

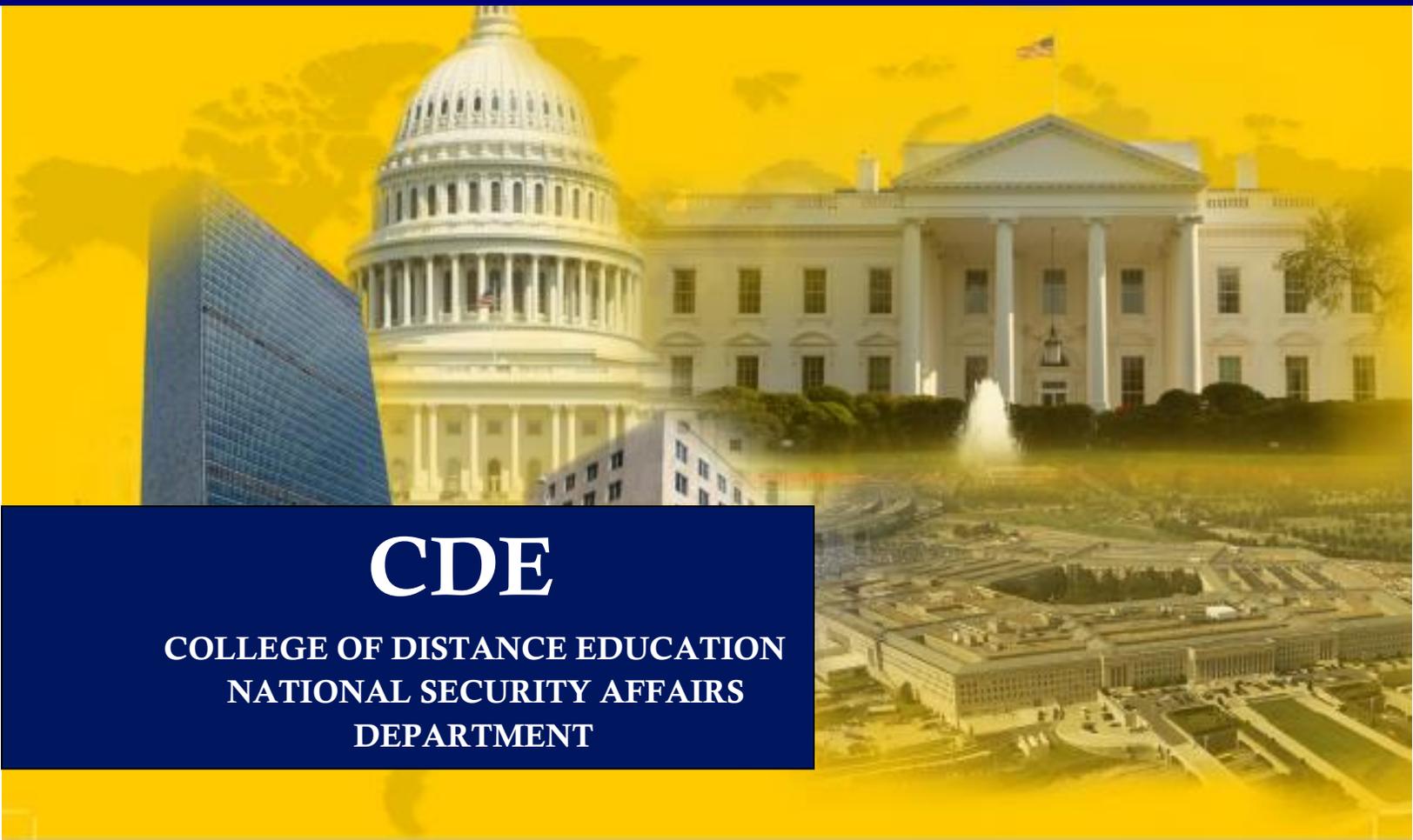


U.S. NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
----- *Est. 1884* -----  
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

## Fleet Seminar Program

# THEATER SECURITY DECISION MAKING

Academic Year 2025-2026 Syllabus



**CDE**

COLLEGE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION  
NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS  
DEPARTMENT

**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE**  
**COLLEGE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**  
**NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT**  
**LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS (LPA) COURSE**  
**AND**  
**THEATER SECURITY DECISION MAKING (TSDM) COURSE**  
**SYLLABUS AND STUDY GUIDE**

**Foreword**

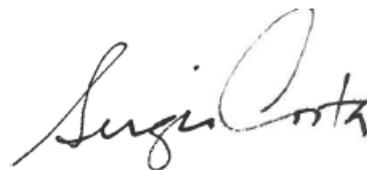
This syllabus contains both an overview and detailed description of the Leadership in the Profession of Arms course of study, and the Theater Security Decision Making course of study. Prepared for the College of Naval Command and Staff for use in the Fleet Seminar Program of the College of Distance Education, this syllabus provides detailed session-by-session guidance, assignments, and study guide material for weekly class preparation.

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# LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS (LPA) COURSE

AND

# THEATER SECURITY DECISION MAKING (TSDM) COURSE

## SYLLABUS AND STUDY GUIDE

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**1. Course Overview.** The courses prepared and presented by the National Security Affairs department for the Fleet Seminar Program are divided into two separate and distinct courses of study over the 34 weeks of this term. The first course is called *Leadership in the Profession of Arms* (LPA) and will comprise the first four weeks. The second course is called *Theater Security Decision Making* (TSDM) and will comprise the final 30 weeks. Although separate courses of study, both LPA and TSDM will be taught by the same professor over a contiguous 34-week period. However, students will earn a separate grade for both LPA and TSDM. This introduction to LPA and TSDM will outline the content and expectations of each of these courses as well as the student deliverables and intended course outcomes.

**a. *Leadership in the Profession of Arms (LPA).*** LPA is rooted in the premise that the profession of arms is maintained by leaders who build trust and confidence with the American people they serve. The degree of trust and confidence they foster is based on the combination of the leader's competence and character. As the global security environment continues to evolve, so must those who lead in it. By continuously developing themselves and their people, leaders in the profession of arms are better prepared for increasingly complex future roles. The LPA sessions enable students to focus on themselves as leaders by reflecting on past performance and identifying potential growth areas. Students are given the time, space, tools, guidance, and encouragement to do the hard work. Through reflection and understanding, students can develop new competencies, strengthen their character, and enhance their ability to lead in complex environments.

**b. *Theater Security Decision Making (TSDM).*** TSDM is the second course of study and is designed to engage intermediate-level military officers and U.S. Government civilians with the challenges and complexities that occur in the rapidly evolving national and international security environments. The curriculum covers a diverse array of national, regional, and global security issues, giving particular emphasis in three fundamental areas: 1) An understanding of the challenges and opportunities that exist within the contemporary security environment in which U.S. national security professionals operate—with specific focus on the U.S. combatant commands; 2) an understanding of the myriad actors (domestic and international, government and non-government) that seek to influence the U.S. national security policy making process, an appreciation for the actions and motives such actors may levy to influence policy decisions, and the level of sway such actors/actions may have on U.S. national security policy; and 3) informed through an understanding of the security environment and an appreciation for the myriad actors and influences driving U.S. national security policy, the course will examine and hone the skills necessary for students to effectively research, assess, and develop a theater-level security strategy that advances U.S. interests.

**2. Course Intent (LPA and TSDM).** The goal of the LPA and TSDM courses is to provide an educational experience that combines conceptual rigor and professional relevance to prepare students to be more effective participants in the national security enterprise's decision making environment. This may be as part of a major national security organization such as a combatant command or Service staff or when in command. The intended outcome of this graduate-level course is to foster Joint warfighting skills, regional awareness, strategic perspectives, critical thinking, and analytic rigor. These skills are needed by national security professionals who will be working in a complex staff environment or when in command. The goal is to help develop skilled Joint warfighters who can develop and execute national- and theater-level military strategies that effectively employ the armed forces in concert with other instruments of national power to achieve the goals of national security strategy and policy in the air, land, maritime, cyber, and space physical domains.

**3. Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP).** The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction, CJCSI 1800.01G (dated 15 April 2024), sets the policies, procedures, outcomes, and responsibilities for both officer Professional Military Education (PME) and JPME. The instruction directs the Services and Service schools to comply with the Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP) by meeting the Joint Learning Areas (JLAs) which are broad categories of Joint knowledge to inform the JPME curricula and meet the requirements for Joint officer education. The education continuum for JMPE-1 outlined in the OPMEP is intended to prepare mid-career officers to conduct operations and campaigns in Service-specific and Joint constructs and to be fully capable of serving as leaders and staff officers at the operational level of war. This syllabus will list the LPA and TSDM Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) for each individual session. In addition, the syllabus will also list the Naval War College's Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that are supported by that session.

**4. Learning Outcomes.** The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) has directed that JPME maintain a current and relevant curriculum that provides graduates with the knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary to perform successfully across a competition continuum comprising armed conflict, competition below armed conflict, and cooperation in both traditional and irregular warfare contexts. The CJCS further directed that this be adopted through an outcomes-based military education (OBME) approach in its development, delivery, and assessment. Given this, "outcomes" will be an integral part of JPME and the LPA and TSDM curricula. The desired outcomes for the LPA and TSDM courses are referred to as Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and are listed below. The LPA and TSDM CLOs directly complement and support the Naval War College's Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for JPME-I. The Naval War College's PLOs are the same for all modalities of JPME-I, resident, the Fleet Seminar Program, the Naval Command and Staff Online Program, and NWC-at-NPS.

**a. LPA and TSDM Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs).** The CLOs for LPA and TSDM are the key concepts, skills, or competencies that a student should be able to articulate, demonstrate, or utilize—theoretically or pragmatically—after completion of the session(s) relevant to a particular CLO. Each CLO will be assessed for student mastery at various stages of the curriculum. Student mastery of each CLOs must be achieved in order to successfully complete LPA and TSDM. The syllabus page for each of the LPA and TSDM sessions will identify the relevant CLO(s) covered by that session as well as when and how the CLO(s) will

be assessed. CLO-1 (below) outlines the learning outcomes required for the LPA course while CLOs 2-4 outline the outcomes required for the TSDM course.

- CLO-1** Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional. (LPA focus)
- CLO-2** Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies. (IS focus)
- CLO-3** Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security. (FPA focus)
- CLO-4** Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests. (SDX focus)

**b. NWC Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs).** The Naval War College's PLOs were approved by the President, Naval War College and the Joint Staff J-7 for all NWC JPME I modalities, (resident, Fleet Seminar Program, NC&S Online Program, and NWC-at-NPS). The Naval War College JPME-I PLOs are achieved only after a student has successfully completed all assessments in LPA, TSDM, JMO, and S&W. The PLO most relevant to LPA will be PLO-3 while the PLO most relevant to TSDM will be PLO-2. The NWC's JPME-I PLOs are as follows:

- PLO-1** Demonstrate joint planning and joint warfighting ability in military operations and campaigns across the continuum of competition. (JMO focus)
- PLO-2** Create theater and national military strategies designed for contemporary security environments. (TSDM focus)
- PLO-3** Apply the organizational and ethical concepts integral to the profession of arms to decision making. (LPA focus)
- PLO-4** Apply theory, doctrine, and seapower through critical, structured thought in professional, written communication. (S&W and JMO focus)

## **5. Course Approach.**

**a. LPA Course Approach.** The LPA course will examine the foundations of the profession of arms, which is understood jointly in the larger context of the national security enterprise. LPA asks students to examine and develop the foundations of the profession of arms beyond their own communities. Students will gain an appreciation for the complex environment they will encounter in more senior roles, and the imperative that their thinking needs to evolve as they lead at the operational level of war and beyond. Students should see themselves in the

context of the profession of arms, exercising sound moral judgment guided by professional ethics, norms, and laws.

**b. TSDM Course Approach.** TSDM is focused at the theater-strategic level where students intensively study various regions of the world and analyze how U.S. foreign policy decisions impact theater security. The course follows the logic of analyzing national security through two distinct lenses: *International Security (IS)*, providing the international strategic context with a strong regional focus on USINDOPACOM, and *Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA)* focusing on U.S. national and organizational decision making environments. At the end of TSDM, course concepts will be synthesized via a *Strategy Development Exercise*, referred to as the SDX. Students will research, develop, and deliver an executive-level group presentation that identifies U.S. national interests, offers a strategic estimate of the Indo-Pacific region over the next eight years, outlines of a theater strategy, and identifies the capabilities required to advance the strategy.

*1) International Security (IS).* The United States, its allies, and partners face an increasingly complex and interconnected global security environment marked by the growing specter of great power competition and conflict, while collective, transnational threats to all nations and actors compete for attention and finite resources. The IS portion of the TSDM course allows students to gain a holistic understanding of this dynamic environment, and how the U.S. aims to synchronize and coordinate all instruments of national power to achieve national security objectives in support of U.S. national interests.

The IS sessions also examine the international system and the role of the U.S. within that system. In doing so it creates a solid foundation for the other two areas of emphasis which in turn examine the U.S. policy making process and the challenges inherent with developing effective theater strategy.

When it comes to national security challenges, as mid-level national security practitioners it is critical to have a thorough and systematic understanding of the international security environment and the larger U.S. national strategic guidance that drives all Department of Defense (DoD) actions. This knowledge is essential to accurately frame a national security problem, comprehend the extant and future motivations, tensions, and opportunities in the international system, and craft options for senior leaders (e.g. combatant commanders) to exercise in pursuit of national interests.

The IS sessions achieve this through the sequential exploration of several relevant national security topics. Starting with examining America's place in the international system, the sessions explore international relations theory and grand strategy, U.S. national-level strategies (National Security Strategy (NSS), National Defense Strategy (NDS), National Military Strategy (NMS), and the Maritime Strategy), the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceanic Regions, the combatant commands and global integration, and future security challenges and opportunities. Throughout these sessions we'll offer a closer examination of the unique security challenges of the various combatant commands to include the role

of USSTRATCOM in strategic deterrence and the role and challenges associated with emerging domains of technology as viewed through USCYBERCOM and USSPACECOM lenses.

**2) Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA).** Whether it's the decision to send cluster munitions to the Ukrainian armed forces, deploy U.S. troops to Iraq, impose sanctions against Russia, invest in local production of microchip processors, fund a new military platform, or increase/decrease the defense budget, policy decisions don't just "happen." The FPA sessions seek to expose students to the complexities of the national security decision making environment, the processes that make it work (or not), and the myriad factors that influence policy decision-makers and their subsequent decisions.

Why? Because the idea that "theirs not to reason why / theirs but to do and die," fails to consider that while military officers (the majority of our students) don't make policy, the DoD does influence policy and understanding the *how* and *why* decisions are made and influenced is a critical element for the education of national security professionals who may find themselves in a position, either directly or indirectly, where they must navigate the complex policy making environment. As Colin Powell argued while speaking to students at the USNWC:

*...you need a better understanding of how politics works, of how public relations work, as to how you generate support for the armed forces of the United States... To make sure you understand the influences that are pressing on the Department and on your particular service. Because ultimately, we are answerable to the American people.*

In short, the FPA sessions help students gain a deeper and greater appreciation of the policy making environment so they are better equipped to "operate knowledgeably and professionally" within it.

The FPA sessions expose students to the study of FPA as an academic discipline and how it will help them develop an "analytical toolkit" for investigating the policy making process and resulting policy decisions. It will begin with a focus on the domestic policy making environment with specific attention given to the formal institutions responsible for national security policy making and execution (e.g., The Presidency, National Security Council, Interagency, Congress, etc.). It will also focus on other domestic "external" factors (e.g., public opinion, think tanks, the media, etc.) that can influence policy debates and decisions. FPA will also ask students to consider and reflect on international influencers on the policy making environment (e.g., individual states like China and Russia, non-state actors like the Islamic State (IS), and international institutions like the United Nations or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)) as well as the role that influences beyond territorial borders can play in shaping foreign policy decisions. The goal is to provide students with the skills needed to conduct a rigorous analysis of a complex national security decision, to

determine the key influences on policy, and the ability to articulate how and why they were influential.

Overall, the FPA sessions are designed to give students conversancy in the national security policy making process, the complexities and peculiarities of it, and their role in it as a national security professional.

**3) *Strategy Development Exercise (SDX)*.** The final weeks of TSDM will offer a synthesis of the IS and FPA sessions via the SDX. The SDX sessions will further hone the skills necessary to develop a theater-level security strategy outline with the objective being the ability to create a theater security strategy that focuses on the contemporary Indo-Pacific region—the course’s final summative assessment. This student deliverable will be achieved by introducing students to each of the assessment’s deliverables which will enable them to break the task of strategy development into smaller, focused, and achievable parts. Although the final deliverable of a theater security strategy is the evaluated portion of the SDX, the process of researching, analyzing, assessing, and deciding strategy that advances U.S. interests is an invaluable aspect of the process.

Another key aspect of the SDX is that it will allow students to balance all of the realities examined in LPA, IS, and FPA to develop a realistic theater security strategy outline based on advancing U.S. interests. The SDX process will enable students to analyze and assess the current security environment, determine a vision for what they would like the theater security environment to look like eight years into the future, and the decision-making process necessary to select an effective theater security strategy that balances risk, takes into account the realities of the domestic political system, considers the demands of global force management, and is able to achieve the desired objectives. The SDX will ultimately allow students to demonstrate proficiency in each of the concepts discussed throughout TSDM as well as the ability to come away with the desired course and program learning outcomes.

**6. Course Organization.** LPA and TSDM will run sequentially over a 34-week period with the same professor. Each week in LPA and TSDM there will be two distinct sessions. This is to separate specific topics from one another (e.g. the Presidency and Congress) so that they can be examined individually while still being introduced in the same week. Despite the number of sessions, the student preparation materials (readings, videos, etc.) for each week will be roughly equivalent to 125 pages of reading. An observant student will note that some sessions have a significant number of readings with respect to quantity. This is intentional so that students may be introduced to many different aspects and viewpoints of a complex topic. Despite the quantity of readings/videos, most of them will be very brief in length with the total page count equivalent remaining within those outlined above. Similarly, some of the preparation material may appear to be dated with respect to their published date or content. This is also intentional. A number readings explore enduring topics whose origins one must understand to effectively analyze the current security environment. For example, to appreciate the current NATO structure one must first understand and appreciate the history of the Cold War and the origins of NATO to ensure the

collective security of the West against the Soviet Union. LPA and TSDM will include the following major elements:

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1) NSA Introduction and Synthesis (seminars)             | 2 Sessions  |
| 2) Leadership in the Profession of Arms (LPA) (seminars) | 7 Sessions  |
| 3) International Security (IS) (seminars)                | 22 Sessions |
| 4) Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) (seminars)              | 22 Sessions |
| 5) Strategy Development Exercise (SDX) (capstone)        | 10 Sessions |

## 7. Course Requirements.

**a. Individual Student Responsibilities.** Students are expected to be fully prepared for each seminar session and to actively contribute positively to classroom discussions. An inquisitive attitude and the willingness by all students to engage constructively with peers and faculty are essential prerequisites for a successful graduate-level seminar experience. The “one-third” rule is the keystone of the seminar approach. The first third is a well-constructed, relevant curriculum. The second third is a highly qualified faculty to present the material and guide the discussion, and the final and most important third is the thorough preparation and active participation and contribution of individual students.

**b. Workload.** Every effort has been made to provide for a consistent reading and preparation workload from week-to-week throughout both LPA and TSDM courses. Both courses are graduate-level courses that as a general rule require approximately three (3) hours of student preparation for every one hour of class time. Accordingly, on balance over the course of each week, students should anticipate approximately nine (9) hours of preparation time each week to go along with the three hours in seminar. However, note that other student deliverables such as formative assessments (FAs) and Summative Assessments (SAs) in the form of written essays, exercises, and group presentations will be due throughout the course as well. Students should take careful note of the due dates for assignments as indicated below in order to plan far in advance for effective time and workload management.

**c. Student Preparation.** All student preparation materials (readings, videos, podcasts, etc.) must be completed prior to class since they serve as the basis for informed and lively seminar discussion. Student preparation is a fundamental requirement of the “Preparation and Contribution” grade students will earn in LPA and TSDM. The goal of the seminar is to discuss leadership and national security issues informed by the preparation materials, not necessarily a review of each. Some syllabus pages will identify “Supplemental Materials” which provide students optional readings that may offer more depth on topics covered in that week’s sessions. From time to time, Professors may also identify (optional) recommended readings to provide additional background knowledge directly relevant to course concepts or to provide more current insights into a seminar discussion.

**d. Study Guidance.** For each session in LPA and TSDM, the syllabus page identifies five distinct areas. Each week’s preparation should begin with a thorough review of the respective

syllabus pages paying particular attention to the Guidance Questions listed in Section C. The five areas of each syllabus page include:

- 1) Section A (Session Overview) offers a brief overview of that session and where it fits within the overall TSDM course.
- 2) Section B (Objectives) identifies the session objectives for that specific session, the relevant TSDM Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) for that session, and the relevant Naval War College Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for that session.
- 3) Section C (Guidance Questions) outlines specific questions for that session which should be used to thoroughly prepare for seminar discussion.
- 4) Section D (Student Preparation) materials, as mentioned above, are the required readings, videos, podcasts, etc., for that session. Supplemental materials may be offered for some sessions, but are optional.
- 5) Section E (Student Deliverables) identifies any student deliverables required by that session and the associated suspense date.

***e. Case Preparation.*** Case studies are frequently used in LPA and TSDM to provide intellectual stimulation, demonstrate application of course concepts, and to develop student abilities to analyze, synthesize, and solve complex problems using the knowledge and skills honed throughout the academic year. Students will be tasked with analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating the case study material. Those efforts must be completed prior to seminar sessions so that discussion can focus on more deeply exploring concepts involved and analysis of the issues contained in the case. In some cases, the case preparation will include an interactive exercise during seminar where the student's full preparation and participation in seminar will be essential.

***f. End of Course Survey.*** An invaluable part of any learning experience is substantive feedback. In an effort to improve the learning experience, students will be required to complete student surveys on their experience. The LPA course will have a dedicated End of Course Survey. The TSDM course will have a Midterm Course Survey at the end of the IS sessions and an End of Course Survey at the end of TSDM. For both LPA and TSDM the surveys will seek student feedback on the curricula, assessments, and their Professor. Students must submit these surveys in order to receive a final grade in each LPA and TSDM. All survey submissions are anonymous, and the anonymous data shared with Professors only after all grades have been finalized.

**8. Attendance.** Students are expected to attend every seminar meeting during the 34 weeks of LPA and TSDM. Attendance is defined as a student's physical presence in any Fleet Seminar Program meeting (exercise or discussion), whether it is in the home seminar or at another Fleet Seminar Program location. *Any student who does not attend a seminar meeting at a Fleet Seminar location for that week shall be considered absent. There is no distinction between "excused" and "unexcused" absences; a student is either physically present for a seminar meeting or not.* A student who is absent from four (4) or more seminar meetings is, by accreditation standards, not eligible for the NWC M.A. degree. Upon the maximum number of absences, or when the absence is anticipated, the specifics of the situation will be reported by the seminar Professor to the NSA Department Chair and Program Manager in Newport. A case-specific determination regarding

eligibility for the NWC M.A. Degree will be made by the Dean, CDE. Students who are subsequently absent from five (5) or more seminar meetings will be reported to the NSA Department Chair and Program Manager upon the fifth absence, and a case-specific determination regarding continuation in the course and eligibility for a Naval War College Diploma and JPME I certification made.

**a. Attendance at an Alternate In-Person Seminar.** The Fleet Seminar Program is structured so that any student who cannot be physically present in their normally assigned seminar on any given week may attend another physical location and earn credit for their attendance. Students are responsible for advising their Professor in advance of any anticipated absence, as well as assisting their Professor in the coordination for participation with another seminar. For example, a student assigned to the Washington Navy Yard is going TDY to San Diego, the student will need to let their Navy Yard Professor know that they will be absent from seminar due to a TDY and of their desire to attend the San Diego seminar rather than incur an absence. The student's Professor would coordinate via email with the gaining Professor in San Diego to facilitate the student's attendance, provided there is space available. Once coordinated, the student's Professor will put the student in touch with the gaining Professor via email so that the student can coordinate any requirements from the gaining Professor. After the student has attended a seminar at the alternate location, the Professor of the visited seminar will advise the Professor of the home seminar of the student's actual attendance and level of preparation and contribution.

**b. Request for Attendance in an Alternate Virtual Seminar.** If an in-person seminar at another location is not available a student may request to be included in one of the two LPA/TSDM virtual seminars, if space is available. *The student must fill out the virtual attendance form and make this request (in writing) through their home Professor who will then forward a written request to the LPA/TSDM Fleet Seminar Program Director for approval.* All requests for attendance in a virtual seminar *must be for operational reasons only where an in-person seminar option is not available or the student is SIQ (sick in quarters).* A student seeking approval of attendance in a virtual TSDM seminar must provide the information identified below on the virtual attendance form in an email to their Professor in order to be considered for approval. The Professor will ensure the validity of the student's request and forward the student's email along with a recommendation for approval to the LPA/TSDM Program Director. The information required for approval must include the following:

- 1) Student's name, email address, home seminar location, and Professor's name.
- 2) Confirmation that the student is on operational TDY/TAD orders or SIQ.
- 3) The start and end dates of the operational TDY/TAD and the location or SIQ.
- 4) Date(s) and virtual location student is requesting to attend (East Coast Virtual meets on Tuesdays at 1730 ET; West Coast Virtual meets on Thursdays at 1730 PT).

**c. Approval of Attendance in an Alternate Virtual Seminar.** If approved, the LPA/TSDM Program Director will email the student, the home Professor, and the gaining virtual Professor to confirm approval for attendance and the corresponding dates. Following the written approval, the student will coordinate with the gaining virtual Professor for any specific requirements for their pending attendance. Following the student's attendance in the virtual

seminar, the Professor of the virtual seminar will advise the Professor at the home seminar of the student's actual attendance and level of preparation and contribution.

**d. Requirements for Attendance in Virtual Seminar.** In order to earn credit for attendance in a virtual seminar—whether permanently assigned or visiting—students *must have full access to Blackboard via the internet and have and maintain the ability to project and receive both audio and video so that they may be full participants in the seminar experience.* Students must also be in a quiet and private location where their full participation can be expected without any distractions for themselves or classmates. If full audio and video capabilities are not available or the student is not in an appropriate private location, they will be asked to leave the virtual seminar and will not earn attendance credit for the session(s) missed. Examples of locations that are *not* appropriate for virtual seminar attendance include (but are not limited to) airports, moving vehicles, commercial eating/drinking/shopping establishments, or any area open to the public that could be distracting to other members of the seminar or where others might overhear student discussions meant to be for non-attribution.

**e. Requirements for Seminar Absence.** If a student is unable to attend seminar at a physical location, or approved for a virtual seminar for any given week or weeks, he or she must submit a written essay for *each* of the sessions missed. The Professor will assign a minimum of two Guidance Questions from the respective syllabus pages for the student to thoroughly answer. *Responses should thoroughly answer the respective Guidance Questions and limited to no more than 500 words for each session.* The essays must be of a high enough quality to satisfy the Professor that the student has mastered the CLO(s) and course concepts for the session(s) missed. The submission will not erase the recorded absence for the seminar(s) missed but will ensure a student's thorough understanding of the session(s) missed. The quality of the written submission will be considered in the student's overall preparation and contribution grade.

**9. Assessments.** The Professor will assess student progress throughout the LPA and TSDM courses using three means of assessment: formative assessments (FA), summative assessments (SA), and student preparation and contribution.

**a. Formative Assessments.** Formative assessments (FAs) are ungraded assessments which offer students and Professors an opportunity to assess student progress and comprehension of course material prior to completing a graded assignment. Each FA is assessed by the Professor as either “meets standards” or “not yet.” Although FAs are not graded, in order to meet standards, the student's work must be assessed at the equivalent of an 80/B- or better. All FAs must meet standards for a student to continue in the course. Any FA assessed by the Professor as “not yet” will need to be re-accomplished following thorough feedback and a remediation plan given by the Professor to the student. Remediation and successful completion of the FA must be completed within 48 hours of being assigned. Any student who receives a second “not yet” on the same FA will be referred to the NSA Department Chair and considered for involuntary disenrollment for failure to progress in the course. TSDM will have 10 FAs spread evenly throughout the course. The following is a list of the TSDM FAs and their corresponding suspense date.

<b>FA #</b>	<b>Type of</b>	<b>Effort</b>	<b>Due</b>
FA-1	Short Essay	Individual/Group	Week 2
FA-2	Short Essay	Individual	Week 9
FA-3	Group Presentations	Individual/Group	Weeks 12-14
FA-4	Short Essay/in-class Exercise	Individual	Week 19
FA-5	Group Presentation/Exercise	Individual/Group	Week 26
FA-6	Group SDX Deliverable 1	Group	Week 28
FA-7	Group SDX Deliverable 2	Group	Week 29
FA-8	Group SDX Deliverable 3	Group	Week 30
FA-9	Group SDX Deliverable 4	Group	Week 31
FA-10	Group SDX Deliverables	Group	Week 32

**b. Summative Assessments.** Summative Assessments (SAs) are graded assessments that validate a student’s mastery of the CLO(s) being covered by that assessment. SAs will be graded with a number and letter grade (e.g., 87/B+). To be considered passing, an SA must earn a grade of 80/B- or higher. Each of the SAs in LPA and TSDM must earn a grade of 80/B- or higher in order for a student to continue in the course. Any SA assessed by the Professor as being below a grade of 80 will need to be re-accomplished following thorough feedback and a remediation plan given by the Professor to the student. Remediation and successful completion of the SA must be completed within 7 days of being assigned. If the second attempt on the SA earns a passing grade, the student will earn a final grade on that SA no higher than 80/B-. Any student who receives a second failure on the same SA will be referred to the NSA Department Chair and be considered for involuntary disenrollment for failure to progress in the course. SAs have a firm due date as outlined below. *Any late submission received after the due date without a written request from the student and written approval from the Professor will earn a grade no higher than an 80/B-.*

**c. Student Seminar Preparation and Contribution.** The final means of graded assessment is student seminar preparation and contribution. This assessment will be evaluated (with a numeric and corresponding letter grade) throughout the course based on how well a student prepared for each seminar and their effectiveness at applying applicable course concepts, demonstrating critical and creative thinking, and communicating these skills in seminar discussions, in-class exercises, and other course activities. LPA and each portion of TSDM (IS, FPA, and SDX) will have their own corresponding preparation and contribution grade.

**\*An important note regarding seminar preparation and contribution grade.** Thorough preparation for each seminar, meticulously absorbing student preparation materials, and substantive contributions during seminar discussions are key aspects of the learning construct. Students will therefore be assessed on the cumulative quality of their individual seminar preparation and contributions. Student contribution is assessed by its quality. The goal is not to measure the number of times students have spoken, but how well they have demonstrated that they have prepared and understood the subject matter, enriched discussion, and contributed to a positive and active learning dynamic. This caliber of commitment requires students to

come prepared to take part in every seminar discussion by absorbing the readings, listening attentively, thinking critically, and offering informed comments on session topics. Students are expected to prepare for and be thoughtfully engaged in each seminar session.

**10. LPA and TSDM Graded Assessments.** The following is a composite listing of the LPA and TSDM course requirements, type of effort, basis of evaluation, time due, and their relative weight:

ASSESSMENT	TYPE OF EFFORT	BASIS OF EVALUATION	DUE DATE	WEIGHT
SA-1 (LPA)	Individual	Ability to analyze a case study and apply course concepts in a logical & concise way. (CLO-1) <b>(PLO-3 Key Assessment)</b>	Prior to IS-1 in Week 5	75% of LPA Grade
Preparation and Contribution (LPA)	Individual	Quality of student seminar preparation and contribution in seminar discussions and written thought pieces.	Continuously throughout LPA	25% of LPA Grade
SA-2 (TSDM-IS)	Individual	Ability to conduct research and explore an in-depth USINDOPACOM security challenge. (CLO-2 and PLO-2)	Prior to IS-21 in Week 15	25%
SA-3 (TSDM-FPA)	Individual	Ability to analyze a case study and apply course concepts in a logical, compelling, and concise way. (CLO-3 and PLO-2)	Prior to SDX-1 in Week 27	25%
SA-4 (TSDM-SDX)	Group Briefing	Quality of SDX product development, presentation, and Q&A responses. (CLOs 1-4) <b>(PLO-2 Key Assessment)</b>	During SDX-15 in Week 34	30%
Preparation and Contribution (TSDM)	Individual	Quality of student seminar preparation and contribution in seminar discussions and written thought pieces.	Continuously Weeks 5-26 and Weeks 27-34	20% (5% each for IS/FPA and 10% for SDX)

**a. Grading Criteria.** A course grade will be assigned based on grades earned for summative assessments and preparation/contribution. Students must complete, with an 80/B- or better grade, each of the NWC core courses (LPA, TSDM, JMO, S&W) for the master's degree program and receipt of JPME Phase I certification. All work in the prescribed curricula for the intermediate program will be graded using the standards below.

1) Final course grades will be expressed as the unrounded numerical average of the weighted course assessments in the table above, to two decimal places, along with the corresponding letter grades with pluses or minuses.

2) General rubrics (in paragraph b. below) are provided so students will know the general performance criteria for summative assessments and student preparation and contribution.

3) Grades for all TSDM assignments are based on the standards set forth in the 2024 U.S. Naval War College Faculty Handbook (page 44), which states in part:

*Historical evidence indicates that a grade distribution of 35% - 45% 'As' and 55% - 65% Bs and 'Cs' can be expected from the overall NWC student population. While variations from this norm might occur from seminar to seminar and subject to subject, it will rarely if ever reach an overall 'A' to 'B/C' ratio of greater than or equal to an even 50/50 distribution.*

4) Unexcused tardy student work—that is, work turned in past the deadline without previous *written notification* from the student to the Professor and *written approval* from the Professor—will receive a grade of not greater than a B- (80). Work submitted more than 14 days late without the prior *written approval* of the Professor will be referred to the NSA Department Chair and may result in the student's removal from the course. Professors are available to assist students with course material, to review a student's progress, and to provide counseling as required. Students with individual concerns are encouraged to discuss them as early as possible so the Professor can render assistance in a timely manner. In any case, work submitted more than 30 days past the due date will be referred by the Professor to the NSA Department Chair and Program Manager in Newport, with disenrollment the likely outcome.

5) All LPA and TSDM Course assessments are open-book and open-notes. Students may consult any of the student preparation materials or course resources while completing the assessments. Collaboration between students on assessments is NOT permitted unless specifically authorized or required by the Professor. The use of commercially available computer software for proofreading a student's work (e.g., Grammarly) prior to submission is not only authorized, it's highly encouraged.

**b. Grading Standards.** All graded activities in TSDM will be evaluated using the following rubrics:

1) *Summative Assessments.* In addition to the substantive criteria specified below, the written response must be editorially correct (spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax, format, etc.).

A+	(97-100)	<b>Work of truly superior quality.</b> Organized, coherent, and extremely well-written response that offers a genuinely new understanding of the subject. Completely addresses the question(s). Covers all applicable major and key minor points. Demonstrates total grasp and comprehension of the topic. Ready to be published “as is” in a peer-reviewed journal. Demonstrates mastery of all Course Learning Outcomes evaluated.
A	(94-96)	<b>Work of exceptional quality.</b> Demonstrates an outstanding grasp of the topic, addressing all major issues and key minor points. Organized, coherent and very well-written. Ready for publication in a peer-reviewed journal with minor edits. Demonstrates mastery of all Course Learning Outcomes evaluated.
A-	(90-93)	<b>Work of very high quality and well above average graduate level.</b> Demonstrates an excellent grasp of the topic. Addresses all major and most of the minor points in a clear and coherent manner. Demonstrates mastery of all Course Learning Outcomes evaluated.
B+	(87-89)	<b>Solid work and slightly above average graduate level.</b> Well-crafted answer that discusses all relevant important concepts with supporting rationale for analysis. Demonstrates mastery of all Course Learning Outcomes evaluated.
B	(84-86)	<b>Expected graduate level performance.</b> A successful consideration of the topic overall, but either lacking depth or containing statements for which the supporting rationale is not sufficiently argued. However, demonstrates acceptable mastery of all Course Learning Outcomes evaluated.
B-	(80-83)	<b>Acceptable, but below average graduate work.</b> Addresses the question and demonstrates a fair understanding of the topic, but does not address all key concepts or is weak in rationale and clarity. However, demonstrates acceptable mastery of all Course Learning Outcomes evaluated.
<B-	(<80)	Grades below a B- are failing and require remediation.

2) *Student Seminar Preparation and Contribution*. Seminar preparation and contribution will be graded at the end of TSDM as a whole number on a 100-point scale. Preparation and contribution grades are determined by Professor evaluation of the quality of a student's preparedness and contributions to seminar discussions, projects, exercises and other course activities. The evaluation will consider a student's critical and creative thinking as demonstrated in oral or written communication when contributing to seminar activities. All students are expected to have completed all student preparation materials, substantively contribute to each seminar session, and to listen and respond respectfully when fellow students or Professors offer ideas. This overall expectation underlies all criteria described below. Interruptive, discourteous, disrespectful, or unprofessional conduct or attitude detracts from the overall learning experience for the seminar and will negatively affect the contribution grade. When a student's contribution grade falls below a B- (or is in danger of it) the Professor will intervene and ensure that the student understands that a contribution grade of B- or better is required for successful completion of each part of the LPA and TSDM courses. The student will be provided the opportunity to increase the contribution grade through remediation provided by the Professor. Remediation must be determined by the Professor to be of high quality to warrant an increase in the student's contribution grade. A final contribution grade below a B- will result in the student not successfully completing course requirements. The key criteria used to evaluate seminar contribution are:

- A+**            **(97-100):**    **Preparation and Contributions provides a wholly new understanding of the topic**, expressed in a clear and concise manner. Demonstrates exceptional preparation for each session as reflected in the quality of contributions to discussions. Strikes an outstanding balance of “listening” and “contributing,” engaging with classmates in a way that elevates the overall level of seminar discourse.
- A**                **(94-96):**        **Preparation and Contribution is always of superior quality.** Unfailingly thinks through the issue at hand before comment. Can be relied upon to be fully prepared for every seminar, and contributions are highlighted by insightful thought, understanding, and in part original interpretation of complex concepts. Thoughts are expressed clearly and concisely, and engage with contributions of others.
- A-**               **(90-93):**        **Preparation and Contribution is always of excellent quality.** Fully engaged in seminar discussions and commands the respect of Colleagues through the insightful quality of their contribution and ability to listen to, analyze, and build upon the comments of others. Ideas are generally expressed clearly. Well above the average expected of a graduate student.
- B+**               **(87-89):**        **Above average graduate level Preparation and Contribution.** A positive contributor to seminar meetings who joins in most discussions and whose contributions reflect understanding of the

material. Contributes original and well-developed insights. Above the average expected of a graduate student.

