American Security Policy
INR 4114 [0001]
University of Central Florida
Fall 2025
Instructor Jeff Dambly

Course Description and Objectives

American Security Policy examines the issues in current United States national security policy, both foreign and domestic, while also diving into relevant considerations such as organizational bureaucracy and history. This is an in-person course. The course material is organized into themed modules that will guide our discussions. University Course Catalog Description: Study of the evolution of American security policy since World War II, including consideration of the social and political costs involved and means of control.

Please read this syllabus carefully. When you've finished reading this syllabus, you can start with the "Syllabus Quiz" on Webcourses. You must score 5/5 on the Syllabus Quiz by Friday, August 22, 2025.

The goal of this course is to introduce you to current issues facing U.S. policymakers from a variety of angles. By the end of this course, I expect you will have a better appreciation for the complexity of issues facing elected officials and personnel within governmental bureaucracies and why they act the way they do. We will look at security policy considerations both foreign and domestic. We will also look at these issues from the perspective of various stakeholders and parse out why those distinctions matter.

The objectives of this class include the following:

- Understand the complex security threats facing U.S. officials
- Understand political processes and structures
- Understand how security decisions are made and reasoned
- Understand legal authorities and limitations for security policies
- Apply analytical reasoning to complex hypothetical security problems
- Engage in discussion and deliberation of security issues
- Improve writing, critical thinking, and creative thinking skills
- Build collaboration skills and practice professional work habits
- Prepare you for graduate school or the professional world

Required Text & Assignments

We have one assigned text for this class that you need to procure, which is *The National Security Enterprise: Navigating the Labrynth* (2nd Ed.). It is edited by Roger Z. George and Harvey Rishikof. It should be available at the bookstore, and you can also get it through Amazon or other online retailers. I chose this book for a couple of reasons. First, I think you'll see that we will emphasize the people in the national security process quite heavily through the semester, and this book parallels that focus. The book provides useful history and background knowledge through characterizing structures and processes. Second, it's reasonably priced. Even though a new copy should only cost around $40, the book is now a few years old and so you should also be able to find a used copy for a little less if you're interested. You are also welcome to purchase the Kindle version if you prefer.

We have a second text from which we will frequently rely on for reading assignments, and that is the *Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited by Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and John A. Cloud, from Oxford University Press. This is available in its entirety through the UCF Library, and I will provide assigned readings in PDF format in Webcourses. If you want to review the book at your leisure, you may find it at the following link, though you will need to get access through your library account: https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190680015.001.0001.

I will also assign other materials such as journal and magazine articles. I do expect that the time dedicated to reviewing and absorbing course material on a weekly basis will be substantial. You will find all course materials on Webcourses either via link or download.

Be mindful that weekly assigned readings vary in length, so some weeks will have heavier reading assignments compared to others. On occasion, you may also find additional *recommended* reading posted in Webcourses. As the name suggests, these are not required but may be interesting or helpful. If there are issues we don't discuss enough for your liking, or that you want to pursue more in depth for your own purposes, I'm always happy to point you in the direction of other relevant reading materials.

Prerequisites: ENC 1102 (Freshman Composition II), POS 2041 (American National Government), or consent of the instructor.

Class Format & How You Will Be Evaluated

This is an entirely in-person course. Class meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 9:30am. I break down the syllabus into modules. Since we have a MWF class schedule, I'll try to break down discussion topics for specific days. However, it is your responsibility to stay up to date on where we are, as the schedule will likely change over time. I reserve the right to amend the syllabus as I deem necessary. Moreover, I want to emphasize the importance of class discussions; the assigned readings are meant to provide a baseline of relevant information. We'll draw out the "why" through in-class discussions. Lectures will also cover materials and issues that aren't in assigned readings (to save you from needing to spend *more* time prepping each week). Finally, you'll note below that participation matters towards your final grade. Thus, you should not expect to skip class and succeed in this course.

