International Security Studies (PIM11)

Module Handbook

Module Convenor:

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Aims

- To introduce students to different concepts of security, such as international, global and human security.
- To facilitate progression in international security studies from the particular to the abstract.
- To examine empirical problems in their historical context.
- To facilitate an understanding and appreciation of the changes and continuities of security problems from the Cold War to the present.
- To develop an in-depth understanding of different approaches to security problems, both in their historical context as well as in the contemporary debate.
- To develop critical understanding of the complex dimensions of security and the nature of various threats to security.
- To explore military and non-military approaches to security threats and develop critical facilities to appraise their suitability for meeting contemporary security challenges.
- To provide students with an intellectual environment for enhancing and testing critical, independent analysis of international and global security.
- To provide the analytical and intellectual basis for single discipline or interdisciplinary academic research in international security studies or for careers which require a sound understanding of the roots and condition of the contemporary security environment.
- To enhance students’ critical and analytical skills through engaging with a diverse and challenging theoretical and empirical literature and to demonstrate these in seminar discussions, presentations, essays and examinations.

Intended learning outcomes

Assessable outcomes

- To provide a solid foundation of knowledge of international security studies which will be tested in examinations.
- To equip students for critical and informed analysis and research of international security studies which they will demonstrate in essays and examinations.

Additional outcomes

- Effective oral presentation of critical analyses.
- Knowledge of the status of academic research and points of departure for further research or study of international security.
- Enhanced knowledge, understanding and ability to analyse problems in international security.

Transferable Skills

- Informed and critical approach to using primary and secondary sources, incl. web-based information, through preparation of all coursework.
- Enhanced confidence in and effectiveness of oral and written communication through seminar discussions, presentations and essays.
- Improved time management through meeting deadlines and regular seminar preparation.
- Independent and team-work through individual and group preparation of coursework.
Seminar Outline

The course is divided into four parts:

**AUTUMN TERM:**

**Part 1: Introduction**
Week 1: Business Meeting

**Part 2: Concepts of Security**
Week 2: What is Security?
Week 3: Realist Concepts of Security
Week 4: Liberal Institutionalism, Security Communities and Democratic Peace Theory
Week 5: Critical Security Studies
Week 6: Human Security

**Part 2: The Cold War Legacy**
Week 7: The Political and Strategic Legacy of the Cold War
Week 8: From the End of the Cold War to the War on Terror

**SPRING TERM**

**Part 3: Current Issues in Security and War**
Week 1: Human Rights and Humanitarian Intervention
Week 2: Security and Global Liberal Governance
Week 3: Proliferation and Non-Proliferation in the 21st Century
Week 4: The Changing Security Agenda: Terrorism
Week 5: The Changing Security Agenda: War as Risk Management
Week 6: From Security Studies to Critical War Studies?

**Part 4: Conclusion: Prospects for Security**
Brief description of teaching and learning methods:
The class is taught in seminars. The seminars consist of student presentations as well as group discussion with occasional short lectures.

Students are expected to develop their knowledge of the subject through a high level of independent study combined with group work, which will inform the class discussions. Presentations, essays and exams are designed not only to test students’ knowledge and ability to think critically and analytically in a variety of environments, but also to reinforce independent study and to ensure a careful and judicious consideration of it. Presentations are also designed to enhance transferable skills. They should aim to communicate concise, critical analyses effectively and raise topics for the subsequent discussion. Students are encouraged to explore different presentation techniques and present freely from brief notes.

Questions not covered by individual presentations will be prepared in groups. With guidance from the tutor, groups will sub-divide the topic and assign specific issue areas to individual members. Groups will collate and shape individual research results into a brief presentation (5-10 minutes). The presenter will be selected on the day of the session.

Coursework

Presentations

Individual presentations should not be longer than 20 minutes and should be accompanied by a one-page summary of the main points. Students may choose the topic from sessions not marked as group work. The essay topic must differ from that of the individual presentation.