- B (84-86): Average graduate level Preparation and Contribution.** Involvement in discussions reflects adequate preparation for seminar with the occasional contribution of original and insightful thought, with some consideration of others' contributions. Ideas may sometimes be difficult to follow.
- B- (80-83): Below average graduate level Preparation and Contribution.** Contributes, but sometimes speaks out without having thought through the Issue well enough to marshal logical supporting evidence, address counterarguments, or present a structurally sound position. Sometimes expresses thoughts that are off-track, not in keeping with the direction of the discussion. Minimally acceptable graduate-level preparation and participation for individual lessons.
- <B- (<80): Failing** and requires remediation.

### *c. Grade Appeals*

1) *Formative Assessments:* Formative Assessments are tools of various types used by the student and the Professor to measure a student's progress toward mastery of Course Learning Outcomes. They are not graded events per se and, as such, are not subject to appeal.

2) *Failing Summative Assessments:* Following remediation, students receiving a grade of less than 80 (B-) on their second attempt to complete a Summative Assessment may appeal within 72 hours after receipt of the grade in order to continue in the course of study. Contested grades shall be appealed first to the Professor who assigned the grade, and then, if unresolved, to the National Security Affairs Department Chair. An additional grader will be assigned who will grade the submission in the blind (i.e., without specific knowledge of the initially assigned grade). This review may sustain, lower, or raise the assigned grade. If this review results in a grade of 80 (B-) or above, the student will receive a grade of 80/B- for the assignment and proceed with the course of study. If the initially assigned grade is sustained or lowered, the student may further contest the newly assigned grade by submitting, in writing and within 48 hours of receipt of the grade, a request that his/her appeal be taken to the Dean, CDE. The determination of the Dean, CDE is final. During the appellate process for a Summative Assessment grade, the student must satisfactorily complete follow-on coursework and graded assignments, if any, in order to remain in the course pending resolution of the appeal.

3) *Passing Grade on Summative Assessments:* Students must meet submission deadlines for appeals of unsatisfactory Summative Assessments as discussed above, but may appeal a graded event for which they receive a grade of 80 (B-) or above within fifteen (15) days after receipt of the grade. Contested grades shall be appealed first to the Professor who assigned the grade, and then, if unresolved, to the NSA Department Chair. An additional

grader will be assigned who will grade the submission in the blind (i.e., without specific knowledge of the initially assigned grade). This review may sustain, lower, or raise the assigned grade. In the event this grade is also subsequently contested, the student must submit, in writing and within 48 hours of receipt of that grade, a request that the appeal be taken to the Dean, CDE. The determination of the Dean, CDE is final.

4) *Preparation and Contribution Grades:* Students may only appeal preparation and contribution grades to the Professor who assigned the grade. That Professor will consider the student's feedback, make a final determination, and present the situation and the final determination to the National Security Affairs Department Chair.

5) *Final Course Grades:* A final course grade is not subject to review except for computational accuracy.

## 11. Academic Integrity

**a. Honor Code.** (Excerpted from the NWC 2024 Faculty Handbook) The Naval War College diligently enforces a strict academic code requiring authors to credit properly the source of materials directly cited in any written work submitted in fulfillment of diploma/degree requirements. Simply put: plagiarism is prohibited. Likewise, this academic code prohibits cheating and the misrepresentation of a paper as an author's original thought. Plagiarism, cheating, and misrepresentation are inconsistent with the professional standards required of all military personnel and government employees. Furthermore, in the case of U.S. military officers, such conduct clearly violates the "Exemplary Conduct Standards" delineated in Title 10, U.S. Code, Sections 3583 (U.S. Army), 5947 (U.S. Naval Service), and 8583 (U.S. Air Force).

**b. Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work without giving proper credit to the author or creator of the work. It is passing off as one's own another's words, ideas, analysis, or other products. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity and will be treated as such. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following actions:

- 1) The verbatim use of others' words without quotation marks (or block quotations) and citation;
- 2) The paraphrasing of others' words or ideas without citation;
- 3) Any use of others' work (other than facts that are widely accepted as common knowledge) found in books, journals, newspapers, websites, interviews, government documents, course materials, lecture notes, films, etc., without giving credit.
- 4) Authors are expected to give full credit in written submissions when utilizing another's words or ideas. Such utilization, with proper attribution, is not prohibited by this code. However, a substantially borrowed but attributed paper may lack the originality expected of graduate-level work; submission of such a paper may merit a low or failing grade but is not plagiarism..

**c. Cheating.** Cheating is defined as the giving, receiving, or using of unauthorized aid in support of one's own efforts, or the efforts of another student. Cheating includes the following:

- 1) Gaining unauthorized access to exams (FAs, SAs, etc.);
- 2) Assisting or receiving assistance from other students or other individuals in the preparation of written assignments or during tests, unless specifically permitted;
- 3) Utilizing unauthorized materials during assessments (notes, texts, crib sheets, generative AI, and the like, in paper or electronic form).

**d. Misrepresentation:** Misrepresentation is defined as reusing a single paper for more than one purpose without permission or acknowledgment. Misrepresentation includes the following:

- 1) Submitting a single paper or substantially the same paper for more than one course at NWC without permission of the instructors;
- 2) Submitting a paper or substantially the same paper previously prepared for some other purpose outside NWC without acknowledging that it is an earlier work.

**e. Actions in Case of Suspected Violations.**

1) If a student's submitted written work appears to violate this code of conduct, the following procedures shall be followed:

(a) The Deputy Dean, CDE, will be notified and will initiate an investigation. The Department Chair will provide all supporting documentation. In the event that a formal investigation is warranted, the student will be informed of the nature of the case and be allowed to submit information on his/her behalf. The results of the investigation will be delivered to the Dean, CDE.

(b) The Dean, CDE, will forward the results of the investigation and a disposition recommendation to the Provost who will determine whether the case should be referred to the Academic Integrity Review Committee (AIRC).

(c) The Provost may elect to have the case settled by the Dean, CDE; or refer it to the AIRC, in which case the President, NWC will be notified of the pending action.

(d) If the case is forwarded to the AIRC, the AIRC will thoroughly review the case, interview the student if feasible, make findings of fact, and recommend appropriate action to the President via the Provost. This action may include any or all of the following:

- i. Lowering of grades on the affected work or on the entire course of instruction (this will be a letter grade of F and a numerical grade of between 0 and 59).
- ii. Inclusion of remarks in fitness reports.

iii. Letters to appropriate branches of the Service, agencies, offices, or governments.

iv. Dismissal from NWC.

v. Referral for disciplinary action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, or for appropriate action under rules governing civilian personnel.

2) Violations discovered after graduation will be processed similarly and may result in referral of the matter to the current command or office of the individual concerned and, if appropriate, revocation of the NWC diploma, master's degree and JPME credit.

**12. Diploma Offered.** A Naval War College, College of Naval Command and Staff diploma may be earned through successful completion of all core courses (LPA, TSDM, JMO, and S&W) through the Fleet Seminar Program. A diploma is awarded for satisfactory completion (overall grade of "B-" or higher) of the core courses.

**13. General Schedule of Seminar Meetings.** Seminars meet one evening per week, for 180 minutes of class time. The schedule showing meeting dates for the year is contained in Annex A.

**14. Key Personnel Contacts.** If you require additional information in your studies or if interpersonal problems develop in a course that cannot be dealt with to your satisfaction by your Professor, please contact the following Professor:

National Security Affairs  
Department Chair  
College of Distance Education

Prof Michael W. Pratt  
Tel: 401-856-5545  
michael.pratt@usnwc.edu

National Security Affairs  
Fleet Seminar Program Director  
College of Distance Education

Prof Michael J. Mooney  
401-856-5538  
michael.mooney@usnwc.edu

ANNEX A

LPA & TSDM MASTER COURSE SCHEDULE  
ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026  
(Each meeting will be 3.0 hours of class time)

Meeting Number	Week of	Session Number	Session Title
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**LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS COURSE**

**Leadership in the Profession of Arms (LPA)**

1	1 Sep	NSA-1 LPA-1	Introduction to National Security Affairs Introduction to LPA (Theories, Complexity, and Vertical Development)
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***FA-1 Due 48-Hours Prior to LPA-2***

2	8 Sep	LPA-2 LPA-3	Complexity and Decision Making (Heuristics and Pitfalls) Moral Perspectives
3	15 Sep	LPA-4 LPA-5	The Profession of Arms Self-Assessment
4	22 Sep	LPA-6 LPA-7	Empathy, Humility, Vulnerability, and Trust Organizational Culture, Climate, and Change

**Summative Assessment 1 Due *Prior* to the Start of IS-1**

**THEATER SECURITY DECISION MAKING (TSDM) COURSE**

**International Security (IS)**

5	29 Sep	IS-1 IS-2	The International Security Environment America's Place in the International System
6	6 Oct	IS-3 IS-4	International Relations: Theory and Grand Strategies National Interests and Instruments of National Power
7	13 Oct	IS-5 IS-6	Political Economy Strategic Deterrence: Concepts and Theory (USSTRATCOM)

**Summative Assessment 2 Proposal Due *Prior* to IS-7**

8	20 Oct	IS-7 IS-8	U.S. National Security Strategy U.S. Defense Strategies: NDS and NMS
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**FA-2 Due *Prior* to IS-9**

9	27 Oct	IS-9 IS-10	U.S. Maritime Strategy The Combatant Commands and Global Integration
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10	3 Nov	IS-11 IS-12	Global Force Management The Pacific Ocean Region: Foundations and Security Challenges (USINDOPACOM)
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11	10 Nov	IS-13  IS-14	The Indian Ocean Region: Foundations and Security Challenges (USINDOPACOM)  China in the 21st Century
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**FA-3 Presentation Due in IS-15 for USEUCOM Groups**

12	17 Nov	IS-15  IS-16	The Atlantic Ocean Region: Foundations and Security Challenges (USEUCOM)  Russia in the 21st Century
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**24 – 28 Nov Thanksgiving Break**

**FA-3 Presentations Due in IS-18 for USSOUTHCOM Groups**

13	1 Dec	IS-17 IS-18	Africa and International Security (USAFRICOM) Latin America and International Security (USSOUTHCOM)
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**FA-3 Presentations Due in IS-19 for USCENTCOM Groups**

14	8 Dec	IS-19  IS-20	The Middle East and International Security (USCENTCOM)  Emerging Domains: Cyber and Space (USCYBERCOM / USSPACECOM)
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**Summative Assessment 2 Due *Prior* to the Start of IS-21**

15	15 Dec	IS-21 IS-22	Emerging Domains: The Impact of Technology The Future Security Environment: Challenges and Opportunities
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**22 Dec – 2 Jan Holiday Break**

## Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA)

16	5 Jan	FPA-1 FPA-2	Foreign Policy Analysis for Practitioners Case Study: The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)
17	12 Jan	FPA-3 FPA-4	Two-Level Games: Sources of Influence in Policy Making Understanding Organizational Process
18	19 Jan	FPA-5 FPA-6	The Presidency and National Security The Interagency Process, NSC, and Palace Politics

### **FA-4 Due *Prior* to FPA-7**

19	26 Jan	FPA-7 FPA-8	Congress' Role in National Security Case Study: Intervention in Beirut (1982-1983)
20	2 Feb	FPA-9 FPA-10	Funding Foreign Policy: Authorizing, Appropriating, and DoD Relations Defense Budgeting, Acquisitions, and Innovation
21	9 Feb	FPA-11 FPA-12	Civil-Military Relations Case Study: Deciding the Iraq War (2003)
22	16 Feb	FPA-13 FPA-14	Diplomacy: The Role of the State Department Economics: Instrument of National Power and Warfare
23	23 Feb	FPA-15 FPA-16	Information: Strategic Communication and Intelligence Lobbyists, Interest Groups, and Think Tanks

### **Summative Assessment 3 Released *After* FPA-16**

24	2 Mar	FPA-17 FPA-18	The Media and Public Opinion States and Non-State Actors
25	9 Mar	FPA-19 FPA-20	Intergovernmental Organizations: Institutions and Alliances Beyond Borders: Influence on U.S. National Security

### **FA-5 Group Presentations Due in FPA-21**

26	16 Mar	FPA-21 FPA-22	Synthesis Case Study Future Foreign Policy Challenges and Opportunities
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### **Summative Assessment 3 Due *Prior* to SDX-1**

## Strategy Development Exercise (SDX)

27	23 Mar	SDX-1	Introduction to the Strategy Development Exercise
		SDX-2	National Interests: The Foundation of Strategy Development

### **FA-6 National Interests Briefing Due in SDX-3**

28	30 Mar	SDX-3	Strategic Assessment: Linking Strategy to Reality
		SDX-4	SDX Product Development

### **FA-7 Theater Strategic Assessment Briefing Due in SDX-5**

29	6 Apr	SDX-5	Translating Objectives into Action: Linking Ends to Ways
		SDX-6	SDX Product Development

### **FA-8 Theater Strategic Outline Briefing Due in SDX-7**

30	13 Apr	SDX-7	Operationalizing Strategy: Linking Ways to Means
		SDX-8	SDX Product Development

### **FA-9 Capabilities Briefing Due in SDX-9**

31	20 Apr	SDX-9	SDX Product Development
		SDX-10	SDX Product Development

### **FA-10 Phase One Dry Run Briefing Due in SDX-11**

32	27 Apr	SDX-11	SDX Phase One Presentation
		SDX-12	SDX Product Development

33	4 May	SDX-13	SDX Phase Two Reframing Moment
		SDX-14	SDX Product Development

### **Summative Assessment 4 Due in SDX-15**

34	11 May	SDX-15	SDX Presentation: Summative Assessment 4
		NSA-2	LPA and TSDM Course Synthesis

**ANNEX B**  
**NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS**  
**STUDY GUIDE**

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**LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS  
AND  
THEATER SECURITY DECISION MAKING  
STUDY GUIDE**

**NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS-1**

**INTRODUCTION TO NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS**

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**A. Session Overview**

The College of Distance Education's (CDE's) National Security Affairs (NSA) Department educates military officers and U.S. government civilians in contemporary national and international security studies as one key element of a wider educational continuum. The Leadership in the Profession of Arms (LPA) course and Theater Security Decision Making (TSDM) course focus on the theater-strategic processes and challenges of the combatant commands. This introductory session will address how the two courses are organized to achieve their professional educational objectives.

**B. Objectives**

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the LPA and TSDM course structures, all student deliverables and due dates, and the expectations of students both in and out of seminar.
  - Identify the backgrounds, expertise, and experiences of the students in seminar.
  - Understand and discuss the importance that leadership plays in the military profession, and what it means to be a professional in the profession of arms.
  - Understand and discuss the importance of the international security environment, the domestic security environment, and the implications that each has in advancing U.S. national interests.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.

- CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
- Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Do you completely understand the introduction pages to the LPA and TSDM syllabus which identify the course structure, expectations, assignments, due dates, attendance, and CDE and NWC policies?
2. What is the most pressing national security issue for the United States today in each of the three oceanic regions covered in TSDM—the Atlantic Ocean region, the Indian Ocean region, and the Pacific Ocean region? What are the roles and limits of national power to address these issues?
3. What does strategic competition look like through a regional lens?
4. What are some of the legacies of the Cold War and post-Cold War periods? Are these legacies pertinent to today's security environment, why or why not?

### D. Student Preparation (34 pp; ~59 min of video)

1. Theater Security Decision Making Course (TSDM) Syllabus, Academic Year 2025-2026, read pp. 1-19 and scan the introductory pages for each annex. (19 pp)
2. Video: Gates, Robert M. "Exercise of Power: American Failures, Successes, and a New Path Forward in the Post-Cold War World." *The Aspen Institute*, YouTube video, 2 July 2020, (00:00-58:40). (~59 min)
3. Gvosdev, Nikolas K. and Derek S. Reveron. "Legacies of the Cold War and Post-Cold War Periods," *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, 29 June 2023. (7 pp)
4. Gvosdev, Nikolas K. and Derek S. Reveron. Geography, "Bureaucracy, and National Security: The New Map," *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, 20 July 2023. (8 pp)

### E. Student Deliverables

48 hours prior to LPA-2 in Week 2, students are required to successfully complete FA-1, addressing CLO-1. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the start of IS-1 in Week 5, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-1 addressing CLO-1. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS-2

### NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS COURSE SYNTHESIS

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#### A. Session Overview

As we conclude this phase of Joint Professional Military Education, this session is designed to synthesize the key themes, concepts, and strategic insights explored throughout the LPA and TSDM courses. In today's complex and dynamic global environment, effective leadership and informed decision-making are essential to maintaining U.S. security, regional stability, and the credibility that is essential in the profession of arms.

This final session offers students an opportunity to reflect on how ethical leadership, strategic thinking, and joint warfighting principles converge to shape outcomes in both operational theaters and institutional settings. Here we will reflect on how senior leaders navigate uncertainty, build trust across cultures and Services, and apply theater-level decision-making to real-world challenges. Emphasis will be placed on integrating lessons learned into your professional practice and preparing you for future responsibilities in increasingly Joint, interagency, and multinational environments.

Through guided discussion and collaborative reflection, students will leave with a deeper understanding of their role as a steward of the profession—one who leads with character, makes sound decisions, and contributes meaningfully to national security objectives.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Reflect on integrating leadership principles, ethical frameworks, and decision making models that assess and respond to complex challenges related to national security.
  - Reflect on critical thinking skills and judgment in synthesizing course concepts to inform leadership behaviors and decision-making under uncertainty.
  - Reflect on personal and professional development as a Joint leader and articulate ways to continue contributing to the profession of arms through mentorship, stewardship, and life-long learning.
  - Reflect on the strategic-level considerations that shape theater- and national-level security decision making, including geopolitical dynamics, domestic factors, interagency coordination, and alliance/partner engagement.
  - Practice Joint and strategic-level thinking by internalizing a Joint mindset and adopt a strategic perspective that transcends Service- or component-centric approaches.
  - Apply JPME knowledge holistically to evaluate past and future operational challenges, demonstrating an integrated understanding of strategy, leadership, and Joint warfighting.

- Address end-of-course administrative issues as required.
- **Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)**
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. What LPA and/or TSDM course themes and concepts were most valuable to you professionally?
2. Did LPA and/or TSDM provide professional relevance to your future professional success?
3. How well did the course integrate real-world scenarios or current operational challenges?
4. What were the most valuable takeaways you have gained from completing LPA and/or TSDM?
5. What areas of the LPA and/or TSDM courses would you improve upon?

### **D. Student Preparation**

None

### **E. Student Deliverables**

None

## ANNEX C

### LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS STUDY GUIDE

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#### Leadership in the Profession of Arms Overview

The Leadership in the Profession of Arms (LPA) course focuses on the student's personal development as a leader and how they fit into organizational decision making. It is designed to prepare students for command and staff positions through the study of foundational leadership, self-reflection and decision making principles. These concepts will be revisited throughout Theater Security Decision Making especially in the Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) sessions and the Strategy Development Exercise (SDX).

In the TSDM International Security (IS) sessions students will consider many of the factors in the security environment that influence the formulation of strategy. The FPA sessions will highlight domestic and internal dynamics that shape how states formulate and implement foreign policy decisions. But all of this takes place via individuals who are *led by someone*. That leader's views on ethics and professionalism, their experiences, their ability to think critically, and education in such matters can have a profound effect on their decision making process. These factors ultimately impact the course of action they choose, both for themselves and their organization.

The profession of arms is maintained by leaders who build trust and confidence with the American people whom they serve. The degree of trust and confidence they foster is based on the combination of the leader's competence and character.

As the global environment continues to evolve, so must those who lead in it. By continuously developing themselves and their people, leaders in the profession of arms are better prepared for future positions of increasing scope, complexity, and uncertainty.

The LPA sessions give students the opportunity to focus on themselves as leaders, by reflecting on past performance and identifying potential growth areas. In LPA, students are provided time, intellectual space, tools, guidance, and encouragement to do the hard work of self-development. Through reflection and understanding, students will develop new competencies, strengthen personal character, and enhance their ability to lead in complex and dynamic environments.

Related to this, the complexity and challenges facing today's military leaders, even at the O-4/O-5 level, can have national and international security implications. They must take a wider view beyond just their "tactical-level" organization and consider factors such as external stakeholder expectations, alignment with the theater/strategic mission, how to effectively identify the best way forward from multiple courses of action, how best to implement change, and a host of other issues. Additionally, effective staff officers must consider the issues weighing on their higher-level leadership be it a Joint Task Force Commander, combatant commander, or other high-level official, to provide the best military advice. The LPA sessions, combined with the SDX, provide students an opportunity to think deeply about leadership and examine several decision making

aspects allowing them to serve more successfully in these command and staff assignments while considering “the larger picture” as it relates to theater-level security.

In sum, the LPA sessions highlight the importance of “the person in the machine” of the theater security environment presented in the IS and FPA sessions. Additionally, it provides an integral element of the TSDM SDX by highlighting the need for assessment, innovative ideas, courses of action and criteria, and how to develop an outline of a theater security plan.

The LPA session concepts include decision making theories, complexity, vertical development, heuristics and biases, moral perspectives, the profession of arms, self-assessment, empathy, humility, vulnerability, and trust, along with some organizational dynamics such as climate, culture and change. This will help students define themselves as a leader and decision maker while also providing insights into their profession and other individual decision makers in the national security environment.

The sessions begin with an examination of decision making theories along with the concepts of complexity and vertical development. Differing definitions of the profession of arms are mostly descriptive definitions, articulating what a profession is, or its expected characteristics. They do not explain how one becomes a professional in their profession, nor who should be considered a professional. These questions will be explored during LPA-4. But as a starting point, it is important to understand that as individual leaders, we ARE the profession. As such, we have the responsibility to continue to grow ourselves and those we lead. This course provides a prescriptive view on what leaders must do to fulfill this professional obligation. The core components are:

### **Reflection - Understanding – Acceptance – Commitment**

**Reflection:** Leaders in a profession must take an internal inventory to establish what their starting point is as a reference for further growth. We all think we know who we are, but “It matters more how others see you.” Good leadership is based on an ability to influence others to achieve objectives. This requires developing relationships that allow others to be internally motivated enough to follow along. Those relationships include a host of dynamics, based on interpersonal interactions. Leaders must examine how others view them if they are to improve as leaders.

**Understanding:** The special expertise necessary for members in the profession of arms extends beyond technical competence to drive ships, fly aircraft, and support our global operations. Leaders must maintain an intellectual curiosity and take the time to dig deeper into concepts that expose them to personal development opportunities. The Navy Leader Development Framework 3.0 states, “The intensity of our self-guided learning efforts is perhaps the most direct reflection of our drive to be the best leaders possible.” Leaders need to understand the theories, various perspectives, and the science behind factors that influence them in leading. This knowledge provides the contextual framework behind who they are and develops their ability to become more adaptive thinkers.

**Acceptance:** When we look at ourselves, we must have the humility to acknowledge

and accept there are elements of our character that are strengths and some that are weaknesses. Leaders must understand and accept that external and cognitive factors influence their decision making. To develop as leaders, we need to examine these factors and the influence they have on our behaviors, decision-making, and belief systems. In accepting that we, and those we interact with, look at the world through different lenses, we can make better and more informed decisions.

The early LPA sessions focus on the individual. Here students will be introduced to several moral perspectives and models of decision making. They will consider topics ranging from humility (I don't know everything), to moral philosophy (how do I know what is right?), to self-awareness (how do others see me?), through decision science (heuristics & biases), Snowden's complexity, and to Kegan's vertical development.

The course flows quickly, as students develop a deeper sense of their role in their profession, and how reflection, understanding, acceptance, and commitment have a significant impact on their development. A key course objective is for students to value reflection. As one student put it, "Self-reflection is important. If this class made me realize anything, in addition to the lessons presented, it was that my growth went unchecked. I grew, but it was without reflection."

### **Leadership in the Profession of Ams Deliverables**

The primary student deliverable for the LPA course is an analytic essay (SA-1) that demonstrates application of key course concepts and mastery of CLO-1 and PLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

**ANNEX C**

**LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS  
STUDY GUIDE**

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## LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS-1

### INTRODUCTION TO LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS (THEORIES, COMPLEXITY, AND VERTICAL DEVELOPMENT)

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#### A. Session Overview

Everyone makes decisions. Decision science shows that when people make decisions, they use a combination of feeling, knowledge, and intuition. Too often we end up oversimplifying these decisions, ignoring facts that do not conform to our perception of reality and ultimately making a poor decision. This is not about hindsight – this is about opening our minds to seeing what is really around us, not just what we want to see. Leveraging work by Paul J.H. Schoemaker, J. Edward Russo, Daniel Kahneman, and Amos Tversky, we now understand far more about how decisions are made than ever before.

This session will also introduce the concepts of cognitive diversity, complexity, and a growth mindset and their impacts to the decision making process. In the IS sessions, students will gain an understanding of the volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous (VUCA) nature of the international security environment in which national security professionals make decisions. Students will then learn to apply the fundamental concepts of decision making, introduced in LPA, within the U.S. national security enterprise.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the LPA sessions, structure, assignments, and expectations.
  - Identify the backgrounds, expertise, and experiences of the students in seminar.
  - Identify the various factors and contexts that are critical to decision making.
  - Understand the rational actor model, together with the advantages and disadvantages associated with this approach to decision making.
  - Understand “alternative” models to the rational actor model and the advantages and disadvantages associated with each.
  - Understand how different environments impact decision making.
  - Understand vertical development, and the role of mental complexity in developing self and others.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.

- Supports NWC PLO-3.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What unique leadership experience or expertise do you bring to the cohort?
2. Reflect on your personal leadership style, strengths and weaknesses. How can self-reflection help you develop as a leader?
3. What are the factors critical to decision making, and how do differing contexts affect consideration of those factors?
4. What is the rational actor model of decision making, why is it important, and what are its underlying assumptions, strengths, and weaknesses?
5. For each “alternative” to the rational actor model, what are the key components of the model, its underlying assumptions, strengths and weaknesses?
6. How does Daniel Kahneman's cognitive model relate to the rational actor model?
7. How do the complex patterns and connections between ideas create competing interpretations of the problem?
8. What is vertical development and how do the LPA sessions support your personal vertical development.

### D. Student Preparation (53 pp; ~30 min of video)

1. National Security Affairs Faculty. Theater Security Decision Making Online Syllabus, Version 3.0, 2025, read pp. 1 through 5. (5 pp)
2. National Security Affairs Faculty. “Decision Making Theories: A Primer.” Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, June 2020. Revised for the College of Distance Education by Professor Bradley Hawksworth, July 2024. (26 pp).
3. Video: Kahneman, Daniel. “10 Questions for Nobel Laureate Daniel Kahneman,” *Time*, 26 November 2011, (00:00-06:06). (~6 min)
4. Video: Berger, Jennifer. “Making Sense of Complexity,” YouTube video, 24 July 2017, (00:00-04:07). (~4 min)
5. Video: Cavallaro, Liz. “Complexity & Vertical Development” *U.S. Naval War College*, 03 September 2021. (00-19:38). (~20 min)
6. Hill, Ryan. “Thinking Like a Round Table Leader.” *Journal of Character & Leadership Development*, 8(1), 116-130, 2021. (14 pp)
7. Powell, Colin. “Spheres and Pyramids,” in *It Worked for Me*, Harper Collins, 2010. (8 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

48 hours prior to the start of LPA-2 in Week 2, students are required to successfully complete FA-1, addressing CLO-1. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the professor.

No later than the start of IS-1 in Week 5, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-1 addressing CLO-1 and PLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the professor.

## LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS-2

### COMPLEXITY AND DECISION MAKING (HEURISTICS AND PITFALLS)

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#### A. Session Overview

LPA-2 builds on the theories presented in LPA-1 and focuses on the process of decision making, specifically the part played by heuristics, rules of thumb, intuition, rationality, and dual-process thought. Heuristics are cognitive shortcuts that help to speed up the process of decision making but come with inherent risk. Some examples of heuristics which will be introduced are recency bias (more recent events are overvalued), confirmation bias (information which confirms existing beliefs is overvalued), and primacy (information received first is overvalued). These concepts are used to better understand the specific ways in which individual decision makers are influenced by different factors. Students will also consider the concepts of perspective taking and the subject-object shift and how these tools can help to enhance the decision making process.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Comprehend how heuristics and biases affect decision making.
  - Apply information to discover different patterns and connections between ideas.
  - Examine complex problems to discover competing interpretations.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - Supports NWC PLO-3.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. How do personal heuristics and biases affect one's decision making?
2. What are common decision traps, and how do they impact decision making?
3. How can one use knowledge of common decision traps to improve personal decision making, and the decision making of the organization?
4. How do the factors and contexts of decision making create complex patterns and connections between ideas?

#### **D. Student Preparation (39 pp)**

1. Williams, B. S. "Heuristics and Biases in Military Decision Making," *Military Review*, 90(5), 58-70, 2010. (13 pp)
2. Bazerman, Max H. and Dolly Chugh, "Decisions Without Blinders," *Harvard Business Review*, 84(1), 88-97, 2006. (9 pp)
3. Russo, J. E., & P. J. H. Schoemaker. "Decision Traps and How to Avoid Them." *Chemical Engineering*, 98(5), 181-185, 1991. (4 pp)
4. Hammond, John S., Ralph L. Keeney and Howard Raiffa. "The Hidden Traps in Decision Making," *Harvard Business Review*, 76(5), 47-52, 1998. (6 pp)
5. Soll, Jack B., Katherine L. Milkman, and John W. Payne. "Outsmart Your Own Biases." *Harvard Business Review*, 93(5), 64-71, 2015. (7 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

48 hours prior to the start of LPA-2 in Week 2, students are required to successfully complete FA-1, addressing CLO-1. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the professor.

No later than the start of IS-1 in Week 5, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-1 addressing CLO-1 and PLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the professor.

## LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS-3

### MORAL PERSPECTIVES

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#### A. Session Overview

There are many different perspectives of moral behavior, and everyone has a slightly different approach to ethical dilemmas. This session exposes students to several philosophical perspectives on ethics and demonstrates their applicability to the military profession by using them in analysis and discussion. Philosophy can be extremely challenging and there is insufficient time in this course to delve deeply into any one school of thought, much less several. As a result, this session focuses on practical aspects of the major philosophical schools: virtue ethics, deontological (duty) ethics, consequentialist ethics, and the ethics of care.

Then the session builds on the premise that an individual formulates a moral world view based on various influences such as personal and social influences. This view, along with their preferred moral framework, can result in conclusions that vary significantly from person to person. In the case of national security professionals, that view must also be reconciled with the common demands and standards of the profession of arms, which will be explored in LPA-4. Ethics are important to consider as one engages in the continual leadership study necessary to take on greater professional responsibilities. At senior leadership levels, one's actions communicate deeper professional and ethical messages to subordinates and to the organization. Accompanying these ethical messages are also important implications concerning organizational values, trust, loyalty, standards of integrity, and stewardship. To that end students will be introduced to and practice applying an ethical decision framework for the military profession, to help them to make decisions which are ethically informed.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the four major moral perspectives.
  - Apply the four major moral perspectives to challenges within the profession of arms.
  - Understand one's own moral paradigm and how it affects decision making.
  - Comprehend the differences between moral failures and moral dilemmas.
  - Understand the ethical slippery slope that can often occur, especially among high-performance people in high-performance organizations.
  - Analyze organizational challenges in manners that incorporate ethical deliberation to inform operational decision making.
- Learning Outcomes

- CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
- Supports NWC PLO-3.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What are the basic premises, strengths and weaknesses of each of the four major moral perspectives? Which do you tend to follow? When might you deviate from this perspective?
2. How do the four major moral perspectives relate to the application of military force, and the profession of arms?
3. What moral paradigm do you favor? Are you able to recognize the limits of this paradigm and expand your thinking when making decisions?
4. When have you faced a moral dilemma, either personally or professionally? How could it have become a moral failure?
5. Have you allowed prior successes to influence your decision making? How has/could this lead to incrementally more questionable decisions?

### D. Student Preparation (48 pp; ~76 min video)

*Note: Entries 1-4 below consist of a webpage with an embedded video. Students are expected to both read the page and watch the video.*

1. Video: "Ethics Explainer: Virtue Ethics," *The Ethics Centre*, 2016. (2 pp; 00:00-03:19). (~3 min).
2. Video: "Ethics Explainer: Deontology," *The Ethics Centre*, 2016. (2 pp; 00:00-03:10). (~3 min)
3. Video: "Ethics Explainer: Consequentialism," *The Ethics Centre*, 2016. (1 p; 00:00-04:03) (~4 min)
4. Video: D'Olimpio, Laura. "Ethics Explainer: Ethics of Care," *The Ethics Centre*, 2019. (2 pp; 00:00-05:26) (~5 min)
5. Video: Shanks Kaurin, Pauline. "The Four Major Moral Perspectives," Naval War College Lecture. Blackboard, (00:00-1:00:38). (~61 mi)
6. National Security Affairs Faculty. "Personal Ethics and Moral Decision Making." Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, National Security Affairs Department, Newport, RI, May 2015. Revised by Professor Bradley Hawksworth, July 2024. (11 pp)
7. National Security Affairs Faculty. "A Tool for Thinking About Ethical Challenges." Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, National Security Affairs Department, Newport, RI, April 2016. Updated by Professor Bradley Hawksworth, July 2024. (2 pp)

8. Ludwig, Dean C. and Clinton O. Longenecker. "The Bathsheba Syndrome: The Ethical Failure of Successful Leaders," *Journal of Business Ethics*, 12(4), 265-273. 1993. (8 pp)
9. Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*. Third ed., New York: Basic Books, 2000, pp. 34-47. (13 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

48 hours prior to the start of LPA-2 in Week 2, students are required to successfully complete FA-1, addressing CLO-1. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the professor.

No later than the start of IS-1 in Week 5, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-1 addressing CLO-1 and PLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the professor.

## LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS-4

### THE PROFESSION OF ARMS

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#### A. Session Overview

In the past there has been little serious debate about whether the “profession of arms” is indeed a profession. However, the claim is now being reexamined in various circles. This examination has included a harder look at who exactly is considered a true “professional” within the military. Most would agree that the act of merely joining the military “profession” does not, ipso facto, make one a professional. But there is little consensus as to when exactly a member of the profession of arms becomes a military professional. In recent history, most discussions that attend to military professionalism have focused on various dimensions of military ethics, which were discussed in LPA-3, or civil-military relations, which will be considered in FPA-11. This session will primarily look at military professionalism and the questions that should arise when students consider what exactly makes them a professional in the truest sense of the word. Placing these discussions into a decision making context students will consider how the decisions of leaders within organizations at every level impact, and are impacted by, how the leader and organization understand military professionalism.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Analyze views of military professionalism and how they may affect decision making.
  - Understand the issues and challenges faced by commanders and staff officers that complicate professional decision making.
  - Relate one’s own personal morals with obligations within the profession of arms.
  - Understand the relevance of the unique obligations of the profession of arms.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. How do differing views of military professionalism affect decision making?
2. What factors might complicate the decisions of commanders and staff officers to enhance military professionalism?

3. What does it mean for civilians to control the military? Is military professionalism sufficient to ensure civilian control, or are “external” control methods also necessary?
4. How does your personal moral decision making compare to your obligations as a leader?

#### **D. Student Preparation (50 pp; ~12 min video)**

1. National Security Affairs Faculty. “Thinking Critically about the Military Profession.” Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI, June 2013. Revised by Professor Bradley Hawksworth, July 2024. (22 pp)
2. Dempsey, Martin E., General, U.S. Army. *America’s Military – A Profession of Arms*, CJCS White Paper, 2012. (4 pp)
3. Cook, Martin. *Moral Foundations of Military Service*. US Army War College *Parameters*. 30(1), 117-129. 2000. (13 pp)
4. Howe, P. Gardner, RADM, USN. “Professionalism, Leader Development Key to Future.” *Naval War College*, Newport, R.I., 19 May 2015. (6 pp)
5. Video: Hill, Donn H., Brig Gen, USA. "Educating the Force on the Profession" *Army University Press*, 1 March 2021, (00:00-11:57). (~12 min)
6. “To Support and Defend: Principles of Civilian Control and Best Practices of Civil-Military Relations,” *War on the Rocks*, 6 September 2022. (5 pp)

#### **Supplemental Materials**

1. Davidson, Janine, “The Contemporary Presidency: Civil-Military Friction and Presidential Decision-making: Explaining the Broken Dialogue.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (2013): 129 – 45. (16 pp)
2. Karlin, Mara E. “The Military’s Relationship with Its Overseers: The Crisis of Meaningful Civilian Control,” in *The Inheritance*, Ch. 4: 49-80. United States: Brookings Institution Press, 2021. (30 pp)
3. Video: NWC Talks: Civil-Military Relations with Lindsay Cohn. Cohn, Lindsay, Professor, U.S. Naval War College, March 24, 2020. (19 min)
4. Video: Brooks, Risa A. Dr. Risa Brooks on the Theory and Paradoxes of Civil-Military Relations (Part I of 4), 9 March 2020. (00:38-15:01) (~15 min)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

No later than the start of IS-1 in Week 5, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-1 addressing CLO-1 and PLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the professor.

## LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS-5

### SELF-ASSESSMENT

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#### A. Session Overview

Two areas that are essential to being an effective national security professional and decision maker are the ability to think critically and self-assessment. At all levels, many national security professionals believe they are effective critical thinkers. For example, would most Americans agree that effective critical thinking was utilized during the prosecution of the Vietnam War? What about the 20-plus years of the Global War on Terrorism? In reality, many people are unable to articulate exactly what constitutes critical thinking. Simply put, critical thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally. It includes the ability to engage in reflective and independent thinking. Someone with critical thinking skills can: (1) understand the logical connections between ideas (2) identify, construct, and evaluate arguments (3) detect inconsistencies and common mistakes in reasoning (4) solve problems systematically (5) identify the relevance and importance of ideas and (6) reflect on the justification of one's own beliefs and values.

Critical thinking is not a matter of accumulating information, it is a specific skill acquired over time based on practice and reflection. A person with a good memory and who knows a lot of facts is not necessarily a good critical thinker. Critical thinkers seek relevant sources of information, deduce likely consequences from what they find, and know how to make use of that information in solving problems.

Critical thinking should not be confused with being argumentative or being critical of other people. Although critical thinking skills can be used in exposing fallacies and bad reasoning, it can also play an important role in cooperative reasoning and constructive tasks. Used effectively, this form of thinking helps one acquire knowledge, improve one's theories, and strengthen arguments. Critical thinking can be used to enhance work processes. It is also an essential prerequisite for being an effective participant in LPA.

