

SS457: GRAND STRATEGY
United States Military Academy
Department of Social Sciences
Spring 2019 (AY 19-2)
Location and Hours: MHB4, H2

CONTACT INFORMATION

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I encourage all students to make use of additional instruction (AI) and to contact me frequently by email with any questions or concerns about the course. These are valuable ways to clarify confusing concepts, ask questions about readings, or receive feedback on classroom performance. It is also often easiest to reply to longer or more detailed questions in person.

OVERVIEW

To say that a state has a “grand strategy” is to claim that its leaders pursue large-scale political objectives within the broader world, and that they mobilize, coordinate and deploy a range of their state’s resources in ways that should logically lead to the goals they seek. States and statesmen, from the ancient polities of Greece and Rome to the great powers of the modern era, have found grand strategy both alluring and elusive. Successful grand strategies have propelled states to greatness, while failure has relegated governments to the dustbin of history. Despite the challenges and complexities inherent to the development and execution of a successful grand strategy, most scholars studying this topic acknowledge that there is no substitute for acting and thinking strategically if there are large-scale political interests to defend and advance. This seminar takes up this challenge by exploring the central elements of grand strategy, in both theory and practice through history.

Block I begins by wrestling with core conceptual issues: How is grand strategy defined? What is the relationship between ends and means? Where does grand strategy come from? How do the international system, domestic political processes, and individual leaders contribute to the development of grand strategy?

Block II explores the concept of power, how different elements of national power—military, economic, political, technological—could be used as grand strategic tools, and the risks and tradeoffs associated with prioritizing one element of national power over others. It also examines several great strategic thinkers, like Carl von Clausewitz, Sun Tzu and B. H. Liddle Hart, who wrestled with big strategic questions in their own time period.

Block III examines the development and the execution, the successes and the failures, of the grand strategies pursued by some of the key great powers through history: from Athens and Sparta in the ancient Greek world to the European and Asian powers of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, as well as the United States after World War II. It also considers strategies of asymmetry pursued by insurgent and terrorist groups.

Block IV assesses contemporary challenges for making and implementing grand strategy, from the “unipolar moment” after the Cold War, to asymmetric challenges from terrorists and non-state groups, to the potential return of great power competition. It covers important debates, from the perspectives of those who encourage continued global activism and those who champion some form of retrenchment in how America engages the rest of the world.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through their studies in SS457, each cadet will:

- (1) Develop a framework for defining, identifying, and critically assessing the formation and execution of grand strategies across history.
- (2) Further develop his/her ability to understand and articulate the logic behind theoretical arguments, as well as the application of theory to explain historical examples.
- (3) Learn how to infer policy prescriptions from theoretical arguments and assess the conditions under which academic theories provide better or worse recommendations for policymaking.
- (4) Further develop his/her critical reading, research, writing, and communication skills.
- (5) Acquire an academic foundation to pursue further, complementary coursework as part of the Grand Strategy Minor.

REQUIREMENTS

This course adopts the standard SOSH department grading scale, ranging from A+ to F. Grades will be based on the following:

Participation	100 points
Cadet seminar leadership	50 points
Analysis Paper #1 (Due 8 FEB)	150 points
Analysis Paper #2 (Due 1 APR)	200 points
Simulation Background Paper (Due 11 APR)	150 points
Simulation Participation (two options)	150 points
TEE	200 points
TOTAL	1,000 points

Participation

This course is taught in a seminar style. Therefore, participation is critical to facilitate active learning. Grand strategy is a complex, rigorous, and often divisive field of study and each lesson will provide ample opportunity for debate and discussion. Students are expected to come to class having read and critically engaged with the assigned reading, and ready to express their reasoned thoughts and opinions during class. Students will be evaluated on the quality (not necessarily quantity) of their participation.

