

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

IGA-211/GOV 1796
CENTRAL CHALLENGES OF AMERICAN NATIONAL SECURITY, STRATEGY,
AND THE PRESS

GRAHAM ALLISON, DAVID E. SANGER, & DEREK REVERON

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SYLLABUS – FALL 2016

Description:

From ISIS and terrorist attacks in the US to the rise of China and Putin's provocations in Europe, this course examines the central challenges to American national security. Through a series of mini cases, students address these issues as if they were professionals on the National Security Council working for the President. In response to specific assignments, students write Strategic Options Memos that require analyzing the challenge, assessing the current strategy, and identifying alternative strategies for protecting and advancing national interests.

Assignments require strategic thinking: analyzing dynamics of issues and developing strategies. In the real world of Washington today, this means thinking clearly about what the US is attempting to achieve in the world in the midst of a swirl of a government whose deliberations are often discombobulated by leaks and press reports. A sub-theme of the course explores ways in which pervasive press coverage intrudes, for example in decision making in cases that include WikiLeaks, cyber attacks, and the National Security Agency affair.

The course will meet *once* a week for two class sessions (three consecutive hours with a break in the middle). One of the two sessions each week will focus on a specific, real-world case that crystallizes one of the central challenges. The second session will provide an opportunity to consider additional central challenges, as well as host occasional guests.

Participants must come to class prepared to discuss the readings (approx. 150 pages per week) and will submit a one-page outline of a strategic options memo for each case. In responding to one of the cases, a full strategic options memo (three pages long) will be required. The final exam will be take-home and will require submitting a strategic options memo plus answering questions that cover the readings.

Time: Monday, 4:15pm-7:00pm

Location: Land Hall (HKS)

Learning Objectives: To enhance participants' ability to: (1) analyze issues in international affairs from a "policy perspective;" (2) think strategically about feasible interventions; (3) communicate analyses of issues in Strategic Options Memos and Outlines; (4) operate within current national security policymaking processes surrounded by an intrusive, inquiring press; and (5) appreciate the complexities of communicating national security policies to multiple audiences.

Expectations: A graduate-level professional course (open to a limited number of undergraduates): attendance at scheduled classes (unless excused in advance for special reasons); completion of assignments on time; reading of all assigned materials in advance of class; readiness to respond to cold calls.

Eligibility: Limited enrollment. Course enrollment will follow procedures established by HKS and FAS. Graduate students from MIT and Fletcher, HKS National Security Fellows, and other fellows are welcome for credit or audit (space permitting). For instructions for cross-registration and auditing, visit: <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/degrees/registrar/instructions-for-cross-registration-and-auditing>. Applications/Student Information Forms will be handed out at Shopping Day on August 29th. If you are unable to attend Shopping Day please see Graham's Faculty Assistant, Andrea Heller, for a form.

Reading: Students are required to complete approximately 150 pages of assigned readings each week, including handouts. Required readings will be on the Canvas Page.

Participants are also required to read at least one major newspaper daily: the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, or the *Financial Times*. Additional relevant articles will be posted on the Course Page.

Required Books:

Throughout the course of the semester, participants will read significant portions of the books listed below. They will be available on the course page and on reserve at the HKS Library. For those who want to purchase them, they are available at the COOP or through electronic download.

- Allison, Graham. *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe*. Holt/Times Books, 2004.
- Reveron, Derek. *Exporting Security: International Engagement, Security Cooperation, and the Changing Face of the US Military*. Second Edition. Georgetown University Press, 2016.
- Sanger, David. *Confront and Conceal: Obama's Secret Wars and Surprising Use of American Power*. Crown, 2012.
- The New York Times. *Open Secrets: WikiLeaks, War and American Diplomacy*. Grove Press, 2011.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Assignments: All assignments must be uploaded to the Course Page in order to receive full credit. Students are required to upload their assignment by **3:30pm** on the day it is due. Additionally, students must hand in a hard copy of their assignment at the beginning of class. Failure to do so will result in an incomplete grade. All assignments must follow the formatting guidelines distributed in class. Examples of Outlines and Strategic Options Memos are posted on the course page.

