 16 at 0800L. The paper will be between 2.5 and no more than 3 pages, single-spaced, in length.

Prompt: Two weeks after leaving ACSC and arriving at your new unit, your boss gives you a task that came down from his/her boss. The command is weighing the implications of a recent uptick in strategic guidance emphasizing threats to the US homeland and directing a shift in the DoD's focus toward countering these threats. Your boss requests that you draft a position paper on the topic to pass up the chain, eventually to the MAJCOM CC.

Specifically, from primary source materials included in the course (or other sources with instructor concurrence), select one issue that national leadership has identified as an emergent or otherwise significant threat to the US homeland. With your position paper, assess the following related to your selected issue:

- a) The nature of the threat as articulated in (unclassified) national documents
- b) Why the issue represents a significant matter of US national security (i.e., What national interests are at stake and how are these interests threatened? What are the linkages to great power competition? How does it affect US power and influence? What are the implications for US allies and partners?)
- c) Any ideas (i.e., theoretical foundations or grand strategic approaches) that potentially influence the assessment and prioritization of the threat
- d) The role and utility of the military relative to other instruments of power in addressing the threat
- e) Implications for *your specific career field or mission area* (if there are no implications, say so and explain why)

International Officers have the option of writing the position paper from the perspective of the United States or their own country.

3. NS-602 (E): Policy Analysis Practicum

On Day 12 of the course, students will participate in a group-based Policy Analysis Practicum associated with the Syria Red Line Crisis case study. The Policy Analysis Practicum will focus on assessing the strategic environment and providing policy makers with recommendations on how to employ joint airpower along with other instruments of power to achieve US national security objectives. Instructors will provide their students with detailed guidance NLT Day 11. The Policy Analysis Practicum is worth 15% of the overall course grade.

4. NS-603 (C): Seminar Contribution

Each student is expected to attend lectures and seminars, read the assigned texts, participate in class exercises, and contribute to seminar discussions. Seminar Contribution is worth 25% of the overall course grade.

Daily Intelligence Briefing: Each student (assigned different days for a given seminar flight starting Day 3), with the exception of international officers, will provide a **5-minute** maximum ‘Intelligence Briefing’ followed by five minutes of discussion at the start of the seminar lesson. The intent is to cover a contemporary real-world event or issue that is significant to US national security and relevant (to the extent possible) to the lesson’s topic. The Daily Intelligence Briefing is incorporated in the Seminar Contribution grade.

International Officer Roundtables: On **Day 2** and **Day 11** of the course, up to 30 minutes of seminar will be dedicated to a structured discussion centered on international officer perspectives. For Day 2, the focus is the represented countries’ national security perspective (e.g., national security interests, priorities, challenges, constraints), similar to what is covered Day 1 from a US perspective. For Day 11, the focus is civil-military relations. Of note, the intent of the Roundtables is for international officers to draw upon existing knowledge and *should require little additional preparation*. All international officers in the seminar flight will participate in each of the Roundtables. Other students should come prepared to ask questions of their international officer colleagues. For international officers, the Roundtables are incorporated in the Seminar Contribution grade and take the place of the Daily Intelligence Briefing requirement.

5. Use of AI for Graded Items

Students will follow ACSC policy on the use of AI with the following course-specific guidance:

- a) Students *will not use* AI tools for the Midterm Essay.
- b) Students *may use* AI tools for the Policy Analysis Practicum.
- c) Students *are encouraged to use* AI tools for the Final Essay.

COURSE MATERIALS

The course includes readings from books issued by ACSC and from electronic files. Access to electronic files is via Teams (ATO). Electronic files denoted in the syllabus as [EL] are provided in PDF form. Electronic files denoted in the syllabus as [EL]* in the syllabus must be accessed via the Air University library link provided in Teams (due to copyright measures).

ACSC provides students with copies of the following course books, which must be returned at conclusion of the course:

- Haddick, Robert. *Fire on the Water*, 2nd ed. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2022.
- Ikenberry, John. *A World Safe for Democracy: Liberal Internationalism and the Crisis of Global Order*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020.
- Mearsheimer, John J. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Co., 2014.
- Mearsheimer, John J. and Sebastian Rosato. *How States Think: The Rationality of Foreign Policy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2024.
- Orenstein, Mitchell. *The Lands in Between: Russia vs. the West and the New Politics of Hybrid War*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2024.
- Rovner, Joshua. *Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011.
- Trachtenberg, David. *The Lawgivers' Struggle: How Congress Wields Power in National Security Decision Making*. Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2020.

Please refer questions or comments to Dr. Shawn Cochran, Course Director.
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US NATIONAL SECURITY SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

BLOCK 1: THINKING ABOUT NATIONAL SECURITY

“It matters how one thinks about national security.”

- Laura Donohue, 2011

DAY 1 - Course Introduction: A Matter of National Security?

DATE: 6/7 Oct 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Review course objectives, syllabus, and methods of evaluation.
2. Comprehend the concepts of national security and national security interest.
3. Assess how the US approach to national security has evolved over time, from the founding of the country to the present day.
4. Review key issues within the contemporary international environment.

LESSON OVERVIEW

The focus of this course is how the United States defines and pursues its national security in a complex, uncertain, and often dangerous world. This introductory lesson explores the core concepts of national security and national security interest, while tracing the evolution of the United States’ approach to national security back to the country’s founding. Multiple authors make the point that the scope of national security—or what is considered a matter of national security—has significantly expanded over time with implications for the allocation of national resources and the balance of power within the federal government.

