

# POS 364: National Security

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*“Wars spring from unseen and generally insignificant causes, the first outbreak being often but an explosion of anger.”*

*-Thucydides*

## Course Description

**Goal of the course:** Welcome to National Security! My name is Dr. Charles G. Ripley, an award-winning professor at Arizona State University. The goal presented here is to familiarize students with national security topics and data science. It eases students into the actual research of national security. This will help students obtain jobs not only in national security, but a broad spectrum of industries as well.

It is important to note that national security is an exciting area of study, particularly since the research has experienced a titanic shift since the attacks on nine-eleven, and again when the Trump Administration changed the focus away from non-state actors (terrorism) to the rise of emerging powers (Russia, China, Iran, and so on). With Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, we are forced to ask an even broader set of national security questions. What sets this course apart from others is that it will focus on not only U.S. national security challenges, but those of other states and non-state actors as well. It offers an expansive understanding of the world and will prove to be an exciting and compelling summer class!

**Catalog Description:** Theoretical and empirical assessment of U.S. national security policy in the post-cold war era.

## Learning Outcomes

This course fulfills the ASU **Social and Behavioral Sciences** General Studies requirement. Students completing a Social and Behavioral Sciences course will be able to:

1. Utilize behavioral or social science approaches, qualitative or quantitative, to examine aspects of human experiences or explain social or behavioral phenomena.
2. Describe the strengths and limitations of behavioral or social science methods in predicting or understanding human behavior.
3. Communicate coherent arguments using evidence drawn from qualitative or quantitative sources.

In addition, students will be able to:

1. Identify key national security issues including traditional state actors, non-state actors (insurgencies,

counter-insurgencies, etc.), and non-traditional threats (cybersecurity, biological weaponry, etc.)

2. Apply [the concepts noted in #1] to real-world events.
3. Explain national security issues of current events from a variety of global perspectives.
4. Explain national security issues from a broad spectrum of global perspectives, not just from a U.S. centric lens.

**Learning Objective:** By the end of this course, students will be familiar with all the theoretical issues surrounding national security and apply them to real-world events. Additionally, a goal of this course is to break from a United States-centric view of the world. Students will identify and describe national security perspectives from around the world!

**Online-course grace period:** In my online courses, I offer a twenty-four-hour grace period for all assignments. For example, since the discussion board is due on Thursdays and Sundays at midnight, you have until 11:59 pm the next day. The reason for such a grace period is attributable to the wide variety of geographic locations. Grace periods are already reflected in the Canvas due dates.

**Announcements:** All course updates and information will be sent out via announcements. You should receive these announcements in your email. However, you will be able to see all the announcements in the Announcement part of Canvas. This means they will be up throughout the course. One cannot say that she or he has never received a piece of information since perusing the announcements is the responsibility of the student. If a student asks a question that has been addressed in announcements, she or he will receive the polite reply, “Please see announcements.”

**Community Forum:** Community Forum attempts to replicate the in-class experience by creating a forum in which students can ask questions regarding the course. This is an open forum so others can benefit from instructor-student interactions. Students can also respond to the inquiries of other students! Please feel free to make your inquiries here!

## Assignments

**Assignments:** All assignments must be completed by their respective due dates. Late discussion board posts and quizzes are not accepted. You will use your extra credit points toward missing assignments, but they only cover roughly 8 points (see extra credit for more). The reason late discussion boards and quizzes are not accepted is twofold. First, the goal of the discussion boards is to ensure that students are keeping up with the material throughout the course. Additionally, they keep students prepared prior to quizzes and exams, instead of “cramming” at the last minute. Quizzes also ensure that students are keeping up with the material. But even more importantly, quiz lectures go up after the quiz is due. That means students can see the answers after the weekly due date. Quizzes are never open to see individual answers since then students who failed to take them can take them after the due date. One must watch the quiz lecture. Finally,

since they are lectures, any information can go on the quizzes.

