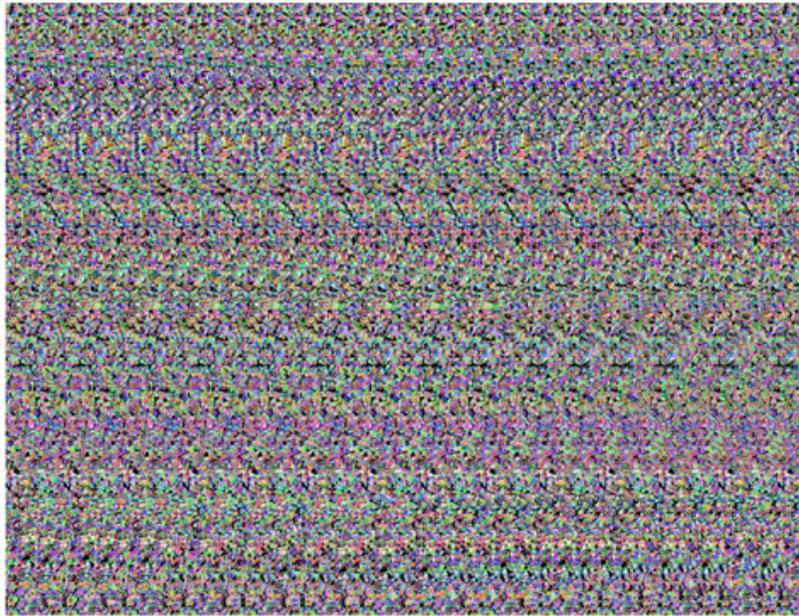


SAASS 690

DIRECTED THESIS RESEARCH

ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-2019

GRAD SCHOOL STEREOGRAM



FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS TO UNLOCK A HIDDEN MESSAGE!

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Course Director: Professor James Kiras

Syllabus Approved: _____

Date: _____

SAASS 690

DIRECTED THESIS RESEARCH

I. Description: Some of you have already completed one (or more) master's degrees and may have already written a master's thesis. The SAASS thesis, however, is likely to be different from any other research product you may have completed previously. This course of instruction, tailored to the specific requirements of the school, is designed for two purposes. First, in conjunction with course essays assigned throughout the year, it will help guide you in developing logical, clear, and persuasive writing. Second, the course provide you with the necessary information and intellectual tools to produce a master's-level thesis.

2. Purpose and Philosophy: Writing assignments during the school year serve two functions, first to foster the total intellectual development of every SAASS student by means of written argument, and second as an evaluation tool. The thesis requires students to sustain a written argument to a greater depth and deeper level than shorter course papers. The requirements for what constitutes a master's-level thesis are contained in the SAASS Thesis Handbook.

The thesis, and more precisely, the research, writing, and revising process of producing a master's thesis, offers an unmatched opportunity for in-depth analysis and critical thinking. These two skills are also excellent methods for developing a sound strategy for exploring the problem. The process of writing a thesis develops essential expertise and sophisticated analytic capacities of great use to strategists. For many of you, the SAASS thesis will be the first contribution of your research and writing to the greater corpus of strategic literature. It is our sincere hope that it is not your last. Your thesis will be a scholarly work on your subject that meets the standards of master's-level work. Contemporary information technology means that the entire world, in addition to the Air University and Air Force communities, will have a chance to read your thesis.

3. Objectives:

- a) To promote student growth in the areas of research, argumentation, and written expression, thus producing *more competent strategists for the Air Force and the Nation*.
- b) To contribute to the body of knowledge about strategy writ large, with particular attention to its connection to air power, space power, and cyber power.

4. Scope: This course is conducted in three phases. The first phase involves seminars by SAASS faculty on different methodological approaches to research, analysis, and writing. The second phase introduces you to research resources available at Air University and elsewhere to assist you in identifying a potential research topic and having it vetted by your faculty mentor. This phase culminates with approval of a topic and assignment of a research committee consisting of two faculty members. The third highly interactive and individualized phase is the development of the thesis, in which each student is closely guided by a faculty advisor and reader from development of a prospectus to final submission of the M.Phil. thesis.