NS-501 (L): Course Introduction

CONTACT HOURS: .5-hour lecture

NS-502 (S): A Matter of National Security?

CONTACT HOURS: 2.5-hour seminar

REQUIRED READINGS (60 pages)

1. Daniel Drezner, “How Everything Became National Security and National Security Became Everything,” *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2024. [\[EL\]](#)
2. Laura Donohue, “The Limits of National Security,” *American Criminal Law Review* 48, no. 4 (2011), 1574-1589, 1751(IV)-1756). [\[EL\]](#)
3. Condoleezza Rice, “The Perils of Isolationism,” *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2024. [\[EL\]](#)
4. Harry S. Truman, “Address on Foreign Policy at the Navy Day Celebration in New York City,” October 27, 1945. [\[EL\]](#)

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. Arnold Wolfers, “National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol,” *Political Science Quarterly* 67, no. 4 (1952). [\[EL\]](#)

DAY 2 - How States Think: Theory and Strategic Rationality

DATE: 9/10 Oct 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Assess the sources and effects of uncertainty in the international environment.
2. Comprehend what it means for the state, as a collective actor, to act strategically and make rational decisions in the face of uncertainty.
3. Weigh the importance of foundational theories in shaping national security decision-making.
4. Assess potential causes and implications of misperception in international politics.

LESSON OVERVIEW

The environment in which the United States defines and pursues its national security is characterized by acute uncertainty. Along these lines, Mearsheimer and Rosato propose that uncertainty is the defining feature of international politics, as “much of the information required to understand and navigate the world is lacking, and what relevant information does exist may not be reliable.”

This lesson examines how states, as collective actors, navigate this world and make rational decisions through use of theory and collaborative decision-making processes. As Jervis highlights, however, the resultant decisions are often marred by misperceptions and misjudgments despite—and sometimes even because of—strong theoretical foundations.

NS-503 (S): How States Think: Theory and Strategic Rationality

CONTACT HOURS: 3-hour seminar

REQUIRED READINGS (131 pages)

1. John J. Mearsheimer and Sebastian Rosato, *How States Think: The Rationality of Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2024), 1-13, 19-69, 101-102, 127-140, 162-167, 178-180, 195-210.
2. Robert Jervis, “Hypotheses on Misperception,” *World Politics* 20, no. 3 (1968). [\[EL\]](#)*

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. Steven M. Walt, “International Relations: One World, Many Theories,” *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1998. [\[EL\]](#)*

BLOCK 2: FOUNDATIONS AND CONTENT OF US NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

“Underneath this political dilettantism...there has remained alive an almost instinctive awareness of the perennial interests of the United States.”

- Hans Morgenthau, 1950

DAY 3 - Ideational Foundations, Part 1: The Realist Paradigm

DATE: 16/17 Oct 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend the basic tenets of realist theories of international relations.
2. Assess realist expectations about great power behavior in international politics.
3. Weigh how realism can affect the conception of US interests and the nature of US foreign policy, particularly as related to China.

LESSON OVERVIEW

As discussed Day 2, theory—for good or bad—plays a critical role in shaping national security decision-making. While other theoretical traditions associated with international politics have influenced US thinking on the margins, realism and liberalism have long dominated both the scholarly and policy discourse. The realist and liberal paradigms thus serve as critical ideational foundations for how the United States defines and pursues its national security. This lesson addresses the first half of the theoretical divide, examining the core tenets of realist international relations theory and the implications of viewing the world through a realist lens.

NS-504 (S): The Realist Paradigm

CONTACT HOURS: 3-hour seminar (includes video)

In seminar, students will watch the following video interview of John Mearsheimer: “The US Can No Longer Stop China’s Rise,” Beijing, October 10, 2024 (18 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euPLXPpENFg>

REQUIRED READINGS (99 pages)

1. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Co., 2014), 1-5, 14-27, 29-54, 138-167.
2. Hans Morgenthau, “The Mainsprings of American Foreign Policy: The National Interest vs. Moral Abstractions,” *American Political Science Review* 44, no. 4 (December 1950), 833-840, 853 [last paragraph]-854). [EL]*
3. James Wood Forsyth, Jr., “The Past as Prologue: Realist Thought and the Future of American Security Policy,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* (Fall 2011). [EL]

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Co., 2014), 360-411 (Can China Rise Peacefully?).
2. Adam P. Liff and G. John Ikenberry, “Racing Toward Tragedy? China’s Rise, Military Competition in the Asia Pacific, and the Security Dilemma,” *International Security* 39, no. 2 (Fall 2014). [EL]

DAY 4 - Ideational Foundations, Part 2: The Liberal Paradigm

DATE: 20/21 Oct 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend the basic tenets of liberal theories of international relations.
2. Assess liberal expectations about great power behavior in international politics.
3. Weigh how liberalism can affect the conception of US interests and the nature of US foreign policy.
4. Comprehend the relationship between US security and the liberal international order.

LESSON OVERVIEW

Reiterating from Day 3, realism and liberalism have long dominated the scholarly and policy discourse in the United States, with these two paradigms providing the ideational foundations for how the United States defines and pursues its national security. This lesson addresses the second half of the theoretical divide, outlining the core tenets of liberal international relations theory and the implications of viewing the world through a liberal lens. Further, it examines the significance of the liberal international order as a bedrock of US national security over the past eight decades.

NS-505 (L): The Liberal International Order: What is it and Why does it Matter?