Self-assessment is a skill closely related to critical thinking. In LPA-2 we began to consider bias in decision making. This session asks us to look more closely at our own personality and how bias may affect our decision making.

Students will be provided background on the personality assessment conducted prior to this session. Students will explore the importance of individual reflection and how they might best use the information found in their self-assessment. This will be useful in both their current position and what they anticipate as their next assignment.

Character is a major component in how we see ourselves, and how we see and judge others. Like many concepts in this course, everyone has an idea of what character is but can rarely articulate it, much less do so succinctly and accurately. Character is inextricably linked to self-awareness, leadership, and mentoring. The personal assessments should be viewed as an opportunity to identify new doors that can be opened to further develop as a leader, as well as gaps that could be addressed.

## **B. Objectives**

- Session Objectives
  - Examine how critical thinking is tied to national security professions.
  - Understand why improving the quality of one's thinking leads to greater awareness of situations and self.
  - Understand the results of the personality assessment tool and its importance.
  - Understand the idea of individual reflection as it applies to self-assessment.
  - Assess individual traits and the relationship between self-awareness and leader development.
  - Assess individual resilience and readiness for effective operational joint-warfighting leadership.
- Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

## **C. Guidance Questions**

1. Why is critical thinking a vital skill for national security professionals to possess?
2. What results will a well-cultivated critical thinker achieve?
3. Do any of the results of your personality assessment surprise you? Why or why not?
4. How will reflection help you to understand results and implement a development plan?
5. What individual traits do you value as/in a leader, and how does self-awareness help you develop those traits?

## **D. Student Preparation (64 pp; ~134 min video)**

1. Paul, Richard and Linda Elder. "Critical Thinking in Everyday Life: 9 Strategies." Modified from the book *Critical Thinking: Tools for Taking Charge of Your Learning and Your Life*. The Foundation Thinker's Guide Library, Foundation for Critical Thinking. 2001. (6 pp)
2. Paul, Richard and Linda Elder. "The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking Concepts and Tools, Seventh Edition." The Foundation Thinker's Guide Library, *Foundation for Critical Thinking*, 2014. (5 pp)

3. Video: Mattis, General James, USMC (ret). Secretary of Defense, 2017-2019. "Critical Thinking: Our Greatest Weapon to Winning Tomorrow's War?" A speech given to *The U.S. Naval Institute*, 25 October 2023, (2:00 – 49:33). (~47 min)
4. Gerras, Stephen J. and Leonard Wong, "Moving Beyond the MBTI." *Military Review*, 92(6), 54-57, 2016. (5 pp)
5. Vinney, C. "Understanding the Big Five Personality Traits." ThoughtCo. 27 September 2018. (7 pp)
6. Bigfive-test.com "Free open-source BigFive personality traits test". <https://bigfive-test.com/> (~10 min)
7. Video: Andersen, Gene R., "Big 5 SA LPA" U.S. Naval War College, College of Leadership and Ethics, Dec 2023. (~60 min)
8. DiBella, Anthony J. "Military Leaders and Global Leaders: Contrasts, Contradictions, and Opportunities," *Prism*, 4(3), 28-37. 2013. (10 pp)
9. Kaufman, Scott B., "Can Personality Be Changed?" *The Atlantic*, 26 July 2016. (4 pp)
10. Sharot, Tali, "How to Motivate Yourself to Change Your Behavior," YouTube video. 28 October 2014. (17 min)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

No later than the start of IS-1 in Week 5, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-1 addressing CLO-1 and PLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the professor.

## LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS-6

### EMPATHY, HUMILITY, VULNERABILITY, AND TRUST

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#### A. Session Overview

Empathy, humility, vulnerability, and trust are key leadership factors. While these are trending concepts in leadership, they also have deep roots in ethical and philosophical study. Reflecting on LPA-2 (Complexity and Decision Making) students can see how these concepts can help to avoid bias and reflecting on LPA-5 (Self-Assessment) they can see how they can enhance critical thinking and self-assessment. In this session, we explore empathy, humility and vulnerability individually, and how they work together to build trust, and improve decision making.

Along with these concepts, the session will also consider perspective taking as a decision making approach. Closely linked to empathy, being able to consider how others perceive a problem is an important method to drive consideration of alternate approaches. This skill is vitally important in the VUCA environment in which national security professionals formulate strategy and make decisions. Finally, this session will look at the growth mindset and how it helps to drive continuous learning and improving.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the importance of empathy, humility, vulnerability, and trust in decision making.
  - Comprehend how subject-object relationships and mental complexity can shape a leader's ability to frame problems effectively.
  - Understand the concept of a growth mindset and its relationship to decision making in a VUCA environment.
  - Assess human factors associated with operational-level leadership.
  - Consider how understanding of self, others, and how others see self to build effective teams.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How do empathy, humility, and vulnerability help to build trust in relationships? How does this promote or hinder decision making?
2. How can considering subject-object relationships and competing interpretations of the problem help a leader frame a problem effectively?
3. How does a growth mindset improve decision making in a VUCA environment? Are there any drawbacks?

### D. Student Preparation (17 pp; ~40 min video)

1. Frei, Frances and Anne Morris. "Begin With Trust" *Harvard Business Review*. May-June 2020, 112-121. (9 pp)
2. Gourguechon, Prudy, "Empathy Is An Essential Leadership Skill -- And There's Nothing Soft About It." *Forbes*, 26 December 2017. (4 pp)
3. Video: Hogan, Robert. "Robert Hogan on the Importance of Humility in Leaders," *Hogan Assessments*, YouTube video, 29 March 2020, (00:00-04:52). (~5 min)
4. Video: Brown, Brené. "Embracing Vulnerability," *Sounds True*. 7 January 2013, (00:00-05:55). (~6 min)
5. Video: Syed, Matthew. (2019). "Pursuing Cognitive Diversity," YouTube video, 20 September 2019, (00:00-06:56). (~7 min)
6. Video: Facts Verse. "Photos That Will Make You Appreciate Life from Others Perspectives" YouTube video, 22 February 2018, (00:00-06:00). (~6 min)
7. Platt, Michael, Vera Ludwig, Elizabeth Johnson, and Per Hugander. "Perspective Taking – A Brain Hack That Can Help You Make Better Decisions," *Innovation, knowledge@Wharton*, March 2021. (4 pp)
8. Video: Syed, Matthew. "Why You Should Have Your Own Black Box," YouTube video, 31 May 2016, (00:00-15:33). (~16 min)

### E. Student Deliverables

No later than the start of IS-1 in Week 5, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-1 addressing CLO-1 and PLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the professor.

## LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSION OF ARMS-7

### ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, CLIMATE, AND CHANGE

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#### A. Session Overview

Crucial to exercising sound leadership is the ability to understand the importance of organizational culture and climate. The Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology defines organizational culture as follows: “A term used to refer to the configuration of values, implicit assumptions, and understandings that are expressed in overt statements, patterns of behavior, and interpretations of symbols that distinguish one organization from others.” Organizational culture is a shared, collective phenomenon, and can exist at many levels. For example, the U.S. Navy has an organizational culture which differs from the other armed services. And within the naval service there are the individual warfare communities, and within these there are different sub-communities, each with their own cultural artifacts and organizational essence. Again, consider for example the organizational culture, similarities and differences within the surface warfare community between the aircraft carrier and amphibious communities. Having a keen appreciation for the nuances and intricacies for the unique organizational culture within which you are leading and operating will greatly increase the effectiveness of your leadership and decision making.

Organizational climate on the other hand, as explained in this session’s third reading, “...refers to an employee’s long-lasting perception of the working environment...every organization has a unique climate.” It essentially answers the question, “What is it like to work here?”, and is influenced by elements such as flexibility, responsibility, standards, rewards, clarity, and team commitment. It is important to note that an organization may possess a strong culture but poor organizational climate, and that your individual leadership style will have a substantial impact on both. It is the responsibility of leaders at every level to work tirelessly to ensure that both the culture and climate of our organization is as strong and positive as possible due to its significant impact on mission accomplishment.

The successful leader, regardless of the level, must learn how to maximize their influence both up and down the chain of command. For mid-level leaders, decisions are rarely made based on one’s positional authority. As such, this session also examines how mid-level leaders can use what power and influence they do have in order to lead, albeit from the middle.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Comprehend the concept of “organizational culture,” its levels or layers, and how leaders influence or are influenced by organizational culture.

- Comprehend the concept of “organizational climate”, its constituent elements, and how the individual actions of leaders can add or detract from a positive organizational climate.
  - Evaluate the relationship between organizational culture, climate, and leadership.
  - Understand how mid-level leaders can influence change in their organization.
  - Describe how organizational concepts will impact the ability to lead and sustain effective teams.
- Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)
    - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
    - Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. How does organizational climate differ from organizational culture and how are they related?
2. How have you impacted climate in your organization?
3. How have you influenced organizational culture, and how has that same culture impacted you?
4. How does organizational culture influence strategy and leadership approach, and how do strategy and leadership approach influence culture?
5. What are challenges that mid-level leaders may face, and what skills are helpful in navigating those challenges?
6. How can you apply what you learned about yourself in the previous sessions to help you develop as a mid-level leader?

### **D. Student Preparation (63 pp)**

1. Kotter, John, P. “Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail.” *Harvard Business Review*, 85(1), 96-103. 1995. (8 pp)
2. Miller, Billy and Ken Turner. “Leading Organizational Change: A Leader’s Role.” Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, August 2013. (9 pp)
3. Watkins, Michael. “What Is Organizational Culture? And Why Should We Care?” *Harvard Business Review*, 15 May 2013. 2-5 (4 pp)

4. Jay, Shani. "What Is Organizational Climate? 7 Steps to Improve Yours." *Academy to Innovate HR*, 21 March 2022. (6 pp)
5. Pratt, Michael W. "Power and Influence". Adapted from National Security Affairs Faculty Paper. Newport, RI: Naval War College faculty paper, June 2023 (8 pp)
6. Sullivan, Edward, and John Baird. "How to Lead When You're Not in Charge." *Fast Company*, 24 March 2021. (3 pp)
7. Nickerson, Jackson. *Leading Change from the Middle: A Practical Guide to Building Extraordinary Capabilities*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2014. Chapter 1 pp 1-19 (19 pp)
8. U.S. Navy, Leadership and Management Education and Training Division, "Navigating a New Course to Command Excellence" pp 1-6. (6 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

No later than the start of IS-1 in Week 5, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-1 addressing CLO-1 and PLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the professor.

## ANNEX D

### TSDM – INTERNATIONAL SECURITY STUDY GUIDE

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#### **International Security Sessions Overview**

The International Security (IS) sessions in the TSDM course focus on the myriad elements of the ever-changing and dynamic international security environment. It seeks to equip students with the ability to analyze the complex challenges and opportunities posed by these elements, and how they affect the formulation of coherent national and theater strategies. Students are subsequently challenged to comprehend U.S. national and theater strategies in the context of fundamental elements of strategy, and how best to employ the instruments of national power (particularly the military instrument) to advance and defend U.S. national interests.

The IS sessions concentrate on five main themes spread across the 22 sessions:

- **International Security Environment**

The first theme is an overview of current global security challenges from both state and non-state actors, transnational challenges such as terrorism, transnational criminal organizations, illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing, and introduces the idea of strategic competition and irregular warfare.

- **National Strategies**

This theme considers the U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS), the U.S. National Defense Strategy (NDS), the U.S. National Military Strategy (NMS), and U.S. maritime strategy. Throughout, we consider grand strategy types and how different types of international relations theory, U.S. national interests, and the instruments of national power influence the formulation of U.S. strategy. Of note, this theme also examines the concept of “strategic deterrence” – which is a designated Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) special area of emphasis (SAE) for JPME - and its role in U.S. strategy.

- **Oceanic Regions**

The third theme shifts focus to a closer examination of security dynamics within the ocean regions of the world, which present both challenges and opportunities for U.S. national security. As a framework to this study, the sessions will explore the three major global oceanic regions that figure most prominently in the achievement of U.S. national security objectives: the Pacific Ocean Region, the Indian Ocean Region, and the Atlantic Ocean Region. Students will assess each region’s deeper political, geographic, socio-economic, security, and diplomatic dynamics. Throughout this study the sessions will focus on the most pressing strategic opportunities and challenges to the U.S. vision of a “free, open, prosperous, and secure world” – chief among them the rise of China (or the Peoples Republic of China (PRC)), and the return to the world stage of an aggressive Russia.

- **Combatant Commands**

What impact do the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) combatant commands (CCMDs) have within the international security environment? The fourth theme considers the CCMDs, the regional challenges they face, how they coordinate and execute operations within the previously discussed oceanic regions, and the role they play in advancing and defending U.S. national interests. We also examine the concept of “global integration” and the DoD framework of “global force management” (GFM; another CJCS SAE for JPME) and how both of these impact the CCMDs’ ability to achieve U.S. national objectives with the military instrument of national power.

- **Changing Character of War and Future Security Challenges**

The IS portion of TSDM concludes with an overview of how the character of war in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is changing as a result of the emerging domains of warfare such as cyber and space and the impact of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, unmanned systems, and hypersonic missiles. The final session of IS offers a look forward to the future challenges and opportunities in the international security environment that could shape the strategic decision making calculus of the United States in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

This study guide is the primary reference for the IS sessions. Student preparation materials should be approached in the order listed, using the session overview as an introduction to understanding the general scope of the session topic. The diversity of the IS readings provides not only an opportunity to examine course concepts, but also an overview of international security dynamics and alternative perspectives. Despite the number of sessions, the student preparation materials (readings, videos, etc.) for each week will be the equivalent of approximately 120 (+/-) pages of reading. An observant student will note that some sessions have a significant number of readings with respect to quantity. This is intentional so that students may be introduced to many different aspects and viewpoints of a complex topic. Despite the quantity of readings/videos, most of them will be very brief in length with the total page count equivalent remaining within those outlined above. Similarly, some of the preparation material may appear to be dated with respect to their published date or content. This is also intentional. A number of our readings explore enduring topics whose origins one must understand to effectively analyze the current international security environment.

### **International Security Deliverables**

The primary student deliverable for the IS sessions is a publication-quality analytic research paper (SA-2) that applies appropriate course concepts and mastery of CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

**ANNEX D**

**TSDM – INTERNATIONAL SECURITY  
STUDY GUIDE**

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## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-1

### THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

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#### D. Session Overview

This introductory session provides a foundational understanding of the international security environment, including the complexity of transnational threats and strategic competition, and how these intersecting challenges effect U.S. national security interests. The spectrum of global security challenges is never static and is increasingly diffuse. As stated in March 2025 by the Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard:

- “A diverse set of foreign actors are targeting U.S. health and safety, critical infrastructure, industries, wealth, and government. State adversaries and their proxies are also trying to weaken and displace U.S. economic and military power in their regions and across the globe...”
- “Both state and nonstate actors pose multiple immediate threats to the Homeland and U.S. national interests. Terrorist and transnational criminal organizations are directly threatening our citizens...”
- “Russia, China, Iran and North Korea—individually and collectively—are challenging U.S. interests in the world by attacking or threatening others in their regions, with both asymmetric and conventional hard power tactics, and promoting alternative systems to compete with the United States, primarily in trade, finance, and security.”

Many international security scholars have opined that the contemporary international security environment is like that which occurred following the break-up of the Soviet Union and can be summed up in the acronym “VUCA”: volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous.

It is also important to understand that competition remains a fundamental aspect of international relations, as actors in the international community (both state and non-state) seek to advance and protect their national interests. As such students will also look at the concept of the “competition continuum,” as introduced in Joint Doctrinal Note 1-19, which “describes a world of enduring competition conducted through a mixture of cooperation, competition below armed conflict, and armed conflict.”

#### E. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Identify and assess security challenges to the United States in the current international environment.
  - Examine and evaluate the differences in scope and impact between threats emanating from state actors versus non-state actors.

- Comprehend the elements of the competition continuum model and how nations compete in the 21st Century security environment.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

## **F. Guidance Questions**

1. What are the key international security environment concerns of the U.S. intelligence community? What role do non-state actors play in the international security environment?
2. Of the international security threats articulated by the 2025 Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community, which is the most serious, and which is the most manageable?
3. How are both state and non-state actors attempting to compete in the current security environment and achieve their national interests without “firing a shot”?
4. On what part of the competition continuum model should the U.S. focus? Does it vary by state, region, or domain? Why?
5. How are transnational challenges likely to shape the future security environment? Which transnational challenges are most important? How do they interact with state dynamics?

## **F. Student Preparation (50 pp; ~23 min of video)**

1. *Joint Chiefs of Staff*. Joint Doctrinal Note 1-19, 03 June 2019, 1-11. (11 pp)
2. Video: “Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community,” Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Senate Select Committee on Intelligence*, (29:15-45:01) 25 March 2025. (~16 min)
3. “America’s New Threat Assessment,” *Geopolitical Futures*, 05 May 2025. (1 pp)
4. McQuaid, Julia, Pamela G. Faber, and Zack Gold. “Transnational Challenges and U.S. National Security: Defining and Prioritizing Borderless Threats,” *Center for Naval Analyses*, November 2017, 3-10. (7 pp)
5. Jones, Seth. “The Future of Competition: U.S. Adversaries and the Growth of Irregular Warfare,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 2021. (9 pp)
6. Clarke, Colin. “Trends in Terrorism: What’s on the Horizon in 2025?” *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, 10 January 2025. (4 pp)

7. Video: “ACLED Conflict Index: December 2024 Update,” Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED), YouTube video, (00:00-7:20), 20 December 2024. (~ 7 min)
8. Appling, Scott, A., et al. “Pivoting the Joint Force: National Security Implications of Illegal, Unregulated, and Unreported Fishing,” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, 4th Quarter 2022. (5 pp)
9. Bunde, Tobias, Sophie Eisentraut, and Leonard Schütte, eds. “Munich Security Report 2025. Multipolarization.” February 2025, pp. 9-11. (3 pp)
10. Applebaum, Anne. *Autocracy, Inc: The Dictators Who Want to Rule the World*. New York: Doubleday, 2024, 8-19. (10 pp)
11. Office of the Director of National Intelligence. “Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community,” 25 March 2025. (SCAN)

## **G. Student Deliverables**

Prior to the start of IS-9 in Week 9, students are required to successfully complete FA-2 addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-2

### AMERICA'S PLACE IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

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#### A. Session Overview

With an understanding of the international security environment in hand, this session will now introduce the fundamental questions that must be answered to think critically about the future of U.S. national security and foreign policy decisions. Despite general impressions among many, the United States has been significantly engaged globally since its founding, with policies evolving based on its relative strengths, the global environment, and security requirements. During World War II, the U.S. was the “arsenal of democracy.” Phrases like “Speak softly but carry a big stick,” “trust but verify,” the “indispensable nation,” are just some with which students may also be familiar.

The role of the United States in the 21st Century is a complicated one, marked by the return of “strategic competition” as introduced in IS-1. In 2019, William J. Burns, (former Director of Central Intelligence) stated, “Today’s world is more crowded, complicated, and competitive than at any point in my three and half decade diplomatic career. The global order that emerged after the end of the Cold War has shifted dramatically, creating unprecedented challenges for American statecraft.” Six years removed from that statement, one could say that’s Burns’ observations are even more true today given the many consequential events that have occurred regarding international security.

The United States, like all sovereign states, operates within the international system, defined as the network of states, organizations, and individuals that interact on a global scale. The international system forms the framework for international relations, outlining who interacts with whom, how they interact, and the rules of engagement. Countries set their foreign policy and develop diplomatic relationships within this system. And like the international security environment, the international system itself is constantly evolving as states work together and establish international agreements.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the origin and concept of the international system.
  - Assess the role and the place of the United States within the international system.
  - Understand the concepts of balance of power, balancing, bandwagoning, and the ‘security dilemma’ with the international system.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.

- Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How has America's role in the international system changed across its history?
2. What are the national interests of the United States? Who decides what they are? How are they prioritized? What justifies a particular interest's relative priority, addition, or elimination?
3. How does the U.S. national security establishment define regional foreign policy priorities? Has geopolitics driven U.S. priorities? How do concepts like Anne-Marie Slaughter's "chessboard" or the "web" help in this process?
4. What is the "balance of power" and why is it an important concept to understand in the international system?
5. How has the concept of the "security dilemma" impacted the interaction of states within the international system?

### D. Student Preparation (38 pp; ~31 min of video)

1. Video: "Inaugural Address of President John F. Kennedy," YouTube video, 20 January 1961, (02:45-09:16). (~7 min)
2. Video: "U.S. as the Indispensable Nation: A Roundtable Discussion," *Charles Koch Institute*, 29 August 2016, (0:00-06:17). (~6 min)
3. Zakaria, Fareed. "The Self-Doubting Superpower," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2024. (10 pp)
4. Brands, Hal. "The Overstretched Superpower," *Foreign Affairs*, 18 January 2022. (8 pp)
5. Gvosdev, Nikolas K. "The Regional Dimension of U.S. Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, 2022. (8 pp)
6. Stolberg, Alan, B. "The International System in the 21st Century," The U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Studies, *Strategic Studies Institute*, U.S. Army War College, 2012, 137-145. (9 pp)
7. Video: CFR Education, "What is the Liberal World Order?" YouTube video, 26 October 2020, (00:00-07:55). (~ 8 min)
8. Video: Slaughter, Anne-Marie. "The Chessboard and the Web," *The MacMillan Report*, Yale University, YouTube video, 08 December 2015, (00:00-15:43). (~16 min)
9. Walt, Stephen, M. "Does Anyone Still Understand the 'Security Dilemma'?" *Foreign Policy*, 26 July 2022. (3 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

Prior to the start of IS-9 in Week 9, students are required to successfully complete FA-2 addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-3

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: THEORY AND GRAND STRATEGIES

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#### A. Session Overview

As observed in the cumulative session readings and videos to this point, the world is constantly changing; it is no surprise that the relationships between states are also dynamic. In a world that is increasingly interconnected, it is more important than ever to understand how states interact with each other, and the impact of those interactions on other states and their citizens.

Having considered the complexity of the international security environment in IS-1 and the evolution of America's place in the world in IS-2, this session considers some major international relations (IR) theories that seek to explain why and how states behave the way they do in the international system. Emphasis will be given to the three prominent schools in American IR: realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Each theory has its own strengths and weaknesses, and no single theory can fully explain the complex world of international relations. However, by understanding these basic theories, one can better understand the world and make more informed decisions about how to interact with other states in achieving and protecting U.S. national interests.

Building upon the previous lessons on the global security environment, we turn to examining what has been termed "grand strategy," which Dr. Hal Brands at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies states is, "...[the] purposeful and coherent set of ideas about what a nation seeks to accomplish in the world and how it should go about doing so." Grand strategy is not just about winning wars; it is about promoting and defending national interests in a variety of ways, including preventing wars, and maintaining peace while meeting those interests.

It can be difficult to develop and sustainably implement a successful grand strategy in a dynamic security environment, while maintaining public support that often requires sacrifice and strategic patience. For the military, the nation's strategic choices have implications for force employment, design, and level of defense spending. Despite the challenges, grand strategy is a critical tool for achieving national interests. This session defines and explores five competing grand strategies that range from the most activist in nature (primacy, liberal internationalism, and selective engagement) to least activist (offshore balancing and strategic restraint).

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Achieve a basic understanding of IR theories, how they differ in explaining international relations, and the implications of those differences for the conduct of foreign policy.

- Apply IR theories to real-world events, analyzing them and drawing out the different conclusions and implications for U.S. behavior.
- Understand the different variations of grand strategies and how they shape and inform the pursuit of national interests.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How helpful are IR theories for understanding and explaining international relations? Are any of them more convincing than the others?
2. What would the various IR theories have to say about China's rise, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, or current U.S. foreign policy?
3. In IS-2, students were introduced to Anne-Marie Slaughter's concepts of "web and chessboard." If the chessboard is a metaphor for geopolitics, with which IR theory does a chessboard approach tend to align?
4. Does Slaughter's "web" focus on institutions and connectivity lend itself to liberal or constructivist approaches? Why or why not?
5. What would you consider to be the most effective grand strategy for the U.S. to pursue today? Why?

### D. Student Preparation (50 pp; ~24 min of video)

1. Synder, Jack. "One World, Rival Theories," *Foreign Policy*, 26 October 2009. (9 pp)
2. Video: "Steve Smith on Bringing International Relations Theory to Life," *Oxford Academic*, YouTube video, 03 January 2014, (00:00-05:56). (~6 min)
3. Brands, Hal. "The Meaning and Challenge of Grand Strategy," in *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, 1-16. (16 pp)
4. Henke, Marina, E. "Best Practices in Grand Strategy Design," *The Strategist*, Texas National Security Review, Vol 8, Issue 2, Spring 2025. (9 pp)
5. Reveron, Derek S. and Nikolas K. Gvosdev. "National Interests and Grand Strategy," in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited by Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and John A. Cloud. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 43-52. (9 pp)

6. Video: Walt, Steven. “What Grand Strategy for America? Why Offshore Balancing is Best,” *Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs*, Brown University, YouTube video, 07 November 2016, (04:30-17:14). (~13 min)
7. Video: Mearsheimer, John. “The U.S. Grand Strategy Since Independence,” *International Relations and Politics*, YouTube video, 14 April 2022, (00:00-05:18). (~5 min)
8. Priebe, Miranda, Schuessler, John, M., and Jasen J. Castillo. “Competing Visions of Restraint for U.S. Foreign Policy,” *RAND*, 09 January 2025. (4 pp)
9. Layton, Peter. “Rethinking Grand Strategy,” *Small Wars Journal*. 06 June 2018. (3 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

Prior to the start of IS-9 in Week 9, students are required to successfully complete FA-2 addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-4

### NATIONAL INTERESTS AND INSTRUMENTS OF NATIONAL POWER

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#### A. Session Overview

Having looked at the concept of grand strategy in IS-3, we now focus attention on examining national interests and instruments of national power. National interests are essentially a country's enduring priorities within the international system. These priorities, like security or economic well-being, are what a country wants to achieve or protect. National power, on the other hand, is a country's ability to achieve those goals. There are different dimensions of power that contribute to a country's overall strength; strategists often talk about “hard power” or “soft power.” In today's world, national power is increasingly measured by a combination of hard and soft power elements. A state that can effectively wield both types of power is more likely to achieve its goals on the international stage. A common framework used in international relations for understanding the different instruments of national power available to a state is by the acronym D-I-M-E: diplomatic, informational, military, and economic power. Scholars and strategists often expand the definition of the instruments of national power by including other distinct subcategories of the instruments of national power in addition to the standard D-I-M-E framework such as financial, intelligence, and law enforcement (i.e., D-I-M-E-F-I-L).

In short, understanding national interests helps us know what objectives states are trying to achieve, and national power shows the potential means they can use to achieve those objectives. There can be debate about what exactly constitutes a national interest, with some arguing for a narrow focus on security and economics, while others believe it should encompass broader values like human rights. Regardless of the definition, national interests play a vital role in shaping a state's course on the world stage. The strategist must understand the types of power (and their limitations), appreciate that national interests can be difficult to define or agree upon, and recognize that their endurance may vary depending on the political leadership of the state.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Analyze the role national interests play in strategic thinking and the formation of strategy.
  - Examine the dimensions of national power and their role in shaping strategy.
  - Understand the difference between instruments and elements of national power.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.

- Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What are national interests and why are they important?
2. How do vital, important, and peripheral national interests affect a state's strategic calculus?
3. Why is there so much difficulty determining and prioritizing national interests?
4. When designing strategy, how can a state achieve balance with the various tools of national power?
5. What are the consequences of overemphasizing one instrument of national power over another?

### D. Student Preparation (56 pp; ~3 min video)

1. Reveron, Derek S. and Nikolas K. Gvosdev. "National Interests and Grand Strategy," in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited by Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and John A. Cloud. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 35-42 (7 pp)
2. National War College. "A National Security Strategy Primer," 2018, 15-35. (17 pp)
3. Kagan, Robert. "A Free World If You Can Keep It: Ukraine and American Interests." *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2023. (7 pp)
4. Nation, R. Craig. "National Power," in *The U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Studies, Volume I: Theory of War and Strategy*, Edited by J. Boone Bartholomees, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012. (8 pp)
5. Jost, Tyler. "Have China's Wolf Warriors Gone Extinct?" *Foreign Affairs*, 27 June 2024. (5 pp)
6. Bondarenko, Inna. "I Trained With Russian Diplomats. I Can Tell You How They Work," *The Moscow Times*, 14 April 2025. (2 pp)
7. Video: "Gray Zone Tools: Information warfare," *Center for Strategic & International Studies*, YouTube video, 07 December 2018, (00:00-02:53). (~3 min)
8. The Joint Staff. "Joint Publication 1-0: Warfighting," 27 August 2023, I-3 – I-4. (2 pp)
9. Bellafiore, Robert. "The Age of Economic Warfare," *City Journal*, 28 March 2025. (2 pp)
10. Pezzullo, Michael. "The Geography of American Power," *The Strategist*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 28 February 2025. (3 pp)

11. Tarquinio, J. Alex. "Soft Power Is Making a Hard Return," *Foreign Policy*, 06 August 2023. (3 pp)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

Prior to the start of IS-9 in Week 9, students are required to successfully complete FA-2 addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-5

### POLITICAL ECONOMY

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#### A. Session Overview

While the TSDM course is obviously focused on security issues and decision making, it is important to remember that most states usually do not face existential threats and are equally or more concerned with the strength of their economic health. Moreover, economic activity can constitute a basis for either conflict or conflict resolution, and a state's economy is the primary factor in its ability to use either coercive force or significant incentives in international bargaining. Thus, it is essential for a security professional to understand the basics of how economic systems work, interact, and how certain economic systems provide a sovereign state with various and unique degrees of leverage.

Political economy is a field that studies the interwoven relationship between political and economic systems. In other words, it examines how governments and their policies influence economies, and how economic conditions affect politics. Political economists use tools from economics, political science, and sometimes even sociology to understand these complex interactions.

This session will also look at more complex questions of how economic power works, how states act to resist or circumvent the exercise of economic power, and the relationships between economics and politics (both domestic and international).

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the basic structure and institutions of the international economic system, including processes of globalization and de-globalization.
  - Understand how economic power is formed and used and learn to analyze its likely effects.
  - Comprehend the relationships between political and economic systems and learn to incorporate them into strategic thinking.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. States choose whether their economy will serve the state's interests or whether state security serves economic interests. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each approach?
2. How do states pursue economic power? What are the respective roles of cooperation and competition in the international system? Why isn't it purely competitive?
3. Most observers see the world as becoming more multipolar, especially in economic terms. What do you think this means, and what can/should the U.S. strategy be going forward?

### D. Student Preparation (48 pp; ~ 10 min of video)

1. Cohn, Lindsay P. "Introduction to Political Economy, Part I Comparative and Part II International." Naval War College, National Security Affairs Department, 2022 (revised). (29 pp)
2. Schilde, Kaija E, Norrin M Ripsman, and Rosella Cappella Zielinski. "The Political Economy of Security." in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited by Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K Gvosdev, and John A. Cloud. Oxford University Press, 2018. (9 pp)
3. Video: Petrova, Magdalena. "We traced what it takes to make an iPhone, from its initial design to the components and Raw Materials Needed to Make it a Reality," *Inside an Apple iPhone: Where Parts and Materials Come From*, CNBC video, 14 December 2018, (00:00-06:51). (~7 min)
4. "A Visual Guide to Critical Materials and Rare Earths," *The Economist*, 25 March 2025. (4 pp)
5. Cimino-Isaacs, Cathleen D. "World Trade Organization," *Congressional Research Service*, 16 February 2024. (2 pp)
6. Video: CFR Education, "What Is Globalization? Understand Our Interconnected World," YouTube video, 01 September 2021, (00:00-03:28). (~ 3 min)
7. "Xi Jinping Swings his 'Assassin's Mace' of Economic Warfare," *The Economist*, 06 February 2025. (4 pp)

### E. Student Deliverables

Prior to the start of IS-9 in Week 9, students are required to successfully complete FA-2 addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-6

### STRATEGIC DETERRENCE: CONCEPTS AND THEORY (USSTRATCOM)

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#### A. Session Overview

The concept of strategic deterrence is the keystone to U.S. defense strategy, and an SAE for JPME. Strategic deterrence underwrites all DoD plans ensuring integrated deterrence for DoD plans and capabilities work as designed. A simple definition of deterrence is the art of convincing an adversary that the costs of taking an unwanted action are greater than the possible benefits. Part of the larger concept of coercive diplomacy, deterrence has a long history as a strategy used by leaders and governments to manage and prevent conflict. Though the use of deterrence has been around for millennia, deterrence as a formal theory was developed largely in the post-World War II nuclear environment as an effort to better understand these new weapons and their effects. However, deterrence theory also has important implications for strategy in the conventional domain. Deterrence is now complicated by an environment that has a more complex array of threats, new domains such as cyber and space, and a broader range of actors. This session will examine the fundamental concepts of deterrence theory, the challenges with implementing a successful deterrence strategy, and how the theory is applied in practice.

Throughout the Cold War, nuclear weapons and theories of nuclear deterrence were central to U.S. strategy and defense planning. This was a paradox: nuclear weapons were unlikely to be used, but their destructive power demanded continual thinking and planning about their role in protecting U.S. national security. In the years following the Cold War, as the threat of an existential nuclear conflict appeared to recede, analysts gave far less thought to nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence. Over the past decade, however, the nuclear question has resurfaced, not only because of increased competition with China and Russia, but also because of North Korea's advancing nuclear capabilities and ongoing concern over a potentially nefarious Iranian nuclear program.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Comprehend the difference between strategic deterrence and nuclear deterrence.
  - Comprehend the fundamentals of strategic deterrence theories, concepts, and supporting capabilities, including nuclear force composition (i.e., weapons, delivery systems) and missions.
  - Apply deterrence theory to current international security challenges.
  - Comprehend the role strategic deterrence plays in U.S. strategy.

- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What are the basic concepts of deterrence? How does a state construct a credible deterrence commitment? What role does rationality play in deterrence calculations?
2. What are the challenges for states to "extend" deterrence to protect allies?
3. What is the difference between strategic deterrence and nuclear deterrence?
4. How well do deterrence concepts hold up in today's evolving international security environment? Do traditional concepts of deterrence apply to the domains of space and cyberspace? If not, why not, and how does deterrence theory need to adjust to account for these two domains?
5. What is the meaning of "integrated deterrence"? How is it different from earlier conceptions of deterrence and is it useful?

### D. Student Preparation (57 pp; ~22 min of video)

1. Mazzar, Michael, J. "Understanding Deterrence," *RAND*, 19 April 2018. (11 pp)
2. Biddle, Tami Davis. "Coercion Theory: A Basic Introduction for Practitioners," *Texas National Security Review* 3, no. 2 (Spring 2020), 94-109. (10 pp)
3. Video: Deterrence 101 – Foundations of Deterrence, *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, CSIS video, 08 December 2021, (00:00-17:39). (~18 min)
4. U.S. Department of Defense. "2022 Nuclear Posture Review" in the *2022 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*, October 2022. (23 pp)
5. Fink Anya, L. "Defense Primer: Strategic Nuclear Forces," *Congressional Research Service*, 11 April 2025. (2 pp)
6. Video: "U.S. Strategic Command posture statement," *Senate Armed Services Committee*, 26 March 2025, (30:57-34:12). (~4 min)
7. Fink, Anya, F. "Congressional Commission on the U.S. Strategic Posture," *Congressional Research Service*, 12 February 2025. (2 pp)
8. Raine, John. "The Erratic Results of Deterrence Against Non-State Armed Groups," *International Institute for Strategic Studies*, 02 April 2024. (2 pp)

9. Fink, Anya, L. “U.S. Extended Deterrence and Regional Nuclear Capabilities,” *Congressional Research Service*, 12 March 2025. (2 pp)
10. Fuhrman, Matthew. “U.S. Allies and Adversaries Are Attempting Nuclear Deterrence without Weapons — Will It Work?” *War on the Rocks*, 07 April 2025. (5 pp)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

Prior to the start of IS-9 in Week 9, students are required to successfully complete FA-2 addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

**INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-7**  
**U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY**

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**A. Session Overview**

The U.S. Congress mandates that the Executive Branch of the U.S. government (USG) submit a wide range of strategy documents to it, which are designed to create internal coherence on foreign and defense policy within the Executive Branch itself, across the USG, and provide a basis for Congress to fund security priorities to achieve national interests.

The primary document that defines the United States' national security interests, objectives, and goals - in effect the U.S. "grand strategy" - is the National Security Strategy (NSS). The NSS is the President's vision for achieving national security objectives and safeguarding the United States' well-being in a dangerous world. It is a road map that outlines the most pressing security threats, both domestic and international, and lays out a course of action for addressing them. As mentioned above, the NSS ensures a coordinated effort across various USG agencies, and addresses proposed uses of all instruments of national power to achieve the nation's security goals, thereby fostering a unified response to challenges. By identifying potential threats and crafting proactive solutions, the NSS strengthens the United States' ability to defend itself and achieve its interests.

Sent by the President to Congress to communicate the Executive Branch's national security vision, the NSS is required to include a discussion of the United States' national interests, commitments, objectives, and policies, along with defense capabilities necessary to implement U.S. security plans and deter threats. As such, it provides a foundation for subsequent national security policies and strategies, which students will examine in IS-8.

**B. Objectives**

- Session Objectives
  - Comprehend the purpose of NSS and how it defines U.S. national interests and efforts to address them.
  - Examine the coordination between the ends, ways, and means in formulating strategy.
  - Evaluate how effectively the NSS provides guidance for U.S. military and national security professionals in formulating strategy.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How does the current NSS define national interests and how does it propose addressing them?
2. Has the NSS become no more than a rhetorical exercise? Does it serve a useful purpose?
3. Does the unclassified nature of the NSS impact its effectiveness? Should the NSS be abolished? Why or why not?
4. How evident is a “grand strategy” type within the current NSS?
5. How clearly are ends, ways, means, and risk expressed in the current NSS?