Collaboration Policy for Students Enrolled for Credit: Each student is expected to turn in a memo/outline representing his/her *original* work. In preparing memos/outlines, students are encouraged to discuss the case and debate potential policy ideas with fellow students, CAs, and/or other peers. The purpose of this is to facilitate active learning from each other and to generate creative strategies. However, students may not spell out details of their individual hierarchy of interests or disclose their preferred policy options to other students in the class. *Each student must hand in an individual memo/outline based on their own analysis in their own words* — not on the summary of a group’s best judgment. Sharing notes is not permitted. In your memo/outline, you do not need to cite ideas that come from the assigned readings, but you must cite any outside sources used. Collaboration is NOT permitted on the take home final exam.

Collaboration Policy for Auditors: Auditors may work in small groups (2-4 students) on assignments. Turn in one memo/outline with all students' ID numbers in the "From" line. Citation policy is the same as that for enrolled students.

Citation Policy: Students are expected to comply with the rules described in the Kennedy School of Government Academic Code. In particular, students should note that: “In all policy memos, you must put any words that are not your own between quotation marks.” While citation is not required for ideas coming from the assigned readings, *direct quotation from any source must use quotation marks*.

Grades:

- Class participation: 15%
- Outlines: 15%
- Strategic Options Memo: 15%
- Mini-case assignment: 15%
- Final take-home exam: 40%

Office Hours:

Professor Allison’s office hours will generally be held on Thursdays from 5:00-6:00pm. An office hours sign-up sheet will be posted outside Professor Allison’s office (L368) on Monday mornings.

David Sanger’s office hours will generally be Monday afternoon or Tuesday morning. He will announce his office hours ahead of his visits.

Derek Reveron’s office hours will be by appointment, Mondays, 3:00-4:00pm.

Course Assistants will also schedule weekly office hours. Check the Canvas Page for updates. Aroop Mukharji (Teaching Fellow) will hold weekly, non-mandatory review sections on Wednesdays from 4:10-5:05pm and 5:05-6:00pm in L140. **There will be an additional review section on Friday, September 9th from 8:45-10:00am in L130 because of the extra class on September 7th.** The review section will facilitate substantive discussion of topics covered in lectures and will provide supplementary instruction on crafting Strategic Options Memos/Outlines.

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Course Schedule –Fall 2016

- M Aug 29** Shopping Day: Introduction
- M Sept 5** Holiday – No class
- W Sept 7** **Extra Class:** Overview: Central challenges, strategic options memos, and the press. Meeting the China Challenge: Can the US and China escape Thucydides Trap? (*This class will be held 4:15-6:00pm in L140, not Land Hall.*)
- M Sept 12** Obama’s Afghanistan, JFK’s Cuba, killing OBL, and Syria: American national interests, strategy, and conceptual frameworks
- M Sept 19** Iran’s geopolitical ambitions and the Middle East
- M Sept 26** NSA, Snowden, WikiLeaks and the press
- M Oct 3** US foreign policy and security deficits: Weak and failing states, pandemic diseases, trans-national narcotic trafficking, piracy, and vulnerable information systems
- M Oct 10** Holiday – No Class
- M Oct 17** North America, Mexico, and homeland defense/security
- M Oct 24** The ISIS/Islamic terrorist challenge: Syria, Iraq, and beyond
- M Oct 31** Global nuclear order/disorder, Pakistan, North Korea, and ?
- PART I: Mini-case presentations
- M Nov 7** Secrecy, privacy, national security, and the press
- PART II: Mini-case presentations
- M Nov 14** Defense/national security budgeting
- Part III: Mini-case presentations
- M Nov 21** Interstate Rivalry and Cyber Security
- M Nov 28** Conclusion: The next president’s biggest national security challenges

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Case Schedule – Fall 2016**

<u>Case</u>	<u>Distributed</u>	<u>Due</u>
(1) China	September 7	September 12
(2) Iran	September 12	September 19
(3) WikiLeaks	September 19	September 26
(4) North America and Homeland Defense	October 3	October 17
(5) ISIS	October 17	October 24
(6) Interstate Rivalry and Cyber Security	November 14	November 21