Cadet Seminar Leadership

Each cadet will choose one class for which they will serve as the principal discussion leader. This means that the cadet will begin the lesson with a brief overview of the readings and the themes to focus on for the day (4-5 minutes). The presentation should not be a lengthy summary, but rather a brief statement of their arguments, purpose, and how they fit together. In addition, the cadet seminar leader will provide discussion questions to guide the day's lesson. The goal of seminar leadership is for you to give your classmates interesting approaches to the readings that they may not have thought of; you want to get our conversation started and ensure the class has relevant things to think about and introducing the class to your own ideas. Students will be evaluated based on the quality of the leadership, to include the accuracy of their summary, the relevance and difficulty level of their questions/ideas, and the frequency with which they are able to guide/respond to points raised throughout the lesson.

Analysis Papers 1 & 2.

These are medium-length papers that ask students to think critically and evaluate different arguments and readings we have discussed in class. Additional information about these papers will be provided closer to the due dates. You will need to use both readings from class and some outside sources to succeed on these papers, though the emphasis of each paper should be on your own critical analysis of ideas and readings we have tackled in class; outside research should be used as evidence to bolster your own argument when necessary, rather than as the primary goal of the papers.

Simulation Assignments

There is no better way to learn than through practice! To facilitate this, we will run one of the Council on Foreign Relations' National Security Council simulation at the end of the course. More information on the simulation and the assignment will be provided later in the semester. All cadets must submit the simulation background paper, which will require them to research their assigned role and prepare arguments for the simulation in advance. All cadets must also participate in the simulation itself. However, you will have the option to either base all your participation points on the quality and frequency of your participation during the simulation, OR

to divide those 150 points evenly between your participation and a short “AAR” paper evaluating what you learned from the simulation.

TEE

The TEE for this class will be open note: you may use any handwritten notes that you take during class or while doing the readings.

POLICIES

Absences

You must notify both the instructor and the section marcher prior to any planned absence. All graded assignments are due at the assigned time regardless of absences or other duties and activities, unless you arrange otherwise with the instructor beforehand. It is particularly important to inform me of an absence well in advance if that absence falls on your assigned leadership day.

Documentation of Sources

All sources used in SS457 must be properly acknowledged and cited IAW DAW, including assistance, notes, and study guides written by someone other than you. Remember that any idea that is not yours and not common knowledge (not just direct quotes) must be cited through footnotes and a work cited page. This is good scholarly practice: scholarship and research are about having a conversation. Citations allow readers to know what ideas you are engaging with and where they should look if they want more information about something. Do not hesitate to ask the instructor for guidance if you have any questions about whether something needs to be cited or how to cite it correctly. This class uses Chicago style footnotes as the method of citation.

Common knowledge, for the purpose of this course, includes in-class discussion, lectures, or conversations/information provided by the instructor—unless the instructor is citing a source used in class. In other words, analysis and discussion during class or with the instructor do not need to be cited. Summaries of ideas from readings do need to be cited. You are expected to cite relevant readings in assignments; do not just rely on class notes. When in doubt, ask the instructor.

Multiple Submission of Academic Work

You may not submit your own work—whether in part or in whole---that has been submitted for credit in this course or any other course. Any submission of prior work—even your own—may be considered plagiarism. However, I welcome efforts to build on ideas you have developed in other classes, and I strongly encourage you to meet with the instructor to discuss how you can successfully submit new work that builds on previous work, if you are interested.

Late Assignments

The penalty for late submissions is 10 percentage points per 24-hour period after the due date. You must notify your instructor in advance if you are submitting work late. Extensions will not be granted without a verified medical profile or emergency pass that justifies late submission. You must complete all graded assignments, late or not, to receive credit for this course.

Regrade Policy

Consistent with Department of Social Sciences policy, you have the right to request a regrade on any assignment worth at least 20% of your overall course grade. To request a regrade, you must 1) Review instructor feedback and your notes, then wait 24 hours after receiving your grade; 2) Within one week, meet with your instructor to discuss the basis of your disagreement; 3) If you still believe a regrade is warranted, submit a brief memo explaining the basis of your disagreement to the instructor within 48 hours of the meeting. The instructor will then ask two disinterested international affairs instructors to regrade the assignment. The final grade will be an average of all three grades. In other words, your grade may go up or down. Note that penalties for late submission are not subject to revision through the regrade process.

