INR 7332 - SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF SECURITY

Section: 0001

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Fall 2025
Class Meeting Days: M
Class Meeting Time: 01:00PM - 03:50PM
Class Meeting Location: HPH O305G
Modality: P
Credit Hours: 3.00

Instructor Information

Name: Nikola Mirilovic
Title: Associate Professor
Office Location: 311 D Howard Phillips Hall
Office Hours
Tuesdays 1:30-2:30 PM, Wednesdays 12:30-2:30 PM (or by appointment).
Phone: n/a
Email: Nikola.Mirilovic@ucf.edu

Office Hours

Time: Tuesdays 1:30-2:30 PM, Wednesdays 12:30-2:30 PM (or by appointment).

Location: 311 D Howard Phillips Hall

Course Description

INR 7332 COS-POLS 3(3,0)Scientific Study of Security: PR: Admission to Security Studies Ph.D. or C.I. Principles of research design and evaluation of studies on domestic and international security; preparation of an empirical research paper. Fall.

This class centers on students developing and completing a security studies empirical research paper ready for submission to a high quality peer reviewed journal. The process involves completing three drafts of the paper and presenting the paper in class three times. Students will work on improving their research design and data analysis skills, their presentation skills, and their knowledge of the relevant literature. Class discussion and participation centers on students formally presenting their work and discussing their colleagues' work.

Student Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Improve their writing, presentation, analytical and research skills.
- Complete a security studies research paper ready for submission to a high quality peer reviewed journal.

Required Course Materials and Resources

No required book

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

The final grade will be based on class participation, three drafts of the research paper, and a short statement. Research paper: the first draft will count for 5% of the final grade; the second draft will count for 26% of the final grade; the final draft will count for 38% of the final grade. The short statement will count for 1% of the final grade. Participation will count for 30% of the final grade.

Students will complete an original empirical research paper (9,000 word maximum) on a security issue. The research paper should be based on an empirical analysis of publicly available data: research projects that involve e.g., fieldwork, conducting research interviews, and/or constructing an original survey, are beyond the scope of this class. The research paper should include a

research question, key hypotheses, an explanation of the relevant causal logic, a discussion of alternative arguments and a literature review, and a discussion of key findings and of the research method and the data used in testing the hypotheses. The research paper will be an original work that the student produced for this class.

The first draft of the research paper should include a completed research design, including key hypotheses and causal logic, alternative arguments, literature review, and a discussion of how the argument will be tested (i.e., which dataset will be used and/or which cases will be examined in detail). The grade for the first draft will be based on whether the draft was submitted on time and presented. The second draft will be a completed research paper which includes an improved version of the research design above as well as the completed testing and discussion of empirical results. The third draft of the research paper will include an improved version of the above: a paper that is overall ready for submission to a quality peer reviewed journal.

Participation is an important component of a seminar and it is particularly important in this class as it involves a number of presentations where students formally present their research to their colleagues. Students should regularly participate in class discussions: active participation is expected in every class. Quality of participation is also important: quality questions and comments are stated clearly, informed by the class readings (student papers and articles), and offer insightful and original arguments. Students should carefully read the work of their colleagues and the other assigned readings. They should be prepared to identify, explain and critique arguments from the readings and offer constructive feedback to their colleagues.

The students will upload each draft of the paper to Webcourses twice: under Discussions (so that their colleagues can download and read it) and under Assignments.

The students will write a short statement (up to 300 words) on how their research interests and plans have changed as a result of completing the research paper in this class.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	84-86%
B-	80-83%
C+	77-79%
C	74-76%
C-	70-73%
D+	67-69%
D	64-66%
D-	61-63%

Letter Grade	Percentage
F	0-60%

Policies for Course Grade

Missed/Late Assignments: The penalty for submitting a paper (or the short statement) late is 10 points (one letter grade) for each calendar day of lateness (i.e., an A paper submitted a day late will receive a grade of B; if submitted two days late it will receive a grade of C, etc.).

Attendance: attendance and active participation is expected in every class

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is prohibited. Use of GenAI tools via website, app, or any other access, is not permitted in this class. All components of assignments in this course must be independently and originally completed by the student. Representing work created by GenAI as your own will be treated as plagiarism.

