

History 600

Grand Strategy: Global Historical Policy Analysis

Spring 2011
Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison
Seminar Meetings: Mondays, 1:20-3:20pm
5257 Humanities

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Office hours:
M 10:00-12:PM, or by appointment

Course Aims

This is a course that brings history, theory, and policy analysis together in a rigorous way. Readings, discussions, and written assignments will examine the making and implementation of “grand strategy.” This is a complex and controversial topic, but the course will assume that managing global change requires a dynamic integration of goals and capabilities. Otherwise, the complexity of the international system promises chaos and possible calamity.

The course will have three specific goals. First, through intensive readings and discussions we will seek to understand how grand strategies are formulated. We will assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of different approaches, and we will apply those lessons to contemporary challenges. We will also propose improved future policies, building on analysis of a useful past.

Second, students in the course will write an original research paper on a historical or contemporary case. They will examine a specific grand strategy in depth, analyzing its origins, implementation, and consequences. These research papers will open new insights about enduring challenges and opportunities for contemporary policy-makers.

Third, and perhaps most important, this course will contribute to a community of strategic thinkers that is larger and more enduring than the seminar. Students will participate in numerous activities outside the classroom, especially a two-day policy simulation and group retreat. Students will also interact with visiting policy-makers, community leaders, and businesspeople throughout the semester. This course will open new networks of informed dialogue about policy and strategy. The ultimate goal of the course is to make these networks a source of positive change in Madison – and far beyond.

Class Participation

Class discussions are a central part of this course. Students are expected to attend every seminar. They should complete all of the assigned reading before each seminar meeting, and arrive prepared for a detailed and critical discussion. Seminars are designed to exchange opinions on the reading, analyze important historical questions, and compare various viewpoints. The quality of each student's class participation during the semester will comprise 30% of his/her grade.

Weekly Response Essays

Each week by **8:PM on the Sunday before class**, all students should post a short response essay on the course website (Learn@UW). 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 readings and discussions. 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? The weekly response essays will comprise 10% of each student's grade.

Primary and Secondary Source Bibliography

After meeting with the instructor individually (during the week of 3/21) to discuss the student's research paper, each student should submit a list of primary and secondary sources in class on **March 28**. The primary sources are the original materials (documents, newspapers, memoirs, pamphlets, pictures, music, and art) that will provide the foundation for the student's research. The secondary sources are the historical interpretations (including those assigned in class) that are relevant for the student's topic. Each paper must use primary materials to shed light on the secondary accounts. The bibliography will count for 5% of each student's grade.

Draft of the Research Paper

On **April 18** each student should submit a completed 15-20 page draft of his/her research paper in class. These drafts should *not* be “rough.” They should include polished prose, careful argumentation, clear organization, a creative introduction, a thoughtful conclusion, completed footnotes, and a full bibliography.

Proofread your paper before submission! Avoid passive voice, clichés, and awkward phrases. Check your grammar carefully. Make sure that each paragraph has a topic sentence. Each sentence should contribute to the point of the paragraph where it is situated.

I will read the draft papers carefully for style and substance. I will offer extensive written and oral comments for students to use in the final version of their papers. The draft research paper will account for 15% of each student’s grade.

Final Version of the Research Paper

Students must submit the final printed version of their research papers to the instructor’s office (**5119 Humanities**) by **Noon on Monday, May 9**. Late papers will not be accepted. Students should try to implement as many of the revisions suggested on the draft paper as possible. The final papers should also reflect additional proofreading for clarity, style, and overall presentation. The final paper will account for 40% of each student’s grade.

Grading

Primary and Secondary Source Bibliography	5%
Weekly Response Essays	10%
Draft of the Research Paper	15%
Class Participation	30%
Final Version of the Research Paper	40%

Assigned Books

Available in new and used editions at the University Bookstore

(Books are also on reserve at the College Library)

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

Jones, Seth. *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010). Paperback.

Mansoor, Peter. *Baghdad at Sunrise: A Brigade Commander's War in Iraq* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). Paperback.

Nagl, John A. *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002). Paperback.

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

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

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

US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). Paperback.

- 1/24 Introduction
What is grand strategy?
How can historical knowledge improve policy-making?
- 1/31 The Art of War
Reading: Sun Tzu, all.
- 2/7 The Science of War
Reading: Clausewitz, first half.
- 2/14 The Irrationality of War
Reading: Clausewitz, second half.
- 2/21 The Great Powers in the European Golden Age
Reading: Tolstoy, first third.
- 2/28 Napoleon and the Promise of Political Genius
Reading: Tolstoy, second third.
- 3/7 The Impossibility of Strategic Mastery
Reading: Tolstoy, last third.
- 3/14 SPRING BREAK
- 3/21 Malaya and Vietnam
Reading: Nagl, all.
- Meet with Instructor Individually to Discuss Research Paper Topics.**

3/28 Henry Kissinger and the Cold War

Reading: Suri, all.

Primary and Secondary Source Bibliography for Research Paper due.

4/1 and 4/2 **GRAND STRATEGY RETREAT – 2 day commitment**

4/4 Grand Strategy Retreat Debriefing:

What did we learn?

4/11 The Iraq War

Reading: Mansoor, all.

4/18 Research Paper Week

Draft of Research Paper Due in Class

4/25 The Afghanistan War

Reading: Jones, all.

5/2 Counterinsurgency Lessons

Reading: US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual, all.

Final Research Papers due: Monday, May 9 at Noon.

Bring them to Professor Suri's office: 5119 Humanities Building.

I will not accept late papers!