Technology

Research consistently shows that the use of technology—including typed notes—is detrimental to learning. However, due to the nature of this course's readings—which are available through blackboard—I will allow the use of laptops and tablets in class. These may only be used to access readings, and only when we are discussing readings. If your laptop can be oriented as a tablet to lie flat on your desk, you must use it that way. Notes should still be taken by hand. If I suspect that cadets are using technology for more than just readings, I reserve the right to ban all technology in the classroom.

LESSON SCHEDULE

BLOCK I: FOUNDATIONS

1) 10 JAN: **Introduction: The Study of World Politics and Thinking about Grand Strategy**

- E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1964), chapter 1. (8)
- John Lewis Gaddis, *On Grand Strategy* (New York: Penguin Press), chapter 1. (27)

2) 14 JAN: **What is Grand Strategy?**

- Nina Silove, “Beyond the Buzzword: The Three Meanings of Grand Strategy,” *Security Studies* 27 (2018), pp. 27-52 (Up to “Conceptual Frameworks”). (25)
- Hal Brands, *What Good is Grand Strategy? Power and Purpose in American Statecraft from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), pp. 1-15. (15)

3) 18 JAN: **How Do States Choose Grand Strategies?**

- Richard Rosecrance and Arthur A. Stein, *Beyond Realism: the Study of Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993): pp. 3-21. (19)

4) 23 JAN: **Does the US have a Grand Strategy?**

- Micah Zenko and Rebecca Friedman Lissner, “Trump is Going to Regret Not Having a Grand Strategy,” *Foreign Policy*, January 13, 2017. Available at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/01/13/trump-is-going-to-regret-not-having-a-grand-strategy/#>. (8)
- Colin Kahl and Hal Brands, “Trump’s Grand Strategic Train Wreck,” *Foreign Policy*, January 31, 2017. Available at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/01/31/trumps-grand-strategic-train-wreck/#>. (14)
- National Security Strategy of the United States, December 2017 (Choose only **one** of the four pillars). (16+)

5) 25 JAN: **Does China have a Grand Strategy? Guest Speaker: Dr. Sulmaan Khan**

- Sulmaan Wasif Khan, *Haunted by Chaos: China’s Grand Strategy from Mao Zedong to Xi Jinping* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), chapter 5. (26 pages)

6) 29 JAN: **What Difference Does Individual Leadership Make?**

- Elizabeth Saunders, *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), chapter 1. (19)

7) 31 JAN: **Critiquing Grand Strategy**

- David Edelstein and Ronald Krebs, “Delusions of Grand Strategy: The Problem with Washington’s Planning Obsession,” *Foreign Affairs* 94 (2015): 109-116. (8)
- Paul Miller, “On Strategy, Grand and Mundane,” *Orbis* 60 (2016), 237-247. (11)
- Ionut Popescu, “Trump Doesn’t Need a Grand Strategy: Why Planning is Overrated,” *Foreign Affairs*, May 21, 2018. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2018-05-21/trump-doesnt-need-grand-strategy>. (4)

BLOCK II: THE INSTRUMENTS OF GRAND STRATEGY

8) 5 FEB: What is Power?

- Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *The Future of Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), chapter 1. (22)

9) 7 FEB: Military Force and Grand Strategy

- Robert J. Art, “To What Ends Military Power?” *International Security* 4:4 (1980), pp. 3-35. (33)

10) 11 FEB: Carl von Clausewitz *On War*.

- Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds.. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), Book I, ch. 1-3, 7; Book VIII, ch. 6B. (42)

11) 15 FEB: An Alternative View on the Role of Force: Sun Tzu and Liddell Hart

- Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, Roger Ames, trans., (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993), Chapters 1-4. (28)
- B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1954), pp. 333-336, 366-372. (11)

12) 20 FEB: Diplomacy and Grand Strategy

- Henry Kissinger, “Foreign Policy as Geopolitics: Nixon’s Triangular Diplomacy,” in *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), Chapter 28. (30)

13) 22 FEB: The Economic Dimensions of Grand Strategy

- Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis*, pp.106-120. (15)
- Lars S. Skalnes, “Grand Strategy and Foreign Economic Policy: British Grand Strategy in the 1930s,” *World Politics* 50 (1998), pp. 582-596. (15)