Disability Access & Accommodations

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing equal access to all students with disabilities (ADHD, learning disabilities, Autism, chronic medical conditions, physical disabilities, etc.). To receive consideration for reasonable disability-related course accommodations, disabled students must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and complete the steps required for SAS to review accommodation requests. More information can be found on the UCF Student Accessibility Services website under the Start Here tab or by contacting SAS directly (Ferrell Commons 185; sas@ucf.edu; Phone - 407-823-2371).

Approved accommodations are shared with course instructors via the SAS Course Accessibility Letter. Implementing certain accommodations may require discussion about specific considerations of the course design, course learning objectives, and the individual academic and course challenges experienced by the student. While students

with disabilities or chronic health needs are also encouraged to discuss any course concerns with professors in addition to contacting SAS, professors are not required to facilitate disability-related adjustments to the course unless the professor has received a Course Accessibility Letter from SAS that outlines approved accommodations.

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Code of Conduct at Student Conduct and Integrity Office. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

a. Academic misconduct is defined as any submitted work or behavior that obstructs the instructor of record's ability to accurately assess the student's understanding or completion of the course materials or degree requirements (e.g., assignment, quiz, and/or exam). Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to: plagiarism, unauthorized assistance to complete an academic exercise; unauthorized communication with others during an examination, course assignment, or project; falsifying or misrepresenting academic work; providing misleading information to create a personal advantage to complete course/degree requirements; or multiple submission(s) of academic work without permission of the instructor of record.

b. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.

c. Commercial Use of Academic Material. Selling of course material to another person and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the University and the instructor of record. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, the instructor of record's slide deck, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, and handouts.

d. Soliciting assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements. The solicitation of assistance with an assignment, lab, quiz, test, paper, etc., without authorization of the instructor of record or designee is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to asking for answers to a quiz, trading answers, or offering to pay another to complete an assignment. It is considered Academic Misconduct to solicit assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements, even if the solicitation did not yield actual assistance (for example, if there was no response to the solicitation).

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, *The Golden Rule*. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and respond to academic misconduct when necessary. Penalties for violating rules, policies, and instructions within this course can range from a zero on the exercise to an "F" letter grade in the course. In addition, an

Academic Misconduct report could be filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, which could lead to disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, or deferred suspension or separation from the University through suspension, dismissal, or expulsion with the addition of a “Z” designation on one’s transcript.

Being found in violation of academic conduct standards could result in a student having to disclose such behavior on a graduate school application, being removed from a leadership position within a student organization, the recipient of scholarships, participation in University activities such as study abroad, internships, etc.

Let’s avoid all of this by demonstrating values of honesty, trust, and integrity. No grade is worth compromising your integrity and moving your moral compass. Stay true to doing the right thing: take the zero, not a shortcut.

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 Let's Be Clear and UCF Cares.

For more information on access and community engagement, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF’s complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – ONAC – Office of Nondiscrimination & Accommodations Compliance & askanadvocate@ucf.edu
- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – Student Accessibility Services & sas@ucf.edu
- Access and Community Engagement (including the Ginsberg Center for Inclusion and Community Engagement, Military and Veteran Student Success, and HSI Initiatives)
- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – Compliance, Ethics, and Risk Office & complianceandethics@ucf.edu
- The Ombuds Office is a safe place to discuss concerns.

Deployed Active-Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Reporting an Incident or Issue

If you believe you have experienced discrimination by any faculty or staff member, contact the Office of Nondiscrimination & Accommodations Compliance via the ONAC website or at 407-823-1336. You can also choose to report using the UCF Integrity Line either anonymously or as yourself at 1-855-877-6049 or by using the online form. UCF cares about you and takes every report seriously. For more information see the Reporting an Incident or Issue Webpage.