Grading - your final grade will be a composite of four major factors:

1) **Participation** (20% of your grade)

- Students are expected to attend each class and should be prepared to participate in class discussions, engage in debates, and work collaboratively with their peers. Evidence to the contrary (absences, lack of participation in discussions, lack of preparedness, or lack of effectively supporting classmates) can significantly harm your participation score.

2) **Written Assignments** (35% of grade)

- Students should expect to respond to a written prompt at the end of each module, which is about every other week. Prompts will be released on Monday morning, and written responses will be due the following Sunday at 11:59pm. Students should be prepared to speak to their response the next week in class discussions as part of a module wrap up.

- Students will be graded based on writing style as discussed in class. My aim is to help guide you in a style appropriate for effective and persuasive analytical arguments.

- Students will be limited to a closed universe of citations and references based on course materials.

3) **Midterm** (20% of grade)

- For your "midterm," you will be provided a question rooted in course materials and asked to provide analysis based only on those materials. This will be an in-class exam.

4) **Final Project** (25% of grade)

- Students will be expected to identify an area of proposed reform or significant concern in the field of national security. The final product will include a written paper and in-class presentation. Project topics must be approved by the instructor in advance, and topics must be related to in-class discussions or assigned reading materials.

- Final project scores will also include providing feedback to peers during their presentations.

Student Expectations

a) Course Behavior

Very simply, every student should be prepared and engaged each class. If you are not engaged, it may affect your grade. Your participation and engagement may well be the deciding factor if your overall grade is on the fence to the next-highest grade range (up or down).

Be sure to understand this next point: this course will engage in discussions

meant to provoke thoughtful conversation on potentially controversial policy topics. I also include an array of viewpoints in reading materials so that we can critique and debate in class. All viewpoints are to be respected in an academic discussion. In expressing arguments and analysis, please be considerate and mindful of your classmates; please also have the same consideration when listening to the viewpoints of your fellow classmates, regardless of if they are consistent with your political or ideological leanings. I anticipate (and, indeed, expect) engaging, vigorous, and professional discussions. I also expect reasoned, measured, and (again) professional discussions. Those who act contrary to these expectations may lose the right to participate in class discussions and earn the associated course points.

b) Absences, Late Work, and Incomplete Grades

Make-ups for assignments, to include the midterm, or the final exam will only be allowed for official University activities or personal emergencies. Written documentation is required. Make-up assessments may be different. See UCF Policy 4.401. and UCF Regulation 5.020.

Excused absences include documented illnesses, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Considerations will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete.

c) Academic Honesty

Course assignments are designed to have educational value; the process of preparing for and completing these exercises will help improve your

knowledge. Just as importantly, these efforts will improve the skills necessary to succeed in the future. Material presented to satisfy course requirements is therefore expected to be the result of your own original scholarly efforts.

Cheating, plagiarism, or any dishonesty in your work is not tolerated at this university. Please refer to your student handbook for more information about UCF's academic honor system and reach out to me if any part of the code is unclear.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is governed on an assignment-by-assignment basis. For each assignment, you must carefully review the instructions to determine whether AI-generated content is permitted. In some cases, you may be permitted (though not required) to use GenAI. When using GenAI, you must disclose specifically where and how it was used in the process of completing the assignment. Unless explicitly allowed, all components of your work must be fully prepared by you. Any attempt to represent GenAI output inappropriately as your own work will be treated as plagiarism. Ultimately, students are responsible for the accuracy and veracity of submitted work whether AI-generated or not. There is significant value in many AI tools, but when authorized they should at most supplement, not replace, your own efforts, to include creative and critical thinking skills.

Each student is honor-bound to submit only their own work under their name or signature, to fully acknowledge their use of any information, ideas, or other matter belonging to someone else, to properly document the source in question, and to offer for credit only that work which they have completed without assistance. If thoughts are not your own, cite appropriately! I am comfortable with either APA or Bluebook (the legal standard) citation formats. I reserve the right to use Turnitin.com or other sources to check for plagiarism or dishonesty.

I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

The Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) defines academic integrity as a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action. http://academicintegrity.org/

UCF Creed: Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

Integrity: I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.