BLOCK III: LEARNING FROM HISTORY: THE EXECUTION OF GRAND STRATEGY

14) 26 FEB: **The Peloponnesian War (Beginnings)**

- Robert B. Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998), pp. 16-49, 65-69, 79-85. (47)

15) 28 FEB: **The Peloponnesian War (Ending and Outcomes)**

- Strassler, *Landmark Thucydides*, pp. 361-390, 395-423, 549-554. (64)

16) 5 MAR: **Grand Strategy of Ancient Rome**

- Kimberly Kagan, “Redefining Roman Grand Strategy,” *The Journal of Military History* 70 (2006), 333-362. (30)

17) 7 MAR: **The Grand Strategy of a Continental Great Power: France under Louis XIV**

- John A. Lynn, “The Grand Strategy of the *Grand Siècle*: Learning from the wars of Louis XIV,” In *The Shaping of Grand Strategy: Policy, Diplomacy, and War*, eds. Williamson Murray, Richard Hart Sinnreich, and James Lacey (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 34-62. (29)

18) 19 MAR: **The Grand Strategy of a Continental Great Power: Germany under Bismarck**

- Scott A. Silverstone, *From Hitler’s Germany to Saddam’s Iraq: the Enduring False Promise of Preventive War* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, forthcoming 2018), chapter 4. (54)

19) 21 MAR: **Maritime Empire: British Grand Strategy**

- Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York: Random House, 1987), pp. 143–158. (16)
- John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), chap. 1. (18)

20) 25 MAR: **Japanese Grand Strategy**

- S. C. M. Paine, *The Japanese Empire: Grand Strategy from the Meiji Restoration to the Pacific War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), chapter 1. (11)
- Peter Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, “Japan’s National Security: Structures, Norms, and Policies,” *International Security* 17 (1993), 84-118. (34)

21) 28 MAR: **COURSE DROP FOR READING**

22) 1 APR: **Grand Strategy and Alliances during War**

- John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2005), pp. 310-321, 336-347. (20)

23) 5 APR: **American Grand Strategy after WWII**

- National Security Council Memorandum 68 [NSC 68], April 1950. Excerpts.

BLOCK IV: CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

24) 9 APR: **Asymmetric Conflict and Grand Strategy I**

- Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare* (University of Illinois Press, 2000), “What is Guerrilla Warfare?” “The Political Problems of Guerrilla Warfare,” and “The Strategy of Guerrilla Resistance Against Japan.” (40)
- Field Manual 3-24, “Counterinsurgency,” (2006), ch.1, pages 1-19 to 1-29. (11)

25) 11 APR: **Asymmetric Conflict and Grand Strategy II (Guest Lecture: TBD)**

- TBD

26) 15 APR: **Cyber Warfare and Grand Strategy**

- Valentin Weber, “Linking cyber strategy with grand strategy: the case of the United States,” *Journal of Cyber Policy* 3 (2018): 236-257. (22)

27) 19 APR: **Russian Grand Strategy in the 21st Century**

- Robert Person, “Russia’s Grand Strategy in the 21st Century.” (20)
- Thomas E. Graham, “The Sources of Russian Conduct,” *The National Interest*, August 24, 2016. Available at <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-sources-russian-conduct-17462>. (14)

28) 23 APR: **The National Security Council: Making and Implementing Strategy Today**

- David Rothkopf, “Inside the Committee that Runs the World,” *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2005). (10)

29) 25 APR: **NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SIMULATION**

- Review your simulation instruction and background materials

30) 30 APR: **Simulation Wrap up and Looking Ahead for the United States**

- Rebecca Friedman Lissner and Mira Rapp-Hooper, “The Liberal Order is More than a Myth,” *Foreign Affairs*, July 31, 2018. (4)
- Stephen G. Brooks et al, “Lean Forward: In Defense of American Engagement,” *Foreign Affairs* 92 (2013), 130-142. (13)
- Campbell Craig et al, “Debating American Engagement: The Future of U.S. Grand Strategy,” *International Security* 38 (2013): 181-199. (19)