CONTACT HOURS: 1-hour lecture

NS-506 (S): The Liberal Paradigm

CONTACT HOURS: 2-hour seminar

REQUIRED READINGS (105 pages)

1. John Ikenberry, *A World Safe for Democracy: Liberal Internationalism and the Crisis of Global Order* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020), 12-52, 57-65, 255-285.
2. Michael C. Desch, "America's Liberal Illiberalism: The Ideological Origins of Overreaction in US Foreign Policy," *International Security* 32, no. 3 (2007), 7-25, 39-43. [\[EL\]](#)*

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. Michael W. Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *The American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (1986). [\[EL\]](#)*
2. John M. Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace," *International Security* 19, no. 2 (1994). [\[EL\]](#)

DAY 5 - Power (and Money) as the Pillar of US National Security

DATE: 23/24 Oct 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Assess different conceptions of what constitutes state power and why these differences matter for national security strategy and decision-making.
2. Understand various instruments of state power and the importance of integrating these instruments toward achieving state aims in the international environment.
3. Comprehend how the US economy and US fiscal policy underpin and constrain US military power within the context of great power competition.

LESSON OVERVIEW

Per Hans Morgenthau, “International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power.” John Mearsheimer similarly contends that “The overall goal of each state is to maximize its share of world power.” While this may be the case, what constitutes power in international politics? What does it mean for a state to maximize its power? This lesson explores what constitutes US national power, both in terms of the underlying determinants and the resultant instruments of power. While material factors certainly play a dominant role in this calculus, the readings suggest that ideas about power—or how one conceptualizes power—can have important implications as well, particularly within the context of great power competition.

NS-507 (L): US Economic Power: What is it and Why does it Matter?

CONTACT HOURS: 1-hour lecture

NS-508 (S): Power (and Money) as the Pillar of US National Security

CONTACT HOURS: 2-hour seminar

REQUIRED READINGS (85 pages)

1. Steven Heffington, Adam Oler, and David Tretler, eds., *A National Security Strategy Primer*, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2021), 19-36. [\[EL\]](#)
2. Adam Quinn and Nicholas Kitchen, “Understanding American Power: Conceptual Clarity, Strategic Priorities, and the Decline Debate,” *Global Policy* 10, no. 1 (February 2019). [\[EL\]](#)
3. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Co., 2014), 55-67, 75-84.
4. John Ikenberry, “Why American Power Endures: The U.S.-Led Order isn’t in Decline.” *Foreign Affairs*, November-December 2022. [\[EL\]](#)
5. Rosella Zielinski and Samuel Gerstle, “Paying the Defense Bill: Financing American and Chinese Geostrategic Competition,” *Texas National Security Review* 6, no. 2 (Spring 2023). [\[EL\]](#)

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. Ashley J. Tellis et. al, “Measuring National Power in the Postindustrial Age,” RAND Report MR-1110-A (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2000). [\[EL\]](#)
2. Peter Trubowitz and Peter Harris, “The End of the American Century? Slow Erosion of the Domestic Sources of Usable Power.” *International Affairs* 95, no. 3 (May 2019). [\[EL\]](#)*

3. Barry R. Posen, "Command of the Commons: The Military Foundation of U.S. Hegemony," *International Security* 28, no. 1 (Summer 2003). [\[EL\]](#)*
4. Mark Duckenfield, "Fiscal Fetters: The Economic Imperatives of National Security in a Time of Austerity," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (Summer 2012). [\[EL\]](#)

DAY 6 - Grand Strategy: Linking Theory to Practice

DATE: 27/28 Oct 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend the role of Grand Strategy in shaping US decision-making and behavior in the international environment.
2. Weigh the influence of ideas (i.e., theory), material factors (i.e., material power), and decision-making processes in shaping US Grand Strategy.
3. Assess competing views of US Grand Strategy; consider the implications of different Grand Strategic approaches for joint force posture and warfighting requirements.

LESSON OVERVIEW

Policymakers may think but not necessarily talk in terms of abstract theory; instead, the relevant discourse often centers on grand strategy. According to political scientist Peter Feaver, grand strategy serves the critical role of bridging the theory and practice of national security. In this sense, grand strategy links broad ideas about how the world works with material pressures and constraints to arrive at a state-centric vision of national interests and priorities, along with a map of how best to allocate state resources and employ instruments of power to secure these interests. This lesson examines the main contours of the grand strategy debate in the United States with an emphasis on the implications for joint force posture and warfighting requirements.

NS-509 (L): Grand Strategy: What is it and Why does it Matter?

CONTACT HOURS: 1-hour lecture

NS-510 (S): Grand Strategy: Linking Theory to Practice

CONTACT HOURS: 2-hour seminar, which will include a group exercise

REQUIRED READINGS (102 pages)

1. Paul Avey, Jonathan Markowitz, and Robert Reardon, “Disentangling Grand Strategy: International Relations Theory and U.S. Grand Strategy,” *Texas National Security Review* 2, no. 1 (November 2018). [\[EL\]](#)
2. Patrick Porter, “Why America’s Grand Strategy Has Not Changed: Power, Habit, and the U.S. Foreign Policy Establishment,” *International Security* 42, no. 4 (Spring 2018). [\[EL\]](#)
3. Evan Braden Montgomery, “Primacy and Punishment: US Grand Strategy, Maritime Power, and Military Options to Manage Decline.” *Security Studies* 29, no. 4 (2020). [\[EL\]](#)*

In addition, read one of the following (by assigned group):

