

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

Tuesdays, 9:00am-12:pm  
Fall 2020  
University of Texas at Austin  
Hybrid/Blended Delivery

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Office hours online  
by appointment

**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 concentrate 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. The course will center on intensive reading, writing, discussion, and a final project.

**Course Delivery**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this is a hybrid/blended course. Our meetings during the first half of the semester will be online, through Zoom. If health conditions allow, we will attempt one or two in-person class meetings during the second half of the semester. These in-person sessions will be added to the existing syllabus, and they will be optional for students. No student will be required to attend an in-person session if she/he has health or related concerns.

**Academic Accommodations and Academic Integrity**

Upon request, the University of Texas at Austin provides appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 512-471-6259 (voice) or 512-410-6644 (Video Phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

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. A discussion of academic integrity, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, as well as helpful information on citations, note taking, and paraphrasing, can be found at the Office of the Dean of Students web page (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/>) and Graduate Studies (<http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/ethics/transcripts/academic.html>). The University has also established disciplinary procedures and penalty guidelines for academic dishonesty, especially Sec. 11.504 in Appendix C of the Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities section in UT's General Information Catalog.

### **COVID Syllabus Guidance from the UT Provost, Fall 2020**

Due to COVID-19 and its attendant challenges, the UT Provost's office has required a number of announcements in each Fall 2020 course syllabus.

**Safety and Class Participation/Masks:** We will all need to make some adjustments in order to benefit from in-person classroom interactions in a safe and healthy manner. Our best protections against spreading COVID-19 on campus are masks (defined as cloth face coverings) and staying home if you are showing symptoms. Therefore, for the benefit of everyone, this means that all students are required to follow these important rules.

- **Every student must wear a cloth face-covering properly in class and in all campus buildings at all times.**
- **Students are encouraged to participate in documented daily symptom screening.** This means that each class day in which on-campus activities occur, students must upload certification from the symptom tracking app and confirm that they completed their symptom screening for that day to Canvas. Students should not upload the results of that screening, just the certificate that they completed it. If the symptom tracking

app recommends that the student isolate rather than coming to class, then students must not return to class until cleared by a medical professional.

- Information regarding [safety protocols with and without symptoms](#) can be [found here](#).

If a student is not wearing a cloth face-covering properly in the classroom (or any UT building), that student must leave the classroom (and building). If the student refuses to wear a cloth face covering, class will be dismissed for the remainder of the period, and the student will be subject to disciplinary action as set forth in the university's Institutional Rules/General Conduct 11-404(a)(3). Students who have a condition that precludes the wearing of a cloth face covering must follow the procedures for [obtaining an accommodation](#) working with [Services for Students with Disabilities](#).

**Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited:** No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

**Class Recordings:** Class recordings (if any are made) are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

**COVID Caveats:** To help keep everyone at UT and in our community safe, it is critical that students report COVID-19 symptoms and testing, regardless of test results, to [University Health Services](#), and faculty and staff report to the [HealthPoint Occupational Health Program](#) (OHP) as soon as possible. Please see this [link](#) to understand what needs to be reported. In addition, to help understand what to do if a fellow student in the class (or the instructor or TA) tests positive for COVID, see this [University Health Services link](#).

### **Required Book Readings**

Belew, Kathleen. *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2018). 978-0674286078.

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

Gates, Robert. *Exercise of Power: American Failures, Successes, and a New Path Forward* (New York: Knopf, 2020). Hardcover. 978-1524731885.

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

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

Power, Samantha. *The Education of an Idealist: A Memoir* (New York: Dey Street Books, 2019). 978-0062820693.

Schwartz, Thomas A. *Henry Kissinger and American Power: A Political Biography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2020). Hardcover. 978-0809095377.

Suri, Jeremi. *The Impossible Presidency: The Rise and Fall of America's Highest Office* (New York: Basic Books, 2017). 978-0465051731.

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.

Wilkerson, Isabel. *Caste: The Origins of our Discontents* (New York: Random House, 2020). Hardcover. 978-0593230251.

### **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: Strategy Statement (approximately 15 pages total)**

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 focused analysis of complex policy problems, and imagination to define pathways for change.

With this core purpose in mind, students will be responsible at the end of the semester for preparing a written strategy briefing on a current U.S. policy issue of their choice. Here are the guidelines:

1. Each student should choose a contemporary policy issue (in consultation with the instructor) that she/he cares about, and where she/he has some background knowledge.
2. Each student should identify at least three of her/his weekly responses that relate to the chosen policy issue, conceptually and/or empirically.
3. Building on the identified weekly responses, and the related readings, each student should assemble a new strategic framework for addressing the chosen policy issue (approximately 5 pages of text).
4. The main body of the paper should then apply the student's strategic framework to a more detailed empirical examination of the chosen policy issue (approximately 10 pages of text).
5. Each paper should have a short introduction that articulates key insights, and a short conclusion that looks forward to future policy questions and contributions.

The strategy statement papers should be concise, focused, and deeply analytical. They should cite sources and show creative thinking.

Every word counts. Papers will be judged by the following criteria:

1. Analytical depth.
2. Creative thought.
3. Careful, concise, and precise writing.
4. Persuasive argument.
5. Overall professionalism.

**Strategy Statement papers are due by 5pm on December 8.**

**Please email a PDF of your paper to Professor Suri: [suri@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:suri@austin.utexas.edu)**

- 9/1 Introduction: How do we understand the structures of power in society?  
What are the strategies for changing the structures of power?  
Wilkerson, *Caste*.

### **Part I: Strategic Wisdom**

- 9/8 Herodotus, *The Histories*, Books 7-8.
- 9/15 Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book 9.
- 9/22 Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*.
- 9/29 Machiavelli, *The Prince*.
- 10/6 Clausewitz, *On War*, Books 1-5.
- 10/13 Clausewitz, *On War*, Books 6-8.
- 10/20 Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, Volumes 1-2.
- 10/27 Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, Volumes 3-4, Epilogue.

### **Part II: Contemporary Leadership Challenges**

- 11/3 Suri, *The Impossible Presidency*.
- 11/10 Gates, *Exercise of Power*.
- 11/17 Schwartz, *Henry Kissinger and American Power*.
- 11/24 Belew, *Bring the War Home*.
- 12/1 Power, *The Education of an Idealist*.

**12/8 Strategy Statement Papers Due.**