Campus Safety

At UCF Public Safety and Police, safety is the top priority. Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise, it's important to be familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In an emergency, always dial 911.
- Every UCF classroom has an **Emergency Procedure Guide** posted on a wall near the door, which will show you how to respond to a variety of situations. This guide can also be found online here.
- In the event of an active threat, remember **AVOID, DENY, DEFEND**. Choose the best course of action and act immediately. Watch the video here to learn more.
    - **AVOID**. Pay attention to your surroundings and have an exit plan. Get as much distance and as many barriers between you and the threat as quickly as possible.
    - **DENY.** When avoiding is difficult or impossible, deny the threat access to you and your space. Lockdown by creating barriers, turning the lights off and remaining quiet and out of sight. Make sure your cell phone is silenced, but do not turn it off.
    - **DEFEND.** When you are unable to put distance between yourself and the threat, be prepared to protect yourself. Commit to your actions, be aggressive and do not fight fairly. Do whatever it takes to survive.
- For emergencies on campus, UCF will utilize the UCF Alert system. All UCF students, faculty and staff are automatically enrolled to receive these email and text alerts, however, it's a good idea to frequently ensure your contact information is up to date.

Financial Aid Accountability

All instructors/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 this activity 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.

Required Readings

Required readings include articles listed under “course schedule” below. Students should use their online UCF Library access to download all of those readings at the beginning of the class. Furthermore, the student presenting a paper will upload that paper about a week before the presentation (please see specific deadlines on Webcourses) for their classmates to read.

Class Schedule

Week	Topic
1	**Introductory Session**
2	Articles: Ross, Michael L. 2004. “How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases.” *International Organization* 58(1): 35-67. Weeks, Jessica L. 2012. “Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict.” *American Political Science Review* (106)2: 326-347.
3	**no class (Labor Day)** **September 2** 11:59 PM: paper 1st draft due – students A, B, C
4	Presentations A1, B1, C1 Paper 1st draft due (9/9, 11:59 PM): students C, D, E
5	Presentations: D1, E1, F1 Paper 1st draft due (9/16, 11:59 PM): students F, G, H
6	Presentations: G1, H1, I1 Paper 2nd draft due (9/23, 11:59 PM): students A, B
7	Presentations A2, B2 Paper 2nd draft due (9/30, 11:59 PM): students C, D
8	Presentations C2, D2 Paper 2nd draft due (10/7, 11:59 PM): students E, F
9	Presentations E2, F2 Paper 2nd draft due (10/14, 11:59 PM): students G, H
10	Presentations G2, H2 Paper 2nd draft due student I; 3rd draft due: Student A (10/21, 11:59 PM)

Week	Topic
11	Presentation I2, A3 Paper 3rd draft due (10/28, 11:59 PM): students B & C
12	Presentations B3, C3 Paper 3rd draft due (11/4, 11:59 PM): students D & E
13	Presentations D3, E3 Paper 3rd draft due (11/11, 11:59 PM): students F & G
14	Presentations F3, G3 Paper 3rd draft due (11/18, 11:59 PM): students H & I
15	Presentations H3, I3
16	**December 1**, 11:59 PM: Short statement due (upload on Webcourses).

Turnitin.com

In this course we will utilize turnitin.com, an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit assignments through the Canvas Assignment Tool in electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as an instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process, visit weblink.

University Writing Center

University Writing Center
Trevor Colbourn Hall 109
Satellite Locations: Main Library, Rosen Library, Online
407-823-2197

UWC website

The University Writing Center (UWC) offers writing support to students from first-year to graduate in every discipline. Tutors provide help at every stage of the writing process, including understanding assignments, researching, drafting, revising, incorporating sources, and learning to proofread and edit. The UWC's purpose is not merely to fix or

edit papers, but to teach writing strategies that can be applied to any writing situation. Consultations are available for individuals and small groups. You may schedule a 45-minute appointment by clicking the *Success Resources* tab on Webcourses, calling the UWC at 407-823-2197, or through the UWC website.

The UWC seeks graduate and undergraduate tutors from all majors. To learn more about becoming a writing tutor, please contact us.

Unauthorized Use of Websites and Internet Resources

There are many websites claiming to offer study aids to students, but in using such websites, students could find themselves in violation of academic conduct guidelines. These websites include (but are not limited to) Quizlet, Course Hero, Chegg Study, and Clutch Prep. UCF does not endorse the use of these products in an unethical manner, which could lead to a violation of our University's Rules of Conduct. 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 could be found in violation of academic conduct standards and could face course and/or University penalties. Please let me know if you are uncertain about the use of a website so I can determine its legitimacy.

In-Class Recording Statement

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.

Course Correspondence

All correspondence with the instructor will be via Webcourses. I will usually respond to your message within 48 hours on business days.

Syllabus disclaimer

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion if necessary.