### D. Student Preparation (66 pp; ~ 13 min of video)

1. Pavel, Barry, and Alex Ward. “Purpose of a National Security Strategy,” *Atlantic Council*, 28 February 2019. (2 pp)
2. DuMont, Malia. “Elements of National Security Strategy,” *Atlantic Council*, 28 February 2019. (5 pp)
3. Video: Mariano, Stephen. “What is a National Security Strategy and Why Have One?” *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 03 February 2017. (~13 min)
4. Chin, John J., Kiron Skinner, and Clay Yoo. “Understanding National Security Strategies Through Time.” *Texas National Security Review* 6, no. 4 (2023). (11 pp)
5. Skaluba, Christopher, and Mara Karlin. “Strategic Guidance for Countering the Proliferation of Strategic Guidance,” *War on the Rocks*, 20 July 2017. (4 pp)
6. The White House. National Security Strategy of the United States of America. October 2022, pp. 6-48. (42 pp)

### E. Student Deliverables

Prior to the start of IS-9 in Week 9, students are required to successfully complete FA-2 addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

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## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-8

### U.S. DEFENSE STRATEGIES: NDS AND NMS

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#### A. Session Overview

IS-7 explored how the NSS provides a foundation for subsequent U.S. national security policies and strategies. With the NSS providing a holistic view of what the objectives and goals of the United States are, and how all elements of national power are generally going to be combined to achieve them, the next “tier” of U.S. strategic guidance students will examine is the National Defense Strategy (NDS), and the National Military Strategy (NMS).

Signed by the Secretary of Defense, the NDS is a critical document outlines how the DoD will address potential threats, defend national interests, and achieve the goals set forth in the NSS. By clearly defining priorities and allocating resources accordingly, the NDS helps maintain a strong military force capable of deterrence and conflict resolution across the competition continuum. It also fosters collaboration with allies and partners, promoting international stability. Regularly updated to reflect the evolving global landscape, the NDS is a blueprint for safeguarding the United States’ peace and prosperity utilizing the military instrument of national power.

Taking it a step further, the NMS (signed by the CJCS) is another core document that provides a common thread to integrate and synchronize the activities of the Joint Staff, CCMDs, U.S. Armed Services, and combat support agencies. It translates the broad security goals of the NSS and NDS into concrete military objectives. By outlining these objectives and preferred military actions, the NMS helps to focus military activities and resource allocation. This ensures the U.S. Joint Force is prepared to address the most pressing threats, deter adversaries, and achieve U.S. national security goals. In essence, the NMS acts as a guide, ensuring the military is manned, trained, equipped, and strategically positioned to safeguard the nation's interests as outlined in the NDS and NSS.

Both of these strategic documents provide overarching guidance and inform how the U.S. Armed Services man, train, and equip their forces, and how CCDRs formulate their individual theater strategies to achieve U.S. national interests as directed by Title 10 USC. IS-9 will provide more information on how the maritime services have incorporated this guidance, while IS-10 will discuss the role of the CCMDs.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Identify and analyze major themes of current U.S. military strategic guidance.
  - Understand the nested and aligned nature of U.S. national security documents.
  - Understand the core components of the current NDS.
  - Understand how the current NMS provides guidance to the Joint Force.

- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What are the areas of alignment and agreement between the current NDS and NMS? Are there any areas that are not?
2. What are the major current and future challenges to the U.S. Joint Force?
3. Does the current NDS establish clear priorities for the DoD?
4. How should the U.S. and allies adapt forces, operational concepts, and posture to respond to new challenges?
5. Does the current NMS establish clear priorities for the Joint Force?

### D. Student Preparation (50 pp; ~ 0 min video)

1. Department of Defense. National Defense Strategy of the United States of America. 27 October 2022, pp. iii-23. (16 pp)
2. Department of Defense. National Defense Strategy Strategic Ways Compilation Factsheets. 27 October 2022. (3 pp)
3. Joint Chiefs of Staff. National Military Strategy of the United States of America. 08 May 2023. (6 pp)
4. Groves, Bryan. "Strategic Discipline and Developing the 2022 National Military Strategy." *The National Interest*, 10 March 2023. (6 pp)
5. Harman, Jane, et al. "Commission on the National Defense Strategy," July 2024, pp. v-xiii. (7 pp)
6. Lykke Jr., Arthur, F. "Defining Military Strategy," *Military Review*, January-February 1997. (4 pp)
7. Manhken, Thomas, G. "A Three-Theater Defense Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, 05 June 2024. (7 pp)

### E. Student Deliverables

Prior to the start of IS-9 in Week 9, students are required to successfully complete FA-2 addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

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## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-9

### U.S. MARITIME STRATEGY

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#### A. Session Overview

Having thus far examined the guidance provided by the NSS, NDS, and the NMS, IS-9 looks at the current maritime strategy endorsed by the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, and the U.S. Coast Guard: “Advantage at Sea: Prevailing with Integrated All-Domain Naval Power” (also known as the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy (TSMS)). The TSMS provides the conceptual foundation for how the maritime services (the Navy, the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard) will work together in coordination to achieve the U.S. national security objectives set forth in the NSS, NDS, and NMS.

With over 95,000 miles of shoreline, the United States has always been a maritime nation. From its colonial founding, the United States’ economic and political ascendancy has been facilitated and underpinned by its mastery of the maritime domain, the realm of 90% of global trade. As outlined in the TSMS, America’s maritime services provide the means and ways of such mastery, ranging from diplomacy, force projection, maneuver warfare within littoral spaces, coastal defense, defense of the global commons, law enforcement and port protection, among other activities.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand key security challenges and opportunities facing the U.S. maritime services.
  - Analyze maritime strategy documents and their suitability for the maritime security environment.
  - Comprehend the maritime services’ contribution to the Joint Force toward the ends defined in the National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy, and National Military Strategy
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. What are the key concepts in each maritime service, and what are some potential synergies related to these concepts that could link the different maritime services with each other and partner navies?

2. What are some urgent and long-term challenges facing the maritime services? Does the TSMS provide an effective pathway forward to address these challenges?
3. What does the rise of Chinese naval power mean for U.S. maritime strategy and how should the United States respond?
4. How does the imperative for the United States to allow free and open access of maritime chokepoints impact U.S. maritime strategy?

**D. Student Preparation (48 pp; ~25 min video)**

1. Video: “The Stakes at Sea,” *Brookings Institution*, 02 June 2023, (00:00-03:19). (~3 min)
2. Berger, David H., Michael M. Gilday, and Karl L. Schultz. “Advantage at Sea, Prevailing with Integrated All-Domain Naval Power,” Department of the Navy, December 2020. (20 pp)
3. Grady, John. “Assisting Pacific Island Nations is ‘Sweet Spot’ for Coast Guard, Says USCG Commandant,” *U.S. Naval Institute*, 29 April 2024. (2 pp)
4. Rubel, Robert C. “Command of the Sea: Why It Is Essential to U.S. Maritime Strategy.” *Proceedings* Vol. 150/1/1,451, January 2024. (4 pp)
5. Herman, Arthur. “The Five Keys of Donald Trump’s Grand Strategy,” *The National Interest*, 12 May 2025. (2 pp)
6. Mahnken, Thomas G. “A Maritime Strategy to Deal with China.” *Proceedings* Vol. 148/2/1,428, February 2022. (7 pp)
7. O’Brien, Robert C. “U.S. Maritime Priorities for a New Era of Competition.” *Center for Maritime Strategy*, 21 December 2023. (2 pp)
8. Kennedy, Mark and Jeffrey Kucik. “It’s Time for a Comprehensive Maritime Strategy.” *War on the Rocks*, 28 March 2024. (4 pp)
9. Video: Chief of Naval Operations. “Chief of Naval Operations Releases Navigation Plan for America’s Warfighting Navy.” YouTube video, 18 September 2024. (~22 min)
10. Waltz, Michael, Mark Kelly, Marco Rubio, and John Garamendi. “Congressional Guidance for a National Maritime Strategy,” U.S. Congress. 30 April 2024. (5 pp)
11. Roughhead, Gary. “Regaining our Standing as a Maritime Nation,” *Real Clear Defense*, 23 May 2024. (2 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

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No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-10

### THE COMBATANT COMMANDS AND GLOBAL INTEGRATION

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#### A. Session Overview

What are the U.S. combatant commands? This session seeks to answer that very question; it provides an overview of the Unified Command Plan (UCP), the CCMDs, and their role in developing theater strategy. There are currently 11 CCMDs – four with transregional responsibilities and seven with assigned physical areas of responsibility (AORs). CCMDs with transregional responsibilities operate world-wide across geographic boundaries and provide unique capabilities to other regionally oriented CCMDs and the Services, while CCMDs with an assigned AOR operate in clearly delineated geographic areas and have a regional military focus. Of note, individual CCMDs are often designated by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) as a “coordinating authority” (CA) for planning, assessing, and recommending changes to plans such as global campaign plans (GCP), regional campaign plans (RCP), or functional campaign plans (FCP).

CCDRs also maintain responsibility for developing campaign plans (CCP) that address their respective area and functional responsibilities. A CCP incorporates intermediate objectives and tasks from GCPs, RCPs, and FCPs. The CCP is, therefore, the principal operational plan for execution of a CCMD’s theater and global responsibilities for all priority challenges. The CCP balances the risks and opportunities of the command and simultaneously accounts for all assigned theater and problem-focused tasks to provide an integrated campaign plan spanning the CCMDs’ assigned responsibilities.

As Joint Publication (JP) 1-0 makes clear, “Joint force decision making with a transregional, all-domain, and multifunctional context may require the integration of joint forces with a global perspective.” The CJCS plays a critical role in the global integration of U.S. military forces. This concept emphasizes a more unified approach across all branches of the armed forces, ensuring a strategic perspective that considers threats and resources on a global scale. The CJCS advises the President and Secretary of Defense on how to best allocate forces and develop joint capabilities. This includes planning, decision making, and force management, all aimed at giving the U.S. military a competitive advantage in a complex and interconnected world. The concept of global integration allows students to consider the DoD’s approach to addressing transregional challenges in multiple domains within the contemporary international security environment, and is directly related to the topic of IS-11, Global Force Management.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the purpose of the UCP.
  - Understand the origins, roles, and responsibilities of CCMDs.
  - Analyze the importance of global integration and its impact on the CCMDs.

- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Why did the United States initially create regional combatant commands?
2. Is the current CCMD structure still effective? What changes might be warranted, if there are any, and why?
3. Do CCDRs have ‘too much’ power relative to the U.S Armed Services or the Joint Staff? Do they have too much sway in the execution of U.S. foreign policy?
4. How important is theater strategy? How do the CCMDs affect DoD capability requirements and force planning?
5. How should the U.S. military best prioritize global and regional threats? Is DoD adequately structured to meet this challenge?

### D. Student Preparation (46 pp; ~26 min of video)

1. McInnis, Kathleen J. “Defense Primer: The Department of Defense,” *Congressional Research Service*, 22 January 2025. (2 pp)
2. Pratt, Michael W. “The Unified Command Plan,” Faculty paper, Naval War College, Newport, RI, January 2021. Revised Summer 2024. (10 pp)
3. Video: Coffey, Ross, “NWC Talks: Combatant Command 101” U.S. Naval War College video, 10 August 2021, (00:00-14:39). (~14 min)
4. Reveron, Derek S., James L. Cook., and Ross M. Coffey. “Competing Regionally: Developing Theater Strategy”. *Joint Force Quarterly* 104, 1st quarter 2022, 48- 61. (8 pp)
5. Hoar, Marguax, Jeremy Sepinsky, and Peter M. Swartz. “A Better Approach to Organizing Combatant Commands,” *War on the Rocks*, 27 August 2021. (5 pp)
6. Quinn, Bryan, Bobby Sickler, and Davide Wiltse. “Modernizing Military Decision-Making: Transforming European Command,” *War on the Rocks*, 24 April 2025. (5 pp)
7. Cancian, Mark, and Chris Park. “Major trends and takeaways from the Defense Department’s Unfunded Priority Lists,” *Breaking Defense*, 19 April 2024. (6 pp)

8. Video: “The Debrief Episode 5: Global Integration for an Interconnected Security Environment,” *U.S. Naval War College*, YouTube video, 09 November 2023, (01:09-12:53). (~12 min)
9. Garmone, Jim. “Global Integration Seeks to Buy Leaders Decision Time, Increase ‘Speed of Relevance’,” *DoD News*, 02 July 2018. (5 pp)
10. The Joint Staff. “CJCSI 3141.01F: Management and Review of Campaign and Contingency Plans,” 31 January 2019, A-3 – A-7. (5 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

For FA-3, students will be assigned to one of four regionally-focused groups—the Atlantic Ocean Region, the Middle East, Africa, or Latin America. Each regionally focused group will be tasked to present a 10-12 minute PowerPoint briefing on a regionally significant security interest approved by the Professor and addressing TSDM CLO-2. Presentations will take place in the corresponding regional sessions at the beginning of IS-15, IS-17, IS-18, and IS-19. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

**INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-11**  
**GLOBAL FORCE MANAGEMENT**

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**A. Session Overview**

Global Force Management (GFM) is a framework used by the DoD to allocate and manage U.S. military forces effectively and another CJCS SAE for JPME. GFM is the action that links the Joint Force to operational demand. Specifically, it is the way the DoD answers CCMD force requirements with force provider capabilities and capacities. The GFM process establishes strategic command and control (C2), strategic posture, and insight into global military force availability. These processes are executed to support military plans and operations, which are guided by national strategy.

Simply put, the GFM process is designed to ensure the right troops, equipment, and resources are in the right place at the right time, whether for ongoing operations, emergency response, or long-term strategic planning. As such, GFM integrates various processes, including force assignment (matching forces to specific missions), force apportionment (prioritizing forces for specific scenarios), and force allocation (providing forces based on current needs). This system aims to align military capabilities with global strategic objectives while maintaining readiness for unforeseen contingencies and is a vital tool for optimizing military operations and ensuring efficiency in responding to diverse challenges across the globe. While GFM may not be a part of your daily duties within the DoD or USG, it impacts every element of the U.S. military, so it is essential for students to have a baseline understanding of this framework.

**B. Objectives**

- Session Objectives
  - Comprehend the purpose, capabilities, and limitations of the GFM processes.
  - Comprehend the directed readiness, assignment, allocation, apportionment, and assessment processes consistent with applicable guidance, policy, and doctrine.
  - Comprehend GFM stakeholder authorities, roles, and functions.
  - Apply risk analysis to current operations and campaigns, future potential conflicts, and Service readiness and modernization when sourcing operational force demand in a globally integrated, prioritized, and risk-informed manner with a finite Joint force structure.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.

- Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How effectively does force planning anticipate future threats and adapt to evolving geopolitical landscapes?
2. Does the current force structure adequately address the balance between conventional warfare, counterinsurgency, and potential peer-to-peer conflicts?
3. Does the current force planning process adequately consider the trade-offs between maintaining large standing armies and building a more agile, adaptable force?
4. How does force planning integrate intelligence gathering and threat assessments to ensure a realistic understanding of potential adversaries?
5. How does force planning consider the role of alliances and partnerships in deterring conflict and achieving strategic objectives?

### D. Student Preparation (23 pp; ~58 min video)

1. O'Rourke, Ronald. "Defense Primer: Geography, Strategy, and U.S. Force Design," *Congressional Research Service*, 04 March 2025. (2 pp)
2. Video: Conway, Tim. "Introduction to Global Force Management," U.S. Naval War College presentation, 10 January 2025. (12:29-44:23, 50:31-1:05:33, 1:15:05-1:17:35, 1:18:30-1:27:05). (~ 58 min)
3. Conway, Tim. "Introduction to Global Force Management," Slide Presentation. U.S. Naval War College presentation, 10 January 2025. (SCAN)
4. Conway, Tim. Information Paper, Subject: Global Force Management. Suffolk, VA: Office of the J-35, 2023. (4 pp)
5. The Joint Staff. "Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Campaigns and Operations," 18 June 2022, IV-4-IV-6. (2 pp)
6. Donnelly, Bill. "I Could Barely Even Spell GFM," *WarRoom*, U.S. Army War College, 02 November 2023. (3 pp)
7. Eaglen, Mackenzie, "Putting Combatant Commands on a Demand Signal Diet," *War on the Rocks*, 09 November 2020. (6 pp)
8. Lee, Caitlin. "The U.S. Military's Force-Management Tug-of-War," *War on the Rocks*, 23 March 2022. (6 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

For FA-3, students will be assigned to one of four regionally-focused groups—the Atlantic Ocean Region, the Middle East, Africa, or Latin America. Each regionally focused group will be tasked to present a 10-12 minute PowerPoint briefing on a regionally significant security interest approved by the Professor and addressing TSDM’s CLOs 1 and 2. Presentations will take place in the corresponding regional sessions at the beginning of IS-15, IS-17, IS-18, and IS-19. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-12

### THE PACIFIC OCEAN REGION: FOUNDATIONS AND SECURITY CHALLENGES (USINDOPACOM)

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#### A. Session Overview

This is the first of three sessions that will explore the oceanic regions most significant to U.S. security considerations: the Pacific Ocean Region, the Indian Ocean Region, and the Atlantic Ocean Region. IS-12 addresses the Pacific Ocean Region.

It would be fair to state that most people fail to truly comprehend the size of this region. The “tyranny of distance” has become somewhat of a cliché, but nonetheless it is especially true when it comes to this region. As one U.S. Admiral told a defense analyst, “In effect, the Indo-Pacific sea space is the equivalent of three Atlantic Oceans.”<sup>1</sup> Per the CIA World Factbook:

“The Pacific Ocean is the largest of the world’s five ocean basins (followed by the Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Southern Ocean, and Arctic Ocean). It is about 15 times the size of the United States and covers about 28% of the global surface (almost equal to the total land area of the world). Strategically important access waterways include the La Perouse, Tsugaru, Tsushima, Taiwan, Singapore, and Torres Straits. The decision by the International Hydrographic Organization in the spring of 2000 to delimit a fifth world ocean basin, the Southern Ocean, removed the portion of the Pacific Ocean south of 60 degrees south. For convenience and because of its immense size, the Pacific Ocean is often divided at the Equator and designated as the North Pacific Ocean and the South Pacific Ocean.”

The Pacific Ocean Region is a major center for global commerce, and an important conduit for global trade and investment. It is also a region fraught with military tensions, including rising nuclear weapons capabilities, and persistent antagonism over various territorial and sovereignty claims. These threats are complex and interconnected, and they pose a significant challenge to the security of the region. The U.S. combatant command primarily responsible for this wide-spread region is the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM).

Of particular importance to the United States are the growing ambitions and national security objectives of China in this oceanic region. China has increasingly been testing international norms and rules by building artificial islands within the economic exclusive zones (EEZs) of other states and selectively contesting freedom of navigation in the region. And of course, the region is home to what could be the 21<sup>st</sup> Century version of the “Balkan powder keg” – the status of Taiwan, in addition to an erratic and unpredictable nuclear North Korea.

IS-12 explores regional U.S. allies, relations between states, and their actions and interactions, including specific regional dynamics that play a key role in U.S. policy considerations. As you will see, the region is the home of many of America’s key alliances (i.e., Japan, Australia,

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<sup>1</sup> [The United States and Indo-Pacific Defense Operations: Adding Prompt Strike to the “Fight Tonight Force” | Defense.info](#)

Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand). Understanding the national interests, ambitions, and vision of the region's international actors, and how to work in concert with like-minded partners in the Pacific is essential to the United States' long-term objective of achieving a "free and open" Indo-Pacific.

## **B. Objectives**

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the importance of the Pacific Ocean Region to U.S. national security.
  - Understand the origins and importance of the U.S. treaty system within the Pacific Ocean Region.
  - Understand the vulnerabilities of the Pacific Ocean Region, including rising great power competition, and the role the wider Pacific community may play in addressing them.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

## **C. Guidance Questions**

1. What are the key U.S. alliances in the Pacific Ocean Region and how did they form?
2. How does geography impact U.S. national security strategy for this region?
3. Should the U.S. seek to "win" great-power competition against China, or should it seek to "manage" great-power competition with China?
4. Is there a role for regional security organizations in the Pacific Ocean Region? Or should the United States stay focused on its hub-and-spokes alliance model?
5. What are the greatest security concerns of the CDR, USINDOPACOM?

## **D. Student Preparation (52 pp; ~16 min of video)**

1. Video: "The Debrief Episode 2" Understanding Regions Through Oceans," U.S. Naval War College, YouTube video, 26 September 2023, (00:00-11:46). (~ 12 min)
2. The White House. Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States. 11 February 2022. (14 pp)

3. Campbell, Caitlin, Cameron M. Keys, and Luke A. Nicastro. "U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM)," Congressional Research Service, 05 March 2024. (2 pp)
4. Video: "U.S. Indo-Pacific Command posture statement," *Senate Armed Services Committee*, 10 April 2025, (30:09-34:24). (~4 min)
5. Laird, Robbin. "The U.S. Approach to Defense and Deterrence in the Indo-Pacific: Deconstructing Admiral Paparo's Recent Testimony," *Second Line of Defense*, 16 April 2025. (6 pp)
6. Nicastro, Luke, A. "U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress," *Congressional Research Service*, 06 June 2023, 1-10, SCAN remainder. (5 pp)
7. Manyin, Mark, E, and Liana Wong "South Korea: Background and U.S. Relations," *Congressional Research Service*, 27 March 2025. (2 pp)
8. Chanlett-Avery, Emma, Kronstadt, K, Alan and Bruce Vaughn. "The "Quad": Cooperation Among the United States, Japan, India, and Australia," *Congressional Research Service*, 30 January 2023. (2 pp)
9. Manyin, Mark, E, Cimino-Issacs, Cathleen, D., Kitamura, Kyla, A., and Caitlin Campbell. "U.S.-Japan Relations," *Congressional Research Service*, 11 March 2025. (2 pp)
10. Mix, Derek, E. and Jared G. Tupuola. "AUKUS and Indo-Pacific Security," *Congressional Research Service*, 03 March 2025. (2 pp)
11. Nicastro, Luke, A. "The Pacific Deterrence Initiative," *Congressional Research Service*, 25 November 2024. (2 pp)
12. Cimino-Issacs, Cathleen, D., Kyla H. Kitamura, and Mark E. Manyins. "Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)," *Congressional Research Service*, 22 July 2024. (2 pp)
13. Tupuola, Jared, G. "The Pacific Islands: Background and Issues for Congress," *Congressional Research Service*, 07 November 2024. (2 pp)
14. Lee, Rachel, M., "The North Korea Conundrum: Pyongyang's Strategic Calculus and Future Trajectory," *Georgetown Journal of International Studies*, 31 May 2023. (3 pp)
15. Lawrence, Susan, V, and Caitlin Campbell. "Taiwan: Political and Security Issues," *Congressional Research Service*, 26 December 2024. (2 pp)
16. Campbell, Caitlin, William Piekos, and Ben Dolven. "China-Philippines Tensions in the South China Sea," *Congressional Research Service*, 04 March 2025. (2 pp)

17. Hamilton, Robert, E. "Setting the Stage: An Overview of Chinese and Russian Interests and Influence in the Indo-Pacific," *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, 15 December 2024, 6-12. (6 pp)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

For FA-3, students will be assigned to one of four regionally-focused groups—the Atlantic Ocean Region, the Middle East, Africa, or Latin America. Each regionally focused group will be tasked to present a 10-12 minute PowerPoint briefing on a regionally significant security interest approved by the Professor and addressing TSDM's CLOs 1 and 2. Presentations will take place in the corresponding regional sessions at the beginning of IS-15, IS-17, IS-18, and IS-19. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-13

### THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION: FOUNDATIONS AND SECURITY CHALLENGES (USINDOPACOM)

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#### A. Session Overview

As mentioned in the IS-12 session overview, the Indian Ocean is the third largest of the world's five ocean basins. Regarding total area, it is almost seven times the size of the United States. Four critically important access waterways that impact the Indian Ocean Region are the Suez Canal (Egypt), Bab-el-Mandeb (Djibouti-Yemen), Strait of Hormuz (Iran-Oman), and Strait of Malacca (Indonesia-Malaysia). Similar to the Pacific Ocean, the decision by the International Hydrographic Organization to delimit a fifth world ocean basin, the Southern Ocean, removed the portion of the Indian Ocean south of 60 degrees south latitude. In addition to the previously examined Pacific Ocean Region, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) is the U.S. combatant command also primarily responsible for this region.

Economically, the Indian Ocean Region connects the resource-rich eastern coast of Africa and the Middle East to Asia's labor markets and manufacturing industries. It is home to some of the world's busiest shipping lanes and major energy resources. As a result, it is a focus of competition and cooperation among major powers as well as a target for transnational threats such as terrorism, piracy, and illegal trafficking. In addition to these challenges, the Indian Ocean Region is also facing the effects of climate change, which is exacerbating existing problems such as sea level rise, drought, and flooding. These effects are likely to have a significant impact on the region's security concerns in the years to come.

Within the Indian Ocean Region, not only is one emerging great power, India, present, but also a number of key middle powers (Pakistan, Indonesia, Iran and South Africa) are located in the region, even as U.S., Chinese, European and Russian interest has increased in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. As such, the region is defined not only by the current global competition among the great powers but also by a series of regionally based rivalries in the Middle East and South Asia. The two main rivals in the Indian Ocean Region are China and India. China has been expanding its military presence in the region, building ports and other facilities in states such as Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Djibouti. India is also expanding its military presence in the region, and it has been working to strengthen its ties with states such as the United States, Japan, and Australia.

The United States has been the dominant power in the Indian Ocean Region for decades, but its relative influence is waning. China is now the world's second-largest economy, and it is investing heavily in the region. The United States is concerned with China's growing military presence in the Indian Ocean Region, and it is working to counter China's influence. These interconnected security challenges make this oceanic region perhaps the most dynamic in terms of future challenges, especially given the importance of this region to the global economy and security balance.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives

- Understand the importance of the Indian Ocean Region to U.S. national security.
  - Understand the challenges of great power competition in the Indian Ocean Region.
  - Understand the importance of the Indian Ocean Region to the global economy.
  - Understand the dynamics of the India-China rivalry and how it manifests itself in regional affairs.
  - Assess the coalition-building efforts of initiatives like BRICS and the Quad.
- Learning Outcomes
    - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
    - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How does the Indian Ocean region factor into great power competition with Russia and China?
2. Is the Indian Ocean region merely a keystone connecting the Pacific and Atlantic regions? Conversely, are there risks of thinking of the Indian Ocean as a subunit of the larger Pacific Ocean region?
3. How does India view its role in and the role of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue? How does the United States view India's role?
4. How does India hedge between Russia and China, on one hand, and its U.S., European and Asian partners on the other? How does hedging impact regional competition?
5. Why does China seek to play a greater role in this region? How do key regional powers assess the Chinese role? How does this create opportunities for the United States?

### D. Student Preparation (58 pp; ~ 19 min of video)

1. Baruah, Darshana M., Nitya Labh, and Jessica Greely. "Mapping the Indian Ocean Region." *Carnegie Endowment for Peace*, 15 June 2023. (21 pp)
2. Graham, Jeffrey D. "Building an Enduring U.S.-India Partnership to Secure a Free, Open, and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region." *Joint Forces Quarterly*, 4th Quarter (October 2022): 23-38. (8 pp)
3. Video: "Indian Ocean Politics: Why Is It So Strategically Important?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, YouTube video, 03 March 2021, (00:00-02:13). (~2 min)

4. Baruah, Darshana and Caroline Duckworth. “We’re Thinking About the Indian Ocean All Wrong,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2022. (2pp)
5. Baruah, Darshana M. “Surrounding the Indian Ocean: PRC Influence in the Indian Ocean.” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Congressional Testimony. 18 April 2023. (7 pp)
6. Humberger, James, and Kaush Arha. “An Indian Ocean Strategy Is Key to Prevailing Over China,” *The National Interest*, 01 September 2024. (3 pp)
7. “Challenges and Solutions for Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean.” *Stable Seas Report*, 05 May 2021, 1-20. (10 pp)
8. “The QUAD Finally Gets Serious on Security,” *The Economist*, 30 January 2025. (2 pp)
9. Bhatt, Pooja. “The Indian Ocean is Witnessing a Surge in Russian Military Exercises,” *The Diplomat*, 13 December 2023. (2 pp)
10. Video: “What is BRICS, and Which Countries Want to Join, and Why?” *Reuters*, 21 August 2023, (00:00-02:22). (~ 2 min)
11. Video: “How India Controls China's Main Weakness: The Malacca Strait,” *Kakome*, 12 March 2023, (00:00-15:15). (~15 min)
12. Meghe, Anshu. “India’s Maritime Dominance,” *Real Clear Defense*, 29 May 2024. (3 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

For FA-3, students will be assigned to one of four regionally focused groups—the Atlantic Ocean Region, the Middle East, Africa, or Latin America. Each regionally focused group will be tasked to present a 10-12 minute PowerPoint briefing on a regionally significant security interest approved by the Professor and addressing TSDM’s CLOs 1 and 2. Presentations will take place in the corresponding regional sessions at the beginning of IS-15, IS-17, IS-18, and IS-19. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance and approval provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-14

### CHINA IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

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#### A. Session Overview

China's ascendancy on the world stage is the most significant geopolitical development of the 21st Century. By area it is the world's largest, and most powerful non-democratic state in the international community. China possesses the world's second largest population, second largest economy, and significant global social and political influence. It is also a state confronting significant internal challenges, including demographic decline, economic slowdown, and regional instability. The state of the U.S.- China relationship has important implications for everything from global health and nuclear proliferation to economic growth and the threat of major war.

The strategic competition between the U.S. and China is the defining challenge of our time, as its outcome will have a significant impact on the world order. Both the current NSS and NDS emphasize the challenge that China poses to U.S. national security interests; the NDS specifically states that China is the "pacing" threat for the U.S. military. As such, the United States must be prepared to compete effectively with China across the competition continuum to protect its interests and values. USINDOPACOM is the Global Coordinator for the "Global Campaign Plan – China," working across DoD and the interagency to coordinate global activity related to the China problem set; however, each CCMD has a significant supporting role considering the global reach and ambitions of China.

As is well known, the United States and China have very different interests and values, and forming agreements on many substantive issues will be challenging. While this competition could lead to conflict, it could also lead to cooperation. This session introduces key elements of China's domestic politics, China's rise and future trajectory, the U.S.- China relationship, and U.S. strategy towards China.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand key elements of China's national interests and the strategy being used to achieve them.
  - Comprehend how China utilizes the instruments of national power to achieve its national objectives.
  - Describe and evaluate key dimensions of national power and compare China and the United States along those dimensions.
  - Analyze shifts in both the balance of power and in Chinese domestic politics and assess their implications for the U.S.- China relationship.

- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Is the PRC a rising or declining power? How do China and the United States compare when looking at each through the lens of the instruments of national power?
2. What are the basic elements of China's national security strategy?
3. What are the major risks, opportunities, and threats that stem from the rise of the PRC, both for the PRC, the United States, and the region?
4. How might different IR theories promote different U.S. policy options in regard to the PRC? How likely is conflict between the U.S.- PRC, and how can it be avoided?
5. Why does China want to control the East and South China Seas' land formations, surrounding waters, and potentially all water within the "nine-dashed line"? What are the implications for the United States and for regional states?

### D. Student Preparation (54 pp; ~8 min of video)

1. Doshi, Rush. *The Long Game: China's Grand Strategy to Displace American Order*. London: Oxford University Press, 2022, 1-14. (13 pp)
2. Council on Foreign Relations. "How Does History Inform the Chinese Communist Party's Domestic and Foreign Policy Goals?" *CFR Education*, 30 March 2023. (8 pp)
3. Economy, Elizabeth. "The 75-Year Quest to Make China Great Again," *The Diplomat*, 01 October 2024. (8 pp)
4. Lawrence, Susan, V. "China Primer: China's Political System," *Congressional Research Service*, 03 January 2025. (2 pp)
5. Sutter, Karen, M., and Michael D. Sutherland. "China's "One Belt, One Road" Initiative: Economic Issues," *Congressional Research Services*, 16 May 2024. (2 pp)
6. Jones, Seth, G, et al. "Competing Without Fighting: China's Strategy of Political Warfare," *Center for International and Strategic Studies*, 02 August 2023, 8-15. (6 pp)
7. Video: "A Secretive Chinese Force Is Becoming the U.S. Military's Biggest Challenge," *Wall Street Journal*, 22 January 2024, (00:00-07:23) (~ 8 min)

8. Department of Defense, Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2024," 18 December 2024, vi-xiii, 136-142. (13 pp - SCAN remainder)
9. Sacks, David. Six Takeaways from the Pentagon's Report on China's Military, *Council on Foreign Relations*, 20 December 2024. (3 pp)
10. Blackwill, Robert, D., and Richard Fontaine. "No Limits? The China-Russia Relationship and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Council on Foreign Relations*, Council Special Report No. 99, December 2024, 4-5. (1 pp)
11. Hope, Arran. "White Paper Offers Chinese Wisdom at the Crossroads of History," *The Jamestown Foundation, China Brief*, Vol. 25, Issue 10, 23 May 2025, 2-6. (4 pp)
12. Brands, Hal, and Michael Beckley. "China Is a Declining Power—and That's the Problem." *Foreign Policy*, 24 September 2021. (7 pp)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

For FA-3, students will be assigned to one of four regionally-focused groups—the Atlantic Ocean Region, the Middle East, Africa, or Latin America. Each regionally-focused group will be tasked to present a 10-12 minute PowerPoint briefing on a regionally significant security interest approved by the Professor and addressing TSDM's CLOs 1 and 2. Presentations will take place in the corresponding regional sessions at the beginning of IS-15, IS-17, IS-18, and IS-19. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance and approval provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard .

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-15

### THE ATLANTIC OCEAN REGION: FOUNDATIONS AND SECURITY CHALLENGES (USEUCOM)

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#### A. Session Overview

The trans-Atlantic relationship between the United States and Europe is long enduring and extremely important for U.S. security as it encompasses most of America's treaty allies, and due to the dense web of economic, political, and informational ties that stretch across the Atlantic. As the former U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO, R. Nicholas Burns noted, "Europe is our largest trade partner. Europe is the largest investor in the American economy. Europe contains the greatest number of American allies in the world - treaty allies through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) - so Europe is of vital importance to the United States."

As such, it is obvious that the Atlantic Ocean is a vital region for the United States. When Latin America and West Africa are added, the Atlantic Ocean Region becomes both the critical nexus for securing U.S. geopolitical and geo-economic interests as well as facilitating the projection of U.S. power around the world. Four U.S. combatant commands share responsibility for the Atlantic Ocean (U.S. European Command, U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Southern Command, and U.S. Northern Command), making it a very dynamic and complex region regarding the coordination and synchronization of the use of the military instrument of national power.

The United States has long been the dominant regional power, but its traditional dominance is increasingly being challenged. Trans-Atlantic security encompasses more than the relationship with Europe. It is also a major strategic region for China and Russia, which are increasingly competing with the United States for regional influence. China has been building its navy and air force, conducting more regional military exercises, and is building military and intelligence facilities in Cuba. With major investments in the region, China has been increasingly using its economic power to gain political influence. Russia has been expanding its military presence in the Arctic, and it has also been conducting more military exercises in the Atlantic. This session will explore the security dynamics that impact this important region and their implications for U.S. national security.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the importance of the Atlantic Ocean Region to U.S. security.
  - Understand how the trans-Atlantic relationship, especially NATO, bolsters U.S. security and its position in the world.
  - Understand the north-south linkages in trans-Atlantic security and the role of the Western Hemisphere and Africa in securing the Atlantic basin.

- Understand the dynamics of trans-Atlantic relations and the challenges of enlarging the Atlantic community.
- Understand the competing global strategic tensions in addressing Chinese challenges to U.S. national security.
- Assess the difficulties in forging an overarching “Atlantic” strategy from the Arctic to the South Atlantic.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How does the partnership between Europe and the United States enable the West to “write the rules” of the international order? How does this enhance U.S. leadership within the international community?
2. The “trans-Atlantic” community initially started as a formulation to describe relations between Europe and North America. Should the concept be widened to encompass West Africa and Latin America? How does this overlap with a geopolitical or geo-economic conception of “the West”?
3. How does NATO sustain a security community between North America and Europe? How does it prioritize challenges from Russia, China, the Middle East, and Africa?
4. What are principal U.S. security considerations in the Western Hemisphere? To what extent does the trans-Atlantic relationship help address those concerns? Could Europe play a greater role in the region, and how would the U.S. view such engagement?
5. How do Russian and Chinese security challenges manifest in the Atlantic Ocean Region? What are the Russian and Chinese strategic objectives?

### D. Student Preparation (46 pp; ~19 min of video)

1. Video: “U.S. European Command posture statement,” *Senate Armed Services Committee*, 03 April 2025, (31:04-34:50). (~4 min)
2. McInnis, Kathleen, J., Brendan W. McGarry, and Paul Belkin “United States European Command: Overview and Key Issues.” *Congressional Research Service*, 30 March 2022. (2 pp)
3. Jones, Bruce, and Daniel S. Hamilton. “The promise of a free and open Atlantic,” *Brookings Institution*, 20 September 2023. (2 pp)

4. Brizzi, Matteo. “Shaping a Pan-Atlantic Community: An Opportunity for the European Union,” *CeSPI*, 14 March 2022. (3 pp)
5. The White House. “Fact Sheet: 32 Countries Launch the Partnership for Atlantic Cooperation,” 18 September 2023. (2 pp)
6. Wall, Colin, and Pierre Morcos. “Invisible and Vital: Undersea Cables and Transatlantic Security,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 11 June 2021. (4 pp)
7. NATO. “The Secretary General’s Annual Report: 2024,” 24 April 2025, 6-15. (8 pp)
8. Video: “What is the NATO Strategic Concept?” NATO, YouTube video, 14 June 2022, (00:00-02:15). (~2 min)
9. Azubalis, Audronis. NATO and the Global South. Preliminary Draft Report of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 25 March 2024. (15 pp)
10. Video: “On the Hunt for the ‘Narco Subs’ Fueling a Global Cocaine Boom,” *Wall Street Journal*, 08 May 2025. (~ 8 min)
11. Shedd, David, Skinner, Kiron, and James Jay Carafano. “Why America Needs a Strategy for America’s Backyard,” *The National Interest*, 05 January 2021. (3 pp)
12. Mitchell, A. Wess. “U.S. Strategy Should Be Europe First, Then Asia,” *Foreign Policy*, 06 September 2024. (3 pp)
13. Holmes, James. “China Could Build an “Island Chain” Around America,” *The National Interest*, 01 March 2025. (4 pp)
14. Video: “Beijing’s Air, Space, and Maritime Surveillance from Cuba: A Growing Threat to the Homeland.” *Committee on Homeland Security*, U.S. Congress, 06 May 2025, (21:35-26:30). (~5 min)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

For FA-3, students will be assigned to one of four regionally-focused groups—the Atlantic Ocean Region, the Middle East, Africa, or Latin America. Each regionally-focused group will be tasked to present a 10-12 minute PowerPoint briefing on a regionally significant security interest approved by the Professor and addressing TSDM’s CLOs 1 and 2. Presentations will take place in the corresponding regional sessions at the beginning of IS-15, IS-17, IS-18, and IS-19. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance and approval provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-16

### RUSSIA IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

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#### A. Session Overview

Russia's 21st Century has been a period of both challenge and opportunity. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia grappled with economic instability and a new political landscape. Under Vladimir Putin's leadership and influence, Russia has sought to reassert itself as a major power on the world stage, leveraging its vast natural resources and military strength. However, democratic backsliding and heightened tensions with the West over the unprovoked Russian invasion of Ukraine have complicated these efforts. Now in its third year, the war in Ukraine has had profound impacts on Russia from its military, economy, and foreign relations to name but a few.