5. Requirements:

- a) Attend the scheduled course days (see Course Calendar). Complete the required assignments.
- b) Obtain faculty approval for your thesis topic.
- c) Comply with all Air University research guidelines regarding tracking your thesis topic. Additional details will be announced later in the term.
- d) **Develop a thesis, based in part on original source documentation, which meets master's-level standards of research, argumentation, and expression.** Typical thesis length is in the range of 50-100 pages of textual material—exclusive of front and back matter; Recommended milestones toward thesis completion are outlined in Appendix 2. These and most other parameters may be adjusted at the discretion of the thesis advisor.
- e) Upon approval of your thesis, complete the Security and Policy Review checklist, found in the SAASS Thesis Guide, upload these documents into the appropriate AU management software system, and forward them to your faculty advisor. Upon review and approval, your faculty advisor will forward these documents to Air University Public Affairs (AU/PA). When AU/PA has reviewed your thesis and approved it for public release, your thesis will be electronically posted and a copy will be sent to your sponsor.
- f) Leave with SAASS an archival copy of both the printed and electronic versions of the thesis.

6. Course Grade: There is no grade for this course. All approved theses will be judged as having met the academic standard for award of a Master of Philosophy degree, as having met the standard for the award of a Certificate of Completion, or as having failed.

7. Course Texts:

Air University Style and Author Guide. AU-I. 2nd Ed. Air University: Maxwell AFB, Alabama, 2015.

Booth, Wayne, Gregory G. Colcomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*, 4th Ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Cook, Claire Kehrwald. *Line by Line: How to Edit Your Own Writing*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.

The Chicago Manual of Style, 16th Ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006.
THIS TEXT MUST BE RETURNED BEFORE GRADUATION.

Fowler, H. Ramsey and Jane E. Aaron. *The Little, Brown Handbook*, 11th Rev. Ed. Boston: Longman, 2009. **THIS TEXT MUST BE RETURNED BEFORE GRADUATION.**

George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. 4th Ed. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005.

King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Kissinger, Henry. *Diplomacy*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1995. **SUMMER READING BOOK.**

Marius, Richard and Melvin E. Page. *A Short Guide to Writing About History*. 8th Ed. New York: Longman, 2011. **THIS TEXT MUST BE RETURNED BEFORE GRADUATION.**

Pape, Robert. *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996.

Pellegrino, Victor C. *A Writer's Guide to Powerful Paragraphs*. Hawaii: Maui Thoughts Co, 2003.

Randolph, Stephen. *Powerful and Brutal Weapons: Nixon, Kissinger, and the Easter Offensive*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Strunk, William and E.B. White, *The Elements of Style*. 4th Ed. New York: MacMillan, 1999.

Trachtenberg, Marc. *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Weston, Anthony. *A Rulebook for Arguments*. 4th Ed. New York, NY: Hackett, 2008.

8. Course Administration: Overall course administration is the responsibility of the SAASS 690 Course Director. The faculty, acting as a Committee of the Whole, will assign each student a thesis committee, composed of a thesis advisor and reader. Faculty research advisors and readers will provide *detailed, timely, and consistent guidance* to students whose theses they are directing or reading. See the SAASS Thesis Guide for additional information and administrative details.

9. Course Calendar.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lesson Title</u>
10 Jul	History and its Methodology: Part I
11 Jul	History and its Methodology: Part II
12 Jul	Social Science Research Methods: Part I
13 Jul	Social Science Research Methods: Part II
15 Aug [^]	Research Resources Available to You
5 Sep	Advanced Historical Research Methods
10 Oct	Advanced Social Science Research Methods
5-9 Nov	Topic Research (Topics Due to 690 Course Director on 9 Nov 18)
17-19 Dec	Prospectus Design (Prospectus Due to Thesis Advisor on 19 Dec 18)
20-31 Dec	Thesis Research
22-25 Jan	Thesis Research
19-22 Feb	Thesis Research
13-20 Mar	Thesis Research
8-12 Apr	Thesis Research (Complete rough draft due on 12 Apr 19)
19-23 May	Thesis Completion (Complete thesis signed NLT 23 May 19)

[^] N.B. This date is subject to change due to scheduling issues.

ASSIGNMENT: Review and write a 1-2 page précis of Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*. Come armed to seminar with your précis, as well as three observations and three questions.



Kissinger reviewing files at the barber shop. As both a scholar and practitioner, Kissinger was a perfectionist. According to Mark Palmer, one of Kissinger's speechwriters, "Henry's practice ended up that we did about, on average, 15 drafts of every speech. And he was involved in every single draft, not writing so much, particularly in the beginning, but commenting. So it was a process that he took very, very seriously. And it was enormously satisfying for me because he was engaged...."