Essays

Students who take International Security Studies as a core unit for the MA International Security Studies are required to submit a formative essay (1 x 1000 words) in week 4.

Summative essays (2 whose combined total equals 7,000 words) are due in week 10 of each term. The topic for the summative essay will be provided by the course tutor in due time.

Assessment:

Presentations

Presentations and seminar contributions are marked and components of end of term student progress reports. They are not part of the formal assessment, but may influence decisions on a marginal final mark.

Coursework

Two summative essays (each 3,500 words), each contributing 25% of grade for the module.

Relative percentage of coursework: 50%

Penalties for late submission:

Deduction of 10 marks for essays delayed by up to one week; thereafter a mark of 0 will be awarded. Marks will also be deducted for essays that are too short or too long by 10% of the
word limit. For further rules applying to essays, students are requested to refer to the GSEIS Handbook.

**Examination:**

One three-hour examination. Students will have to write three essays chosen from 10 questions. Each essay is worth 1/3 of the examination grade. The examination grade is worth 50% of the final grade.

**Requirements for a pass:**

Students must achieve an overall mark 50% after coursework and exam marks have been combined. A grade of 50% will reflect the following characteristics in:

**Examinations**

A coherent answer to the question displaying a succinct though sound basic knowledge and critical understanding of the subject. Small factual errors allowed.

**Essays**

A coherent answer to the question displaying a solid knowledge of the subject and core readings; critical skills and a developed analysis; sound documentation of sources.

**Reassessment arrangements**

Re-sit examinations in September or following May; re-submission of coursework by September or May; resubmission of dissertation by May of following year.
VI. READINGS

Central readings are listed below in the schedule of seminar topics. Most are available via the main library, often through electronic databases. Selected readings will be handed out in class.

Other materials, most of which are available in or through the University Library, are suggestions for further reading. Many listed readings also contain extensive bibliographies. Journals of particular interest to students of international security include *International Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *Global Governance*, *International Security*, *Security Studies*, *Security Dialogue*, *Survival*, *Review of International Studies*, *International Organization*, *International Peacekeeping*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Environmental Values*, and *Global Environmental Change*.

**BASIC TEXTS:**

Students who take this module (above all those without a background in security studies) are advised to procure a copy of the following introductory text:


For historical background, the following books are particularly useful:


**Useful websites include:**

- Crisis Group: [http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm](http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm)
- Federation of American Scientists: [http://www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org)
- Institute for Science and International Security: [http://www.isis-online.org/](http://www.isis-online.org/)
- International Institute for Strategic Studies: [http://www.iiss.org](http://www.iiss.org)
PART I: Introduction and Concepts of Security

Week 1: Business Meeting

Week 2: What is Security?

1. What makes 'security' a 'contested concept'?
2. What does the expansion of the concept of security suggest about who can best provide security, for whom it should be provided, and how?

Reading

Essential Reading


Further Reading:


Week 3: Realist Concepts of Security

1. How do the central assumptions of Realist theories of International Relations shape their understanding of 'security'.

2. Explain the ‘security dilemma’ and examine its ramifications for international security.

Reading

Essential Reading


Mearsheimer, John J., “Get Real - The False Promise of International Institutions”, *International Security* 19 (1994-95) 3, pp.5-49 [see also the subsequent debate in *IS*].