Consequently, the current 2022 NDS labels Russia as an "acute" threat, while the combatant commander of U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), Gen. Christopher G. Cavoli, characterized Russia as a "chronic threat" during his April 2024 testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee. Similar to USINDOPACOM being the CCMD primarily engaging across the competition continuum with China, USEUCOM is the CCMD primarily engaging across the competition continuum with Russia. And similarly, all the CCMDs play a key role in confronting Russia due to the scale of its global reach and ambitions.

Since the February 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, U.S. - led economic sanctions have sought to punish the Russian state and restrict funds for its war effort. The growth of NATO, to now include Finland and Sweden, and Russia's turn toward other like-minded authoritarian regimes (i.e., China, Iran, North Korea) have further isolated the country. Russia's future will depend on its ability to navigate these challenges and develop its economy while still maintaining its global influence.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand key elements of Russia's national interests and the strategy being used to achieve them.
  - Comprehend how Russia utilizes the instruments of national power to achieve its national objectives.
  - Describe and evaluate key dimensions of national power and compare Russia and the United States along those dimensions.
  - Assess the impact of the Russian maritime strategy on U.S. national security interests.
- Learning Outcomes

- CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
- Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What are the basic elements of the Russian national security strategy?
2. How does the growing cooperation and engagement between Russia and other authoritarian powers threaten the international rules-based order?
3. How does the Russian maritime strategy intersect with the Western view of the trans-Atlantic community? How does this correlate with EU and NATO understandings of security?
4. How do Russian actions in Ukraine and Africa create security issues for the United States and Europe?
5. What are Russian “active measures”, and the threat posed by economic coercion in the form of “state capture”?
6. How does the fracturing of the Collective Security Treaty Organization impact Russian security decision making?

### D. Student Preparation (48 pp; ~11 min of video)

1. Duclos, Michel. “Russia’s National Security Strategy 2021: the Era of ‘Information Confrontation’,” *Institut Montaigne*, 08 February 2021. (3 pp)
2. Chiriac, Olga, R. “The 2022 Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation: Mobilization, Maritime Law, and Socio-Economic Warfare,” *Center for International Maritime Security*, 28 November 2022. (5 pp)
3. Burna-Asefi, Sophia Nina. “Russia’s Plans Are Bigger Than Conflict with the West or Camaraderie with China,” *The Diplomat*, 08 May 2025. (3 pp)
4. Schwarzenberg, Andres B. “Russia’s Trade and Investment Role in the Global Economy,” *Congressional Research Service*, 17 January 2023. (2 pp)
5. Video: “How Russia is Taking Control of the Arctic.” *The Guardian - It's Complicated*, YouTube video, 25 January 2024, (00:00-05:53). (~6 min)
6. Alberque, William, and Paul Fraioli. “Russia’s New Foreign-Policy Concept: The Airing of Grievances and a New Vision of World Order,” *International Institute for Strategic Studies*, 13 April 2023. (3 pp)
7. Lloyd, Gabriel. “Hybrid Warfare and Active Measures.” *Small Wars Journal*, 10 October 2021. (7 pp)

8. Jones, Seth. "Russia's Shadow War Against the West," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, March 2025. (11 pp)
9. Video: "The Kremlin Playbook in Europe – State Capture of Cyprus." *Center for the Study of Democracy*, YouTube video, 15 December 2020, (00:00-4:51). (~5 min)
10. Norwegian Intelligence Service. "Focus 24: The Norwegian Intelligence Service's Assessment of Current Security Challenges, (Russia's Permanent Break with the West)," 26 January 2024, pp. 28-41. (5 pp)
11. Temnycky, Mark. "The Demise of Putin's Little Non-NATO," *Center for European Policy Analysis*, 06 September 2023. (2 pp)
12. Fink, Anya, L. "Russia's Nuclear Weapons," *Congressional Research Service*, 22 January 2025. (2 pp)
13. Bowen, Andrew, S., Manyin, Mark, E., and Mary Beth D. Nikitin. "Russia-North Korea Relations," *Congressional Research Service*, 30 October 2024. (2 pp)
14. Blackwill, Robert, D., and Richard Fontaine. "No Limits? The China-Russia Relationship and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Council on Foreign Relations*, Council Special Report No. 99, December 2024, 6-7. (1 pp)
15. Fink, Anya, L. "Russia's Nuclear and Coercive Signaling During the War in Ukraine," *Congressional Research Service*, 26 November 2024. (2 pp)
16. Arieff, Alexis, et al., "Russia's Security Operations in Africa," *Congressional Research Service*, 02 January 2025. (2 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

For FA-3, students will be assigned to one of four regionally-focused groups—the Atlantic Ocean Region, the Middle East, Africa, or Latin America. Each regionally focused group will be tasked to present a 10-12 minute PowerPoint briefing on a regionally significant security interest approved by the Professor and addressing TSDM's CLOs 1 and 2. Presentations will take place in the corresponding regional sessions at the beginning of IS-15, IS-17, IS-18, and IS-19. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance and approval provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-17

### AFRICA AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY (USAFRICOM)

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#### A. Session Overview

The African continent plays a critical role in international security. Its vast territory can harbor instability, with weak states vulnerable to terrorism, criminal networks, and violent extremism. Violent extremist groups like Boko Haram and al-Shabaab destabilize entire regions of the continent, while transnational crimes like drug trafficking and piracy threaten coastal areas. Weak governance and competition for resources exacerbate tensions, and the growing youth population strains already limited opportunities. Further complicating matters, climate change fuels competition for water and land, while the involvement of external actors with varying agendas adds another layer of complexity to finding solutions. These threats can then spill over borders, impacting international security and the achievement of U.S. national security objectives. The U.S. combatant command responsible for this region (excluding Egypt) is U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM).

Conversely, a stable and prosperous Africa contributes to a more secure world. Africa's vast resources, from minerals to fertile land, make it a key player on the world stage. This wealth, however, is often overshadowed by challenges. The continent grapples with internal conflicts, poverty, and corruption. Meanwhile, major powers vie for influence, offering investment and sometimes military aid in exchange for access to resources. This complex web of interests makes Africa a continent of both immense potential and intricate geopolitical maneuvering. By addressing these challenges through partnerships and promoting good governance, African states and the West can foster a more secure Africa and a safer world for all.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the major security challenges facing African states in the 21st Century.
  - Identify emerging trends and potential future challenges to the security of Africa (e.g., climate change, water scarcity, demographic shifts).
  - Evaluate the role of international cooperation in addressing African security challenges.
  - Understand the influence of both state non-state actors on security in Africa.
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of different strategies for promoting peace and security in Africa (e.g., diplomacy, sanctions, nation-building).
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.

- Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How can African states address the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty and lack of opportunity, while also combating VEO's? What role should external powers, such as the United States, China, and Russia, play in these efforts?
2. What are the most effective strategies for mediating and resolving internal conflicts in Africa? Does the United States have a clear vision to support peace efforts within Africa?
3. How can the international community better balance security assistance with development aid to address the root causes of conflict in Africa?
4. How can the United States and regional organizations like the African Union (AU) discourage coups and promote democratic transitions?
5. With growing populations and an increasing demand for resources, how can African states manage resource extraction and prevent conflict? What role can international actors play in promoting transparency and good governance in the resource sector?

### D. Student Preparation (54 pp; ~20 min of video)

1. Video: "U.S. Africa Command posture statement," *Senate Armed Services Committee*, 03 April 2025, (34:57-39:32). (~5 min)
2. U.S. Africa Command. "U.S. Africa Command Theater Strategy 2024-2033: African Partner Led, U.S. & Ally Enabled," 2024. (6 pp)
3. Video: "Gen Michael Langley on DMA Center Stage," *U.S. Africa Command*, YouTube video, 25 August 2023, (00:00-12:30). (~12 min)
4. The White House. "U.S. Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa," 08 August 2022. (11 pp)
5. Usman, Zainab. "The New U.S. Africa Strategy Breaks from the Status Quo – With Some Perplexing Stumbles," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 11 August 2022. (3 pp)
6. The White House. "Fact Sheet: Accelerating the U.S. – Africa Partnership After the 2022 U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit," 13 December 2023. (6 pp)
7. "Africa's 2024 Security Trends in 10 Graphics," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 17 December 2024. (7 pp)
8. Barrios, Ricardo, Caitlin Campbell, Nicolas Cook, and Michael D. Sutherland. "China and Sub-Saharan Africa," *Congressional Research Service*, 31 January 2025. (2 pp)
9. Salmon, Kinley. "Of Chaos and Coups," *The Economist: The World Ahead 2024*, 11 November 2023. (1 pp)

10. Klassen, Lisa. "A New Battleground: Russia's "Grey Zone" Warfare in the Sahel," *Oxford University Politics Blog*, 27 March 2023. (2 pp)
11. "Mapping a Surge of Disinformation in Africa," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*. 13 March 2024. (8 pp)
12. "Deaths Linked to Militant Islamist Violence in Africa Continue to Spiral," *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*. 29 January 2024. (6 pp)
13. Video: "Geopolitics and Governance in North Africa." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, YouTube video, 01 May 2023, (00:00-02:57). (~ 3 min)
14. Lu, Christina. "Washington Wants to Revive a Critical Minerals Mega-Railway Through Africa," *Foreign Policy*, 28 February 2024. (2 pp)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

For FA-3, students will be assigned to one of four regionally-focused groups—the Atlantic Ocean Region, the Middle East, Africa, or Latin America. Each regionally focused group will be tasked to present a 10-12 minute PowerPoint briefing on a regionally significant security interest approved by the Professor and addressing TSDM's CLOs 1 and 2. Presentations will take place in the corresponding regional sessions at the beginning of IS-15, IS-17, IS-18, and IS-19. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance and approval provided by the Professor.

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-18

### LATIN AMERICA AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY (USSOUTHCOM)

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#### A. Session Overview

Although often overlooked on the international stage, Latin America holds a significant position in international security for a multitude of reasons. The region is “generally understood to consist of the entire continent of South America in addition to Mexico, Central America, and the islands of the Caribbean whose inhabitants...shared the experience of conquest and colonization by the Spaniards and Portuguese from the late 15th through the 18th Century as well as movements of independence from Spain and Portugal in the early 19th Century.”<sup>2</sup> The U.S. combatant command primarily responsible for this region is U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), although U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) works in close coordination with USSOUTHCOM on issues such as drug trafficking and migration.

Latin America, perhaps more than other regions, grapples with transnational threats like drug trafficking and gang violence that spill over borders, ultimately impacting international security. Its proximity to the United States within the Western Hemisphere makes instability in Latin America a high concern for U.S. national security. The region boasts abundant natural resources, making it both a vital economic player and a potential target for external influence that could disrupt global markets. Additionally, the region's commitment (or lack thereof) to international law and its democratic trajectory holds weight in the global balance of power.

Currently, the geopolitical landscape of Latin America is in flux. Internal political polarization and a shift towards pragmatism in foreign policy are redefining alliances. The influence of the United States has waned in the region as China increases its presence and engagement with states in Latin America; Russia and Iran are likewise making inroads with the region. As a result, regional cooperation faces hurdles due to ideological divides. These dynamics play out against a backdrop of social issues and economic anxieties, making Latin America a complex and evolving region in the international system.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the major 21<sup>st</sup> Century security challenges facing Latin American states.
  - Explain the influence of the United States on security issues in Latin America.
  - Assess the growing role of China, Russia, and other external actors in Latin America's security dynamics.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Latin-America>

- Identify emerging trends and potential future challenges to security in Latin America (e.g., climate change, water scarcity, demographic shifts).
- Understand the influence of non-state actors (e.g., terrorist organizations, militias, transnational criminal organizations) on security in Latin America.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What are the biggest security challenges and opportunities facing Latin America in the coming decades?
2. Should the United States maintain its traditional role as a security guarantor in Latin America, or should it cede more ground to regional organizations?
3. How is the growing influence of China and Russia impacting security in Latin America, and what are the implications for the United States?
4. Should the definition of security in Latin America be expanded to include non-traditional threats like poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation?
5. How are transnational threats evolving in Latin America, and how can the region cooperate with international partners to combat them more effectively?

### D. Student Preparation (59 pp; ~13 min of video)

1. Video: “U.S. Southern Command posture statement,” *Senate Armed Services Committee*, 13 February 2025, (33:02-37:00). (~4 min)
2. Meyer, Peter, J., “Western Hemisphere: Issues for the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress,” *Congressional Research Service*, 15 January 2025. (2 pp)
3. Berg, Ryan, C. “Insulate, Curtail, and Compete: Sketching a U.S. Grand Strategy in Latin America and the Caribbean,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 11 May 2023. (19 pp)
4. Barrios, Ricardo, and Karla I. Rios. “China’s Engagement with Latin America and the Caribbean,” *Congressional Research Service*, 23 June 2023. (2 pp)
5. O’Neil, Shannon, K. “The United States’ Missed Opportunity in Latin America,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2024. (9 pp)
6. U.S. Southern Command. “U.S. Southern Command Strategy,” 02 January 2023. (11 pp)

7. Ratzlaff, Adam, and Emma Woods. “An Anchor in the Tumultuous Seas of US Latin America Policy: Assessing SOUTHCOM’s 2025 Posture Statement,” *Modern War Institute*, 12 March 2025. (3 pp)
8. Holmes, James. “China's Maritime Moves in South America: A Wake-Up Call for U.S. Leadership,” *The National Interest*, 18 November 2024. (2 pp)
9. Angelo, Paul, J. “A Less Lethal Latin America,” *Foreign Affairs*, 11 September 2024. (5 pp)
10. Freeman, Will, and Ryan C. Berg. “The Land That Geopolitics Forgot,” *Foreign Affairs*, 17 October 2023. (6 pp)
11. Video: “Mexico Is Building a \$7.5 Billion Trade Route to Compete with Panama Canal,” *Wall Street Journal*, 23 September 2024, (00:00-08:42).

### **E. Student Deliverables**

For FA-3, students will be assigned to one of four regionally-focused groups—the Atlantic Ocean Region, the Middle East, Africa, or Latin America. Each regionally focused group will be tasked to present a 10-12 minute PowerPoint briefing on a regionally significant security interest approved by the Professor and addressing TSDM’s CLOs 1 and 2. Presentations will take place in the corresponding regional sessions at the beginning of IS-15, IS-17, IS-18, and IS-19. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance and approval provided by the Professor.

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## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-19

### THE MIDDLE EAST AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY (USCENTCOM)

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#### A. Session Overview

The Middle East occupies a significant position within the global security landscape and is a region marked by complex and enduring geopolitical tensions. There are competing definitions of what states exactly comprise the “Middle East” (a Eurocentric term coined in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century). Generally, it can be defined as, “...the lands around the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea, encompassing at least the Arabian Peninsula and, by some definitions, Iran, North Africa, and sometimes beyond... In addition, geographic factors often require statesmen and others to take account of Afghanistan and Pakistan in connection with the affairs of the Middle East.”<sup>3</sup> The U.S. combatant command primarily responsible for this region is U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM); the regional area of responsibility for USCENTCOM in fact does include Pakistan and Afghanistan due to the geographic linkages referenced above.

The first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century witnessed significant U.S. presence and influence in the region, with the U.S. being engaged in multiple military operations in the region (e.g., Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom) following the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. homeland. Recent years have seen a shift as the United States focuses more on the security situation in the Indo-Pacific region. This has created a vacuum filled by regional powers like Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye, with each vying for influence. Further complicating the situation are ongoing conflicts, fragile states, and competition for resources like oil.

Political instability and conflict within the Middle East can disrupt these resources, impacting economies worldwide. Additionally, the region is a breeding ground for extremism and terrorism, posing a direct threat to international security. Unresolved conflicts and the presence of nuclear weapons further heighten tensions, potentially escalating into wider wars. The recent war between Israel and Hamas has once again plunged the region into uncertainty, as have the Iranian-backed Houthi attacks on international shipping in the Red Sea. Ensuring stability in the Middle East is a complex challenge, and one that has a ripple effect on international security.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the major 21<sup>st</sup> Century security challenges facing the states in the Middle East.
  - Identify emerging trends and potential future challenges to security in the Middle East (e.g., climate change, water scarcity, demographic shifts).

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Middle-East>

- Evaluate the role of international cooperation in addressing U.S. regional security challenges in the Middle East.
- Understand the influence of non-state actors (e.g., terrorist organizations, militias) on regional security.
- Understand the impact of the Middle East on global energy security and economic stability.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How do ongoing regional conflicts in the Middle East, like the Israeli-Hamas war or the fall of the Assad regime in Syria, impact international security and U.S. national security objectives within the region?
2. To what extent do sectarian tensions within the Middle East contribute to broader regional instability? Does this dynamic have an impact beyond the immediate region?
3. How is the competition for resources, like water and oil, affecting security dynamics in the region?
4. What role do external powers, such as the United States, Russia, and China, play in shaping security issues in the Middle East? How do the interests of these external actors sometimes clash and contribute to regional tensions?
5. What are the security implications of the proliferation of ballistic missiles and other weapons technologies in the region?

### D. Student Preparation (56 pp; ~13 min of video)

1. Video: “U.S. Central Command posture statement,” *Senate Armed Services Committee*, 07 March 2024, (25:30-31:08). (~ 5 min)
2. Lucas, Nathan, J. and Brendan W. McGarry. “United States Central Command.” *Congressional Research Service*, 16 December 2022. (2 pp)
3. U.S. Central Command. “Theater Strategy: People, Partners, and Innovation,” 08 June 2023. (4 pp)
4. Clayton, Thomas. “Iran: Background and U.S. Policy,” *Congressional Research Service*, 30 December 2024. (14 pp)

5. Pollack, Kenneth, M. "Iran's Grand Strategy Has Fundamentally Shifted," *Foreign Policy*, 15 August 2023. (3 pp)
6. Robinson, Kali, and Will Merrow. "Iran's Regional Armed Network," *Council on Foreign Relations*, 31 January 2024. (1 pp)
7. Brown, Phillip. "Middle East Oil," *Congressional Research Service*, 27 August 2024. (1 pp)
8. Gering, Tuvia. "Full Throttle in Neutral: China's New Security Architecture for the Middle East," Atlantic Council, 15 February 2023. (14 pp)
9. Blanchard, Christopher, M. "Syria Transition and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, 11 March 2025. (2 pp)
10. Zannotti, Jim. "The Palestinians: Overview, Aid, and U.S. Policy Issues," *Congressional Research Service*, 15 April 2025. (2 pp)
11. U.S. Department of State, "Fact Sheet: U.S. Security Cooperation with Israel," 20 January 2025. (1 pp)
12. Blanchard, Christopher, M. "Saudi Arabia," *Congressional Research Service*, 25 March 2024. (2 pp)
13. Video: "Iraq Is Building a \$17 Billion Trade Corridor to Bypass the Suez Canal," *Wall Street Journal*, 18 March 2025. (00:00-07:53).
14. Blanchard, Christopher, M. "Yemen: Conflict, Red Sea Attacks, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, 17 April 2025. (2 pp)
15. Mehrara, Maya. "Russian Navy Gets Big Boost in Red Sea," *Newsweek*, 13 February 2025. (1 pp)
16. Waller, Julian, G., et al. "The Evolving Russia-Iran Relationship," Center for Naval Analysis, January 2025, i-ii, 70-75. (7 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

For FA-3, students will be assigned to one of four regionally-focused groups—the Atlantic Ocean Region, the Middle East, Africa, or Latin America. Each regionally focused group will be tasked to present a 10-12 minute PowerPoint briefing on a regionally significant security interest approved by the Professor and addressing TSDM's CLOs 1 and 2. Presentations will take place in the corresponding regional sessions at the beginning of IS-15, IS-17, IS-18, and IS-19. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance and approval provided by the Professor.

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## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-20

### EMERGING DOMAINS: CYBER AND SPACE (USCYBERCOM / USSPACECOM)

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#### A. Session Overview

A constant theme that emerges when examining the international security environment is the dynamic nature of the environment. As such, the rapid advancement of technology is changing the character of war in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, creating a new landscape of security concerns and challenges which states are being forced to address. This session examines two specific aspects of the advance of technology and their impact on the international security environment: the domains of cyber and space.

Increasingly cyberattacks are a major concern for the United States and all states within the international community due to a heavy reliance on digital infrastructure. Such reliance makes all sectors of society more vulnerable to data breaches, disruption of critical services, and manipulation by malicious actors. States and non-state actors alike are developing more sophisticated tools to disrupt critical services, steal sensitive data, and manipulate information. This raises concerns about potential attacks on power grids, financial institutions, health institutions, and even democratic processes. The interconnectedness of the internet makes it difficult to pinpoint the origin of attacks, further complicating international efforts to establish norms and hold perpetrators accountable. The U.S. combatant command responsible for the cyber domain is U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM).

International security in outer space is also facing new threats. The increasing number of satellites orbiting Earth creates a congested environment, with debris from collisions or anti-satellite tests posing a risk to critical infrastructure. Additionally, military powers are developing capabilities to disrupt or destroy satellites, threatening communication and navigation systems relied upon globally. Furthermore, the aforementioned advent of cyberattacks are emerging as a related concern, with states and non-state actors targeting ground stations and satellites themselves. The newest CCMD, U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM), is responsible for the space domain. Overall, these issues highlight the need for international cooperation to establish norms and regulations for responsible behavior in both cyber and space, ensuring their continued use for peaceful purposes.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand how cyber threats can impact international peace and stability, the role of cyberspace in geopolitical competition, and the challenges of international cooperation in cyberspace.
  - Analyze how cyberattacks can disrupt critical infrastructure, economies, and political systems.
  - Analyze the potential for cyberwarfare and its implications for international relations.

- Understand emerging challenges in cyberspace, such as the weaponization of artificial intelligence (AI) and the rise of cyber-enabled disinformation campaigns.
- Understand the critical role space-based technologies play in modern military operations and U.S. national security.
- Evaluate the challenges of maintaining peaceful uses of outer space in an era of increasing competition.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the moral, ethical, and professional responsibilities and challenges associated with being a national security professional have on decision making.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLOs 2.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. How can the United States establish international norms for responsible state behavior in cyberspace?
2. What are the challenges of enforcing international law and norms in cyberspace, given its borderless nature?
3. The digital divide leaves certain states in the international system more vulnerable to cyberattacks. How can international efforts bridge this gap and improve global cybersecurity?
4. What role do non-state actors play in cyberattacks, and how can they be held accountable?
5. With the increasing number of states and private companies with spacefaring capabilities, how can international cooperation be fostered to ensure a peaceful and sustainable space environment?
6. What are the biggest challenges posed by the weaponization of space, and how can existing treaties be strengthened or new ones created to prevent an arms race?
7. As reliance on space-based infrastructure (e.g., GPS, communication satellites) grows, how can U.S. vulnerabilities to cyberattacks and physical disruptions be addressed on an international level?
8. How can we differentiate between legitimate space exploration and potential military activities?
9. What is the role of space assets in modern warfare, and how might it change in the future?

#### **D. Student Preparation (51 pp; ~24 min of video)**

1. Video: “U.S. Cyber Command posture statement,” *Senate Armed Services Committee*, 09 April 2025, (35:56-40:22). (~4 min)
2. Theohary, Catherine, A. “Defense Primer: Cyberspace Operations,” *Congressional Research Service*, 29 November 2024. (2 pp)
3. Video: Zegart, Amy. “Cyberwar,” *TEDxStanford*, YouTube video, 29 June 2015, (00:00-16:53). (~17 min)
4. U.S. Department of Defense. Summary 2023 Cyber Strategy of the Department of Defense. 12 September 2023. (12 pp)
5. Rollins, Sharon. “Defensive Cyber Warfare Lessons from Inside Ukraine,” *Proceedings*, Vol 149/6/1444, June 2023. (3 pp)
6. Video: “U.S. Space Command posture statement,” Senate Armed Services Committee, 26 March 2025, (34:16-39:15). (~3 min)
7. “War in Space is No Longer Science Fiction,” *The Economist*, 31 January 2024. (5 pp)
8. Ignatius, David. “China is Serious About Winning the New Space Race,” *Washington Post*, 20 July 2023. (2 pp)
9. Knutson, Jacob. “Russia Vetoes UN Resolution Denouncing use of Nuclear Weapons in Space,” *Axios*, 24 April 2024. (2 pp)
10. Rovner, Joshua. “Everything, Everywhere, All at Once? Cyberspace Operations and Chinese Strategy,” *War on the Rocks*, 25 March 2024. (4 pp)
11. Zesinger, David, and Michael Posey. “Live Long and Prosper on the Battlefield,” U.S. Army War College, *WarRoom*, 12 December 2024. (4 pp)
12. U.S. Space Force. “Space Warfighting: A Framework for Planners,” 10 April 2025, 3-20. (17 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-21

### EMERGING DOMAINS: THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY

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#### A. Session Overview

The penultimate session of the IS curriculum serves as a companion to the topics of cyber and space discussed in IS-20 and continues to explore how advances in technology influence national and theater strategies, decision making, and force design. It is an imperative that national security professionals have an understanding that, as former CJCS Gen Mark A. Milley, USA, stated in July 2023, “Geostrategic competition and rapidly advancing technology are driving fundamental changes to the character of war. Our opportunity to ensure that we maintain an enduring competitive advantage is fleeting.” Although there are many areas we could cover on the topic of technology from a national security perspective, it can be argued that three of the most consequential are the introduction of artificial intelligence (AI), unmanned systems, and hypersonic weapons. Consequently, these are the topics on which this session will focus.

The rapid development of AI has brought a new layer of complexity to international security. Concerns range from autonomous weapons making decisions on life and death to AI being used to spread dis/misinformation and manipulate populations. Biases in AI systems could exacerbate existing tensions, while the potential for theft of sensitive data or manipulation of algorithms by hostile actors raises the specter of major cyberattacks. The United States and other like-minded states are grappling with how to ensure responsible development and use of AI to prevent conflict and maintain stability.

The rise of unmanned military systems, like aerial drones or unmanned ground vehicles (UGV), is creating yet another set of international security challenges. In the maritime domain the use of both unmanned surface and subsurface vehicles is growing exponentially. Concerns in this area include the proliferation of these weapons to non-state actors and the potential for accidental or unauthorized use leading to civilian casualties. Additionally, the blurring of lines between military and commercial drones makes attribution for attacks difficult, raising questions about how and when to retaliate. These powerful technologies are constantly evolving, and as with AI, the United States, other like-minded states, and IGOs such as the United Nations and the European Union are scrambling to develop regulations and norms to prevent their destabilization of international security.

Finally, hypersonic missiles are at the cutting edge of weaponry, traveling at mind-boggling speeds exceeding five times the speed of sound. This extreme velocity allows them to cover vast distances in a fraction of the time compared to traditional missiles, making them difficult to intercept, potentially destabilizing the balance of power between states, and raising the risk of regional conflicts escalating. Additionally, the speed of these weapons could compress decision making times in a crisis, increasing the chances of miscalculation. Currently, the United States, Russia, and China are in a race to develop and deploy these powerful weapons, raising concerns about their impact on international security.

## **B. Objectives**

- Session Objectives
  - Analyze the risks and challenges posed by AI in the international security environment.
  - Understand how unmanned systems are changing the nature of warfare.
  - Analyze the implications of unmanned systems for force structure and decision making.
  - Analyze how hypersonic weapons could destabilize the balance of power between states.
  - Analyze the challenges hypersonic weapons pose to deterrence strategies.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the moral, ethical, and professional responsibilities and challenges associated with being a national security professional have on decision making.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - Supports NWC PLOs 2.

## **C. Guidance Questions**

1. What are the long-term geopolitical ramifications of a world where some states have a significant advantage in AI capabilities?
2. How can we ensure that AI development benefits all states and contributes to global stability?
3. How will AI-powered autonomous weapons systems change the nature of warfare?
4. How can the United States avoid an AI arms race between competing powers?
5. How is the easy accessibility and affordability of unmanned systems impacting U.S. national security interests?
6. How will the increasing autonomy of unmanned systems impact decision making and accountability in warfare?
7. How might hypersonic weapons affect existing deterrence strategies and the balance of power between states?

#### **D. Student Preparation (32 pp; ~47 min of video)**

1. Sayler, Kelley, M. "Defense Primer: Emerging Technologies," *Congressional Research Service*, 04 November 2024. (2 pp)
2. Linn, Thomas, C. "International Security in the Age of Artificial Intelligence," Faculty Paper, College of Distance Education, U.S. Naval War College, 06 May 2025. (15 pp)
3. Video: "The AI Arsenal That Could Stop World War III," *TED Talks*, YouTube video, 08 April 2025, (00:00-10:39) (~10 min)
4. Harper, Jon." Combatant commands to get new generative AI tech for operational planning, wargaming," *Defense Scoop*, 05 March 2025. (1 pp)
5. Video: "The Future of War," *The Economist*, YouTube video, 04 July 2023, (00:00-16:38). (~17 min)
6. "How Oceans Became New Technological Battlefields," *The Economist*, 03 July 2023. (2 pp)
7. Sayler, Kelley, M. "DOD Replicator Initiative: Background and Issues for Congress," *Congressional Research Service*, 02 December 2024. (2 pp)
8. Tucker, Patrick. "Navy Envisions 'Hundreds of Thousands' of Drones in the Pacific to Deter China," *Defense One*, 16 February 2024. (2 pp)
9. Ackerman, Elliot, and James Stavridis. "Drone Swarms Are About to Change the Balance of Military Power," *Wall Street Journal*, 16 March 2024. (1 pp)
10. Video: "How Ukraine's Boat Drones Sank a THIRD of the Black Sea Fleet and Changed Naval Warfare Forever," *Daily Mail*, 15 March 2024, (00:00-13:12). (~13 min)
11. Sayler, Kelley, M. "Defense Primer: Hypersonic Boost-Glide Weapons," *Congressional Research Service*, 01 November 2024. (2 pp)
12. Video: "The Race to Build Hypersonic Missiles," *Wall Street Journal*, YouTube video, 31 May 2022, (00:00-07:21). (~ 7 min)
13. Holmes, James. "When Machines Go to War," *The National Interest*, 29 March 2025. (3 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY-22

### THE FUTURE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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#### A. Session Overview

Throughout the IS sessions students were exposed to a wide variety of topics concerning the dynamic character of the international security environment, strategic guidance, and strategy formulation. This final session of the IS portion of the TSDM course serves as an opportunity to reflect on the myriad elements that constitute the international security environment and look forward; debating the possible challenges and opportunities to international security that are emerging in the coming decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

As illustrated via the five IS themes and the student readings and videos within each session, the evolving international security environment presents a complex landscape of challenges and opportunities. Traditional threats like interstate conflict, geopolitical competition and nuclear proliferation persist, while issues like “gray zone” operations by U.S. adversaries, the race for control of the Arctic / Antarctica and the weaponization of emerging technologies loom large. Transnational threats continue to place pressure on states when it comes to making decisions regarding the allocation of finite resources in the pursuit of achieving one’s national security objectives.

However, these very challenges also open doors for cooperation. Increased global interconnectedness necessitates international collaboration to address transnational threats. Technological advancements, if harnessed for good, can create tools for conflict prevention, communication, and disaster response. The ability of the United States to navigate this complex environment, foster diplomacy, and prioritize collective security will be paramount to achieving U.S. national security objectives and in shaping a more stable future.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand how states engage across the competition continuum to advance their interests in both the contemporary and future international security environment.
  - Comprehend the implications of the cooperative efforts between authoritarian powers to U.S. national security.
  - Understand the challenges of gray zone operations.
  - Comprehend the implications of the growing geopolitical competition for control of the Arctic / Antarctica Ocean Regions.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.

- Supports NWC Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) 2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Do the conflicting visions of the international order between the United States (and its allies) and the rising tide of authoritarian powers (i.e., China, Russia) mean that future global conflict is inevitable? Why or why not?
2. Is the future of the Arctic and Antarctic Ocean Regions going to be determined by the parameters of the U.S.-China-Russia strategic competition?
3. What challenges do expanding “gray zone” operations by China and Russia present to international security?
4. What factors affect relations across the Taiwan Strait and, particularly, the likelihood of conflict? How do concepts like the balance of power, security dilemma, bandwagoning, and deterrence help us understand these issues?
5. Projecting forward into the coming decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, how do you foresee the role of emerging technologies impacting international security?

### D. Student Preparation (41 pp; ~6 min of video)

1. Bremer, Maximillian, K. “The Four Tyrannies of Logistical Deterrence,” *Stimson Center*, 08 November 2023. (6 pp)
2. Lin, Bonny, John Culver, and Brian Hart. “The Risk of War in the Taiwan Strait Is High—and Getting Higher,” *Foreign Affairs*, 15 May 2025. (5 pp)
3. Chivvis, Christopher, S. “The Fragile Axis of Upheaval,” *Foreign Affairs*, 18 March 2025. (4 pp)
4. Video: “Understanding Gray Zones,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, YouTube video, 07 December 2018. (00:00-04:17). (~4 min)
5. Stroul, Dana. “The Narrow Path to a New Middle East,” *Foreign Affairs*, 01 April 2025. (7 pp)
6. Yoshihara, Toshi, and Casey Nicastro. “The Chinese Military’s Challenges in the 2030s,” *The National Interest*, 03 April 2025. (4 pp)
7. Cook, Ellie. “Europe Quietly Prepares for World War III,” *Newsweek*, 04 December 2024. (4 pp)
8. Video: “Could There Be Conflict Over Antarctica?” *The Economist*, 2025. (00:00-02:29) (~2 min)

9. United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. “International Security 2045: Exploring Futures for Peace, Security and Disarmament,” 18 January 2024, 13-15, 17-23. (8 pp)
10. Predd, Joel, B., et al. “Thinking Through Protracted War with China: Nine Scenarios,” *RAND*, 26 February 2025, iv-vii. (3 pp)
11. Defense Intelligence Agency. “Golden Dome for America: Current and Future Missile Threats to the U.S. Homeland,” 13 May 2025. (1 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

No later than the beginning of IS-21 in Week 15, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-2—an analytic research paper addressing CLO-2. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard.

## ANNEX E

### TSDM – FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS STUDY GUIDE

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#### Foreign Policy Analysis Sessions Overview

The Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) sessions provide students with an opportunity to develop a critical understanding of the domestic and international influences that can shape national security policy at the theater level. An appreciation for the complexity of the foreign policy making environment—and the often-cumbersome processes it entails—is essential for any national security professional. As military officers and civilian leaders progress from tactical roles to broader operational and strategic responsibilities, a firm grasp of how policy is formulated and influenced becomes increasingly important. Through these sessions, students will develop the ability to analyze complex, multidisciplinary national security issues by examining the range of domestic and international actors and forces that impact national security decision making. They will also gain insight into how national security policies are developed and implemented across multiple organizational levels, from within individual agencies or Services and cabinet-level departments (U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), U.S. Department of State (DoS), etc.) to the broader U.S. Government (USG) and the international system.

- a. *Division I: Introduction to Foreign Policy Analysis* (FPA 1—2) lays the foundation for FPA sessions by introducing students to the basic theory underlying policy analysis and briefly reviewing the relevant constitutional and statutory authorities granted to the nation’s policymakers, as well as providing a notional framework used for analyzing complex foreign policy case studies. The division then examines a seminal foreign policy analysis case: The Cuban Missile Crisis, considering the myriad factors influencing decision makers during thirteen days in October 1962. The Cuban Missile Crisis case serves as the first in a series of case studies aimed at challenging students to apply analytical tools and critical thinking to enhance understanding of U.S. foreign policy decision making
- b. *Division II: The U.S. National Security Environment* (FPA 3—17) comprises the majority of the FPA sessions. It examines how national- and theater-level security policy is devised and implemented within the U.S. government. Constitutional authorities, along with important reforms such as the National Security Act of 1947 and the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, will help inform the discussions in these sessions. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the various analytical perspectives in the academic field of FPA, as well as the role played by the presidency, the national security council, interagency partners, Congress and its committees/sub-committees, the media, lobbyists, think tanks, and so on within the policy making process. In addition, students will be expected to gain a broad understanding of the complex world of force planning, including the realities of force planning, and will revisit some of the formal processes that help translate strategies into defense priorities and action.
- c. *Division III: International Influences on National Security Policy* (FPA 18—20) examines the forces, actors, and factors in the global/international system that affect the decision making process and the development of policy. National security professionals, as they

advance in their careers, will be confronted with international political, cultural, religious, and ideological issues, all of which can influence U.S. national security policy and its implementation. Students will examine all these issues in seminar culminating with a complex case study requiring the application of all concepts covered throughout the FPA sessions.

- d. *Division IV: FPA Synthesis* (FPA 21—22) provides a synthesis case study, course review, future foreign policy challenge, and summative assessment review. The synthesis case study will provide the opportunity to comprehensively exercise and apply analytical tools and concepts from FPA sessions to a complex and contemporary national security case study. Using the tools, techniques, and concepts presented in FPA, students will analyze a national and/or theater security issue and identify relevant factors in both the domestic-internal (staff/organization), domestic-external (etc. think tanks/media/public opinion), as well as the international (or external) environment, including U.S. and global elements. Students will also apply these tools and concepts in a future-oriented foreign policy scenario to prepare for an environment where one must anticipate foreign policy decisions.

### **Foreign Policy Analysis Focus**

FPA is designed to enhance the professional competence of students who will serve as practitioners in the national security environment—such as a combatant command staff, a Service staff, or when in command. FPA sessions will increase comprehension of the role of the national security professional through understanding:

- The range of domestic and international actors and influences that can affect the decision making process and formulation of national security and defense policy.
- The formal (and informal) processes through which significant national security policy decisions are made and how decisions can shape and/or alter theater security policy.

### **Foreign Policy Analysis Guidance**

The FPA study guide (Annex E) is the primary planning document for the FPA sessions. For each session, it will provide a session overview, the objectives and learning outcomes covered in that session, general guidance for seminar preparation, the required student preparation (readings, videos, podcasts, etc.), and outlines any student deliverables and their associated suspense. Student preparation materials should be approached in the order listed, using the session guidance as an aid.