OVERVIEW: You'll begin your odyssey at SAASS with its core experience: the course seminar. Today you'll spend two hours in a group of 8-12 students exploring the 19th and 20th century through the lens of diplomatic history. The seminar discussion will be led by a SAASS professor and will provide you with a baseline understanding of the key actors and events you will explore in depth in subsequent courses.

2. History and its Methodology: Part II

11 July 2018

ASSIGNMENT: Read Chapters 1-3 of Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History*. Also read the Introduction of Stephen Randolph, *Powerful and Brutal Weapons*, skim the remainder of the book but pay close attention to the footnotes and sources he uses.



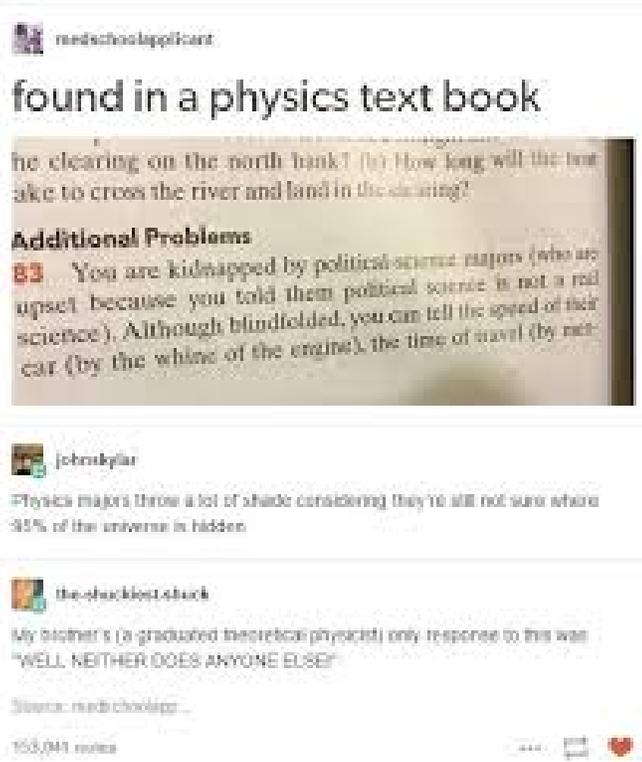
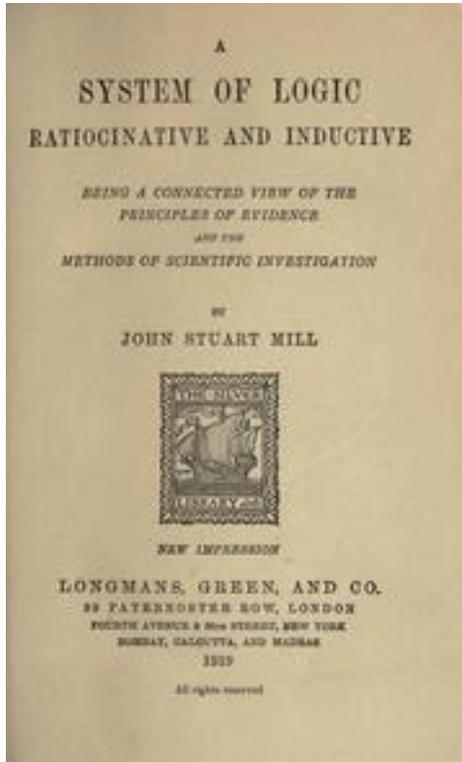
Ruth Benedict (1887-1948) was a path breaking scholar in the field of anthropology, introducing a number of key concepts you'll read about throughout the year including the idea of strategic culture. In addition, she was also a practitioner and served as cultural advisor to the U.S. government during World War II. Her work was instrumental in providing an understanding the role of the Emperor in Japanese culture and society. She wrote: "No man ever looks at the world with pristine eyes. He sees it edited by a definite set of customs and institutions and ways of thinking."

OVERVIEW: In a two-hour seminar, you will explore more specifically the method of historical inquiry including how historians structure arguments and approach sources according to its disciplinary "set of customs...and ways of thinking."

3. Social Science Research Methods: Part I

12 July 2018

ASSIGNMENT: Read Chapters I, 7-12 of George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* and Chapters I-3 of Robert Pape, *Bombing to Win*.