4. John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, “The Case for Offshore Balancing,” *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 4 (July-August 2016). [\[EL\]](#)
5. Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, “Lean Forward: In Defense of American Engagement,” *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 1 (January-February 2013). [\[EL\]](#)

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. Nina Silove, “Beyond the Buzzword: The Three Meanings of ‘Grand Strategy,’” *Security Studies* 27, no. 1 (2018). [\[EL\]](#)
2. Miranda Priebe et. al., “Competing Visions of Restraint,” *International Security* 49, no. 2 (Fall 2024). [\[EL\]](#)

DAY 7 - US National Security Strategy

DATE: 30/31 Oct 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Weigh the purpose and value of the US National Security Strategy as a source of strategic guidance.
2. Assess patterns of continuity and change in the US National Security Strategy since the end of the Cold War.
3. Review US security interests, priorities, and goals in the most current version of the US National Security Strategy.
4. Assess implications of the US National Security Strategy for joint force posture and warfighting requirements.

LESSON OVERVIEW

Wrapping up the block “Foundations and Content and US National Security Strategy,” this lesson takes an in-depth look at the NSS document. Although not labeled as such, the NSS is arguably the closest thing we have to a published grand strategy, or a formal articulation of how the United States defines and aims to pursue its national security in a complex, uncertain, and dangerous world. It is accordingly a key source of strategic guidance for DoD leadership, which, per JP 5-0, is tasked with the development of “defense policy goals and priorities for the deployment, employment, and sustainment of US military forces based on the NSS.”

NS-511 (S): US National Security Strategy

CONTACT HOURS: 2-hour seminar

REQUIRED READINGS (75 pages)

1. Don M. Snider, *The National Security Strategy: Documenting Strategic Vision*, 2nd ed. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Press, 15 March 1995), 1-6, 14-19. [EL]
2. Paul Lettow, “U.S. National Security Strategy: Lessons Learned,” *Texas National Security Review* 4, no. 2 (Spring 2021). [EL]
3. John J. Chin, Kiron Skinner, and Clay Yoo, “Understanding National Security Strategies Through Time,” *Texas National Security Review* 6, no. 4 (Fall 2023). [EL]
4. Justin Logan and Benjamin H. Friedman, “The Case for Getting Rid of the National Security Strategy,” *War on the Rocks*, 4 November 2022. [EL]

Plus, review the most recent *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. [EL]

Additional National Security Strategy documents going back to 1987 can be found at <https://history.defense.gov/Historical-Sources/National-Security-Strategy/>.

BLOCK 3: AGENTS AND STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION-MAKING

“And so we argued, and so we disagreed—all dedicated, intelligent men, disagreeing and fighting about the future of their country, and of mankind.”

- Robert F. Kennedy, 1969

DAY 8 - National Security Decision-Making Models

DATE: 3/4 Nov 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend the rational actor model of national security decision-making.
2. Comprehend the organizational process model of national security decision-making.
3. Comprehend the bureaucratic politics model of national security decision-making.
4. Assess the relative utility of different models of national security decision-making for explaining policy choices and state behavior in the international environment.

LESSON OVERVIEW

Looking back to Day 2, Mearsheimer and Rosato present a variation of the rational actor model of state decision-making tailored to an environment of acute uncertainty, and that privileges the role of the state leader along with key advisors. In 1969, Graham Allison introduced an alternative framework to the rational actor model that has since become a staple in the field of security studies. Specifically, Allison proposed that within a large and complex governmental structure, organizational dynamics and political bargaining can influence national security decision-making in important ways not captured by more simplistic rational actor approaches. These different models of national security decision-making provide insights into the Cuban Missile Crisis, a critical case in crisis management and nuclear deterrence dynamics.

NS-512 (S): National Security Decision-Making Models

CONTACT HOURS: 3.5-hour seminar (includes film)

During the first portion of this extended lesson, students will watch the first 1 hour and 40 minutes of the film ‘Thirteen Days’ (2000), based on the 1997 book *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis*, by Ernest R. May and Philip D. Zelikow.

REQUIRED READINGS (59 pages)

1. Graham Allison, “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *The American Political Science Review* 63, no. 3 (September 1969). [\[EL\]](#)
2. Timothy McKeown, “Plans and Routines, Bureaucratic Bargaining, and the Cuban Missile Crisis,” *The Journal of Politics* 63, no. 4 (November 2001). [\[EL\]](#)*
3. Graham Allison, “The Cuban Missile Crisis at 50: Lessons for US Foreign Policy Today,” *Foreign Affairs* 91, no. 4 (2012). [\[EL\]](#)

DAY 9 - The President, Congress, and National Security Decision-Making

DATE: 6/7 Nov 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend presidential authorities and roles in national security decision-making.
2. Comprehend Congressional authorities and roles in national security decision-making.
3. Assess patterns of interaction between the president and Congress in national security decision-making.
4. Weigh the implications of the War Powers statute for the employment of military force and threats to employ military force.

LESSON OVERVIEW

As David Trachtenberg suggests, the defining feature of national security decision-making in the United States since the country's origin has been a "struggle for dominance" between the president and Congress. Accordingly, a foundational understanding of US national security decision-making should begin with the roles and authorities of the executive and legislative branches of government. Particularly, the interaction between the president and Congress has important implications for the application of the military instrument of power. The question of war powers remains central to this interaction as seen with the debate surrounding the United States' June 2025 airstrikes against Iran.