### **Foreign Policy Analysis Deliverables**

Students are expected to complete all preparation materials prior to each session. The major graded deliverable (Summative Assessment 3) requires students to conduct a rigorous analysis of a complex foreign policy case.

ANNEX E

TSDM – FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS  
STUDY GUIDE

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# FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-1

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS FOR PRACTITIONERS

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### A. Session Overview

From the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, to the decision to invade Iraq in 2003, to the decision to supply military materiel and intelligence to Ukraine in 2022, history shows that national security policy is rarely the product of formal authority alone. Behind every major decision, complex domestic, bureaucratic, and international forces are at work, often driving decisions as much as, or at times more than, formal authorities, statutes, or constitutional provisions. Understanding these forces is at the heart of FPA.

Serving as the first of two sessions in *Division I: Introduction to Foreign Policy Analysis*, this session lays the foundation for the study of foreign policy decision making by introducing the basic theories and frameworks of FPA. It also briefly reviews the constitutional and statutory authorities granted to national security policymakers, setting the foundation for discussions on the formal structures that shape the policy making environment. However, as the examples above suggest, formal authorities tell only part of the story. Informal actors and elements ranging from public opinion, bureaucratic infighting, interest group lobbying, media narratives, and international pressures, routinely shape, constrain, or accelerate foreign policy decisions.

FPA is specifically designed to increase student appreciation for these diverse domestic, bureaucratic, and international influences that affect every organization involved with national security decision making. This introductory session is designed to familiarize all national security professionals, especially those at the combatant command level, with the increasingly diverse and demanding pressures that shape future national security policies.

### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Describe the general requirements and content of FPA sessions.
  - Identify the key domestic, international, and theater-level actors, as well as the bureaucratic processes that profoundly impact national security affairs.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Foreign policy decisions may be less about what a president or other leaders want and more about what options are possible given political and systemic limitations. What are some of those restraints? How might they affect foreign policy decisions?
2. This session introduces concepts like “two-level games” and “levels of analysis” that will be explored in greater detail throughout the FPA sessions. For now, what are your initial thoughts/impressions on the basic concepts behind these terms? In broad terms, how might they explain how international and domestic political systems interact to influence foreign policy decision making?
3. Why should military officers study foreign policy analysis? If so, why? If not, why? Why might it be beneficial for national security professionals to dissect and investigate foreign policy decisions?
4. Decision makers inevitably must act with incomplete information. Foreign policy analysts face similar informational challenges. What information would be especially important in a foreign policy context, and what data are easiest to come by, harder to come by, and nearly impossible to come by? What tools and methods can analysts use to better understand foreign policy actions and their consequences?

### D. Student Preparation (52 pp; ~33 min of video)

1. Blankshain, Jessica D. and Nikolas K. Gvosdev. “Understanding Foreign Policy Analysis,” Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, National Security Affairs Department, Newport, RI, 2015. Revised for the College of Distance Education by Professor Christopher Faulkner, October 2023. (16 pp)
2. Knott, Stephen F., Andrew Stigler, and Nikolas K. Gvosdev. “Introduction to Foreign Policy Analysis,” Faculty paper, Naval War College, Newport, RI, 2015. Revised for the College of Distance Education, Summer 2023. (20 pp)
3. Video: “The Debrief Episode 1: Analytic Perspectives of Foreign Policy Decision-Making.” National Security Affairs Department, U.S. Naval War College, 27 September 2023, (00:00 – 33:18).
4. Gvosdev, Nikolas K. “Should Military Officers Study Policy Analysis?” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, 76, (1<sup>st</sup> Qtr, 2015): 30-34. (4 pp)
5. Blankshain, Jessica D. and Andrew L. Stigler, "Applying Method to Madness: A User's Guide to Causal Inference in Policy Analysis," *Texas National Security Review* 3, no. 3 (2020): 76-89. (12 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

Prior to the start of FPA-7 in Week 19, students are required to successfully complete FA-4 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-2

### CASE STUDY: THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS (1962)

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#### A. Session Overview

Few moments in American history better illustrate the stakes and complexity of national security decision making than the Cuban Missile Crisis. For 13 days in October 1962, the United States and the Soviet Union moved perilously close to nuclear war. At the core of the confrontation were Soviet missiles in Cuba, capable of striking most of the U.S. homeland. In a fog of uncertainty, conflicting intelligence, and competing policy recommendations, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and U.S. President John F. Kennedy sought to achieve their geostrategic and political objectives while desperately working to avoid nuclear catastrophe. Long heralded as a model of presidential decision making, deeper examination reveals a far more complicated and nuanced process, marked by bureaucratic friction, domestic and international political constraints, misperceptions, and improvisation.

A key objective of the FPA sessions is to help students dissect and understand the United States' national security decision making processes, using cases like the Cuban Missile Crisis to highlight the enduring challenges of foreign policy making. An appreciation of the complex—and at times cumbersome—nature of this process is vital for any national security professional. This case study serves as the first in a series of cases throughout the FPA sessions that will demand increasingly sophisticated application of analytical frameworks, critical thinking skills, and the ability to generate meaningful explanatory power when evaluating U.S. foreign and national security decision making.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Analyze and explain the influential factors in a complex national security case.
  - Identify the various actors and factors in the Cuban Missile Crisis that impacted U.S. decision making and how they impacted the decisions.
  - Assess how different analytical perspectives can be used to provide a more complete understanding of the forces active in foreign policy decision making.
  - Assess how such an understanding might be useful in determining probable outcomes of ongoing national security decisions.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Consider how both the United States and the Soviet Union viewed the crisis. Why did the Soviet Union attempt to place offensive missiles in Cuba in the first place?
2. Why did the U.S. choose to respond to the Soviet missile emplacement with a quarantine of Cuba? Why not make an alternative decision? Why respond at all?
3. Why did the Soviet Union decide to withdraw the missiles?
4. How might the Cuban Missile Crisis help in understanding the potential for nuclear confrontation today?

### D. Student Preparation (50 pp; ~55 min of video)

1. Allison, Graham. "The Cuban Missile Crisis," in *Foreign Policy: Theories Actors Cases*, 3rd edition. Edited by Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, and Tim Dunne. Oxford University Press, 2016, 256-272. (15 pp)
2. Video: "The Cuban Missile Crisis: At the Brink." *PBS*, 1992, (00:00 – 54:45).
3. "The World on the Brink. John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *John F. Kennedy Presidential Library* (Review each of the 13 Thirteen Days). (6 pp)
4. Radchenko, Sergey, and Vladislav Zubok. "Blundering on the Brink: The Secret History and Unlearned Lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis," *Foreign Affairs*, 03 April 2023. (20 pp)
5. Allison, Graham. "Putin's Domsday Threat: How to Prevent a Repeat of the Cuban Missile Crisis in Ukraine," *Foreign Affairs*, 05 April 2022. (9 pp)

### E. Student Deliverables

Prior to the start of FPA-7 in Week 19, students are required to successfully complete FA-4 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-3

### TWO-LEVEL GAMES: SOURCES OF INFLUENCE IN POLICY MAKING

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#### A. Session Overview

Whether negotiations over an Iranian nuclear deal to stop the development of a nuclear weapon or contemporary tensions with the PRC surrounding U.S.-Taiwan relations, such interactions reveal a critical truth about U.S. foreign policy: it is shaped by both domestic political dynamics as well as by international bargaining. At the intersection of these two arenas lies a far more complicated story of how national security policy is truly made.

Serving as the start of *Division II: The U.S. National Security Environment*, this session unpacks the complexity of policy making at the national and theater levels, examining how security policy is devised and implemented across the U.S. government. Building directly on concepts introduced in the previous two sessions, students will now move beyond the simplistic "black box" assumptions of the rational actor model to explore the real-world influences that domestic and international actors exert on foreign policy decision making.

Central to this exploration is the formal introduction of the concept of two-level games, first articulated by political scientist Robert Putnam. While students encountered elements of this paradigm during their analysis of the Cuban Missile Crisis, this session provides a structured theoretical framework for understanding how leaders must simultaneously negotiate at two interconnected levels: the international arena (Level I) and the domestic political landscape (Level II). Through a detailed case study of the 2009–2015 Iran nuclear negotiations that culminated in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and through consideration of U.S.-Taiwan relations today, students will see how two-level dynamics can define the limits or opportunities of foreign policy choices and shape the outcomes of critical national security decisions.

#### B. Session Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Examine two-level games as a foreign policy decision making framework.
  - Understand the importance of other states' foreign policy decision making processes.
  - Apply the two-level game framework to a case study to evaluate a U.S. foreign policy decision.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What is the two-level games framework? How does it help to explain how international and domestic political systems interact to influence U.S. national security policy making?
2. Why is it important to understand the motivations and domestic political systems of other states when conducting foreign policy analysis?
3. How can FPA tools be adapted to better understand decisions outside the U.S. context?
4. What domestic actors were influential in the Iranian nuclear negotiations, and how? What international actors/influencers were impactful, and how?
5. How does the Taiwan issue fit into the two-level games' framework? Who are the influential players, both domestically and internationally?

### D. Student Preparation (60 pp; ~8 min video)

1. Gvosdev, Nikolas K., Jessica D. Blankshain and David A. Cooper. "Domestic Politics," in *Decision-Making in American Foreign Policy: Translating Theory into Practice*, Ch. 9: 284-296. 2019. New York: Cambridge University Press. (12 pp)
2. Video: Blankshain, Jessica D. "Two-level Games," U.S. Naval War College, 21 August 2020, (00:00 – 7:54).
3. Gvosdev, Nikolas K., Jessica D. Blankshain and David A. Cooper. "Other Countries," in *Decision-Making in American Foreign Policy: Translating Theory into Practice*, Ch. 10: 334-345, 360-367. 2019. New York: Cambridge University Press. (18 pp)
4. Hurst, Steven. "The Iranian Nuclear Negotiations as a Two-Level Game: The Importance of Domestic Politics." *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 27, no. 3 (2016): 545–567. (16 pp)
5. Blanchette, Jude, and Ryan Hass. "The Taiwan Long Game: Why the Best Solution is No Solution," *Foreign Affairs*, 20 December 2022. (14 pp)

### E. Student Deliverables

Prior to the start of FPA-7 in Week 19, students are required to successfully complete FA-4 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-4

### UNDERSTANDING ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESS

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#### A. Session Overview

From the Joint Staff in the Pentagon, to a combatant command headquarters overseas, to a bureau at the State Department, military and interagency organizations are central to how the United States formulates and implements national security policy. Their structures, cultures, and processes profoundly shape how information is managed, decisions are made, and policies are carried out. Military and civilian staffs are essential components of the U.S. national security enterprise, each serving a multitude of purposes and performing a wide range of tasks. While every staff is to some degree unique, major organizations—whether military or civilian—tend to follow recognizable patterns of behavior and employ specific standard operating procedures (SoPs).

Understanding these patterns enables national security professionals to anticipate potential actions and reactions within the policy making process. Organizational structures affect how staffs gather and analyze information, assign work, set priorities, and make key decisions. Over time, organizations also develop distinct internal cultures that further influence behavior, communication, and operational dynamics.

For national security professionals working within major staffs, recognizing the influence of organizational behavior is critical. A clear grasp of these dynamics can not only influence individual performance but also helps mitigate frustration by distinguishing between factors within one's control and the larger institutional forces at play. Professionals who can navigate and influence their organizational environments are far better positioned to contribute meaningfully to their staffs' missions—and to the broader objectives of U.S. national security.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Identify the behavioral characteristics and limitations of organizations, such as a major staff, in formulating and implementing effective policies.
  - Identify the behavioral characteristics of and competing cultures inside different types of military and civilian organizations.
  - Examine the possible cascading and reinforcing effects of organizational behavior on mission accomplishment.
  - Apply the organizational process perspective to a case study to better understand a U.S. foreign policy
- Learning Outcomes

- CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
- CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
- Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How is the organizational process perspective distinct from the unitary state perspective?
2. Every government organization—whether a department, agency, Service, or staff—develops its own culture. How do different cultures and sub-cultures impact the way in which organizations operate internally and externally? Can you think of examples in your own career of instances where organizational behavior affected decision making, processes, or practices?
3. How might national security professionals operating in the national security policy arena navigate the dynamics of organizational processes to assure mission success?
4. How does the organizational process perspective help explain/understand the 2007 Minot-Barksdale Bent Spear incident?
5. How does the organizational process perspective help explain/understand challenges related to security force assistance and building partner capacity?
6. How does organizational inertia within large bureaucracies like the Pentagon undermine strategic adaptation, and what mechanisms—internal or external—might force meaningful organizational change?

### D. Student Preparation (56 pp; ~13 min of video)

1. Gvosdev, Nikolas K., Jessica D. Blankshain and David A. Cooper. "Organizational Process Perspective," in *Decision-Making in American Foreign Policy: Translating Theory into Practice*, Ch. 10: 125-161. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019. (34 pp)
2. Video: Blankshain, Jessica. "The Organizational Process Perspective," U.S. Naval War College, 17 August 2020, (00:00 – 12:58).
3. Grier, Peter. "Misplaced Nukes," *Air and Space Forces Magazine*, 26 June 2017. (8 pp)
4. Tecott, Rachel. "Why America Can't Build Allied Armies: Afghanistan is Just the Latest Failure," *Foreign Affairs*, 26 August 2021. (4 pp)
5. Eaglen, Mackenzie. "Just Say No: The Pentagon Needs to Drop the Distractions and Move Great Power Competition Beyond Lip Service," *War on the Rocks*, 28 October 2019. (10 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

Prior to the start of FPA-7 in Week 19, students are required to successfully complete FA-4 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-5

### THE PRESIDENCY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

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#### A. Session Overview

As outlined in Article II of the Constitution, the President is vested with executive power and is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States. While many observers argue that the Constitution created an “invitation to struggle” between Congress and the President for control of the nation’s foreign and defense policies, during the last two centuries, wars, and other national emergencies have increased the power of the presidency relative to the Legislative Branch. Various technological developments, from the rise of radio and television to the advent of nuclear weapons and artificial intelligence, have also enhanced the power of the presidency, with some critics arguing that this led to the creation of an “imperial presidency.”

This expansion of presidential power is evident throughout American history. During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln asserted sweeping executive authority, including the suspension of habeas corpus without congressional approval. Franklin D. Roosevelt’s use of emergency powers during the Great Depression and World War II further entrenched expectations of a strong executive. In the Cold War, Harry Truman reinforced this trend by committing U.S. forces to Korea without a formal declaration of war. More recently, post-9/11 national security measures under George W. Bush, such as the authorization of surveillance programs and military tribunals through executive orders, have reignited longstanding debates over executive overreach. As these examples illustrate, crises, technological change, and evolving threats have repeatedly shifted the distribution of power toward the President, raising enduring questions about accountability, limits, and the role of the Executive relative to Congress in national security governance. This session tackles these questions related to checks and balances, and others, examining the power of the presidency in national security affairs.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Analyze the Article 2 powers vested in the President and identify the tools available in shaping and implementing foreign policy.
  - Understand the role of, and tools available to, presidents in shaping and implementing the national security agenda.
  - Analyze how the interpretation of Article 2 outlined in the Constitution conflict with Article 1 and the power of the Legislative branch in areas related to theater and national security.
  - Examine how an individual decision maker (the President) can be affected by their experiences, expertise, biases, heuristics, emotions, and belief systems.

- Identify the role of risk and uncertainty in cognitive processes that impact decision making in policy making.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What Constitutional powers are reserved for the president? What powers are not explicitly directed, and how has executive authority developed and evolved?
2. Are personal qualities important in understanding how presidents perform their duties, as the readings suggest? How might their approaches have impacted their ability to accomplish U.S. national security objectives?
3. How have presidents shaped or utilized their administrations to help them make decisions? The president's inner circle has unique access to the president. How do presidents organize and integrate advisors into policy decisions? What are common trends, and what are the outliers?
4. Presidents bring a wide variety of experiences and influences with them into the office. How do those shape their foreign policy agendas and their decision making?
5. What cognitive paradigms (reflexes, habits, intuition, synthesis, leadership traits) have presidents relied upon in the past?

### D. Student Preparation (68 pp; ~17 min of video)

1. The Constitution of the United States, Article II. (2 pp)
2. Video: Knott, Stephen. "NWC Talks, Presidential Power and National Security," U.S. Naval War College, 2019, (00:00 – 17:15).
3. Brattebo, Douglas M. and Tom Lansford. "The Presidency and Decision-making," in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited by Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and John Cloud, 97–110. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. (13 pp)
4. Dickerson, John. "The Hardest Job in the World. What if the Problem Isn't the President—it's the Presidency?" *The Atlantic*, 321, no. 4 (2018): 47-63. (16 pp)
5. Klein, Ezra. "The Green Lantern Theory of the Presidency Explained," *Vox*, 20 May 2014. (4 pp)

6. Gvosdev, Nikolas K., Jessica D. Blankshain and David A. Cooper. "Cognitive Perspective," in *Decision-Making in American Foreign Policy: Translating Theory into Practice*, Ch. 4: 88-124. 2019. New York: Cambridge University Press. (32 pp)
7. "AI Models Could Help Negotiators Secure Peace Deals," *The Economist*, 16 April 2025. (3 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

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No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-6

### THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS, NSC, AND PALACE POLITICS

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#### A. Session Overview

The interagency decision making process, at both the national and the theater levels, develops policy and coordinates the entire range of agencies and departments charged with U.S. national security. While interagency coordination in national security affairs occurs at the national level through the National Security Council (NSC) and the NSC Staff assigned to support it or through interagency working groups, similar coordinating efforts occur at the theater level as well. Gabriel Marcella of the U.S. Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute observes:

The interagency decision making process is uniquely American in character, size, and complexity. The process also reflects the constant tension between the reality of global commitments and the constraints imposed by America's lofty values and its imperfect institutions, a concern shared by the founding fathers and enshrined in the system of checks and balances.

A large number of departments and agencies beyond the DoD and DoS have important national security-related responsibilities and, as a result, are active participants in the interagency process. Even policy decisions that are primarily military can be directly affected by non-military agencies. Studying the interagency process can help increase effectiveness as a national security professional and is essential to understanding how foreign and security policy is developed within the Executive Branch.

This session focuses directly on the NSC, how it was created, how it is generally organized, how it has changed with each president, and how it ideally helps the president (ideally) make better, more well-informed policies and decisions. It also considers the variety of top-level officials involved in decision making, the formal/informal relationships, internal rivalries, and palace intrigue that impact policy decision making. Understanding how these individuals relate, gain access, and interact with the president can help understand the ultimate policy or decision that results. At the theater level, the session considers the interagency process designed to advise combatant commanders and U.S. ambassadors. From an interagency vantage, these leaders are supported by country teams within U.S. embassies and a combatant commander staff element, including political advisors (POLADs), at times known as Joint Interagency Coordination Groups or JIACGs.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Assess the role of the NSC and NSC Staff in facilitating the interagency process.
  - Analyze the general structure of the interagency process at the national and theater levels.

- Assess the competing missions of the agencies participating in national security policy development.
  - Identify the challenges in promoting the coordination of national security policy across the various agencies and departments of government.
  - Understand the concept of palace politics and its applicability to FPA.
  - Analyze how the interagency process at both the national and theater levels work to prevent or minimize contradictions in U.S. policy.
- Learning Outcomes
    - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
    - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Why is this perspective termed "palace politics," and how does it help in analyzing foreign policy decision making? What examples stand out from the readings to illustrate the palace politics approach? What are other cases where similar dynamics may be at work?
2. How has the NSC changed over time, and what has led to these changes? What issues should the NSC primarily address? How does the NSC facilitate interagency interaction, and what challenges may be brought about by the NSC?
3. Compare and contrast the different individuals selected to serve as Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (APNSA). Were there common themes across administrations?
4. What are some of the main challenges with interagency coordination at the theater-level? How might these challenges imperil national security?

### D. Student Preparation (60 pp; ~65 min of video)

1. Schake, Kori. "The National Security Process," in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited by Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and John Cloud, New York: NY: Oxford University Press, 2018, Ch. 7: 123-132. (9 pp)
2. Chollet, Derek. "The National Security Council: Is it Effective or Is it Broken?" in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited by Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and John Cloud. New York: NY: Oxford University Press, 2018, Ch. 6: 111-121. (9 pp)
3. Gates, Robert M. "Chapter 5: Beyond Iraq: A Complicated World," in *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War*, 171-177. 2014. New York: Alfred Knopf. (6 pp)

4. Video: “Gatekeepers: The White House Chief of Staff,” *Harvard Kennedy School Institute of Politics*, 12 September 2017 (00:00 to 45:00).
5. Gvosdev, Nicholas, Jessica Blankshain, and David Cooper. “Palace Politics Perspective,” in *Decision-Making in American Foreign Policy: Translating Theory into Practice*, Ch. 7: 192-223. 2019. New York: Cambridge University Press. (30 pp)
6. Carter, Alexander. “Improving Joint Interagency Coordination: Changing Mindsets,” *NDU Press*, 01 October 2015. (6 pp)
7. Video: “The Debrief Episode 10: The Interagency and the Indo-Pacific,” National Security Affairs Department, U.S. Naval War College, 02 February 2024, (00:00 – 20:10).

### **E. Student Deliverables**

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-7

### CONGRESS' ROLE IN NATIONAL SECURITY

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#### A. Session Overview

As the constitutional scholar Edwin Corwin once famously observed, the Constitution is an “invitation to struggle for the privilege of directing American foreign policy.” Although many scholars and casual observers argue that the Executive Branch dominates when it comes to national security policy making, the Legislative Branch does have the ability to significantly influence national security policy. Article I of the Constitution grants Congress certain powers regarding national security: to declare war, raise and support armies, provide and maintain a Navy, make rules for regulating the land and naval forces, and organize the militia, calling it into federal service when necessary.

This session examines Congress' roles and responsibilities in crafting legislation dealing with national security and in providing oversight of Executive Branch departments and agencies, including the military establishment. Student preparation materials highlight the interplay between military officers and other national security professionals with elements of the Legislative Branch with the intent of lessening what Admiral William Crowe, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), described as an understanding gap: “Congress does not understand the military well, and the converse is also true.” Students should also gain insight into the influence of outside actors (e.g., interest groups, lobbyists, and think tanks) on the congressional agenda. These actors will be discussed in greater detail in follow-on sessions.

One of the most visible interactions between DoD and Congress involves the annual budget. National leaders develop a strategy, determine what capabilities are required to achieve its objectives, and articulate how military forces are expected to be employed in the service of national strategy. However, given that resources are finite, as discussed in IS-11, the DoD must balance different and competing priorities and allocate available resources. In turn, both the White House—which is charged with preparing the overall budget of the federal government—and Congress—which, per the Constitution, holds the power of the purse—must assess the DoD's budget submission and come to a final resolution regarding priorities and funding. This session introduces the importance of the power of the purse while FPA-9 examines Congress' role in authorizing and appropriating (funding).

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Analyze the structure of Congress and its role in passing laws, appropriating funds, and conducting oversight of the Executive Branch, as well as the processes that the Legislative Branch employs to influence policy.
  - Examine how and why military officers and other national security professionals interact with the Legislative Branch.

- Analyze how Congress interacts with the Executive Branch, especially the DoD, to establish effective national security policies, institutions, and processes.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What powers does Congress have in creating, shaping, and influencing national security policies?
2. What limitations exist that prevent Congress from fully exercising its authority in the realm of national security?
3. How and why has Congress delegated its authority to the Executive Branch? How might Congress reclaim its Constitutional authority in the realm of national security?
4. How do military professionals interact with Congress, and how do these interactions impact national security?

### D. Student Preparation (68 pp; ~44 min of video/podcast)

1. The Constitution of the United States, Article I. (4 pp)
2. Serafino, Nina M., and Eleni G. Ekmektsioglou. "Congress and National Security," in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and John A. Cloud, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018, Ch. 9: 151-182. (27 pp)
3. Video: "The Debrief Episode 4: Congress: Your Partner in National Security," National Security Affairs Department, U.S. Naval War College, 09 November 2023, (00:00 – 18:09).
4. Podcast: "How is Congress Involved in Foreign Policy (with Jordan Tama)," *The American Enterprise Institute: Understanding Congress Podcast*, Episode 39, 02 October 2023, (00:00 – 26:40).
5. Tama, Jordan. "The Surprising Bipartisanship of U.S. Foreign Policy." *Foreign Affairs*, 06 July 2023. (8 pp)
6. U.S Naval War College Faculty. "Congress and the Creation of USSOCOM," Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI, May 2013, 1-13. (11 pp)
7. Guenov, Tressa, and Tommy Ross. "At a Crossroads, Part I: How Congress Can Find Its Way Back to Effective Defense Oversight." *War on the Rocks*, 09 March 2018. (10 pp)

8. Murphy, Chris. "National Security is Stronger When Congress is Involved. Here's How We Get Back to the Table." *War on the Rocks*, 20 July 2021. (5 pp)
9. Beavers, Elizabeth. "Congress Needs to Do More than Just Exercise Its War Powers." *War on the Rocks*, 19 March 2024. (5 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-8

### CASE STUDY: INTERVENTION IN BEIRUT (1982-1983)

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#### A. Session Overview

The Reagan administration's decision to deploy U.S. Marines to Lebanon in the early 1980s stands as an important example of Presidential decision making under conditions of extreme international complexity. Confronted with mounting violence following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the destabilization of Beirut, U.S. leaders were forced to navigate a rapidly shifting geopolitical landscape, characterized by sectarian conflict, superpower competition, and fragile alliances. Reagan's decision was shaped not only by the international environment but also by a range of domestic factors, including public opinion, congressional pressure, and the role of front-line military and diplomatic actors operating under ambiguous conditions. The interpersonal dynamics within the Reagan administration, including tensions between members of the NSC, further complicated the decision making process.

This case has enduring relevance because it vividly illustrates how foreign policy decisions are rarely the product of deliberative and rational decision making. Instead, they often emerge from the interplay of multiple forces: organizational routines, bureaucratic interests, cognitive biases, alliance dynamics, and public pressures. For national security professionals, the Beirut case demonstrates how theoretical concepts introduced in FPA, such as two-level games, bureaucratic politics, organizational behavior, and bounded rationality, play out in practice. This case study offers critical insights into the full breadth of the policy environment and serves as an early warning about the dangers of mission creep, unclear political objectives, assigning the military to pursue non-military objectives, and the limits of military power in complex civil conflicts—lessons that remain highly relevant today.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Analyze and explain the influential factors in a complex national security case.
  - Analyze the domestic and international influences on both senior policymakers and national security organizations in the assessment and prioritization of national security threats and challenges.
  - Analyze how Congress works with the Executive Branch, especially the Department of Defense, to establish effective national security policies, institutions, and processes.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.

- Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. What were the international and domestic factors that influenced the President's initial decision to deploy Marines to Lebanon to facilitate the withdrawal of Palestinian fighters from Beirut? Which would you identify as most influential and why?
2. How did the deliberations and arguments within the administration change in the debate over returning the Marines to Beirut in the wake of the massacres at Sabra and Shatila?
3. How accurately did decision makers in Washington perceive the influences—both domestic and international—that ultimately had an impact in determining the success of their policy?
4. What role did Congress play in exercising oversight of the Executive Branch? Was it in line with their Constitutional authority? Was their oversight sufficient? Why or why not?
5. National security professionals must consider political, social, military, and economic factors when advising their military and civilian superiors. What are the necessary and relevant factors when making strategic and operational recommendations?

### **D. Student Preparation (25 pp; ~55 min video)**

1. Gvosdev, Nikolas K. “Case Study: Lebanon Revisited,” in *Navigating the Theater Security Enterprise*. Newport, RI: Naval War College, 2017, Ch.10: 219-246. (25 pp)
2. Video: “Retreat from Beirut,” *Frontline*, 26 February 1985, (00:00 – 54:35).

### **E. Student Deliverables**

Prior to the start of FPA-7 in Week 19, students are required to successfully complete FA-4 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-9

### FUNDING FOREIGN POLICY: AUTHORIZING, APPROPRIATING, AND DOD RELATIONS

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#### A. Session Overview

As Kay King, former Vice President of the Washington Program at the Council on Foreign Relations noted in a 2010 report, “When Congress fails to perform, national security suffers, thanks to ill-considered policies, delayed or inadequate resources, and insufficient personnel. Without Congressional guidance, allies and adversaries alike devalue U.S. policies because they lack the support of the American people that is provided through their representatives in Congress.”

Earlier sessions have illustrated the importance of Congress in national security, highlighting friction between the Legislative and Executive Branches. This session continues that conversation by focusing on two essential questions: how do policymakers decide what and how much to spend on defense, and what role(s) does Congress play in these decisions? Decisions on defense spending result from interactive Executive and Legislative Branch decision making systems and processes. This session will outline the national security decision making processes and dynamics that result in annual defense bills and address their long-term, strategic implications for national defense in an era of strategic change.

National security professionals cannot ignore the impact that strategy, resources, and domestic politics play in meeting the needs of the nation’s warfighters, the combatant commands, and the Joint forces they employ in support of our national interests. Budgetary constraints and political influences result in planning and programming decisions that have associated risks to mission execution within both the current and future security environment. Congress is not only empowered with the ‘power of the purse’ but also with congressional oversight on the annual defense budget process, title 10 law, the NDAA, UCMJ, military promotions, and so on. DoD leaders interact with those committees regularly and are often required to provide testimony and reports on requested resources. Taken together, this session provides an introduction and overview of that interaction.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Comprehend the role of Congress in the annual defense budgetary process.
  - Understand the policy decision making and lawmaking systems and processes that drive U.S. defense authorizations and appropriations.
  - Consider the myriad policy factors that impact defense spending decisions, both internal to the DoD and from external actors, interests, and influences.

- Analyze the trade-offs that are often involved in defense spending decisions and consider how these trade-offs might impact long-term force planning.
- Identify the oversight role of congressional committees and sub-committees, particularly those involved in the annual congressional defense budget process.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Why is the federal budget cycle designed the way that it is? Is it effective? Why or why not? What impacts do time, domestic politics, or international dynamics have on the authorizations and appropriations processes?
2. How do the Services and combatant commands communicate with Congress? How does this impact defense authorizations and appropriations?
3. Why do members of Congress—including members of the President’s party—tend to deviate from (either increasing or decreasing) the administration’s defense budget requests?
4. How does Congress influence what the DoD can plan for, build, and buy?
5. What challenges does Congress see with the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) process? What, if anything, can it do to address these challenges?

### D. Student Preparation (64 pp; ~2:30 min of video)

1. Congressional Research Service. “Defense Primer: The National Defense Authorization Act Process,” and “Defense Primer: Defense Appropriations Process,” with additional commentary by Naval War College faculty, April 2020. (10 pp)
2. Video: “Congressional Appropriations Process.” *University of Maryland, School of Public Policy*, 18 September, 2020, (00:00 – 2:33).
3. Brose, Christian. “Bureaucracy Does its Thing,” in *The Kill Chain: Defending America in the Future of High Tech Warfare*, 206–224. New York: Hachette Books, 2020. (20 pp)
4. Zielinski, Rosella Cappella, and Samuel Gerstle. “Paying the Defense Bill: Financing American and Chinese Geostategic Competition,” *Texas National Security Review*, 6, no. 2, 2023, 57-78. (19 pp)

5. Sharp, Travis. "Chapter 2: Hardwired for Hardware: Congressional Adjustments to the Administration's Defense Budget Requests, FY 2016 to FY 2023," *Center for Strategic and Budgetary Analysis*, 2023, 11-33. (15 pp)
6. "Defense Resourcing for the Future. Final Report from the Commission on PPBE Reform." *Commission on PPBE Reform*, March 2024, 1-11 (SCAN). (10 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-10

### DEFENSE BUDGETING, ACQUISITIONS, AND INNOVATION

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#### A. Session Overview

From shaping the Global War on Terror to adapting to the demands of strategic competition with China and Russia, the DoD plays a central role in U.S. foreign and national security policy. Its influence extends far beyond traditional warfighting into diplomacy, security cooperation, and budgetary politics at both the national-strategic and theater-strategic levels. This session examines how the DoD shapes, influences, and executes U.S. policy by analyzing the distinct roles played by the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), the Services, and combatant command. Special attention is given to the expanding influence of combatant commanders, who today oversee activities ranging from regional engagement and crisis management to security sector assistance and budget advocacy.

The session also explores the intersection of long-term force design strategies and the realities of the defense budgeting process. Students will review the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) system and assess how bureaucratic friction, Service rivalries, and institutional inertia affect defense planning and resource allocation. As discussed in IS-21, particular emphasis is placed on how emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and hypersonic weapons, are reshaping defense priorities and complicating traditional processes for aligning military strategy with foreign policy objectives.

Despite shifts in the global balance of power, the United States remains the world's dominant military actor. Understanding how the DoD operates internally, how it influences broader national strategy, and how it adapts to technological change and evolving threats is critical to comprehending the full picture of contemporary U.S. foreign policy decision making.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Comprehend the structure, hierarchy, and functions of the DoD and subordinate organizations in U.S. national and theater security decision making and policy processes.
  - Understand the role that DoD entities play in developing and implementing national defense and military policy.
  - Examine how various defense establishment entities sometimes arrive at different conclusions during foreign policy deliberations.
  - Comprehend the role of the combat commanders in identifying capability gaps and resourcing needs.

- Consider the opportunities and challenges of defense budgeting, acquisitions, and innovation.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. How does DoD organizational structure affect the formulation of defense policy? Does DoD culture differ from other agencies?
2. How do individual Service cultures affect policy formation at the DoD level?
3. Where are the friction points among the Secretary of Defense, JCS, combatant commanders, and Service Secretaries?
4. What are the DoD's bureaucratic interests, and how does the organization protect those interests in the political bargaining and compromise at the executive level?
5. What are the cascading effects on the DoD from internal changes or surprising events around the globe that have strategic impact? How do decisions at the Joint Staff level impact combatant commands?

### **D. Student Preparation (76 pp)**

1. McInnis, Kathleen J. "Defense Primer: The Department of Defense," *Congressional Research Service*, updated 08 November 2022 (SCAN). (2 pp)
2. McMillan, Joseph and Franklin C. Miller. "The Office of the Secretary of Defense," in *The National Security Enterprise: Navigating the Labyrinth*, edited by Roger Z. George and Harvey Rishikof, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2nd edition, 2017, Ch. 6: 120-135. (14 pp)
3. O'Hanlon, Michael E. "Defense Budgeting and Resource Allocation." In *Defense 101: Understanding the Military of Today and Tomorrow*. Ithaca [New York]: Cornell University Press, 2021. (Read only: Chapter Introduction 44-46; "The Big Picture: Broad Definitions and Processes," 46-52; "Breakdowns of the U.S. Department of Defense Budget," 52-55; "The Acquisitions Budget," 56-58; and "Conclusion: Defense Budgeting and Grand Strategy," 81-84). (15 pp)
4. Sapien, Joaquin. "The Inside Story of How the Navy Spent Billions on the "Little Crappy Ship," *ProPublica*, 07 September 2023. (18 pp)

5. Lipton, Eric. “Faced With Evolving Threats, U.S. Navy Struggles to Change,” *The New York Times*, 04 September 2023. (5 pp)
6. Robertson, Noah. “Pacific Problems: Why the US Disagrees on the Cost of Deterring China,” *DefenseNews*, 03 April 2024. (6 pp)
7. Schneider, Jacquelyn. “Does Technology Win Wars? The U.S. Military Needs Low-Cost Innovation—Not Big-Ticket Boondoggles,” *Foreign Affairs*, March 03, 2023. (8 pp)
8. O’Hanlon, Michael E and Alejandra Rocha. “Strengthening America’s defense industrial base,” *Brookings*, 20 June 2024. (10 pp)
9. Eaglen, Mackenzie, “Putting Combatant Commands on a Demand Signal Diet,” *War on the Rocks*, 09 November 2020 (SCAN – Review from IS-11). (6 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-11

### CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

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#### A. Session Overview

Civil-military relations is the study of the relationships among the military, the civilian government, and the broader civilian population. In the context of FPA, particular attention is given to how the interactions between civilian policymakers and military officers influence the formation, interpretation, and execution of national security policy. Analysts also consider how public perceptions of the military, including factors such as levels of trust and confidence, can shape the political environment and affect the range of viable policy options available to decision-makers.

A well-functioning system of civil-military relations is critical to ensuring both effective policy outcomes and the maintenance of democratic norms. Strains or breakdowns in these relationships can lead to blurred lines between civilian and military roles, confusion over strategic priorities, or challenges to civilian control of the armed forces. Conversely, strong professional norms, clear communication, and mutual respect between civilian leaders and military officers help uphold accountability, civilian supremacy, and effective governance.

This session offers an opportunity to reflect on U.S. civil-military relations, examining both enduring principles and evolving dynamics. It explores how actions taken by military leaders, elected officials, civil servants, and the public, contribute to shaping this foundational aspect of American national security. By analyzing key issues such as military advice to civilian leadership, the role of retired officers in public debates, and societal perceptions of the armed forces, students will develop a deeper understanding of how civil-military interactions influence foreign and national security policy making.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Comprehend the relationships among the U.S. military, American society at large, and the nation's civilian leadership.
  - Define civilian control of the military and why it is important in a democratic society.
  - Analyze the factors that affect U.S. senior military and civilian leadership's perspectives on force planning and the use of force and how this can influence foreign policy.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.

- CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
- Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. What is the role of the military in a democracy?
2. What role does military advice play in policy making? What are the sources of civil-military friction in policy making?
3. Do members of the military view themselves as superior to civilian policymakers? Is it a problem if they do? What policy or other changes might alter this perception?
4. Are civilians responsible for understanding the military? What are the consequences if they do or do not?
5. What are the key challenges for contemporary U.S. civil-military relations?