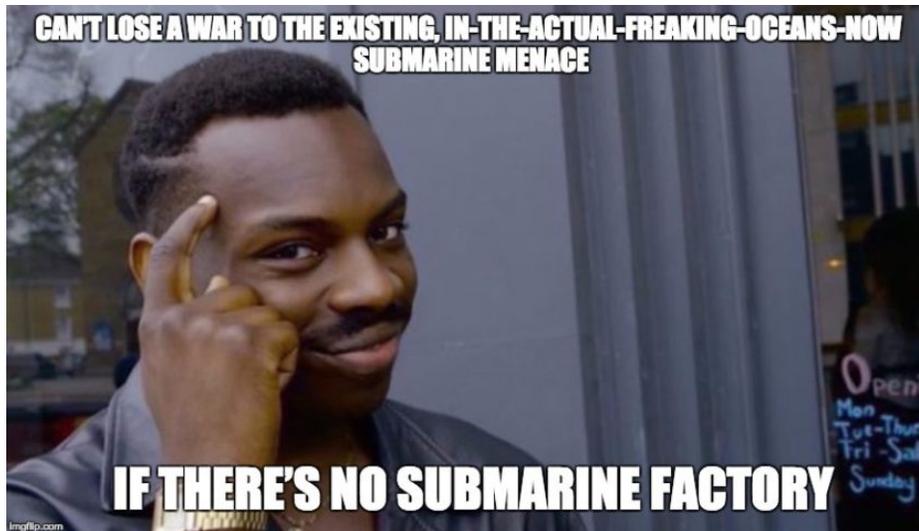
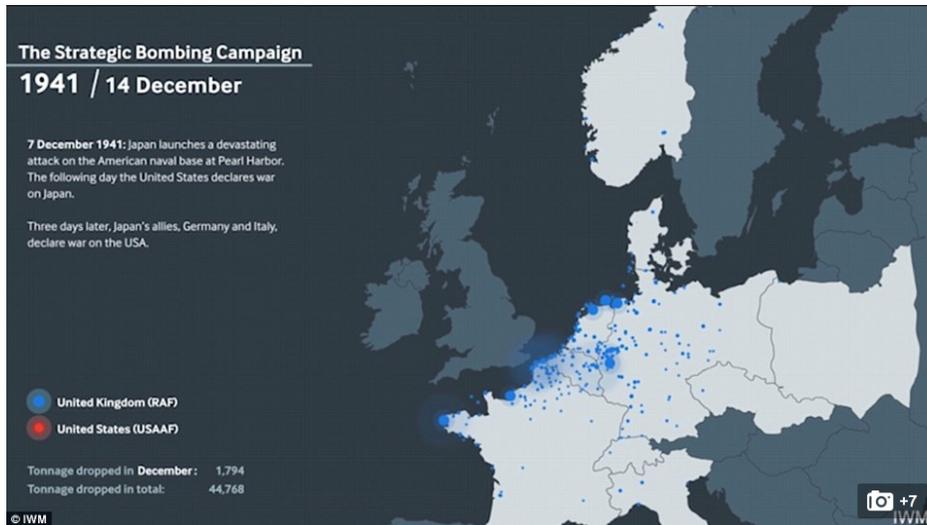


OVERVIEW: In this two-hour seminar, you'll contrast the historical method of inquiry with the more formalized, explicit "set of customs...and ways of thinking" in the social sciences, including causal logic, inductive and deductive reasoning, and process tracing and examine how former SAASS instructor Robert Pape applies them in *Bombing to Win*.

4. Social Science Research Methods: Part II

13 July 2018

ASSIGNMENT: Read Chapters 2-6 of George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* and Chapters 4-9 of Robert Pape, *Bombing to Win*.



OVERVIEW: In this two-hour seminar, you'll continue your exploration of social science methods by understanding the case study approach and assessing Robert Pape's case study selection and use to test his general theory.

5. The M.Phil. Thesis

15 August 2018^

ASSIGNMENT: Read the SAASS Thesis Guide as well as George Orwell's classic essay, "Why I Write" (provided electronically). Attend faculty and staff presentations on the M. Phil. Thesis process in the morning. Conduct initial thesis topic research in the afternoon. This ends the formal instruction on research methods.



Eric Arthur Blair, more popularly known as "George Orwell," wrote in a number of different forms for a variety of purposes. His contributions to the English language and popular culture are considerable. When setting out on a project, he said, "I do not say to myself 'I am going to produce a work of art.' I write it because there is some lie that I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention, and my initial concern is to get a hearing." Selecting a topic and crafting a research question is one of the most important tasks you will complete this semester.

