

History 381/Public Affairs 388K
Strategy and Decision-Making in Global Policy

Tuesdays, 9:00am-12:pm
Fall 2015
University of Texas at Austin
SRH 3.216/219

Professor Jeremi Suri
suri@austin.utexas.edu
Office hours:
Tuesdays, 1:30pm-3:pm in SRH 3.378
Wednesdays, 1:30pm-3:pm in GAR 2.122

Course Aims

This advanced graduate course will examine how leaders formulate a coherent and effective strategy for policy-making in a complex and unpredictable global environment. Readings and discussions will focus on planning, organization, persuasion, and adaptation to changing international pressures. The course will focus on case studies in leadership, as well as broader studies of global change in the modern world. Students should gain a greater appreciation for what it means to be an effective strategist, policy-maker, and agenda-setter. They should also acquire a certain humility about the difficulties involved with fulfilling these often inhuman tasks.

Academic Accommodations and Academic Integrity

Upon request, the University of Texas at Austin provides appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 or 471-6441.

Academic integrity is central to the mission of the university. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person without proper acknowledgement of that source. This means that you must use footnotes and quotation marks to indicate the source of any phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or ideas found in published volumes, on the Internet, or created by another student. For more information about the university's expectations for academic integrity, see:

http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php.

Assigned Readings

Books for Purchase at the University Co-op

Books are also on reserve at UT's Perry-Castañeda Library

Clausewitz, Carl von. *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976). Paperback. 978-0691018546.

Gaddis, John Lewis. *George Kennan: An American Life* (New York: Penguin, 2011). Paperback. 978-1594203121.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Robin Waterfield (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Paperback. 978-0199535668.

Hill, Fiona and Clifford Gaddy, *Mr. Putin: Operative in the Kremlin* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2015). Paperback. 978-0815726173.

Hutchings, Robert and Jeremi Suri, eds., *Foreign Policy Breakthroughs: Cases in Successful Diplomacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015). Paperback. 978-0190226121.

Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince*, translated by Harvey C. Mansfield (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). Paperback. 978-0226500447.

Pollack, Kenneth M. *Unthinkable: Iran, the Bomb, and American Strategy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014). Paperback. 978-1476733937.

Suri, Jeremi. *Henry Kissinger and the American Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007). Paperback. 978-0674032521.

Tolstoy, Leo. *War and Peace*, translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (New York: Vintage, 2008). Paperback. 978-1400079988.

Tzu, Sun. *The Art of War*, translated by Samuel Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971). Paperback. 978-0195014761.

Reading Assignments

This course includes a heavy load of weekly reading – generally a full book per week. Students are expected to read all of the assigned materials carefully and critically *before each seminar meeting*. Focus on each author’s key arguments and how they relate to larger historical concerns and debates – how is the author trying to change the way we think about strategy and policy? Interrogate narrative strategies – how does the author assemble his or her argument for the purpose of convincing the reader? Pay close attention to sources – how does the author “prove” his or her point? Most important, as the semester progresses think about how the assigned readings relate to one another – how is each author responding to other scholars?

Weekly Response Essays

Each week by **5:PM** on the **Monday before class**, all students should post a short response essay on the course website (available through UT’s Canvas Course Management Website): <http://canvas.utexas.edu/>.

This response essay should include 3 basic paragraphs. The first paragraph should summarize the key arguments in the readings and their significance. The second paragraph should analyze how the week’s readings relate to other course and outside texts. The third paragraph should offer the student’s critical assessment of the week’s readings: What was most persuasive? What was least persuasive? Which are the issues and questions that need more attention? What kind of new research do the readings inspire?

Students are expected to read each other’s weekly essays before class. They are also expected to comment substantively on each other’s essays. The weekly essays and comments will provide a starting point for each week’s class discussion.

Grading

Weekly Response Essays and Comments	30%
Weekly Class Discussion Participation	30%
Final Project	40%

Final Project: Group National Security Briefings

The purpose of this course is to prepare students to become strategic planners, ready to advise and lead large global organizations. This difficult task requires analytical sophistication, historical knowledge, and current awareness. It calls for effective teamwork and persuasion of principals.

With this core purpose in mind, students will be responsible at the end of the semester for preparing a strategy briefing on current American national security. Here are the guidelines:

1. Students will work in teams of 5 or 6, arranged by the middle of the semester.
2. Each team will prepare a strictly **15-minute presentation**.
3. The presentation will address the new **President-elect Michael Bloomberg** during his post-election and pre-inauguration transition.
4. The presentation will answer the following questions:
 - a. **What national security strategy should the United States pursue for the next four years?**
 - b. How can the President-elect and his administration maximize the security and well-being of the United States?
 - c. How should the United States define its national security priorities, and how should it pursue them?
 - d. What can the President-elect and his administration expect to achieve in the course of four years?

5. The teams will present their briefings in class on December 1.

6. Based on the presentations and feedback, each team will submit a final 15-page written briefing by **Monday, December 7 at 5:pm**. Please submit final written briefings by email to: suri@austin.utexas.edu

The national security briefings will be judged by the following criteria:

1. Professionalism.
2. Attention to the requirements and demands of the assignment.
3. Quality of information.
4. Accuracy.
5. Coherence.
6. Analytical insight.
7. Usefulness.
8. Strategic wisdom.
9. Creativity.

- 9/1 Introduction: What is strategy? How does one formulate a strategy?
How does one evaluate a strategy?

Part I: Strategic Wisdom

- 9/8 Herodotus, *The Histories*, Books 7-9.
- 9/15 Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*.
- 9/22 Machiavelli, *The Prince*.
- 9/29 Clausewitz, *On War*, Books 1-5.
- 10/6 Clausewitz, *On War*, Books 6-8.
- 10/13 Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, Volumes 1-2.
- 10/20 Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, Volumes 3-4, Epilogue.

Part II: Case Studies – Strategic Leaders

- 10/27 Gaddis, *George Kennan*.
- 11/3 Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*.

Part III: Case Study – Contemporary Russia

- 11/10 Hill and Gaddy, *Mr. Putin*.

Part IV: Case Study – Iran and Nuclear Weapons

11/17 Pollack, *Unthinkable*.

Part V: Case Study – Great Power Diplomacy in the 21st Century

11/24 Hutchings and Suri, *Foreign Policy Breakthroughs*.

Part VI: National Security Briefings

12/1 Group Briefings.