Further Reading:


Week 4: Liberal Institutionalism, Security Communities and Democratic Peace Theory

1. Examine critically the Liberal assumption that international norms and institutions are security-building.

2. What is the relationship between democracy and security?

3. Explain and assess the utility of the concept of ‘security community’.

Reading

Essential Reading


Further Reading


**Week 5: Critical Security Studies**

1. *Why do critical approaches to security studies object to traditional, especially Realist, concepts of security and security policy and how do they re-define security?*

2. *What can critical security studies contribute to the study of international relations that traditional ‘problem-solving’ approaches cannot?*

**Reading**

*Essential Reading:*


**Further Reading:**


**Week 6: Human Security**

1. What is ‘human security’ and is it a useful concept for the analysis and promotion of contemporary security?

2. What factors have promoted the emergence of the concept of human security?

**Reading**


Human Security Report, at [www.humansecurityreport.org](http://www.humansecurityreport.org)

*Further Reading*


Part II: The Cold War Legacy

Week 7: The Political and Strategic Legacy of the Cold War

1. What do a) containment and b) détente tell us about Western perceptions of the Soviet threat?

2. Evaluate the role of nuclear doctrines and strategies in thinking about and planning for security during the Cold War.

Reading

Essential Reading


Gould-Davies, Nigel, ‘Rethinking the Role of Ideology in International Politics during the Cold War’, *Journal of Cold War Studies* 1999.


Further Reading on Containment and Détente:


Mr. X, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct”, *Foreign Affairs*, July 1947, pp. 566-582.


Further Reading on Nuclear Strategy and Disarmament:


Diehl, Paul F., “Ghosts of the Arms Control Past”, *Political Science Quarterly* 105 (1990-91) 4, pp. 597-615.


MccGwire, Michael, “Deterrence, the Problem not the Solution”, *International Affairs* 62 (1985-86) 1, pp. 55-70.


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**Week 8: From the End of the Cold War to the War on Terror**

1. *Why did the Cold War end?*

2. *What are the ‘root causes’ of the War on Terror? Is it actually a ‘war’?*

**Reading**

*Essential Reading*


*Further Reading*


**SPRING TERM**

**Part III: Current Issues in Security and War**

**Week 1: Human Rights and ‘Humanitarian Intervention’**

1. *Does the so-called international community have a ‘responsibility to protect’?*

2. *Whose security have so-called humanitarian military interventions protected since the end of the Cold War?*

**Reading**

*Essential Reading*


*Further Reading*


**Week 2: Security and Global Liberal Governance**

1. What role does ‘human security’ play in the liberal governance of global politics?

2. What role does sovereignty play in the liberal governance of global politics?

**Reading**

*Essential Reading:*


Neumann, Iver B. and Ole Jacob Sendling, Governing the Global Polity. Practice, Mentality, Rationality (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press 2010), chapters 1, 2, and 5.

Further Reading:

Abstract.

**Week 3: Proliferation and Non-Proliferation in the 21st Century**

1. Examine the underlying rationale and effectiveness of rules and norms based approaches to non-proliferation with special reference to WMD and ballistic missiles.

2. Are strengthening deterrence with ‘useable nuclear weapons’, missile defence and pre-emptive defence the most suitable non- or counter-proliferation strategies for the 21st century?

**Reading**

*Essential Reading*


**Further Reading**


Week 4: The Changing Security Agenda I: Terrorism

1. Is global terrorism a new phenomenon?
2. How far have the responses to global terrorism been effective?

Reading

Essential Reading


Further Reading


Hellmich, Christina and Andreas Behnke, Knowing al-Qaeda. The Epistemology of Terrorism (Farnham: Ashgate 2012).


Navias, M., “Finance Warfare as a Response to International Terrorism”, *The Political Quarterly* 73 (2002) 1, pp. 57-79. [please note that the whole journal issue is focused on international terrorism]


**Week 5: The Changing Security Agenda II: War as Risk Management**

1. ?
2. ?

**Essential Reading:**


Rasmussen, Mikkel V., “‘It Sounds Like a Riddle’: Security Studies, the War on Terror and Risk”, Millennium: Journal of International Studies 33(2) 2004, pp. 381-395.


**Further Reading:**


**Reading:**

**Week 6: From Security Studies to Critical War Studies?**

**Essential Reading:**


**Further Reading:**
Part IV: Prospects for Security

STUDENT DEBATE:

‘The Concept of International Security is Obsolete in the 21st Century’