### **D. Student Preparation (60 pp; ~29 min of video)**

1. “To Support and Defend: Principles of Civilian Control and Best Practices of Civil-Military Relations,” *War on the Rocks*, 06 September 2022. (SCAN) (5 pp).
2. Davidson, Janine, “The Contemporary Presidency: Civil-Military Friction and Presidential Decision-making: Explaining the Broken Dialogue.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (2013): 129 – 45. (16 pp)
3. Video: “The Role of the Military in a Democracy,” *George Washington’s Mount Vernon*, November 10, 2023, (00:00 – 17:54 and 41:40 – 52:55).
4. Karlin, Mara E. “The Military’s Relationship with Its Overseers: The Crisis of Meaningful Civilian Control,” in *The Inheritance*, Ch. 4: 49-80. United States: Brookings Institution Press, 2021. (30 pp)
5. Schmidt, Tood. “Civilian Control of the Military: A Useful Fiction?” *Military Review*, January-February 2023. (5 pp)
6. Crosbie, Thomas, and Anders Klitmoller. “Beyond the Neutral Card: From Civil-Military Relations to Military in Politics.” *Real Clear Defense*, 20 December 2023. (4 pp)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

During FPA-21 in Week 26, students are required to successfully complete FA-5, an in-class case analysis and presentation addressing CLO-3. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-12

### CASE STUDY: DECIDING THE IRAQ WAR (2003)

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#### A. Session Overview

On 20 March 2003, a United States-led coalition launched the invasion of Iraq, an operation that ultimately led to the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's government. This session examines the events, dynamics, procedures, and perspectives that played a role in what was arguably the most consequential U.S. military initiative of the post-Cold War era. Students will be offered an opportunity to assess the extent to which Iraqi actions and misperceptions, U.S. interagency deliberations, and domestic and international dynamics, may have contributed to the likelihood of war. U.S. perceptions played a role as well. Congressional dynamics included legislators who offered reservations but ultimately passed an authorization of the use of military force (AUMF). Former Senior Intelligence Officer Paul Pillar stated, "9/11 made it politically possible for the first time to persuade the American people to break a tradition of not launching offensive wars."

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Analyze and explain the influential factors in a complex national security case.
  - Comprehend the factors that led to the decision to invade Iraq militarily.
  - Assess the role of perceptions, calculations, ethics, and beliefs in the processes that led to this decision.
  - Examine the role of Congress in authorizing the use of military force (AUMF).
  - Analyze both the American and Iraqi perspectives on the unfolding diplomatic, and ultimately military, confrontation.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. What motivated the United States to take offensive action against Iraq? What are the factors and events that drove this decision? Was there dissent? If so, who/why?

2. What Iraqi actions, both in the years prior and in the weeks and months immediately preceding the invasion, played a role in the decision process?
3. What were the U.S. assumptions and beliefs that motivated this decision? Was the decision the product of a rational process? Did cognitive factors impact the development of the policy of confronting Saddam Hussein?
4. How did the broader Bush Administration approach the threat from Iraq? Were certain individuals more influential? If so, who and how? How was influence exercised?
5. George W. Bush stated that he "had tried to address the threat from Saddam Hussein without war." Was the war in Iraq something that could have been avoided based on the case study materials?

#### **D. Student Preparation (74 pp)**

1. Stieb, Joseph. *The Regime Change Consensus: Iraq in American Politics, 1990-2003*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2021: 189-247 (Read only: "Bush's Case for War" 192–214). (22 pp)
2. Woods, Kevin, James Lacey, and Williamson Murray. "Saddam's Delusions: A View from the Inside," *Foreign Affairs*, 85, no. 3, 2006, 2-26. (23 pp)
3. Bush, George W. *Decision Points*. New York: Crown Publishers, 2010, 223-253. (29 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

During FPA-21 in Week 26, students are required to successfully complete FA-5, an in-class case analysis and presentation addressing CLO-3. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-13

### DIPLOMACY: THE ROLE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT

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#### A. Session Overview

As discussed in IS-4, diplomacy is the foremost instrument of statecraft to manage foreign relations, minimize external threats, defuse regional crises, and advance U.S. security and prosperity in the global arena. Put simply, diplomacy may be thought of as the art of managing interactions with friends and foes alike to find common ground and advance national interests. Diplomatic success is often measured by crises resolved or conflicts avoided, while diplomatic failures can lead to war or loss of influence. Diplomats represent U.S. citizens and the president in remote outposts, warzones, and bustling capitals, building enduring relationships that allow the U.S. to manage global challenges, provide unique understanding and insights to policymakers on emerging threats and opportunities, and protect American citizens abroad. This session will identify and analyze the key players, processes, and dynamics involved in using diplomacy as an instrument of national power and the influence that diplomatic tools and institutions can have on U.S. foreign policy decision making.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand how the Department of State (DoS), through its embassies and consulates, conducts foreign policy overseas.
  - Understand the nature, conduct, and challenges of diplomacy.
  - Explore the various actors involved in diplomacy, and how they might approach diplomacy differently.
  - Analyze the potential advantages of diplomatic interaction, as well as the challenges and obstacles that can thwart diplomatic initiatives.
  - Examine a case of successful diplomacy.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. What is a country team, and how does it function? What challenges do country teams face in competing with strategic rivals? How do combatant commanders work with and through country teams?

2. Based on the readings, in a world full of organizations and bureaucracies, what examples can you identify where one-on-one diplomacy made a difference?
3. Is diplomacy the United States' biggest weakness, as the student preparation materials suggest? If so, how? If not, what is, and why?
4. Where and in what ways has diplomacy been influential and/or successful in U.S. foreign policy?

#### **D. Student Preparation (63 pp; ~29 min of video)**

1. Cloud, John A. and Damian Leader, "Diplomacy, the State Department, and National Security," in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited by Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and John Cloud, New York: NY: Oxford University Press, 2018, Ch. 10: 185-195. (8 pp)
2. Video: "The Debrief: Diplomacy and the State Department." National Security Affairs Department, U.S. Naval War College, 9 November 2023, (00:00 – 29:00).
3. Hutchings, Robert. "American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War in Europe," in *Foreign Policy Breakthroughs: Cases in Successful Diplomacy*, edited by Robert Hutchings and Jeremi Suri, 148-172. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2015. (20 pp)
4. Toosi, Nahal. "Frustrated and Powerless: In Fight with China for Global Influence, Diplomacy is America's Biggest Weakness," *Politico*, 22 October 2022. (15 pp)
5. Murray, Shoon and Anthony Quainton. "Combatant Commanders, Ambassadorial Authority, and the Conduct of Diplomacy," in *Mission Creep: The Militarization of Foreign Policy*, edited by Gordon Adams and Shoon Murray, 166–191. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2014. (20 pp)

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-14

### ECONOMICS: INSTRUMENT OF NATIONAL POWER AND WARFARE

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#### A. Session Overview

The United States is a world leader in large measure through its ability to project enormous economic power and influence beyond its borders as seen in IS-4 and IS-5. Crafting economic policy as a critical component of foreign policy is a complex, interdisciplinary effort involving the Executive and Legislative Branches of government, a variety of monetary and financial institutions with global reach, and the indisputable role of the private sector. This session examines the agents of economic power and the range of foreign policy tools available, including coercive tools such as quotas, tariffs, sanctions, and export controls, along with positive incentives such as trade, security assistance, and economic development. It poses the questions: How is the economic instrument of national power used generally, and how can economic tools best be used to pursue and influence foreign policy and national security goals?

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Identify and differentiate the multiple actors involved in economic statecraft.
  - Distinguish the primary tools of economic statecraft and analyze how they may be wielded in deterrent and friendly scenarios.
  - Evaluate the limitations of economic statecraft – where it is most likely to succeed and where it frequently fails.
  - Explore the role of the interagency process in foreign economic policy making.
  - Consider the challenges and trade-offs the United States faces when confronted with the dilemma of protecting national security but also retaining its lead in artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and other cutting-edge technologies.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. What is the purpose of economic statecraft, and what is the track record of its success in the United States? What are the obstacles and limitations?

2. What considerations should policymakers give to the use of coercive economic tools, and what are the domestic costs?
3. How does the United States use economic “carrots” such as trade, loans, and economic assistance, and how effective have these tools been?
4. How have economic tools been used to make war more difficult for strategic competitors?

**D. Student Preparation (65 pp; ~8 min of podcast)**

1. Cloud, John and Nikolas Gvosdev. “How U.S. Economic Policymaking is Distinct from its National Security Counterpart,” in *A Policy Analysis Reader*, National Security Affairs Department, U.S. Naval War College, 2018. Revised by Professor Andrea Cameron, 2024. (16 pp)
2. Harris, Jennifer, and Robert Kahn. “Understanding and Improving U.S. Financial Sanctions,” in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited by Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and John Cloud, New York: NY: Oxford University Press, 2018, Ch. 12: 229-248. (14 pp)
3. Barry Eichengreen. “What Money Can’t Buy: The Limits of Economic Power,” *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2022. (9 pp)
4. Barnes, Julia and Ana Swanson. “Commerce Dept. Is on the Front Lines of China Policy,” *The New York Times*, 8 December 2024. (3 pp)
5. Podcast: “Sec. Gina Raimondo on the Role of Commerce in Supporting National Security.” *NPR – All Things Considered*, 1 December 2023. (8 min)
6. Brown, Chad. “The Return of Export Controls,” *Foreign Affairs*, 24 January 2023. (5 pp)
7. Mackinnon, Amy. “Russia’s War Machine Runs on Western Parts,” *Foreign Policy*, 22 February 2024. (9 pp)
8. Miscik, Jami, Peter Orszag, and Theodore Bunzel. “Geopolitics in the C-Suite.” *Foreign Affairs*, 11 March 2024. (6 pp).
9. Diaz, Chris and Aroop Mukharji. “Beyond Strategy: Executing Economic Security Policy,” *War on the Rocks*, 11 April 2025. (8 pp)

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-15

### INFORMATION: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INTELLIGENCE

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#### A. Session Overview

From Russian disinformation campaigns targeting U.S. foreign policy objectives in Africa as examined in IS-17, to Chinese cyber intrusions targeting classified data as discussed in IS-13 and 20, the battles over information and intelligence now sit at the center of strategic competition. Understanding both domains is critical to advancing U.S. national security objectives across diplomatic, military, and economic fronts.

This session identifies and analyzes the key players, processes, and dynamics involved in using the informational instrument of national power to advance U.S. national security objectives. It explores the critical role of information as both a tool of influence and a domain of competition, focusing particularly on the concepts of strategic communication and narrative construction—how states craft, project, and adapt messages to shape perceptions, build credibility, and achieve strategic effects. The session also examines the relationship between intelligence and policy making, and intelligence as the foundation for developing effective information strategies for gaining an edge across all instruments of national power.

Special emphasis is placed on the growing influence of emerging technologies—including artificial intelligence, cyber capabilities, and social media platforms—and the increasingly important roles played by private sector actors in shaping the global information environment. Students will also assess how adversaries, both state and non-state, exploit information operations, misinformation, and disinformation campaigns to challenge U.S. interests and destabilize democratic societies.

Building on students' understanding of the Executive Branch and the domestic political system, this session encourages a forward-looking application of FPA concepts, asking students to critically evaluate how information and intelligence are wielded in today's interconnected world and how it might evolve in future competition and conflict.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the importance of strategic narrative/communication and how “shaping the narrative” is an important instrument of national power.
  - Evaluate how emerging tech and open-source information can shape the intelligence process.
  - Assess the United States government’s use of information through various cases.
  - Consider if/how intelligence can influence policy decision makers.

- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. What are the fora for U.S. national security decision makers to coordinate on strategic messaging? What obstacles does such coordination face?
2. What are the challenges and opportunities for the U.S. government in using information in a networked world both as intelligence and as a messaging tool/narrative?
3. Does the U.S. government's use of information differ from that of authoritarian governments? How? Why?
4. Do authoritarian regimes have advantages in strategic messaging? If so, how could this influence U.S. foreign policy decision making?

### D. Student Preparation (62 pp; ~5 min of video)

1. Simpson, Emile. "Strategic Narrative," in *War from The Ground Up: Twenty-First Century Combat as Politics*, 179–185. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. (6 pp)
2. Video: "Behind the Scenes of the President's Daily Brief," *Office of the Director of National Intelligence*, 26 July, 2023, (00:00 – 05:21).
3. Zegart, Amy. "Open Secrets: Ukraine and the Next Intelligence Revolution." *Foreign Affairs*, 20 September 2022. (10 pp)
4. Morell, Michael and David Gioe. "Spy and Tell: The Promise and Peril of Disclosing Intelligence for Strategic Advantage." *Foreign Affairs*, 23 April 2024. (16 pp)
5. Lin-Greenberg, Erik and Theo Milonopoulos. "Boots on the Ground, Eyes in the Sky: How Commercial Satellites Are Upending Conflict," *Foreign Affairs*, 30 May 2022. (4 pp)
6. Marrin, Stephen. "Why Strategic Intelligence Analysis Has Limited Influence on American Foreign Policy." *Intelligence and National Security* 32, no. 6 (2017): 725–42. (13 pp)
7. Stradner, Ivana and Anthony Ruggiero. "America is Still Losing the Information War." *Foreign Policy*, 10 March 2023. (5 pp).
8. Goldenziel, Jill and Daniel Grant. "Information Resilience: Countering Disinformation and Its Threat to the U.S. Alliance System." *War on the Rocks*, 15 November 2023. (8 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-16

### LOBBYISTS, INTEREST GROUPS, AND THINK TANKS

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#### A. Session Overview

From the halls of Washington D.C.'s think tanks, to the offices of powerful lobbying firms, domestic non-governmental actors increasingly shape the debates, and sometimes the outcomes, of national security policy. Over the past half-century, a networked community of think tanks, lobbyists, consultants, and advocacy organizations has expanded dramatically in size, scope, and influence, a trend now mirrored in capitals around the world.

This session provides additional information on and insights into this often-obscure world of domestic non-governmental influence in foreign policy and national security decision making. Students will examine the types of power and influence these actors possess, the mechanisms they use to access and shape the perspectives of decision makers, and the ways in which they seek to influence legislation, budget priorities, strategic narratives, and public opinion. Special attention will be given to the strategies used by think tanks and lobbyists to frame policy debates, build coalitions, and insert research and advocacy into the policy making process.

Understanding this network of non-governmental influence is increasingly essential for national security professionals operating at the strategic and theater levels. Those who recognize how these domestic external actors can impact U.S. decision making will be better equipped to navigate the policy environment, assess the origins of proposals and pressures, and ultimately contribute more effectively to the development of sound national security strategies.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Identify the missions and roles of think tanks, lobbyists, and consultants in influencing policy and legislative decisions in the defense and national security realms.
  - Comprehend how these institutions (and individuals) function, why they function the way(s) they do, what stakes and interests they have in policy decision making processes, what influence they might or might not have on decisions, and the implications for policymakers.
  - Assess the potential influence of think tanks, lobbyists, and other domestic non-state actors or non-governmental organizations in the formation of policy.
  - Assess how and why both domestic U.S. actors and non-U.S. interests (including other governments) might seek to lobby the U.S. government.
  - Develop the ability to critically assess the sources of support, information, analysis, and products these institutions use and generate, as well as the networks they employ to try to influence policy decisions.

- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Consider the argument, “most people...come to the subject [of interest groups and lobbying] predisposed to disliking them.” Do you agree? Why/Why not? Where does this disposition come from?
2. Why are special interest and lobby groups formed? How and why do they express their policy preferences, and to what extent do they influence the policy decision making process?
3. What are think tanks, why do they exist, and what, if anything, makes them influential? What impact might they have on national security affairs, particularly at the theater level?
4. What are the arguments, if any, for including lobbyists in the legislative process?
5. How do foreign policy-oriented think tanks compete for space in the marketplace of ideas, and how can they influence U.S. policymakers?

### D. Student Preparation (63 pp; ~13 min of video)

1. Gvosdev, Nikolas K. “Deploying Influence and Expertise: Think Tanks, Interest Groups and Lobbyists in the Theater Security Enterprise,” Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, National Security Affairs Department, Newport, RI, 2012. Revised for the College of Distance Education by Professor Christopher Faulkner, Spring 2023. (28 pp)
2. Video: “How the Pentagon falls victim to price gouging by military contractors,” *CBS News: 60 Minutes*, 21 May 2023, (00:00 – 13:25).
3. Levinson, Chad. “Think Tanks and American Interventionism,” *War on the Rocks*, 24 November 2021. (9 pp)
4. Freeman, Ben and Nick Cleveland-Stout. “Quincy Brief #68: Big Ideas and Big Money: Think Tank Funding in America,” *Quincy Institute*, 03 January 2025. (10 pp)
5. Whitlock, Craig and Nate Jones. “Retired U.S. Generals, Admirals Take Top Jobs with Saudi Crown Prince,” *The Washington Post*, 18 October 2022. (13 pp)
6. Huang, Reyko. “Armed Rebel Groups Lobby in DC, Just Like Governments. How Does that Influence U.S. Policy?” *The Washington Post*, 6 February 2020. (3 pp)

7. Optional Video: “Interview with Professor Nickolas Gvosdev on Influencing Defense Policy: The Role of Think Tanks, Lobbyists, and Interest Groups in National Security,” U.S. Naval War College, Spring 2023, (00:00 – 39:00).

### **E. Student Deliverables**

During FPA-21 in Week 26, students are required to successfully complete FA-5, an in-class case analysis and presentation addressing CLO-3. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-17

### THE MEDIA AND PUBLIC OPINION

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#### A. Session Overview

From the "CNN effect" during humanitarian crises in Somalia and Bosnia to the rapid spread of information (and misinformation) on social media, the media and public opinion have become powerful forces in the national security environment. Although the media cannot create policy directly, as former National Security Advisor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Secretary of State Colin Powell observed, "it does create the environment in which the policy is made."

This session examines how media and public opinion can both support and undermine government and military initiatives, substantiate or challenge official narratives, and enhance or erode national credibility. Media influence can shape public sentiment, international perceptions, and elite opinion alike, creating conditions that either constrain or embolden U.S. policymakers. Special attention will be given to how media framing and agenda-setting impact policy debates, crisis responses, and strategic communications.

Modern technologies, from 24-hour news cycles to social media platforms, have created new opportunities for public opinion to influence decision making, often in near real time. Yet the American public's frequent inattentiveness to national security issues has also allowed presidents considerable leeway in foreign policy. This session provides students with an opportunity to explore the complex relationship between public opinion and national security policy, including how public sentiment is formed, and at times leveraged, within the policy making process.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Critically assess the role of the media in influencing policy and legislative decisions in the defense and national security realms.
  - Comprehend how various media institutions and outlets function, what stakes and interests they have in policy decisions, and what impact they might or might not have on decisions.
  - Examine how media coverage affects national security decision making.
  - Analyze the motivations and consequences of leaking on national security.
  - Analyze the role of public opinion in democratic policy making and what influences can affect it.
- Learning Outcomes

- CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
- Supports NWC PLO-2.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. How would you characterize the relationship between the U.S. military and American news media outlets?
2. How does the media influence public opinion and vice versa? How do both public opinion and the media influence decision makers? Does "the media" constitute an interest group with an independent agenda?
3. How does public opinion influence and/or impact foreign policy decision making? How responsive should national security leaders be to public opinion?
4. Does the media influence DoD? If so, how? Why does the U.S. military care about its public image?
5. Why is the U.S. military so trusted compared to other public institutions? What are the implications of that trust -- are there potential downsides (for the military or the nation)?
6. Think about today's media ecosystem. How does the political fragmentation and polarization of news sources and the rise of social media as a main information source for many people in the U.S., affect foreign policy making? What new challenge for national security might it pose?

### **D. Student Preparation (45 pp; ~44 min video/podcast)**

1. Gvosdev, Nikolas K. "Woodward's Dilemma: Leaking, Spinning and Reporting the News," Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, National Security Affairs Department, Newport, RI, 2013, 1-10. Revised for the College of Distance Education by Professor Christopher Faulkner, Summer 2024. (9 pp)
2. Faulkner, Christopher. "Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy." Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, College of Distance Education, Newport, RI, March 2023. (9 pp)
3. Aday, Sean. "The U.S. Media, Foreign Policy, and Public Support for War," in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Communication*, edited by Kate Kenski and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, 2018, Ch. 23: 315-326. (10 pp)
4. Video: Woodruff, Judy. "Exploring the links between political polarization and declining trust in news media," *PBS News Hour*, 31 July 2024 (00:00 – 11:44)
5. Baum, Matthew, and Phillip Potter. "Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy in the Age of Social Media." *The Journal of Politics*, 81 no. 2, (2019): 747-756. (Read only sections:

“The World as it Was,” 748-749; “What Has Changed?” 749-751; “Conclusion,” 755). (4 pp).

6. Cohen, Raphael, et al. “Combatting Foreign Disinformation on Social Media.” *RAND*, 2021. (Read only: “Summary” (ix-xii)). (3 pp)
7. Walcott, John. “Why the Press Failed on Iraq,” *Foreign Affairs*, 29 March 2023. (10 pp)
8. Podcast: “Foreign Policy Versus Public Opinion.” *A Better Peace: The War Room Podcast*, U.S. Army War College, 19 January 2024, (00:00 – 32:21).

### **E. Student Deliverables**

During FPA-21 in Week 26, students are required to successfully complete FA-5, an in-class case analysis and presentation addressing CLO-3. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-18

### STATES AND NON-STATE ACTORS

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#### A. Session Overview

From the rise of the Islamic State to the influence of global tech and military firms like SpaceX, Anduril, or OpenAI, today's international security environment is shaped by far more than just state actors. Military and national security professionals must increasingly navigate a complex web of forces that influence U.S. policy choices and constrain or expand strategic options.

This session marks the first of three sessions within *Division III: International Influences on National Security Policy*. Division III examines the external forces emanating from the global community that affect U.S. national security decision making and the development of foreign and defense policy. As discussed throughout the International Security (IS) sessions, the international system has grown increasingly dynamic and complex, creating a persistent demand for deeper knowledge and more nuanced analysis by national security practitioners.

While states remain the principal actors in the modern international system, a wide range of non-state actors also yield significant influence on policy development and decision making. Armed groups such as the Islamic State and Hamas, non-governmental organizations like Human Rights Watch, and powerful private-sector actors such as SpaceX are just a few examples of entities capable of shaping the policy environment in ways that directly impact U.S. national security interests.

Understanding the nature, goals, and actions of these diverse global actors—and how they interact within the broader international system—is critical for professionals involved in Joint military policy development and execution. Those who can unpack the complexities of the modern international system will be far better positioned to anticipate challenges, leverage opportunities, and contribute meaningfully to U.S. security strategy in an increasingly interconnected world.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Explain the nature of the modern international system and the distinction between sovereign states and nations and why an appreciation of those distinctions is relevant to mid-career national security professionals.
  - Understand current trends reinforcing or weakening state sovereignty.
  - Identify the range of non-state actors (MNCs, violent extremist organizations, transnational criminal organizations, NGOs, and foundations) that can affect national security and defense policies.
  - Assess how non-state actors reinforce or weaken the sovereignty of states.

- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Are states still the primary actors in the modern international system? Why or why not? How has this changed over time, if at all?
2. How do different types of states (i.e., weak, strong, autocratic, democratic) impact U.S. foreign policy decision making?
3. How do non-state actors, particularly non-state armed groups, impact U.S. policy decision makers? How has past experience in addressing various non-state armed groups influenced our future policy debates?
4. In what ways do super-empowered individuals influence national security decision makers and the policy making process?

### D. Student Preparation (46 pp; ~36 min of video/podcast)

1. National Security Affairs Faculty. “Global Influences on Policy Decision-Making: States and Non-State Actors,” Faculty Paper, U.S. Naval War College, College of Distance Education, Newport, RI, 2020. Revised by Professor Christopher Faulkner, Summer 2024. (10 pp)
2. Bajoghli, Narges and Vali Nasr. “How the War in Gaza Revived the Axis of Resistance.” *Foreign Affairs*, 17 January 2024. (9 pp)
3. Video: “Inside Look at U.S. Navy Response to Houthi Red Sea Attacks.” *CBS News: 60 Minutes*, 18 February 2018, (00:00 – 13:09).
4. Clarke, Colin. “The Islamic State Never Went Away.” *Foreign Policy*, 10 April 2024. (4 pp)
5. Walt, Stephen. “The United States Has Less Leverage Over Israel Than You Think.” *Foreign Policy*, 21 March 2024. (3 pp)
6. Powers-Riggs, Aidan. “Taipei Fears Washington is Weakening Its Silicon Shield,” *Foreign Policy*, 17 February 2023. (5 pp)
7. Reinsch, William Alan and Jack Whitney. “Silicon Island: Assessing Taiwan’s Importance to U.S. Economic Growth and Security,” *CSIS*, 10 January 2025. (5 pp)

8. Satariano, Adam, Scott Reinhard, Cade Metz, Sheera Frenkel, and Malika Khurana. “Elon Musk’s Unmatched Power in the Stars,” *New York Times*, 28 July 2023. (10 pp).
9. Podcast: “How Musk’s Starlink Became a Security Liability for the U.S.,” *Marketplace Tech*, 14 September 2023. (10 min)
10. Video: “Palmer Luckey on Making Autonomous Weapons for the U.S. and its Allies,” *60 Minutes*, YouTube video, 18 May 2025. (00:00 – 13:20)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

During FPA-21 in Week 26, students are required to successfully complete FA-5, an in-class case analysis and presentation addressing CLO-3. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-19

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: INSTITUTIONS AND ALLIANCES

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#### A. Session Overview

Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) typically involve two or more nations working on issues of common interest. Importantly, IGOs are formally codified by treaty and “in the absence of a treaty an IGO does not exist in the legal sense.”<sup>4</sup> IGOs have become increasingly visible—and arguably more influential—actors in international politics. The nature, goals, and actions of these entities can have substantial implications for U.S. national security and defense-related policy.

This session focuses specifically on the role and influence of international organizations and alliances on U.S. foreign policy decision making, considering the way such institutions can shape global norms, facilitate multilateral agreements, serve as platforms for information exchange and policy coordination, and/or constrain decision makers. Through participation in various IGOs, the United States often aims to set and influence international norms/trends, gain insights and perspectives from allies and adversaries, adjust policies to align with global standards, and leverage resources and expertise that these organizations can provide. Engagement in IGOs can also influence the United States in other ways, increasing the ability of the United States to exercise soft power and diplomacy, build alliances, and advocate for its vital interests on the global stage. Pressure from IGOs and their accountability mechanisms can also influence U.S. foreign policy decision making by encouraging compliance with international norms and agreements. Overall, IGOs can serve as crucial arenas that shape the direction of U.S. foreign policy through dialogue, competition, cooperation, and collective action with other member states.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the role and significance of IGOs like NATO or the UN, in the international system.
  - Identify key IGOs relevant to U.S. foreign policy and their respective areas of influence.
  - Consider how U.S. participation in IGOs shapes foreign policy priorities, strategies, and decision making processes.
  - Evaluate the benefits and challenges of multilateralism in the context of U.S. foreign policy, considering IGO engagement.
  - Explore case studies in session materials illustrating how IGOs have influenced specific U.S. foreign policy decisions or initiatives.

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<sup>4</sup> See Harvard Law School’s definition of IGOs.

- Reflect on the role of IGOs in shaping global governance and the implications for U.S. leadership and influence.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. How do various international institutions (e.g., the UN) influence policy decision makers, if at all?
2. How might distinct IGOs shape and influence U.S. foreign policy priorities and strategies?
3. What are the benefits and challenges of engaging with IGOs in advancing U.S. foreign policy objectives? What are the consequences if/when the United States does not work through IGOs?
4. Consider U.S. alliances, both formal and informal. How do these security relationships influence national security decision making and policy? How might an analyst know?

### D. Student Preparation (62 pp; ~13 min of video)

1. National Security Affairs Faculty. “Global Influences on Policy Decision-Making: States and Non-State Actors,” Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, College of Distance Education, June 2020. Revised by Professor Christopher Faulkner, Summer 2024. (10 pp)
2. Raustiala, Kal and Viva Iemanja Jeromnim. “Why the UN Still Matters,” *Foreign Affairs*, 7 June 2023. (9 pp.)
3. Brands, Hal and Peter D. Fever. “What are America’s Alliances Good For?” *Parameters*, 47, no. 2, 2017, 15-30. (15 pp)
4. Radin, Andrew. “Reconsidering U.S. Decision-making Within NATO After the Fall of Kabul,” *War on the Rocks*, 25 October 2021. (8 pp).
5. Video: “National Security Leaders Worry About U.S. Failure to Ratify Law of Sea Treaty,” *CBS News: 60 Minutes*, 24 March 2024, (00:00 – 13:02).
6. Lu, Christina. “Washington Wants in on the Deep-Sea Mining Game,” *Foreign Policy*. 29 March 2024. (3 pp)
7. Cohen, Jared and Ian Bremmer. “The Global Credibility Gap,” *Foreign Affairs*, 6 December 2023. (17 pp)

8. “The United Nations System: Frequently Asked Questions,” *Congressional Research Service*, 22 September 2023. (SCAN: “Summary”; 1-3; 8-10; 15-18). (9 pp)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

During FPA-21 in Week 26, students are required to successfully complete FA-5, an in-class case analysis and presentation addressing CLO-3. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-20

### BEYOND BORDERS: INFLUENCES ON NATIONAL SECURITY

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#### A. Session Overview

Success in national security policy often hinges not just on capabilities or intent, but on how actions are perceived by others. Understanding how foreign actors, whether heads of state or local actors, perceive legitimacy, authority, and action in specific geopolitical contexts is important if not imperative. This session introduces concepts such as operational awareness and strategic empathy which can be useful for anticipating how foreign actors may interpret and respond to U.S. foreign policy.

Operational awareness refers to the ability to identify and assess context in which one operates, including factors like regional norms, historical experience, and leadership structures that can shape political behavior within a given environment. It enables national security professionals to understand the conditions under which decisions are made, both by allies and adversaries, and to avoid misinterpretation or misalignment in policy implementation. Strategic empathy, in turn, is the disciplined application of perspective-taking to forecast and anticipate actions/reactions, assess risk, and inform the development of effective policy and operational outcomes.

This session examines the challenges such awareness contributed to suboptimal outcomes in post-2003 Iraq, where insufficient attention to local dynamics ultimately hindered U.S. foreign policy efforts and derailed expectations. Through this case, students will refine their ability to apply analytical frameworks to real-world challenges in which perceptions, not just intentions, shape outcomes. Strengthening these competencies enables national security professionals to contribute more effectively to strategy development, operational planning, and mission success in complex environments.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand ways in which a national security professional needs to consider local and regional factors in planning and executing policies, particularly the impact on the success or failure of operations.
  - Consider how key local and regional dynamics, such as historical experience, political structures, and prevailing norms, can influence how foreign actors perceive legitimacy and authority.
  - Analyze how mismatches between U.S. foreign policy intentions and local perceptions can produce resistance, instability, or strategic challenges.
  - Analyze and explain the influential factors in a complex national security case.

- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLOs 2 and 3.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. How do local and regional dynamics such as historical grievances or local norms shape how foreign actors perceive legitimacy and respond to U.S. foreign policy?
2. Has the U.S. effectively assessed and adapted to the political and societal environments in countries where it has operated (e.g., Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq)? How might improved regional awareness and strategic empathy inform future national security planning and execution?
3. How can misreading elements of the local decision making environment contribute to foreign policy challenges or operational friction??
4. Why did the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) persist in its showdown with Grand Ayatollah Sistani? What lessons can be learned from this experience in Iraq that could translate to other theaters?

### **D. Student Preparation (54 pp)**

1. National Security Affairs Faculty. “The Importance of Assessing the Operational Environment for U.S. Foreign Policymaking,” Naval War College faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI, Aug 2021. Revised by Professor Christopher Faulkner, Summer 2024. (20 pp).
2. Gvosdev, Nikolas, K. “The Ayatollah Versus the Ambassador: The Influence of Religion on Politics in Post-Saddam Iraq,” Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, National Security Affairs Department, Newport, RI, 2010. (15 pp)
3. Graff, Garrett. “Orders of Disorder: Who Disbanded Iraq’s Army and De-Baathified Its Bureaucracy?” *Foreign Affairs*, 5 May 2023. (13 pp)
4. Vowell, J.B., and Craig Evans. “Operationalizing Strategic Empathy: Best Practices from Inside the First Island Chain,” *The Strategy Bridge*, 16 November 2022. (6 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

During FPA-21 in Week 26, students are required to successfully complete FA-5, an in-class case analysis and presentation addressing CLO-3. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

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## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-21

### SYNTHESIS CASE STUDY

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#### A. Session Overview

Whether countering gray zone activities in Europe or managing contested security environments in the Indo-Pacific region, theater-level challenges today demand an integrated understanding of domestic, international, and organizational forces. National security professionals must be able to synthesize complex dynamics that will shape the security environment to better inform effective policy development and decision making.

This session is the first of two sessions in *Division IV: FPA Synthesis*. Building on the foundations established in earlier FPA sessions, students will have the opportunity to comprehensively apply key concepts to a contemporary theater security case study. As *Introduction to Foreign Policy Analysis* reading from FPA-1 noted, “It has never been more important for a national security professional to understand the range of international and domestic actors and influences that can impact theater security.” This session operationalizes that insight by requiring students to engage deeply with the policy analysis of a theater-level issue.

Students will apply FPA concepts to assess how domestic and international influences, interagency dynamics, organizational behavior, and other factors, shape U.S. decision making in a real-world security environment. Special attention will be given to understanding how bureaucratic structures, institutional interests, alliance considerations, and domestic political pressures interact within the U.S. national security system. By integrating these elements, students will enhance their ability to successfully navigate the complexities of the policy making environment and provide strategic recommendations.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Using the tools, techniques, and concepts presented in FPA sessions, analyze a contemporary national- and theater-level security issue and identify relevant factors in both the internal (domestic) environment as well as the external (international) environment, including U.S. and global elements.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. The FPA sessions were designed to provide an in-depth examination of “the actors, their motivations, the structures of decision making, and the broader context in which ... policy choices are formulated.” How can FPA concepts be used to analyze this case?
2. Reading FPA 1-2 quoted Richard Kugler’s observation, “Any good policy analysis must start with a rich conceptualization of the key variables and their relationships.” What are the key variables and their relationships in this case?
3. The very first reading in FPA-1 noted that principal themes in FPA “come together to demonstrate the diversity of institutional and structural influences on how and why decisions are made and how state action is shaped.” Which actors/factors were most influential in shaping the decision making process discussed in this case?

### **D. Student Preparation**

1. Case study materials will be provided by the Professor prior to this session.

### **E. Student Deliverables**

During FPA-21 in Week 26, students are required to successfully complete FA-5, an in-class case analysis and presentation addressing CLO-3. Specific guidance for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS-22

### FUTURE FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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#### A. Session Overview

From responding to emerging threats like autonomous weapons proliferation to navigating potential conflicts over Arctic resources, future national security decisions will demand not only tactical agility but strategic foresight. Effective national security professionals must be able to anticipate the actors, forces, and dynamics that will shape policy making to better inform decisionmakers before decisions are made.

This session challenges students to apply their FPA analytical skills to a future-oriented national security decision-making scenario. The objective is to analytically identify the actors, factors, powers, influences, and institutional dynamics that would likely affect a major policy decision in a plausible future context. Students will be expected to move beyond retrospective case studies and instead apply their understanding of the policy making ecosystem to forecast how U.S. foreign policy might be decided under new, complex conditions.

A detailed grasp of the U.S. foreign policy making apparatus, including the formal authorities, informal actors, bureaucratic frictions, and external influences explored in previous sessions, is essential to building this kind of strategic foresight. Developing the ability to anticipate challenges and opportunities in the policy environment is a critical skill for national security professionals operating at the strategic and theater levels.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Analyze and comprehend the range of policy actors, factors, dynamics, and influences that could affect U.S. policy regarding a critical national security concern.
  - Apply FPA concepts and tools to determine the art of the possible in a hypothetical future-oriented policy making situation.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. The fictional (but realistic) scenario involves a surprise invasion by the People's Republic of China (PRC) of Taiwan-administered islands (Quemoy and Matsu) that lie just offshore

from the PRC mainland. What, if anything, would the U.S. government be likely to do in response?

2. How would uncertainty about PRC intentions influence U.S. decision making across the Executive Branch, Congress, and military leadership? What initial policy responses would be available, and what internal debates might arise?
3. The student preparation materials provide insights into how U.S., PRC, and Taiwanese officials reacted to past crises, particularly related to the three Taiwan Straits Crises (1954–55, 1958, and 1995–96). How did myriad domestic and international dynamics and pressures affect policymakers? How has Beijing perceived and responded to past crises involving the United States?

#### **D. Student Preparation (62 pp)**

1. U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian. “The Taiwan Straits Crises: 1954–55 and 1958.” In *Milestones: 1953–60*. Washington, DC: Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. (2 pp)
2. Smith, Paul. “A Lesson from 1958 Could Help Deter China from Taking Taiwan,” *Defense One*, 1 May 2025. (2 pp)
3. Mann, Jim. “Crisis Over Taiwan,” in *About Face: A History of America’s Curious Relationship with China from Nixon to Clinton*, 315–338. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1999. (23 pp)
4. Wu, Xinbo. “Managing Crisis and Sustaining Peace Between China and the United States,” *United States Institute of Peace*, 2008. (Read only: 7–10; 23–37). (17 pp)
5. Gordon, Susan, and Michael Mullen. “Introduction,” in *US-Taiwan Relations in a New Era: Responding to a More Assertive China*. Independent Task Force Report No. 81, New York, NY: Council on Foreign Relation, June 2023. (3 pp)
6. Chien, Amy Chiang, John Liu, and Paul Mozur. “Fight or Surrender: Taiwan’s Generational Divide on China’s Threats,” *The New York Times*, 05 August 2022. (5 pp)
7. Glaser, Bonnie S. and Bonnie Lin. “The Looming Crisis in the Taiwan Strait.” *Foreign Affairs*, 02 July 2024. (10 pp)

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

No later than the start of SDX-1, students are required to submit and successfully complete SA-3 addressing CLO-3. Specific instructions for this deliverable can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## ANNEX F

### TSDM – STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE STUDY GUIDE

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#### **Strategy Development Exercise Overview**

The Strategy Development Exercise (SDX) is the synthesizing event for TSDM, the final summative assessment, and the “key assessment” for PLO-2. The SDX is a two-phase event in which students actively apply concepts from the IS and FPA sessions in a simulated real-world exercise. Each seminar will assume the role of a USINDOPACOM Joint Planning Group (JPG). As the course’s synthesizing event, the SDX provides students an opportunity to exercise concepts learned throughout TSDM while also demonstrating mastery of the TSDM CLOs and PLO-2. In the LPA sessions students examined the significance of critical thinking, the various ways in which decisions are made, and the challenges associated with effective decision making—especially within the profession of arms. The IS sessions provided students with an overview of the ever-changing international environment that the United States must consider while trying to advance U.S. interests. The FPA sessions allowed students an opportunity to analyze the myriad actors, factors, and processes that must be considered in the development of national security policy in each of the organizational, domestic, and international environments. The SDX sessions, students are given the opportunity to synthesize the concepts covered throughout TSDM and demonstrate their application in a group exercise focused on the USINDOPACOM theater.