Scholarship: I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.

Community: I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.

Creativity: I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.

Excellence: I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

d) Technology

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording classroom activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance, and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these

requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct as described in the Golden Rule.

Outside of your assigned textbook, course materials are available through Webcourses. Students must have the ability to view videos, write, and upload assignments. Students should have access to high-speed internet and updated software. Mobile devices may be used to view course content or upload assignments as determined by the instructor. Please work early so that if you have any problems, you can receive any needed help prior to assignment due dates and times. Technology will not be an excuse for missing deadlines.

e) Unauthorized Use of Class Materials

There are many fraudulent websites claiming to offer study aids to students but are cheat sites. They encourage students to upload course materials, such as test questions, individual assignments, and examples of graded material. Such materials are the intellectual property of instructors, the university, or publishers and may not be distributed without prior authorization. Students who engage in such activity are in violation of academic conduct standards and may face penalties.

f) Emergency Procedures

Students are encouraged to be aware of their surroundings and familiar with actions to take in various types of emergencies. To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to <https://my.ucf.edu> and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."

Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructor outside of class.

g) Title IX

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu and http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/.

For more information on diversity and inclusion, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – OIE – http://oie.ucf.edu/ & askanadvocate@ucf.edu
- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services
- Diversity and Inclusion Training and Events
- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office & complianceandethics@ucf.edu
- Ombuds Office

h) Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

i) Financial Aid Requirement

All faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please ***complete the Evidence of Academic Engagement Quiz by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course***. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Office Hours and Professor Contact

Office hours will be Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from 11am-12pm, in my office on the third floor of Howard Phillips Hall (305A). More generally, I will always make my best effort to be available for questions. You may email me at jeffrey.dambly@ucf.edu at any time. I am almost always connected to email, so please don't hesitate to follow up if I do not respond quickly. At the most, you should expect a response no later than 1 business day. If designated office hours are problematic, we can also schedule time to meet in office or virtually on Zoom that's convenient for you.

Grading Scale

A	100-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
F	Below 60

Course Accessibility Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need specific access in this course, such as accommodations, should contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss various access options. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created

and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable.

Accommodations for Active-Duty Military Students

If you are a deployed active-duty military student and feel that you may need a special accommodation due to that unique status, please contact the instructor to discuss your circumstances.

Course Breakdown – Subjects and Reading Assignments

These readings are subject to change. In fact, they likely will change as the semester evolves. Please coordinate with your classmates and instructor if you have any questions about upcoming assignments

Module 1: Defining the US Role in the World
Aug. 18 - 29

Topics Covered:

Monday, August 18: syllabus review and course introduction
Wednesday: August 20: actors and authorities: Congress and the Executive
Friday, August 22: actors and authorities: the bureaucrats

Monday, August 25: strategic vision in an international threat space
Wednesday: August 27: strategic vision within the United States
Friday, August 29: interagency process challenges

Reading Assignment:

- Introductory article: Beevor, A. (2025, May 7). We are still fighting World War II. Foreign Affairs. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/world/world-war-ii-antony-beevor-geopolitics.
- The National Security Enterprise, Chapters 2, 13
- The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security, Chapters 1-3, 5-7, 9

Module 2: International Diplomacy
Sept. 1 – 12

Topics Covered:

Monday, Sept. 1: no class (Labor Day)
Wednesday, Sept. 3: bandwagoning and counterbalancing
Friday, Sept. 5: the nature of American diplomacy post-World War II

Monday, Sept. 8: State Department challenges

Wednesday, Sept. 10: diplomatic limitations in the 21st century
Friday, Sept. 12: diplomatic goals moving forward

Reading Assignment:

- Mitchell, W.A. (2025). The return of great-power diplomacy. *Foreign Affairs* 104(3).
- Walt, S.M. (1987). Explaining alliance formation. In *The origins of alliances*. Cornell University Press.
- The National Security Enterprise, Chapter 4
- The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security, Chapters 11, 12, 19

- Recommended Reading: The National Security Enterprise, Chapter 5
- Recommended Reading: The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security, Chapters 30, 32
- Recommended Reading: Keohane, R.O., & Nye, Jr., J.S. (2025). The end of the long American century: Trump and the sources of U.S. power. *Foreign Affairs* 104(4).
- Recommended Reading: Dispensable nation: America in a post-American world. *Foreign Affairs* 104(4).