OVERVIEW: Faculty and library staff presentations on selecting a thesis topic, researching, and other subjects related to the M.Phil. thesis process. ^Please note this date is subject to change due to scheduling issues.

6. Advanced Historical Research Methods

5 September 2018

ASSIGNMENT: Your 627 teaching team will conduct a lunchtime (brownbag) presentation and discussion on advanced historiography. Time, location, and materials to be announced later.

7. Advanced Social Science Research Methods

10 October 2018

ASSIGNMENT: Skim through King, Keohane, and Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry*. Your 632 teaching team will conduct a lunchtime (brownbag) presentation and discussion based on the book and answer any questions you might have. Time and location to be announced later.

8-12. Research

5-9 November 2018

ASSIGNMENT: Coordinate your M.Phil. Thesis topic proposal with at least one faculty member. **Submit your signed M.Phil. Thesis topic proposal (See Appendix A of the Thesis Guide) to the SAASS 690 Course Director by COB on Friday, 9 Nov 18.** Thesis advisors and readers will be assigned to you after a subsequent faculty meeting. From this point forward, your thesis research will be directed and guided by your thesis advisor, in coordination with your reader.

13-15. Research

17-19 December 2018

ASSIGNMENT: **Students to conduct peer-reviews of thesis prospectus ideas on 17 December. Faculty to sit in and observe where** Develop your thesis prospectus with your advisor. **Obtain their approval of your prospectus by COB on 19 Dec 2018.**

16-21. Research

20-31 December 2018

ASSIGNMENT: In between shopping, parties, celebrations, and holiday mayhem, find time to do some substantive research on your M.Phil. Thesis. Doing so will make for a much happier, and less stressful, beginning of the spring semester for you.

ASSIGNMENT: After a well-deserved holiday break it's back to the second half of your SAASS year. At this point, you'll probably think you are well behind in the thesis process as you see look at when the full draft is due ("11 weeks—OMG!") Enemies you will confront early in the thesis process are procrastination and perfection. You would be wise to consider Ms. Butler's words as you write.



American science fiction author Octavia Butler (1947-2006) was recipient of Hugo and Nebula awards for her remarkable works. She overcame early childhood illnesses and traumas to pen over 15 novels and two collections of short stories and, in the process, change the genre. She was also known for her directness, and of her own writing, famously said, "You don't start out writing good stuff. You start out writing crap and thinking it's good stuff, and gradually you get better at it. That's why I say one of the most valuable traits is persistence."

OVERVIEW: The nominal due date of the introduction of your thesis is Friday, 25 Jan 19. Your Thesis Advisor may adjust this deadline as necessary to fit your specific research agenda.

26-29. Research

19-22 February 2019

ASSIGNMENT: You will have numerous distractions at this time of year. Assignments. House or apartment hunting. And the list goes on. You'll begin to question your own sanity as you confront these realities and ponder the "big questions" raised by your thesis ("Do androids dream of electric sheep?"). Set these "realities" aside and continue to Research and Write. Your understanding of your topic continues to grow and you'll start to understand the power you have at your fingertips. You are now seven weeks away from full draft submission.



American science fiction author Philip K. Dick (1928-1982) wrestled with the meaning of reality in both his personal life and professional work. He appreciated the power of prose: "The basic tool for the manipulation of reality is the manipulation of words. If you can control the meaning of words, you can control the people who must use the words." You may discover in the thesis process new meaning of words—your task is to convince others of the reality you have discovered.

OVERVIEW: The nominal due date of the first and possibly second body chapters of your thesis is Friday, 22 Feb 19. Your Thesis Advisor may adjust this deadline as necessary to fit your specific research agenda.

ASSIGNMENT: Continue to Research and Write. Whether you know it or not, your subconscious mind or “System 2 thinking” is engaged on the “big ideas” of your thesis, establishing connections and identifying patterns, even as you go about your daily routine.



British novelist Graham Greene (1904-1991), considered by some one of the finest authors of the 20th century, said of the writing process, “So much in writing depends on the superficiality of one’s days. One may be preoccupied with shopping and income tax returns and chance conversations, but the stream of the unconscious continues to flow undisturbed, solving problems, planning ahead; one sits down sterile and dispirited at the desk, and suddenly the words come as though from the air; the situations that seem blocked in a hopeless impasse move forward; the work has been done while one slept or shopped or talked with friends.”