As discussed throughout TSDM, the complexity and challenges facing today’s military leaders, even at the O-4 and O-5 levels, can have national and international security implications. As such, today’s military leaders must take a wider view beyond just their “tactical level” organization. This view should consider factors such as identifying vital U.S. interests in various theaters of operation, the differing challenges, roles and missions of the various combatant commands, stakeholder expectations (foreign and domestic), alignment with theater-, regional-, and strategic-level missions, how to effectively advance U.S. interests from multiple courses of action, identifying the requisite capabilities needed to achieve success, and a host of other issues. The SDX sessions incorporate the concepts and themes examined in the LPA, IS, and FPA sessions and synthesize them into the real-world theater security decision making environment. This synthesis provides students with an invaluable opportunity to think more critically about the real-world challenges facing today’s national security professionals at the theater level. The goal is to enable students to serve more effectively in command and staff assignments while considering “the larger picture” as it relates to theater-level national security.

#### **The SDX Process**

As the capstone event for TSDM, students will need to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts covered throughout the course as well as the ability to apply these concepts through a practical exercise focusing on USINDOPACOM and the Indo-Pacific region over the next eight years.

**SDX Phase One:** In Phase One of the SDX (SDX 1-12), each JPG must produce and brief an executive-level PowerPoint briefing covering USINDOPACOM for the J-5 Director (the Professor or presiding official). The presentation will have four distinct deliverables: 1) clearly identify U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region; 2) a strategic estimate of the future USINDOPACOM security environment over the next eight years; 3) a sub-headings level outline of a theater strategy for USINDOPACOM that includes desired *ends* and *ways*; and 4) a list of four capabilities (*means*) that will be necessary to achieve or advance the strategic ends.

**SDX Phase Two:** In Phase Two, (SDX-13-14), the JPGs will be presented with a “reframing moment” (by the Professor) that will describe a significant “event” within the Indo-Pacific region. The JPG must critically assess the effectiveness and suitability of their strategic proposal considering the reframing moment. Utility, strengths and weaknesses, potential blind spots, and missing concepts or capabilities must all be considered in this critical analysis. It is said that no plan survives first contact with the enemy. Phase Two of the SDX provides the JPG with the opportunity to assess how their plan “survived” and propose potential alterations or additions as desired.

**SDX Product:** The required JPG product will be delivered in two briefings. First is a 30-minute PowerPoint briefing covering the four required elements of Phase One mentioned above. The second product (which directly follows the first) is a second PowerPoint briefing (no more than 10 minutes) discussing the results of the critical assessment of their strategic proposal following the reframing moment. Following the 40-minutes of the Phase One and Phase Two briefings, there will be 15 minutes of Q&A with the Professor and/or presiding official. Each JPG will designate at least three briefers (at least two briefers for Phase One and one brifer for Phase Two), but all students are expected to participate in the Q&A. Slide templates will be provided by the Professor to help keep the focus on content.

**Approach:** Over the next eight weeks the SDX sessions will guide students through the critical thinking and planning processes necessary for the development of a theater strategy. Students are not writing a complete theater strategy. Instead, they are providing an executive level presentation that can facilitate development of the CCMD-level products that provide a strategic overview of the USINDOPACOM theater. Concepts and capabilities should represent the important Doctrine, Organizational, Training, Material, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities, and Policy (DOTMLPF-P) requirements across the DIME that are necessary to advance the strategy, accomplish strategic objectives, and achieve the strategic vision. Though students are tasked with providing a USINDOPACOM theater strategy outline, the realities of the need for interagency cooperation and whole of government approaches should be considered. The subsequent SDX sessions will clearly outline the requirements of the SDX and the expected deliverables.

### **SDX Deliverables Guidance**

The SDX Phase One deliverables include the following components organized into an executive-level PowerPoint briefing not to exceed 30 minutes:

1. A clearly defined, rank-ordered list of the four (4) most significant U.S. interests in the USINDOPACOM theater.
  - For the purposes of the SDX, students should take as given the current NSS guidance, concept of national interests, and identification of sources of threat. An important element of this component is the *prioritization of national interests and the understanding of what that prioritization implies*. Not all national interests are vital national interests...the state does not have the means to serve all interests at the same level of importance. But national strategic guidance can be a bit vague on priority levels of national interests. This is where students can stake their flag and make a case for which interests are vital, which are important, and which are peripheral in the Indo-Pacific region.
  - Once identified, the hierarchy of interests should form the foundation of the “*Golden Thread*” or cohesive theme for the strategic proposal. What does the United States hope to accomplish? Why does the country need to accomplish these goals? All U.S. strategies must serve and be traceable to national interests, and the level of investment is directly tied to the level of importance of those interests. If the U.S. national interests are not clearly established and aligned to the strategic proposal it is intended to serve, the creation and sustainment of a “*Golden Thread*” will be very difficult to accomplish.
2. A USINDOPACOM theater strategic estimate over the next eight (8) years.
  - Produce a description of the region’s significance to U.S. security and interests, especially upcoming threats and opportunities. Consider how the USINDOPACOM theater fits into the global security picture for the U.S. Students should:
    - Evaluate the four (4) most significant major trends in the USINDOPACOM theater over both the near term (0-2 years) and medium term (3-8 years) that may challenge the United States’ ability to advance and defend its interests in the region.
    - Consider what is happening in terms of demographics, economics, politics, the environment, etc., both within the region and in that region's relationships with important outside actors.
    - Conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis analyzing the INDOPACOM’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats anticipated over the next eight years.
    - Consider the U.S. military position in the region and relationships between the neighboring combatant commands and states / regional organizations / sub-state actors, as well as with other U.S. government agencies working in the region. Where might CCMD interests and preferences align with those of other actors, and where might there be tension? Given there are multiple CCMDs bordering on the Indo-Pacific region, what tension might exist between them?
    - Consider both the likelihood and the severity of various potentially negative events/trends in the region.

3. A USINDOPACOM theater strategy outline.

- Produce a sub-heading-level outline of the strategic approach from the USINDOPACOM perspective.
  - Having determined the trends the United States would need to influence to achieve its goals, students must develop the outline of a strategic approach to the USINDOPACOM theater within a global context. In other words, students should not plan in a vacuum, but should consider how their strategic proposal may impact U.S. strategy on a global scale.
  - What is the vision or desired strategic end-state or outcome (*ends*) for the USINDOPACOM theater in both the near (0-2 years) and medium (3-8 years) term time period? Consider threats and opportunities in terms of likelihood and severity as well as urgency and order of occurrence.
  - Describe and discuss concepts (*ways*) required to achieve the strategic objectives. This is the sub-heading level discussion that goes beyond a catchy bumper sticker and gets into the concepts the student proposes to achieve the strategic goals. These concepts can be outside the scope of the DoD.
  - Are there other actors the United States will need to influence to arrive at the desired end-state or outcome? What forms of leverage might the United States have over these actors? How can the United States exert that leverage at the least cost and without violating important principles?
  - Explain the challenges and risks in the proposed strategy outline and discuss risk mitigation measures (avoid, accept, manage, transfer).
  - Consider alignment with national strategic direction from the United States NSS, NDS, and NMS.

4. A prioritized list of required capabilities.

- A list of four (4) prioritized capabilities (*means*) necessary to carry out the theater strategic proposal. Determine and defend the relative priority of the listed capabilities.
  - Conceptualize these as capabilities across the DOTMLPF-P. They can be hardware, doctrine, organization, skills, personnel, etc. Discuss how it would be executed in the field, and how it would help to achieve the desired strategic outcomes.
  - Capabilities do not have to be solely DoD focused or military in nature. Although, three of the four capabilities identified by the JPG should be DoD focused or military in nature. However, if one the required capabilities does outside the scope of the DoD, the briefing should discuss the possible policy implications, actors, and processes to attain the required capability.

The SDX Phase Two deliverable includes the following components organized into an executive-level PowerPoint briefing not to exceed 10 minutes:

1. A critical analysis of the Phase One strategic proposal which examines the major regional national security event outlined in the reframing moment.
  - Assess and brief how well the JPG's strategic proposal meets the events described in the reframing moment.
  - Based on the reframing moment, identify and brief any potential weaknesses or blind spots discovered in the strategic proposal.
  - Based on the reframing moment, identify and brief any areas of the strategic proposal where the JPG could strengthen its effectiveness, and detail how it would do so.
  - Identify all areas of the strategic proposal that effectively address and mitigate the effects of the reframing moment.

ANNEX F

TSDM – STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE  
STUDY GUIDE

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## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE

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#### A. Session Overview

This introductory session of the SDX will provide students with a thorough outline of the SDX requirements, a review of each session's purpose, and an opportunity to ask questions to ensure all students are working with the same understanding of the deliverables. To help ensure each JPG is meeting expectations, they will be given an opportunity to present a short brief to the Professor on each of the four deliverables in Phase One. These briefings are considered FAs and will occur over the course of the SDX development process. The Professor will offer the JPG feedback on the quality of the briefing, offer suggestions for improvement, and validate the JPG has a solid foundation on which to develop the next portion of their briefing.

To ensure each student has an opportunity for maximum participation and input into the SDX product, seminars with 12 or more students will be broken up into two separate JPGs. The Professor will divide students into two separate JPGs with an equitable number of students in each. Seminars with 11 students or less will have a single JPG. No JPG will have more than 11 students or fewer than six.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the SDX scenario, processes, products, student deliverables.
  - Understand the process, format, and timing for coordinating and briefing each of the SDX deliverables.
- SDX Objectives in Phase One
  - Understand and apply TSDM course concepts.
  - Identify and prioritize U.S. national interests in the Indo-Pacific region, distinguishing between vital, important, and peripheral interests in the context of long-term strategic competition.
  - Conduct a strategic assessment of the Indo-Pacific region over the next eight (8) years, identifying key security, political, economic, and technological trends that may impact USINDOPACOM's ability to advance U.S. interests in the region.
  - Develop a coherent strategic framework that links clearly defined strategic *ends* to operational and institutional *ways*, grounded in the realities of the projected security environment.

- Construct a rank-ordered list of capabilities—joint, interagency, and multinational—that represent the necessary *means* to implement the proposed strategy effectively.
  - Apply the *ends–ways–means* construct to evaluate strategic sufficiency, internal logic, feasibility, and *risk* across time, domains, and operational theaters.
  - Assess risk arising from misalignment or shortfalls in *means*, and recommend mitigations or adaptations to ensure strategic success in a resource-constrained environment.
  - Communicate strategic reasoning clearly and concisely, demonstrating the ability to justify strategic choices through evidence, doctrinal grounding, and sound logic.
- SDX Objectives in Phase Two Reframing Moment
    - Critically analyze and assess Phase One strategic proposal in light of a major regional national security event.
    - The seminar must prepare a short set of slides (3-5) to present the results of their critical analysis. These slides will be presented after the 30-minute Phase One presentation, and prior to the question-and-answer period. The seminar is allotted 10 minutes to present its Phase Two presentation. Phase Two slides are due to the Professor no later than 48-hours prior to the start of SDX-15.
- Learning Outcomes
    - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision-making as a national security professional.
    - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
    - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision-making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
    - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
    - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

None

### **D. Student Preparation (67 pp, ~20 min of video)**

1. TSDM Syllabus Annex F. Read entire Annex SDX 1-55. (55 pp)

2. Reveron, Derek S, James L Cook, and Ross M Coffey. 2022. "Competing Regionally: Developing Theater Strategy." *Joint Force Quarterly* 104, 2022. (12 pp)
3. Video: Pratt, Michael W. "Strategy Development Exercise Overview," July 2025. (~20 mins)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

Formative Assessments 6-10. The JPG will be required to present five briefings throughout the development of the SDX Phase One product. Each of the first four briefings will focus on one of the four deliverables of Phase One and be approximately 10 minutes in length:

- 1) Prioritized list of U.S. interests (FA-6 briefed in SDX-3).
- 2) Theater strategic estimate (FA-7 briefed in SDX-5).
- 3) Theater strategy outline (FA-8 briefed in SDX-7).
- 4) List of four rank-ordered capabilities (FA-9 briefed in SDX-9).

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-2

### NATIONAL INTERESTS: THE FOUNDATION OF STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

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#### A. Session Overview

As discussed in IS 12 and 13, USINDOPACOM is the largest and most dynamic geographically oriented combatant command spanning a region that is home to over half the world's population, 38 states, six of the world's 20 largest economies, and a complex mix of emerging powers, historical rivalries, and transnational threats. As the strategic focus of U.S. national security increasingly shifts toward the Indo-Pacific region, understanding how to align theater security strategy with enduring U.S. national interests has never been a more critical skill for national security professionals.

This session offers students an opportunity to examine the intersection of U.S. strategic objectives and theater-level planning within the USINDOPACOM theater. Students will explore how national interests (such as maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific, deterring aggression, ensuring freedom of navigation, and promoting regional stability) inform the development and execution of theater strategy. Given the combination of international relations theory, policy analysis, case studies, and operational design, students have studied throughout TSDM, this portion of the SDX will enable them to assess how USINDOPACOM can translate strategic guidance into campaign plans that deter adversaries, reassure allies and partners, and shape the security environment. The goal of the session is to equip students with the ability to critically assess and contribute to the formulation of theater strategies that are both responsive to dynamic security challenges and grounded in long-term U.S. strategic objectives.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Identify and prioritize U.S. national interests as articulated in strategic documents (e.g., NSS, NDS, NMS) and explain their relevance to the Indo-Pacific region.
  - Understand the geopolitical and security dynamics unique to USINDOPACOM.
  - Describe the role of theater strategy in linking national-level policy and guidance to operational and tactical execution within a geographic combatant command.
  - Evaluate how USINDOPACOM aligns theater campaigns and posture to support U.S. national interests and deter adversary aggression.
  - Examine the tools and mechanisms available to a combatant commander, such as security cooperation, force posture, access agreements, and integrated deterrence.

- Understand how theater strategy is developed and adapted in response to dynamic security conditions.
- Critically reflect on the challenges of coalition and partner coordination in the region, and the role of alliances and partnerships in advancing U.S. interests.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. What are vital U.S. national interests, and who defines them?
2. What are the U.S. national interests in the Indo-Pacific region, and how have they evolved in recent strategic guidance?
3. How do national interests differ from policy goals, values, or preferences?
4. How do the NSS, NDS, and NMS inform USINDOPACOM's theater strategy?
5. Is a theater strategy truly strategic if it is not explicitly grounded in national interests? Why or why not?
6. In what ways does the concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific align with or diverge from traditional U.S. strategic interests?

### **D. Student Preparation (40 pp)**

1. The White House. National Security Strategy of the United States of America. Washington, DC: *White House*, October 2022, pp. 6-13, 37-45 (16 pp) SCAN remainder of document.
2. Reveron, Derek S. and Nikolas K. Gvosdev. "National Interests and Grand Strategy," in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. National Security*, edited by Derek S. Reveron, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, and John A. Cloud. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, pp. 35-42. (7 pp)

3. National War College, *A National Security Strategy Primer*, 2018, pp. 15-35. (17 pp)

### **Supplemental Materials**

1. Chin, John J., Kiron Skinner, and Clay Yoo. "Understanding National Security Strategies Through Time." *Texas National Security Review* 6, no. 4 (2023). (11 pp)
2. Kagan, Robert. "A Free World If You Can Keep It: Ukraine and American Interests." *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2023. (7 pp)
3. Video: Mariano, Stephen. "What is a National Security Strategy and Why Have One?" *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, 03 February 2017. (~13 min)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

Formative Assessments 6-10. The JPG will be required to present five briefings throughout the development of the SDX Phase One product. Each of the first four briefings will focus on one of the four deliverables of Phase One and be approximately 10 minutes in length:

- 1) Prioritized list of U.S. interests (FA-6 briefed in SDX-3).
- 2) Theater strategic estimate (FA-7 briefed in SDX-5).
- 3) Theater strategy outline (FA-8 briefed in SDX-7).
- 4) List of four rank-ordered capabilities (FA-9 briefed in SDX-9).

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-3

### STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT: LINKING STRATEGY TO REALITY

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#### A. Session Overview

At the beginning of this session each of the seminar's JPGs will present a PowerPoint briefing, approximately 10 minutes in length, that prioritizes their list of U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region. Following the briefing and feedback from the Professor, SDX-3 will begin.

Retired Admiral William McRaven, former commander of U.S. Special Operations Command and the leader credited with the successful operation that killed Usama bin Laden famously said, "You need to know where you are before you can determine where you want to go." This is a powerful reminder that self-awareness is crucial for setting goals and achieving success. Understanding the current situation, including skills, resources, limitations, threats, opportunities, etc., is essential before one can effectively develop a strategy that achieves one's desired objectives. Before any national security professional can determine where they want to go, they must first determine where they are. This session provides students with the essential concepts, critical thinking tools, and strategic frameworks necessary to evaluate complex and dynamic security challenges in today's most consequential region: the Indo-Pacific. As the United States' primary theater for strategic competition in the 21st century, the Indo-Pacific region presents a unique blend of geopolitical opportunity and military risk. National security professionals within USINDOPACOM must continually assess and adapt to a rapidly evolving landscape shaped by great power rivalry, technological disruption, alliance dynamics, and gray-zone coercion—the very same goal of the SDX.

This session will provide students with insights necessary to assess the challenges facing USINDOPACOM in the Indo-Pacific region and how well it is postured to assist in advancing U.S. interests. This session also introduces a structured assessment methodology in the form of assessing an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, frequently referred to as SWOT.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Conduct a comprehensive security environment assessment tailored to the Indo-Pacific region, apply joint strategic concepts, and recommend theater-level strategies that advance U.S. national objectives while mitigating operational and strategic risk.
  - Apply the fundamentals of assessment, its key elements, and critical factors.
  - Understand what is and is not important to assess as part of an organizational assessment.

- Describe the advantages of assessing a situation from the perspective of the four SWOT categories: (internal) strengths and weaknesses, (external) opportunities and threats.
- Discuss the delineation of internal and external assessment factors.
- Comprehend the linkage between assessment integrity and decision quality.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

#### *Foundational Questions:*

1. What are the key trends in geographic, demographic, economic, and political composition in the Indo-Pacific region?
2. What are the enduring U.S. national interests in this region, and how are they prioritized (vital, important, peripheral)?
3. What is the strategic vision or end-state the United States seeks to achieve in the Indo-Pacific region?

#### *Threat and Risk Assessment:*

1. Who are the primary state and non-state actors challenging regional stability?
2. What are the emerging threats across military, informational, economic, cyber, and gray-zone areas within the Indo-Pacific region?
3. What flashpoints (e.g., Taiwan Strait, South China Sea, Korean Peninsula, India/Pakistan) have the greatest risk of escalation?
4. What are the most likely and most dangerous risks in the Indo-Pacific theater?

*Alliances and Partnerships:*

1. Who are the key allies and partners, and how do their interests align or diverge from U.S. objectives?
2. What is the state of regional multilateral institutions and security architectures (e.g., AUKUS, Quad, ASEAN, BRICS)?
3. How do strategic partnerships enhance or limit U.S. deterrence and influence?

*Military Posture and Capability Assessment:*

1. What is the current U.S. and allied force posture across the Indo-Pacific region?
2. What security-related capabilities (*means*) are necessary to deter aggression and support regional stability?
3. How is the U.S. implementing concepts like Integrated Deterrence, building enduring advantages, campaigning, and Distributed Maritime Operations?

*Strategic Trends and Outlook:*

1. What are the key political, technological, economic, and military trends shaping the Indo-Pacific region over the next eight years?
2. How will China's continuing rise, North Korea's military trajectory, and climate affect regional dynamics?
3. What are the implications of strategic competition for U.S. influence, readiness, and strategic messaging?

*Strategic Risk and Mitigation:*

1. What are the key risks to U.S. strategy (e.g., overextension, alliance friction, escalation)?
2. How can U.S. policy balance deterrence with diplomacy and reassurance with readiness?
3. What are the indicators of strategic success or failure in this theater?

**D. Student Preparation (47 pp; ~7 min of video)**

1. National Security Affairs Faculty. "Assessment," Newport, R.I.: Naval War College faculty paper, Newport, R.I. May 2014. Revised for the College of Distance Education by Professor Michael Pratt, July 2025. (9 pp)
2. National Security Affairs Faculty. "SWOT and Structured Assessment," Faculty paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI, April 2010. Revised for the College of Distance Education by Professor Michael Pratt, July 2025. (13 pp)

3. Video: “How to Perform a SWOT Analysis,” On Strategy. October 19, 2016, (0:00-7:02). (~7 min)
4. Paparo, Samuel J., Admiral, USN, Commander USINDOPACOM. “U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Posture Statement,” April 2025. (25 pp)

## **E. Student Deliverables**

Formative Assessments 6-10. The JPG will be required to present five briefings throughout the development of the SDX Phase One product. Each of the first four briefings will focus on one of the four deliverables of Phase One and be approximately 10 minutes in length:

- 1) Prioritized list of U.S. interests (FA-6 briefed in SDX-3).
- 2) Theater strategic estimate (FA-7 briefed in SDX-5).
- 3) Theater strategy outline (FA-8 briefed in SDX-7).
- 4) List of four rank-ordered capabilities (FA-9 briefed in SDX-9).

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-4

### SDX PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

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#### A. Session Overview

This session provides each of the seminar's JPGs valuable seminar time to develop their theater strategic estimate, and to seek and receive Professor feedback that will be briefed as FA-7 in SDX-5.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, approximately 10 minutes in length, that offers a theater strategic estimate over the next eight years that is in line with the JPG's prioritized list of U.S. interests, the theater strategy outline, and a rank-ordered list of capabilities.
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, not to exceed 30 minutes in length, that outlines the JPG's four Phase One deliverables.
  - Incorporate Professor feedback and guidance into the JPG's Phase One deliverables and presentation.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. Has the JPG incorporated the feedback and guidance offered by the Professor for their prioritized list of U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region?

2. Has the JPG fully developed a theater strategic estimate for USINDOPACOM over the next eight years that addresses each of the requirements as outlined in SDX-1?
3. Is the JPG fully prepared to deliver a PowerPoint briefing, approximately 10-minutes in length, that outlines a USINDOPACOM theater strategic estimate over the next eight years at the beginning of SDX-5?

#### **D. Student Preparation**

None

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

Formative Assessments 6-10. The JPG will be required to present five briefings throughout the development of the SDX Phase One product. Each of the first four briefings will focus on one of the four deliverables of Phase One and be approximately 10 minutes in length:

- 1) Prioritized list of U.S. interests (FA-6 briefed in SDX-3).
- 2) Theater strategic estimate (FA-7 briefed in SDX-5).
- 3) Theater strategy outline (FA-8 briefed in SDX-7).
- 4) List of four rank-ordered capabilities (FA-9 briefed in SDX-9).

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-5

### TRANSLATING OBJECTIVES INTO ACTION: LINKING ENDS TO WAYS

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#### A. Session Overview

At the beginning of this session, each of the seminar's JPGs will present a briefing, approximately 10-minutes in length, on their theater strategic estimate of the Indo-Pacific region over the next eight years. Following the briefing and feedback from the Professor, SDX-5 will begin.

The Indo-Pacific region represents one of the most strategically significant—and complex—theaters in contemporary U.S. foreign policy. With a dynamic blend of geopolitical rivalry, economic interdependence, contested domains, and diverse regional actors, the formulation of strategy in this area demands a precise and thoughtful linkage between political objectives (*ends*) and the military or interagency methods (*ways*) devised to achieve them.

This session allows students to build upon what they examined in the IS sessions by further exploring how strategic *ends*, such as a deterred China, regional stability, and freedom of navigation, are translated into *ways*, such as the application of military presence, Joint Force posture, security partnerships, and forward deterrence concepts, to name just a few. As part of the SDX, students will critically examine how strategy is shaped by regional dynamics, alliance structures, and the challenge of managing escalation in a competitive security environment.

Effective strategy in the Indo-Pacific region is not just about resources or presence—it's about *purpose*. This session challenges students to think critically about whether U.S. strategic *ways* truly support the stated *ends*. Students should evaluate real-world examples as discussed in seminar, consider both the clarity of U.S. objectives and the credibility of the paths that are being taken to achieve them. Previous IS sessions focused on issues such as developments in the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait, advancement of nuclear weapons and missile technology by North Korea, or the efficacy of integrated deterrence. These sessions provided students with the necessary background and skills to assess the adequacy and coherence of current U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific region.

Broadly conceived, strategy is an instrument of policy in both war and peace. In general, when considering national security, strategy describes how the national instruments of power, including military means, are applied to achieve national interests (*ends*). As such, strategy constitutes a continual dialogue between policy on the one hand and such factors as geography, technology, and resources on the other. As discussed in IS, using national-level strategic documents (NSS, NDS, NMS, and U.S. maritime strategy) as guides, combatant commanders develop theater strategies, which are defined in joint doctrine as “concepts and courses of action directed toward securing the objectives of national and multinational policies and strategies through the synchronized and integrated employment of military forces and other instruments of national power.” To start this process, the combatant command should have a

firm understanding of U.S. interests in the region and then develop *ways* to advance and defend those interests.

## **B. Objectives**

- Session Objectives
  - Develop a coherent strategic framework that links clearly defined strategic *ends* to operational and institutional *ways*, grounded in the realities of the projected security environment.
  - Understand the connection between desired objectives/outcomes (*ends*) and the strategic concepts, courses of action, or methods (*ways*) employed to achieve the desired objectives.
  - Assess the strategic *ends* guiding U.S. military engagement in the Indo-Pacific region.
  - Evaluate the *ways* the Joint Force and interagency community employ to pursue those *ends*.
  - Analyze the coherence between political aims and military strategy within a competitive regional environment.
  - Identify risks and friction points that arise from misalignment or overreach in linking *ends* to *ways*.
  - Propose alternative strategic approaches that strengthen regional deterrence and align with U.S. national interests.
  - Why must risk be taken into account in decision making?
  - Understand risk identification, calculation, acceptance, and mitigation on a decision.
  - Comprehend the *ways* and *means* of establishing, measuring, and comparing sets of alternatives to arrive at the best course of action to pursue to achieve desired objectives.
  - Understand rational decision making and explain and apply a rational decision making process.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.

- CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
- CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
- Supports NWC PLO-2.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. Do the selected strategic concepts, courses of action, or methods (*ways*) clearly and logically support the strategic objectives/outcomes (*ends*)?
2. Is there a direct cause-and-effect relationship between the *ways* chosen and the outcomes (*ends*) desired?
3. Are the *ways* appropriate to the level of war (strategic, operational, tactical)?
4. Do the *ways* reflect a clear understanding of the problems or challenges the strategy seeks to address?
5. Are the *ways* consistent with national or theater-level strategic guidance (e.g., NSS, NDS, theater campaign plans)?
6. Do the *ways* take into account the strategic environment, including political, military, and cultural factors?
7. Have alternative *ways* been considered, and why were these *ways* selected over others?
8. Can the *ways* be executed with available or attainable *means*?
9. Are the *ways* feasible given known constraints (e.g., rules of engagement, political will, international support)?
10. Do the *ways* effectively account for potential adversary responses or strategies?
11. What risks arise from the chosen *ways*, and how can they be mitigated?
12. Are there any gaps between the *ends* and the *ways* that could jeopardize the strategy?
13. What are the options for addressing identified risks, and how does one decide between these options?

### **D. Student Preparation (45 pp)**

1. Department of Defense. National Defense Strategy of the United States of America. Washington, DC: *Department of Defense*, 27 October 2022, pp. iii-23. (16 pp)

2. Department of Defense. National Defense Strategy Strategic Ways Compilation Factsheets, Washington, DC: *Department of Defense*, 27 October 2022. (3 pp)
2. Pratt, Michael W. “Deciding Strategy,” Newport, R.I.: Naval War College faculty paper, July 2024. Adapted from the National Security Affairs Faculty paper, May 2011. (14 pp)
3. Reveron, Derek S, James L. Cook, and Ross M. Coffey, “Competing Regionally: Developing Theater Strategy,” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, First quarter 2022. (12 pp)

### **Supplemental Materials**

1. Video: “What is Strategy? It’s a Lot Simpler Than You Think,” *Harvard Business Review*, February 23, 2022, (0:00-9:31). (~9 min)
2. Pratt, Michael W. “Implementation: The Art of Execution,” Newport, R.I.: Naval War College faculty paper, July 2024. Adapted from the National Security Affairs faculty paper, April 2011. (13 pp)
3. Pratt, Michael W. “Domains of Implementation.” Newport, R.I.: Naval War College faculty paper, July 2024. Adapted from the National Security Affairs faculty paper, May 2010. (10 pp)
4. Pratt, Michael W. “Assuring Organizational Excellence.” Newport, R.I.: Naval War College faculty paper, July 2024. Adapted from the National Security Affairs faculty paper, May 2012. (13 pp)
5. Pratt, Michael W. “Counting What Counts.” Newport, R.I.: Naval War College faculty paper, July 2024. (10 pp)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

Formative Assessments 6-10. The JPG will be required to present five briefings throughout the development of the SDX Phase One product. Each of the first four briefings will focus on one of the four deliverables of Phase One and be approximately 10 minutes in length:

- 1) Prioritized list of U.S. interests (FA-6 briefed in SDX-3).
- 2) Theater strategic estimate (FA-7 briefed in SDX-5).
- 3) Theater strategy outline (FA-8 briefed in SDX-7).
- 4) List of four rank-ordered capabilities (FA-9 briefed in SDX-9).

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for

this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-6

### SDX PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

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#### A. Session Overview

This session provides each of the seminar's JPGs valuable seminar time to develop their theater strategy outline that will be briefed as FA-8 in SDX-7.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, approximately 10 minutes in length, that offers a theater strategy outline over the next eight years that is in line with the JPG's prioritized list of U.S. interests, the theater strategic estimate, and a rank-ordered list of capabilities.
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, not to exceed 30 minutes in length, that outlines the JPG's four Phase One deliverables.
  - Incorporate Professor feedback and guidance into the JPG's Phase One deliverables and presentation.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. Has the JPG incorporated the feedback and guidance offered by the Professor for their USINDOPACOM theater strategic estimate?
2. Has the JPG fully developed a theater strategy outline for USINDOPACOM over the next eight years that addresses each of the requirements as outlined in SDX-1?

3. Is the JPG fully prepared to deliver a PowerPoint briefing, approximately 10-minutes in length, that discusses their theater strategy outline at the beginning of SDX-7?

#### **D. Student Preparation**

None

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

Formative Assessments 6-10. The JPG will be required to present five briefings throughout the development of the SDX Phase One product. Each of the first four briefings will focus on one of the four deliverables of Phase One and be approximately 10 minutes in length:

- 1) Prioritized list of U.S. interests (FA-6 briefed in SDX-3).
- 2) Theater strategic estimate (FA-7 briefed in SDX-5).
- 3) Theater strategy outline (FA-8 briefed in SDX-7).
- 4) List of four rank-ordered capabilities (FA-9 briefed in SDX-9).

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-7

### OPERATIONALIZING STRATEGY: LINKING WAYS TO MEANS

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#### A. Session Overview

At the beginning of this session each of the seminar's JPGs will present a PowerPoint briefing, approximately 10-minutes in length, on their theater strategy outline for the Indo-Pacific region. Following the briefing and feedback from the Professor, SDX-7 will begin.

This session allows students to explore the critical role of linking operational *ways* with the appropriate *means* to achieve clearly defined strategic *ends* in the context of joint and theater-level operations. Bridging the gap between conceptual strategy and practical implementation enables students to understand and apply the logic of strategic design, resource allocation, and campaign planning within the Indo-Pacific region.

As part of the SDX, students should examine how strategic objectives (*ends*) inform the development of operational approaches (*ways*) and how the integration and application of joint capabilities (*means*) are essential to successful execution. Emphasis is placed on aligning available and projected resources—including personnel, platforms, logistics, enablers, and interagency or allied contributions—with the chosen courses of action.

Through case studies and collaborative planning exercises, students have assessed historical and contemporary operations to identify the factors that drive or constrain the linkage between *ways* and *means*. Special focus will be given to identifying risk resulting from misalignment, shortfalls, or overreach, and to developing adaptive strategies under conditions of uncertainty and resource limitations.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Understand the operational meanings of *ways* and how they relate to *ends* and achieving strategic objectives.
  - Assess how operational approaches (*ways*) determine the selection, organization, and employment of tactical capabilities (*means*).
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, approximately 10 minutes in length, that offers a rank-ordered list of capabilities that is in line with the JPG's prioritized list of U.S. interests, the theater strategic estimate, and the theater strategy outline.
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, not to exceed 30 minutes in length, that outlines the JPG's four Phase One deliverables.

- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### C. Guidance Questions

1. Will the selected operational *means* and *ways* logically and effectively support and achieve the strategic objectives?
2. Are the available *means* sufficient, suitable, and sustainable for the selected *ways*?
3. What joint, interagency, or multinational capabilities can be employed to support the operational *ways*?
4. Does the selected strategy sufficiently leverage all instruments of national power (DIME) in the operational approach?
5. If *means* are limited, how would one prioritize operational *ways*? What tradeoffs must be made?
6. How can one reframe or adapt operational *ways* to align with constrained *means*?

### D. Student Preparation (12 pp)

8. Joint Chiefs of Staff. National Military Strategy of the United States of America. Washington, DC: *Joint Chiefs of Staff*, 08 May 2023. (6 pp)
9. Groves, Bryan. "Strategic Discipline and Developing the 2022 National Military Strategy." *The National Interest*, 10 March 2023. (6 pp)

### Supplemental Materials

1. Berger, David H., Michael M. Gilday, and Karl L. Schultz. "Advantage at Sea, Prevailing with Integrated All-Domain Naval Power," *Department of the Navy*, December 2020. (20 pp)

2. Video: Chief of Naval Operations. "Chief of Naval Operations Releases Navigation Plan for America's Warfighting Navy." YouTube video, 18 September 2024. (~22 min)

### **E. Student Deliverables**

Formative Assessments 6-10. The JPG will be required to present five briefings throughout the development of the SDX Phase One product. Each of the first four briefings will focus on one of the four deliverables of Phase One and be approximately 10 minutes in length:

- 1) Prioritized list of U.S. interests (FA-6 briefed in SDX-3).
- 2) Theater strategic estimate (FA-7 briefed in SDX-5).
- 3) Theater strategy outline (FA-8 briefed in SDX-7).
- 4) List of four rank-ordered capabilities (FA-9 briefed in SDX-9).

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-8

### SDX PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

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#### A. Session Overview

This session provides each of the seminar's JPGs valuable seminar time to develop their rank-ordered list of capabilities, and to seek/receive Professor feedback that will be briefed as FA-9 in SDX-9.

#### Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, approximately 10 minutes in length, that offers a rank-ordered list of capabilities that is in line with the JPG's prioritized list of U.S. interests, the theater strategic estimate, and theater strategy outline.
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, not to exceed 30 minutes in length, that outlines the JPG's four Phase One deliverables.
  - Incorporate Professor feedback and guidance into the JPG's Phase One deliverables and presentation.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### B. Guidance Questions

1. Has the JPG incorporated the feedback and guidance offered by the Professor for their USINDOPACOM theater strategy outline?

2. Has the JPG fully developed a rank-ordered list of capabilities that addresses each of the requirements as outlined in SDX-1?
3. Is the JPG fully prepared to deliver a PowerPoint briefing, approximately 10-minutes in length, on their rank-ordered capabilities at the beginning of SDX-9?

#### **D. Student Preparation**

None

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

Formative Assessments 6-10. The JPG will be required to present five briefings throughout the development of the SDX Phase One product. Each of the first four briefings will focus on one of the four deliverables of Phase One and be approximately 10 minutes in length:

- 1) Prioritized list of U.S. interests (FA-6 briefed in SDX-3).
- 2) Theater strategic estimate (FA-7 briefed in SDX-5).
- 3) Theater strategy outline (FA-8 briefed in SDX-7).
- 4) List of four rank-ordered capabilities (FA-9 briefed in SDX-9).

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-9

### SDX PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

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#### A. Session Overview

At the beginning of this session each of the seminar's JPGs will present a PowerPoint briefing, approximately 10-minutes in length, on their four prioritized capabilities necessary to achieve the strategy outline. Following the briefing and feedback from the Professor, SDX-9 will begin.

This session provides each of the seminar's JPGs valuable seminar time to consolidate and synthesize the four deliverables briefed in FA-6 – FA-9 and prepare for FA-10 (the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation) that will be briefed as FA-10 in SDX-11.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, not to exceed 30 minutes in length, that outlines the JPG's four Phase One deliverables.
  - Incorporate Professor feedback and guidance into the JPG's Phase One deliverables and presentation.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. Has the JPG incorporated the feedback and guidance offered by the Professor for each of the Phase One deliverables?

2. Is there a coherent link and discernable “Golden Thread” between each of the Phase One deliverables.

#### **D. Student Preparation**

None

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

Formative Assessments 6-10. The JPG will be required to present five briefings throughout the development of the SDX Phase One product. Each of the first four briefings will focus on one of the four deliverables of Phase One and be approximately 10 minutes in length:

- 1) Prioritized list of U.S. interests (FA-6 briefed in SDX-3).
- 2) Theater strategic estimate (FA-7 briefed in SDX-5).
- 3) Theater strategy outline (FA-8 briefed in SDX-7).
- 4) List of four rank-ordered capabilities (FA-9 briefed in SDX-9).

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-10

### SDX PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

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#### A. Session Overview

This session provides each of the seminar's JPGs valuable seminar time to consolidate and synthesize the four deliverables briefed in FA-6 – FA-9 and prepare for FA-10 (the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation) that will be briefed as FA-10 in SDX-11.

#### Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, not to exceed 30 minutes in length, that outlines the JPG's four Phase One deliverables.
  - Incorporate Professor feedback and guidance into the JPG's Phase One deliverables and presentation.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### B. Guidance Questions

1. Has the JPG incorporated the feedback and guidance offered by the Professor for each of the Phase One deliverables?
2. Is there a coherent link and discernable "Golden Thread" between each of the Phase One deliverables.
3. Has the JPG reviewed the SDX Phase One Rehearsal Checklist

## **Strategy Development Exercise Phase One Rehearsal Checklist**

### **CONTENT**

- Meets SDX requirements
- Demonstrates clear understanding of TSDM course concepts
- U.S. interests, strategic estimate, strategy outline, and four required capabilities aligned, consistent and mutually supporting
- Innovative while aligning with existing U.S. strategic guidance
- Makes a strong case for feasibility

### **STRUCTURE**

- Material logically presented with an easily recognizable “Golden Thread” which ties the whole strategic proposal together from start to finish
- