INR 6136: Seminar in American Security Policy
Professor: Stephen Sloan
Fall, 2011
Tuesday: 6:00-8:50PM
Room Number: BA 207
Office Hours: 4:00-5:00 Tuesday

Course Description

This course will introduce the student to the study of national security with a focus on the United States. The class however will place that focus in the broader context of comparative, regional and international affairs.

The course does not assume prior knowledge in the field. It does however require with the guide of the instructor, the development of areas of specialization for each of the students. The class while providing an overview of security studies as they particularly related to the United States will not address all the topics associated with national security. The students, however, are expected to acquire of overview through their reading of one of the assigned texts, US National Security. Sections of the text will be assigned and specifically addressed in the lectures and discussions.

While there are many subjects associated with national security, after providing a broad scope to the study the course will focus on the changing nature of warfare, conflict and violence as they particularly relate top US National Security requirements related to policies, processes and politics. Consequently the students will use the other assigned text, Security Studies: A Reader – particularly as a resource throughout the class. In addition the instructor will assign selected chapters for classroom discussion.

Course Objectives

To introduce the student the study of national security.
To address changes and continuity in the international arena

To focus on US national security – requirements, processes and policies with an emphasis on the changing nature of warfare conflict and violence

To identify and discuss future changes in national and international security

Course Requirements

Each student will be required to engage in an extensive research paper that will culminate in periodic progress reports, a final oral report and a paper handed in the class session before final week. Given the nature of the assignment the paper will be the result of the on going work throughout the semester and not a last minute effort to meet the deadline.

In addition, depending on circumstances, a simulation of a foreign policy crisis involving US national security may be conducted.

The grade will primarily be based on the final paper, however the oral reports, and meaningful participation in the class as well as the proposed simulation will be included in the grade.

Since the class meets only once a week there will only be one excused absence. An unexcused absence will result in a five-point reduction in grade. Paper due in class last class session 29 November.

Course Outline (Subject to Change based on the Dynamics in the Class)

Defining national security

Elements of national security

United States national security requirements

The international arena – continuity and change

Understanding warfare, conflict and violence with an emphasis on the changing nature of warfare

The spectrum of conflict with a focus on what has variously been called "asymmetric warfare," "low intensity conflict." "Insurgency, "operations other than warfare, " and other terms.

A focus on terrorism

Cyber warfare

The role of intelligence

The role of diplomacy

National security –process and policy

President, congress, the public and external actors.

The future face of national and international security

Texts

Thomas G. Mahnken and Joseph A. Maiolo (eds), Strategic Studies: A Reader, New York: Routledge: 2008. (paperback)

Sam C. Sarkesian, John Allen Williams and Stephen J Cimbala, US National Security: Policymakers, Processes and Politics, Fourth Edition, Boulder: Rienner, 2008. (paperback)

It is strongly suggested that the student read the following newspapers: New York Times, Washington Post and the periodical The Economist.

Other assignment readings will be made in class.

Internet Usage

The Internet can be very selectively used for sources. It is important that you provide a full citation and can justify the use of Internet material (Is the author, material and organization credible? Please see the instructor if you have any questions about the source.)