All assignments will be checked for plagiarism through Turnitin. Plagiarism is a serious issue and any student caught plagiarizing will receive an automatic zero for the assignment. Please see the university's policies on plagiarism for more information. Moreover, although this is not an English class, writing skills do matter. They are important not only for this course, but almost any educational or vocational endeavor. Severe grammatical errors and poorly organized essays can obscure otherwise intelligent and insightful arguments. Therefore, I hope students use the course to enhance their writing abilities. I will be available to assist students with their writing and will post helpful literature on how we can improve. Students can also visit the university's Writing Center. I will be posting information on how students can take advantage of this service. The final paper must be typed in 12-point Times Roman font and double-spaced. Students are free to use either APA or Chicago styles of citation. Citation style, however, must be consistent throughout the paper. MLA style is less common in the social sciences.

***Course Discussion Boards:*** Course Discussion Boards are found in each module. Every week (beginning on a Monday and ending on a Sunday) the class will have a series of questions in the discussion forums. There are two a week. The first set of answers to these questions must be posted by Friday 11:59 pm each week; the second by Monday 11:59 pm of each week. The questions will relate to the week's readings, videos, and lectures. In order to receive full credit, answers cannot be a mere sentence. Most posts will require at least two well-developed sentences to address each question adequately. Therefore, although this is an online course, reading, preparedness, and participation are all requirements of the course. Do not worry about having the "correct" answer. In fact, there is often no correct answer; sometimes questions are subject to interpretations. However, since one of the principal goals of this course is to become familiar with the major theoretical approaches and understand how they relate to real world issues, posts must reflect an effort to read and analyze the literature prior to posting.

A mere sentence will not warrant points. Finally, discussion boards cannot be accepted late. But if a student does get the discussion board posted before a "0" is entered, she/he will earn the point. At the end of the semester, a number of students try to boost their grades through answering the discussion boards. However, this defies the purpose of the discussion boards (to be prepared with the readings) and, therefore, fails to garner points.

***Three-Minute Virtual Video Debates:*** In addition to the general course discussion-boards, students will choose one class debate in which they will participate in that specific debate. I have tried this activity in previous courses, and it has been extremely successful, even with those who are not accustomed to working online. This is a great opportunity to begin learning more about social media! The goal is to demonstrate not only knowledge of the subject, but also to develop the skills to present a clear, concise presentation. In fact, think of it as practice for a virtual job interview! Students must record the debates!

**Three-Minute Virtual Video Response:** You must also post a rebuttal to another student's debate. This will be the same format and three minutes. A student can choose any student from any debate. Be creative! Just be respectful! It is due within a few days after the debate was posted.

Please get your debates up on time—students experience stress at the end of the semester and completing assignments on or even prior to their due dates are important for time management, an area we all need to develop.

**Debate due dates:** The specific due dates for your first debate are in the sign-up discussion board (they always land on a Sunday). The rebuttal is more difficult to pin down since it depends on when the other student posts.

How should we go about this? The best way, first of all, is to make sure you have a YouTube account. You will need to video tape yourself via your laptop camera (unless you have other ways). After uploading the argument, you can copy and paste (embed) the link in the HTML part of the discussion board for your particular video argument. There is also a content area (Upload video to Canvas) with instructions on how to go through the process. You can also bypass YouTube and simply upload it on Canvas.

**Exams:** There is a midterm and final exam for the course. It will cover all the readings, videos, and lectures up through Week 3. The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions. Each question is worth one point, whereas in the weekly quizzes, each question is worth .5 points—so be prepared!

**Zoom Preparation:** Prior to the two exams, we will have a Zoom preparation. Students will participate and ask questions. This is also a great venue to get to know each other in an online course. I will post the meeting for those who cannot attend.

**Quizzes:** Every Weekend there will be a scheduled quiz. The quiz opens on Friday night and closes Tuesday night at 11:59 pm (this time includes the grace period). These quizzes, open all day, will be multiple-choice questions. They will draw upon the readings, lectures, and videos for the specific period. The goal of the quizzes is not to reduce points but encourage students to keep up with the readings and reward those who do. Remember, students cannot retake quizzes or take quizzes once the quiz lecture is up. Students will be able to see the answers, so this is not negotiable.

**Final paper:** Since this is a survey course on national security, the final paper entails a wide range of choices depending on the interest of the particular student. Students must choose a particular national security issue upon which she or he will research. The overall goal of the paper is the following: 1) Capture a summary of the principle issue; 2) advance a thoughtful analysis of the issue; 3) relate the subject matter to the course; 4) incorporate at least five different sources you have found on your own in order to advance a substantial and thoughtful analysis; and 5) address a specific policy conundrum related to national security, intelligence, and/or terrorism. For example, one issue may deal with how the vast intelligence bureaucracy

has hindered information sharing and how this has decreased U.S. national security. However, one would also have to address this problem and try to solve it. This assignment, therefore, is to prepare you for future university research and to think of policy analysis and solutions. The final paper must be uploaded on Canvas at the end of the course. It must be six pages in length (just make sure to hit that sixth page), not including the reference list.

In addition to writing a paper for a decent course grade, try developing your paper to further your studies and help your career. If you are interested in, say, studying international law, write a paper on international law and national security. If you are interested in working with women in post-conflict areas, think of a suitable paper. The paper can address any issue. Think of using your paper as a sample for a job, internship, and/or graduate or law school. In a nutshell, do not develop a paper for just the class, but possibly something for long-term use. You can also speak about your paper in an interview! If you seek an internship at the US Department of State (or have interests in that area), you would be able to say U.S. diplomacy is such a passion for me that I addressed the issue in a term paper. Make this paper useful for the future!

Please follow the structure on the syllabus: 12 Times New Roman font, double-spaced, and default margins (do not squish the margins to get more space!). Remember that graphs, pictures, table of contents, reference list, glossary, short abstracts (an abstract is not a requirement in the paper) do not count as page space. Only writing counts toward that space. The subject is completely open to your own interests.

**Final Paper Rubric:** When developing your paper, think of the five-paragraph-theme rubric, only longer. The first paragraph is the introduction, the middle paragraphs are the meat of the essay, and the last few paragraphs focus on a conclusion. For this paper, your conclusion should not just recap what was written, but advance policy options related to your subject.

Finally, do not plagiarize. I am not accusing anyone of this, but it is worth stressing that Turnitin catches plagiarism rather quickly. The end of the semester is a busy time so resist any temptation. I also will not be addressing any emails about problems uploading papers late (I get so many). The end of the semester witnesses a large number of computer crashes, sicknesses, houses blowing up, abuelas and babushkas dying, and so much more. I felt compelled to warn AARP about the semester's end. The elderly is particularly vulnerable! Just take the few points less and accept it. That is why we have extra credit woven into the grade scale.

***Extra credit:*** There are roughly 15 extra points. The extra credit points compensate for any grade issues that arise in the course (missed quiz, late assignment, etc.). The fifteen extra credit points are woven into the course points. Students do not have to do anything for five of the extra credit points. Since there are 100 points, students have the ability to earn at least 115 points.

## **Grading**

***Grades:*** Grades are based on a 100-point scale. This means your grades are not based on the Canvas percentage. To understand your grade, please compare your points with the grade scale.

The assignments are graded as follows (please remember that small changes will occur. For instance, there may be 17 discussion board points and only 23 quiz points):

Discussion forums and participation:	20 points
Virtual debate:	10 points
Rebuttal debate:	10 points
Midterm exam: (First three weeks)	20 points
Final exam: (Last weeks)	15 points
Quizzes:	25 points
Final paper:	10 points
Total	110 points

The grading scale is as follows (university policy does not allow C-, D+, or D-):

100: A+	75-79: B-
95-99: A	70-74: C+
90-94: A-	65-69: C
85-89: B+	60-64: D
80-84: B	0-59: E

## Literature: No book to purchase!

***Books, Readings, and lectures:*** This course employs a wide range of materials and activities including articles, book chapters, documentaries, lectures, videos, and textbooks that address current and past trends in national security.

The following book can be found free in our online ASU library in an earlier edition:

Meese, Nielson, et al. 2018. American National Security. Seventh edition (Paperback). Johns Hopkins University Press. ISBN-13: 978-1421426778/ISBN-10: 1421426773

Posted articles and book chapters on Canvas

**Course Schedule (readings and themes are subject to changes with ample notice due to the topical subject matter of national security—just take the war between Ukraine and Russia! There will also be many exciting on-the-ground lectures as well as more conventional ones)**

**If there are any issues with the syllabus or Canvas, please contact me first. All readings, lectures, and videos are organized in the course Modules. The discussion boards will guide your reading and viewing of course materials.**