NS-513 (L): Presidential War Powers and Great Power Conflict

CONTACT HOURS: 1-hour lecture

NS-514 (S): The President, Congress, and National Security Decision-Making

CONTACT HOURS: 2-hour seminar

REQUIRED READINGS (121 pages)

1. David Trachtenberg, *The Lawgivers' Struggle: How Congress Wields Power in National Security Decision Making* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2020), pp. 19-38, 77-140.
2. Charles Tiefer and Kathleen Clark, "Congressional and Presidential War Powers as Dialogue: Analysis of the Syrian and ISIS Conflicts," *Cornell International Law Journal* 49, no. 3 (Fall 2016), pp. 683-704, 713-717. [\[EL\]](#)
3. Matthew C. Waxman, "Syria, Threats of Force, and Constitutional War Powers," *The Yale Law Journal Online* 123, (2013). [\[EL\]](#)

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. David Trachtenberg, *The Lawgivers' Struggle: How Congress Wields Power in National Security Decision Making* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2020), 39-75.
2. Christopher Swift, "The Strategist's Guide to War Powers," *War on the Rocks*, 9 September 2013. [\[EL\]](#)
3. William G. Howell and Jon C. Pevehouse, "When Congress Stops Wars," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 5 (September-October 2007). [\[EL\]](#)
4. War Powers Resolution of 1973. Public Law 93-148, 93rd Cong., 1st sess. (7 November 1973). [\[EL\]](#)
5. War Powers Amendment of 2021. H.J. Res. 29, 117th Cong., 1st sess. (8 March 2021). [\[EL\]](#)

DAY 10 - The Intelligence Community and National Security Decision-Making

DATE: 10/14 Nov 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend how the US intelligence community supports national security decision-making.
2. Assess the nature of an “ideal” relationship between the intelligence community and senior policy makers.
3. Weigh potential causes of friction between the intelligence community and senior leaders, and potential sources of bias and error associated with intelligence estimates.

LESSON OVERVIEW

Returning once again to Day 2, Mearsheimer and Rosato propose that “Much of the information required to understand and navigate the world is lacking, and what relevant information does exist may not be reliable.” That said, national leaders still rely heavily on the intelligence community to inform national security decision-making. While the intelligence community accordingly plays a critical role in the national-security decision-making process, the relationship between the intelligence community and national leadership is complex and often characterized by friction and mistrust.

NS-515 (L): Intelligence in Great Power Competition

CONTACT HOURS: 1-hour lecture

NS-516 (S): The Intelligence Community and National Security Decision-Making

CONTACT HOURS: 2-hour seminar

REQUIRED READINGS (98 pages)

1. Joshua Rovner, *Fixing the Facts: National Security and the Politics of Intelligence* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 1-13, 18-48, 89-112.
2. Robert Jervis, "Why Intelligence and Policymakers Clash," *Political Science Quarterly* 125, no. 2 (2010). [\[EL\]](#)
3. Gareth Porter, “Chemical Attacks in Syria: How US Intel Went Wrong,” *Middle East Policy* XXIII, no. 3 (Fall 2016). [\[EL\]](#)*

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. David Trachtenberg, *The Lawgivers' Struggle: How Congress Wields Power in National Security Decision Making* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2020), 177-198.

DAY 11 - The Role of the Military in National Security Decision-Making

DATE: 17/18 Nov 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend how the US military supports national security decision-making.
2. Assess the nature of an “ideal” relationship between the US military and civilian policy makers.
3. Weigh potential sources of friction and dysfunction in the relationship between the US military and civilian policy makers.

LESSON OVERVIEW

National security decision-making in the United States is a highly politicized process defined, as discussed Day 9, by a “struggle for dominance” between the president and Congress. Given the norm—grounded in the Constitution—of an apolitical military subservient to civilian leadership, what is the appropriate role of the US military in this politicized national security decision-making process? How best can US military leaders advise political leadership? What are potential sources of tension between the US military and civilian leadership when it comes to national security decision-making?

NS-517 (S): The Role of the Military

CONTACT HOURS: 3-hour seminar

REQUIRED READINGS (62 pages)

1. Brenner M. Fissell, “The Military’s Constitutional Role,” *North Carolina Law Review* 103, no. 2 (1 January 2025), 333-346. [\[EL\]](#)*
2. Mackubin Thomas Owens, “What Military Officers Need to Know about Civil-Military Relations,” *Naval War College Review* 65, no. 2 (Spring 2012). [\[EL\]](#)
3. Janine Davidson, “Civil-Military Friction and Presidential Decision Making: Explaining the Broken Dialogue,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (March 2013). [\[EL\]](#)
4. Samuel P. Huntington, “Interservice Competition and the Political Roles of the Armed Forces,” *American Political Science Review* 55, no. 1 (March 1961). [\[EL\]](#)*

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. David Trachtenberg, *The Lawgivers' Struggle: How Congress Wields Power in National Security Decision Making* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2020), 141-176.

DAY 12 - Syria Red Line Case Study: Airpower, Politics, & Military Deterrence

DATE: 20/21 Nov 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Evaluate US national security interests, security threats, and policy options in the 2013 Syria Red Line Crisis scenario.
2. Evaluate the interaction between the president, Congress, the intelligence community, and the military—with the implications for US decision-making—in the 2013 Syria Red Line Crisis scenario.
3. Evaluate the potential utility and limitations of airpower for achieving US national security objectives in the 2013 Syria Red Line Crisis scenario.

LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson pushes students to assess and apply concepts from preceding lessons within the case of the 2013 Syria Red Line Crisis. The 2013 case provides valuable insights into US national security decision-making in a context of uncertainty. It is particularly useful in terms of highlighting national-level perspectives about the utility and limitations of US airpower for achieving US national security objectives. During seminar, students will participate in a graded Policy Analysis Practicum based on the case and informed by lesson readings to include primary source documents from the relevant timeframe.

NS-518 (S): Syria Red Line Case Study: Airpower, Politics, & Military Deterrence

CONTACT HOURS: 3-hour seminar, which will include graded Policy Analysis Practicum

REQUIRED READINGS (66 pages)

1. Barrack H. Obama, “Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on Syria,” (Office of the Press Secretary, Washington, D.C., 10 September 2013). [EL]
2. Wyn Bowen, Jeffrey W. Knopf, and Matthew Moran, “The Obama Administration and Syrian Chemical Weapons: Deterrence, Compellence, and the Limits of the ‘Resolve plus Bombs’ Formula,” *Security Studies* 29, no. 5 (2020). [EL]
3. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, July 19, 2013. [EL]
4. United States Congress, “Syria: Weighing the Obama Administration’s Response,” Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 113th Cong., 1st sess., 2013, 1-9, 16-18, 21-29. [EL]
5. Anthony H. Cordesman, “US Options in Syria: The Dempsey Letter,” Center for Strategic and International Studies, 26 July 2013. [EL]

Plus, watch the following video *prior to* seminar:

‘Obama at War: Inside the Obama Administration’s Syria Policy,’ PBS Frontline.

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/obama-at-war/>

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. The White House, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the President of the United States, May 2010). [EL]

2. Jason Fritz, “To Intervene or not Intervene in Syria? The Limits of Power Define Interests,” *War on the Rocks*, 17 July 2013. [\[EL\]](#)
3. Wendy Pearlman, “Syrian Views on Obama’s Red Line: The Ethical Case for Strikes against Assad,” *Ethics and International Affairs* 34, no. 2 (2020). [\[EL\]](#)*
4. David Sorenson, “US Options in Syria,” *Parameters* 43, no. 3 (1 September 2013). [\[EL\]](#)

BLOCK 4: THREATS AND CHALLENGES TO US NATIONAL SECURITY

“It is impossible to foresee or define the extent and variety of national exigencies...The circumstances that endanger the safety of nations are infinite.”

- Alexander Hamilton, 1787

DAY 13 - The China Threat

DATE: 1/2 Dec 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend the nature and scope of Chinese threats to US national security interests.
2. Comprehend China’s national security perspective and grand strategy.
3. Assess implications of China’s efforts to alter the US-led international order.
4. Weigh the potential for armed conflict between the US and China.

LESSON OVERVIEW

The “Threats and Challenges to US National Security” block kicks off with a lesson centered on China, which the DoD has named as its “top pacing challenge.” Intentionally building upon China-focused lessons from the preceding Military Theory course and laying a groundwork for the subsequent Contemporary and Emerging Warfare course, this lesson on the China threat emphasizes China’s grand strategy and implications for the US-led Liberal International Order.

NS-519 (L): TBD

CONTACT HOURS: 1-hour lecture

NS-520 (S): The China Threat

CONTACT HOURS: 2-hour seminar

REQUIRED READINGS (125 pages)

1. Robert Haddick, *Fire on the Water*, 2nd ed. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2022), 9-50, 81-109.
2. Paul Gewirtz, “China, the United States, and the Future of a Rules-Based International Order,” Brookings Institute, 22 July 2024. [\[EL\]](#)
3. Avery Goldstein, “China’s Grand Strategy under Xi Jinping: Reassurance, Reform, and Resistance,” *International Security* 45, no. 1 (Summer 2020). [\[EL\]](#)
4. Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community*, March 2025, 9-16. [\[EL\]](#)

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. People’s Republic of China, *China’s National Security in a New Era*, white paper (Beijing, China: State Council Information Office, 12 May 2025). [\[EL\]](#)

DAY 14 - The Russia Threat

DATE: 4/5 Dec 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Weigh the nature and scope of Russian threats to US national security interests.
2. Understand Russia's national security perspective and grand strategy.
3. Comprehend the interaction between the United States and Russia since the end of the Cold War.
4. Assess the significance of the relationship between Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea.

LESSON OVERVIEW

Russia's recent aggression and ongoing war versus Ukraine may be the most obvious representation of the Russian threat. But as stated in the latest *Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community*, "Regardless of how and when the war in Ukraine ends, Russia's current geopolitical, economic, military, and domestic political trends underscore its resilience and enduring potential threat to US power, presence, and global interests." Particularly, Russia's increasing ties with China, Iran, and North Korea present a significant challenge to US interests and influence around the globe. As with the Day 13 lesson on China, this lesson on the Russian threat builds upon the preceding Military Theory course and sets the stage for the subsequent Contemporary and Emerging Warfare course.