OVERVIEW: The nominal due date of the second and possibly third body chapters of your thesis is Wednesday, 20 Mar 19. Your Thesis Advisor may adjust this deadline as necessary to fit your specific research agenda.

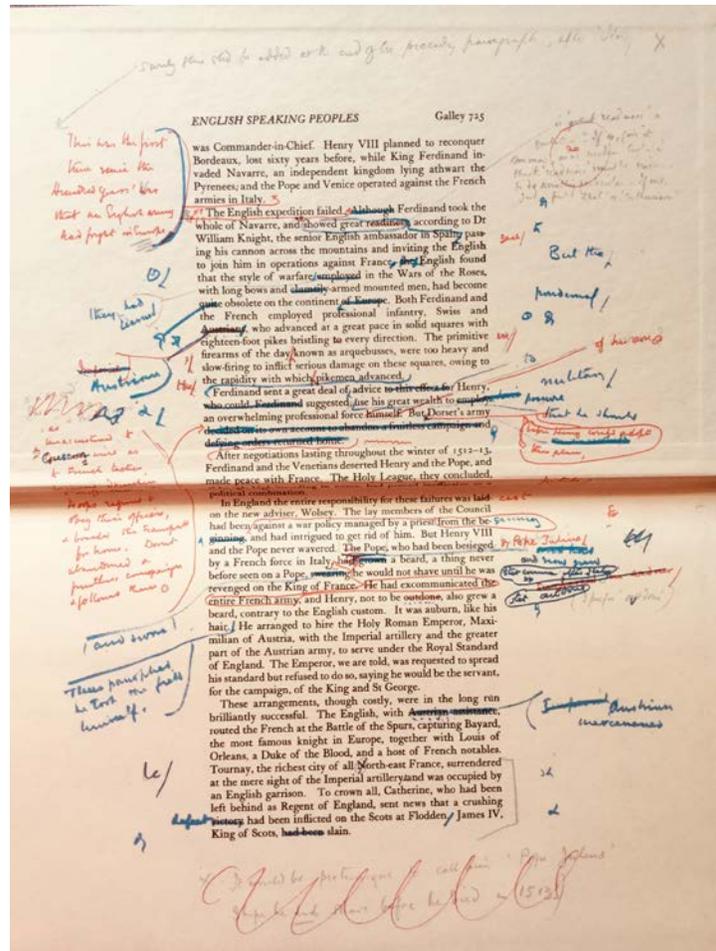
ASSIGNMENT: Research and Write. Make sure your words and gestures say clearly and precisely what you mean.



Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965) was a warrior, leader, strategist, historian, and winner of the 1953 Nobel Prize for literature. Few have captured the journey you are on in more terms you have come to understand: “Writing a book is an adventure. To begin with it is a toy and an amusement. Then it becomes a mistress, then it becomes a master, then it becomes a tyrant. The last phase is that just as you are about to be reconciled to your servitude, you kill the monster and fling him to the public.” Churchill was also prone to gaffes. His initial attempt to rally the British public using a symbolic “V for Victory” sign failed as the gesture he chose was colloquially used to represent “Up Yours.” Or was it just clever political theater?

OVERVIEW: The due date for the complete rough draft of your thesis is Friday, 12 Apr 19.

ASSIGNMENT: The writing of your thesis is hopefully over. Now begins the last step in your journey—editing and revising your work. To complete this task, work hard to obtain the signatures of your thesis advisor and reader indicating your work meets master’s standards. Ring the bell in the Legacy Room, also known as “Sheila’s Place,” in a manner as inauspicious or ostentatious as you would like. You have earned it.



Galley proofs for one of the volumes of Winston Churchill’s *A History of the English Speaking Peoples*. The marks and comments in the margins are a mixture of his editor/proofreader (in red) and his own (in blue) to improve the clarity and quality of the work.

OVERVIEW: In order to graduate, you must pass SAASS 699, the Oral Comprehensive Examination. In order to sit for the Comprehensive Exam, you must complete your M.Phil. thesis by COB on Thursday, 23 May 2019.