Module 3: Military Involvement
Sept. 15-26

Topics Covered:

Monday, Sept. 15: growth of the 800-pound gorilla
Wednesday, Sept. 17: strategy and responding to evolving threats
Friday, Sept. 19: logistics of being a superpower

Monday, Sept. 22: interventions and state sovereignty
Wednesday, Sept. 24: case discussion: Iran
Friday, Sept. 26: case discussion: Libya

Reading Assignment:

- Freedman, L.D. (2025). The age of forever wars. *Foreign Affairs*, 104(3).
- The National Security Enterprise, Chapters 6 and 7
- The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security, Chapters 15-17

Module 4: Intelligence & National Security
Sept. 29 – Oct. 8

Topics Covered:

Monday, Sept. 29: structural overview, strategic warning and other forms of intelligence
Wednesday, Oct. 1: the role of intelligence – active participants or suppliers of information?
Friday, Oct. 3: the specificity of intelligence and communicating with leaders

Monday, Oct.6 : politicization and other issues with intelligence
Wednesday, Oct. 8: state and local homeland security & law enforcement intelligence

Reading Assignment:

- National Security Enterprise, Chapters 9 & 10
- The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security, Chapter 8
- Amy B. Zegart, ''An Empirical Analysis of Failed Intelligence Reform Before 9/11,'' *Political Science Quarterly* 121 (Spring 2006)
- Richard K. Betts, ''Analysis, War, and Decision: Why Intelligence Failures are Inevitable,'' *World Politics* 31 (October 1978): 61–89.
- Erik J. Dahl (2010) Missing the Wake-up Call: Why Intelligence Failures Rarely Inspire Improved Performance, *Intelligence and National Security*, 25:6, 778-799, DOI: 10.1080/02684527.2010.537876
- Robert Dover (2020) SOCMINT: a shifting balance of opportunity, *Intelligence and National Security*, 35:2, 216-232.

Midterm: October 10th (in-class)

Module 5: Counterterrorism Security Policy at Home and Abroad
Oct. 13 – Oct. 24

Topics Covered:

Monday, Oct. 13: overview of the law of armed conflict
Wednesday, Oct. 15: war vs. policing models of counterterrorism
Friday, Oct. 17: post-9/11 FISA

Monday, Oct. 20: homeland security overview
Wednesday, Oct. 22: state and locals in homeland security
Friday, Oct. 24: privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties issues

Reading Assignment:
- The National Security Enterprise, Chapters 11 & 12
- The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security, Chapters 18, 26, 28

Module 6: Emerging Tools and Threats
Oct. 26 – Nov. 7

Topics Covered:

Monday, Oct. 27: encryption wars
Wednesday, Oct. 29: cyber warfare in international conflicts
Friday, Oct. 31: towards a cohesive cybersecurity response plan?

Monday, Nov. 3: drones and new vehicles for threats
Wednesday, Nov. 5: critical infrastructure and counterintelligence
Friday, Nov. 7: space and National Security

Reading Assignment:
- The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security, Chapters 21-23

Module 7: Where Do We Go from Here?
Nov. 10 - 14

Topics Covered:

Monday, Nov. 10: national security and austerity
Wednesday, Nov. 12: confronting international rivals (group exercise)
Friday, Nov. 14: what's next?

Reading Assignment:

- The National Security Enterprise, Chapter 1, Conclusion
- The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security, Chapter 8, 14, 29, 34

Presentations
Nov. 17 - 21

Topics Covered:

Monday, Nov. 17: presentations
Wednesday, Nov. 19: presentations
Friday, Nov. 21: presentations