History 381/Public Affairs 388K
Emerging Global Challenges: History and Policy

Wednesdays, 9:00am-12:pm   Professor Jeremi Suri
Spring 2024   suri@austin.utexas.edu
University of Texas at Austin   Office hours:
GAR 1.122   Wednesdays, 1:30-3:00pm

Course Aims

This advanced graduate course will examine the global dynamics in our contemporary world and their effects on a series of pressing issues related to security, democracy, and political economy. The course will focus on the intersection of domestic and international challenges, and their relevance for U.S. national security. The goal of the course is to provide students with a firmer foundation for integrating diverse challenges, understanding their common roots, and defining policy responses that are holistic and strategic. Achieving this goal requires a mix of history, theory, and close policy analysis. It also calls for broad reading and intensive discussion. This course will push students to synthesize various analytical skills, broaden their issue expertise, and develop a coherent individual worldview that offers useful prescriptions for future policy. The course will not encourage agreement among students, but it will demand a consideration of multiple points of view before students settle on their own, original explanatory frameworks for contemporary global challenges.

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 Services for Students with Disabilities (https://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/).

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 or artificial intelligence 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 or artificial intelligence. For more information about the university's expectations for academic integrity, see: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/.

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?

Most of the books are available for purchase in paperback or electronic editions. The books are also available at the UT and other major libraries.

Grading

Weekly Response Essays and Comments	30%
Weekly Class Discussion Participation	35%
Final Paper (including class presentation)	35%

Weekly Response Essays

Each week by **5:PM** on the **Tuesday 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 <u>first paragraph</u> should summarize the key arguments in the readings and their significance. The <u>second paragraph</u> should analyze how the week's readings relate to other course and outside texts. The <u>third paragraph</u> 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.

Final National Security Paper

For the final project, each student will write a national security paper that interprets some of the key dynamics of change in the current domestic and international environment. The paper should explain how the United States can respond to current dynamics of change and pursue new, promising policy initiatives. The paper should leverage knowledge of recent history and current crises to promote U.S. national interests in specific ways. Students are expected to draw on the course readings and additional research around the chosen policy initiative. These papers should be written for a knowledgeable audience of policy-makers with broad experience. Papers should contain 15-20 pages of polished text and cogent analysis, including detailed source citations.

The instructor will meet with each student to discuss his/her paper during the semester. Students will prepare short presentations, based on their papers, for class on April 24. Papers are due on **<u>Wednesday, May 1 at 12pm.</u>** Students should email their completed papers to Professor Suri: suri@austin.utexas.edu.

Week 1: Expertise
1/17   Tetlock, Philip E. *Expert Political Judgment: How Good is it? How Can We Know?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005). Paperback.

Weeks 2 and 3: History
1/24   Neustadt, Richard E. and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers* (New York: Free Press, 1986). Paperback.

1/31   Brands, Hal and Jeremi Suri, *The Power of the Past: History and Statecraft* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2015). Paperback.

Weeks 4 and 5: Pandemic
2/7   McNeill, William H. *Plagues and Peoples* (New York: Random House, 1976). Paperback.

2/14   Wright, Lawrence. *The Plague Year: America in the Time of COVID* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2021).

Weeks 6 and 7: Artificial Intelligence
2/21   Harari, Yuval Noah. *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (New York: Harper Collins, 2015). Paperback.

2/28   Kissinger, Henry, Eric Schmidt, and Daniel Huttenlocher. *The Age of AI: And Our Human Future* (New York: Little, Brown, 2021). Paperback

Weeks 8 and 9: Middle East
3/6   Simon, Steven. *Grand Delusion: The Rise and Fall of American Ambition in the Middle East (*New York: Penguin Press, 2023).

3/13   SPRING BREAK

3/20   Reading to be determined.

Weeks 10 and 11: Ukraine
3/27   Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Paperback.

4/3   Kimmage, Michael. *Collisions: The Origins of the War in Ukraine and the New Global Instability* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2024).

Weeks 12 and 13: Democracy and Nation-Building
4/10   Suri, Jeremi. *Liberty's Surest Guardian: Rebuilding Nations After War From the Founders to Obama* (New York: Free Press, 2011). Paperback.

4/17   Levitsky, Steven and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die* (New York: Broadway Books, 2018). Paperback.

Week 15: Student Presentations and Papers
4/24   Student Presentations

5/1   Student Papers due by 12:pm. Please email to: suri@austin.utexas.edu