APPENDIX I AWARDS AND CONTESTS

Thesis Award Program: There are five sponsored thesis awards to recognize outstanding student research contributions. They are the Air Force Historical Foundation Award for the best historical thesis; the First Command Financial Planning Award for the best thesis on leadership or ethics; two Air University Foundation Awards, one for best thesis in security studies and the second for best thesis on technology, space, and cyberspace; and, the Airlift/Tanker Association Award for the best thesis on mobility or logistics. The faculty reader determines which, if any, award for which the thesis competes. Winners in each category are normally published by AU Press in the prestigious series of Drew Papers.

Essay Contests: Students also have the opportunity to participate in several writing contests typically announced during the academic year. Two that have attracted SAASS entries over the last several years are those sponsored by the National Defense University (NDU) and the Virginia Military Institute (VMI). The Awards Director, Professor Thomas Hughes, will send out notifications of each contest to students and faculty well in advance of submission deadlines.

- I. NDU acts as the sponsor for the Secretary of Defense's national security strategy essay contest and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) military strategy article and military strategy essay contests. The rules normally stipulate that entrants may receive faculty assistance up to the time of submission within the School but no assistance thereafter. Students can submit essays or articles in the following categories:
 - a. Students can submit for the following essay categories (see below for word count details):
 - i. The SECDEF National Security Essay Competition includes two categories:
 1. National Security Research Essay: Maximum 8,000 words. This category has been the mainstay of past SECDEF competitions and encourages in-depth research, analysis, and critical thinking on general national security strategy topics.
 2. Future Security Environment Essay: Maximum 8,000 words. This new (2017-2018) category *specifically* asks students to examine the national security implications of one or more broad political, economic, social, or technological factors, with an emphasis on potentially novel or unexpected combinations of factors that might result in strategic surprise. The essay should provide a vivid diagnosis of this potential national-level security problem set, describing the impact and influence on national security strategy over the next two decades.
 - ii. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff National Defense and Military Strategy Essay Competition includes three categories:
 1. Strategic Research Essay: Maximum 5,000 words. This category has been the mainstay of past CJCS competitions and encourages

in-depth research, analysis, and critical thinking on general defense and military security topics.

2. Future Operating Environment Essay: Maximum 5,000 words. This new (2017-2018) category specifically asks students to develop a compelling argument describing a specific set of conditions, circumstances, and influences that may bear on the decisions of a future commander and impact how the future joint force (or some part of it) should change in order to operate successfully out to 2040. The goal of the essay should be to provide a logical description of how strategic, social, or technological changes might impact the character of joint warfare over the next two decades.
3. Strategy Article: Maximum 1,500 words. This category is similar in length to many current JPME course papers. It should be a scholarly but tightly focused research paper.

b. The following is an approximate time-line:

- a. Mid-April 2018: SAASS nominations and internal judging
 - b. Late April 2018 SAASS entries submitted to NDU
 - c. Early May 2018: First round judging electronically from home station
 - d. Mid-May 2018: Final judging at NDU
2. VMI's John A. Adams Center sponsors an essay contest for any topic dealing with the Cold War (1945-1991). Winners normally receive a plaque and a generous cash award, and their entries are considered for publication in *The Journal of Military History*. The limit is twenty-five double-spaced pages, exclusive of notes and bibliography. The deadline is usually in mid-July. Faculty assistance is authorized up to the time of submission to VMI. There is no internal SAASS judging.

APPENDIX 2 RESEARCH MILESTONES

The milestones below are recommended for development of the thesis. Timely submission of thesis milestones is critical to allow for a process of constructive and reflective interaction between the researcher and his/her advisor and reader. **Final approval of the thesis is required by COB on 23 May 2019 in order for the student to be eligible to take comprehensive examinations.**

MILESTONES (Bold Text)	DATE(S)
Students Submit Preferences for Thesis Topics	9 Nov 2018
Final Thesis Prospectus Due	19 Dec 2018*
Research Period 1	20-31 Dec 18
Research Period 2	27-31 Jan 19
Research Period 3	22-25 Jan 19
Introduction Due	25 Jan 2019*
Research Period 4	19-22 Feb 19
First (and possibly Second) Body Chapter(s) Due	22 Feb 2019*
Research Period 5	13-20 Mar 19
Second (and possibly Third) Body Chapter(s) Due	20 Mar 2019*
Research Period 6	8-12 Apr 19
Complete Rough Draft Due	12 Apr 2019
Draft Revision Period	13-23 May 19
<u>FINAL THESIS DUE</u>	<u>23 May 2019</u>

*Recommended. Your Thesis Advisor will determine appropriate milestones, if these do not fit your individual research and writing plan.