NS-521 (S): The Russia Threat

CONTACT HOURS: 3-hour seminar (includes video)

In seminar, students will watch the PBS Frontline video 'Putin and the Presidents' (54 minutes).
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/putin-and-the-presidents/>

REQUIRED READINGS (135 pages)

1. Mitchell Orenstein, *The Lands in Between: Russia vs. the West and the New Politics of Hybrid War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2024), 1-92, 141-163.
2. Andrea Kendall-Taylor and Richard Fontaine, "The Axis of Upheaval: How America's Adversaries are Uniting to Overturn the Global Order," *Foreign Affairs* 103, no. 3 (May-June 2024). [EL]
3. Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community*, March 2025, 16-22, 29-30. [EL]

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. Lucas Winter, Jemima Baar, and Jason Warner, "The Axis Off-Kilter: Why an Iran-Russia-China 'Axis' is Shakier than Meets the Eye," *War on the Rocks*, 19 April 2024. [EL]
2. Sergey Radchenko, "Driving a Wedge Between China and Russia Won't Work," *War on the Rocks*, 24 August 2021. [EL]

DAY 15 - Artificial Intelligence (AI) and US National Security

DATE: 8/9 Dec 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend the opportunities and challenges of AI for US national security.
2. Assess the potential impact of AI on national power and thus great power competition.
3. Weigh how AI might affect US national security decision-making.
4. Assess the implications of AI for the military as an instrument of US national power and the potential effects on joint warfighting.

LESSON OVERVIEW

Per a recent report from the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence, “Americans have not yet grappled with just how profoundly the AI revolution will impact our economy, national security, and welfare...America is not prepared to defend or compete in the AI era.” This lesson examines, albeit cursorily, the implications of AI for US national security. Particularly, it considers the implications of AI at three distinct levels relevant to previous lessons in the course. First is the potential impact of AI on state power within the context of great power competition. Second is the potential impact of AI on national security decision-making. Third is the potential impact of AI on the effectiveness and utility of the military instrument of power.

NS-522 (L): TBD

CONTACT HOURS: 1-hour lecture

NS-523 (S): Artificial Intelligence and US National Security

CONTACT HOURS: 2-hour seminar

REQUIRED READINGS (78 pages)

1. Chairman of the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence, *Final Report*, (Washington, D.C.: NSCAI, 2021), 19-28. [\[EL\]](#)
2. Matthew Daniels and Ben Chang, “National Power After AI,” Center for Security and Emerging Technology (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University’s Walsh School of Foreign Service, July 2021). [\[EL\]](#)
3. Christopher Chivvis and Jennifer Kavanagh, “How AI Might Affect Decision-Making in a National Security Crisis,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 17 June 2024. [\[EL\]](#)
4. Avi Goldfarb and Jon R. Lindsay, “Prediction and Judgment: Why Artificial Intelligence Increases the Importance of Humans in War,” *International Security* 46, no. 3 (Winter 2021-2022). [\[EL\]](#)

RECOMMENDED READINGS (OPTIONAL)

1. The White House, memorandum of record, subject: Advancing the United States’ Leadership in Artificial Intelligence; Harnessing Artificial Intelligence to Fulfill National Security Objectives; and Fostering the Safety, Security, and Trustworthiness of Artificial Intelligence, 24 October 2024. [\[EL\]](#)
2. Amandeep Singh Gill, “Artificial Intelligence and International Security: The Long View,” *Ethics and International Affairs* 33, no. 2 (Summer 2019). [\[EL\]](#)*

3. Michael C. Horowitz, “Artificial Intelligence, International Competition, and the Balance of Power,” *Texas National Security Review* 1, no. 3 (May 2018). [\[EL\]](#)
4. Department of Defense, *AI, China, Russia, and the Global Order*, US Government White Paper (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, December 2018). [\[EL\]](#)

DAY 16 - Securing the US Homeland

DATE: 11/12 Dec 25

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend threats to the US homeland as articulated in national documents, and the extent to which there has been a material change in the national security environment.
2. Weigh how threats to the US homeland affect and are affected by conceptions of national security.
3. Assess implications of threats to the US homeland for joint force posture and warfighting requirements.

LESSON OVERVIEW

The most recent tranche of US national security documents places increased emphasis on emergent threats to the US homeland, with President Donald Trump issuing an executive order directing the armed forces to “staunchly continue to participate in the defense of our territorial integrity and sovereignty.” Going back to Day 1, Laura Donohue describes various epochs in the evolution of the country’s approach to national security, with each epoch affecting “alterations to the domestic and foreign affairs structures of the federal government.” Do emergent threats to the US homeland, along with the associated prioritization of securing the US homeland, represent a new epoch in this sense? What are the implications for US grand strategy? For national security decision-making? For the military instrument of power?

NS-524 (S): Securing the US Homeland

CONTACT HOURS: 3-hour seminar, which will include a group exercise

REQUIRED READINGS (84 pages)

1. Executive Order (EO) 14167, Clarifying the Military’s Role in Protecting the Territorial Integrity of the United States, 20 January 2025. [\[EL\]](#)
2. Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community*, March 2025, 5-8. [\[EL\]](#)
3. Department of Homeland Security, *Homeland Threat Assessment* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Intelligence and Analysis, 2025). [\[EL\]](#)
4. Statement of General Gregory M. Guillot before the House, *U.S. Military Posture and National Security Challenges in North and South America: Hearing before the Armed Services Committee*, 119th Cong., 1st sess., 1 April 2025. [\[EL\]](#)
5. Fiona B. Adamson, “Crossing Borders: International Migration and National Security,” *International Security* 31, no. 1 (Summer 2006). [\[EL\]](#)*

ELECTRONIC READING LINKS

(as of 25 June 2025)

DAY 1

Daniel Drezner, “How Everything Became National Security and National Security Became Everything,” *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2024.

<https://research-ebSCO-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/c/kkovua/viewer/html/dvgrzgvzzz?route=details>

AUL PERMALINK:

https://aul.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01AUL_INST/1171f6/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_3101277705

Laura Donohue, “The Limits of National Security,” *American Criminal Law Review* 48, no. 4 (2011).

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2132563 (OPEN ACCESS)

Condoleezza Rice, “The Perils of Isolationism,” *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2024.

<https://research-ebSCO-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/c/kkovua/viewer/html/zbn6ssvrlj?route=details>

AUL PERMALINK:

https://aul.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01AUL_INST/1171f6/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_3101281604

Harry S. Truman, “Address on Foreign Policy at the Navy Day Celebration in New York City,” October 27, 1945.

<https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/public-papers/178/address-foreign-policy-navy-day-celebration-new-york-city>

Arnold Wolfers, “National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol,” *Political Science Quarterly* 67, no. 4 (1952).

<https://www-jstor-org.aufric.idm.oclc.org/stable/2145138?sid=primo&seq=1>

AUL PERMALINK:

https://aul.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01AUL_INST/1171f6/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_58844692

DAY 2

Robert Jervis, “Hypotheses on Misperception,” *World Politics* 20, no. 3 (1968).

<https://www-jstor-org.aufric.idm.oclc.org/stable/2009777?sid=primo&seq=1>

AUL PERMALINK:

https://aul.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01AUL_INST/1171f6/cdi_proquest_journals_1301479649

Steven M. Walt, “International Relations: One World, Many Theories,” *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1998.

<https://research-ebSCO-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/c/kkovua/viewer/html/yms7pc2lyz?route=details>

AUL PERMALINK:

https://aul.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01AUL_INST/1171f6/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_839111063

DAY 3

Hans Morgenthau, "The Mainsprings of American Foreign Policy: The National Interest vs. Moral Abstractions," *American Political Science Review* 44, no. 4 (December 1950).

<https://www-jstor-org.aufric.idm.oclc.org/stable/1951286?sid=primo&seq=1>

AUL PERMALINK:

https://aul.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01AUL_INST/1171f6/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_58779878

James Wood Forsyth, Jr., "The Past as Prologue: Realist Thought and the Future of American Security Policy," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* (Fall 2011).

https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-05_Issue-3/Forsyth.pdf

AUL PERMALINK:

https://aul.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01AUL_INST/1171f6/cdi_proquest_reports_890180710

Adam P. Liff and G. John Ikenberry, "Racing Toward Tragedy? China's Rise, Military Competition in the Asia Pacific, and the Security Dilemma," *International Security* 39, no. 2 (Fall 2014).

<https://research-ebsco-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/c/kkovua/viewer/pdf/zej5cogrijj?route=details>

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DAY 4

Michael C. Desch, "America's Liberal Illiberalism: The Ideological Origins of Overreaction in US Foreign Policy," *International Security* 32, no. 3 (2007).

<https://research-ebsco-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/c/kkovua/viewer/pdf/p4udcvdbnz?route=details>

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Michael W. Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *The American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (1986).

<https://www-jstor-org.aufric.idm.oclc.org/stable/1960861?sid=primo&seq=1>

AUL PERMALINK:

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John M. Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace," *International Security* 19, no. 2 (1994).

<https://research-ebsco-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/c/kkovua/viewer/pdf/6obuvw5uhr?route=details>

AUL PERMALINK:

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DAY 5

Steven Heffington, Adam Oler, and David Tretler, eds., *A National Security Strategy Primer*, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2021).

https://nwc.ndu.edu/Portals/71/Images/Publications/NWC%20NSS%20Primer%202021.pdf?ver=F2C_dWgjNc2G1hvOWob5wA%3d%3d (OPEN ACCESS)

Adam Quinn and Nicholas Kitchen, "Understanding American Power: Conceptual Clarity, Strategic Priorities, and the Decline Debate," *Global Policy* 10, no. 1 (February 2019).

<https://research-ebsco-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/c/kkovua/viewer/pdf/xhzto2hvfq?route=details>

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John Ikenberry, "Why American Power Endures: The U.S.-Led Order isn't in Decline," *Foreign Affairs*, November-December 2022.

<https://research-ebsco-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/c/kkovua/viewer/html/uaxhqj4qmf?route=details>

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https://aul.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01AUL_INST/1171f6/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_2733493724

Rosella Zielinski and Samuel Gerstle, "Paying the Defense Bill: Financing American and Chinese Geostrategic Competition," *Texas National Security Review* 6, no. 2 (Spring 2023).

<https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstreams/56c31240-d6d7-4def-9a32-2969c53e60a5/download> (OPEN ACCESS)

Ashley J. Tellis et. al, "Measuring National Power in the Postindustrial Age," RAND Report MR-1110-A (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2000).

https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1110/RAND_MR1110.pdf

(OPEN ACCESS)

Peter Trubowitz and Peter Harris, "The End of the American Century? Slow Erosion of the Domestic Sources of Usable Power." *International Affairs* 95, no. 3 (May 2019).

<https://research-ebsco-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/c/kkovua/viewer/pdf/ib63ogvwpj?route=details>

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Barry R. Posen, "Command of the Commons: The Military Foundation of U.S. Hegemony," *International Security* 28, no. 1 (Summer 2003).

<https://research-ebsco-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/c/kkovua/viewer/pdf/rg3nkxg7zz?route=details>

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Mark Duckenfield, "Fiscal Fetters: The Economic Imperatives of National Security in a Time of Austerity," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (Summer 2012).

[https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-06_Issue-2/04-](https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-06_Issue-2/04-Duckenfield.pdf)

[Duckenfield.pdf](https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-06_Issue-2/04-Duckenfield.pdf)

AUL PERMALINK:

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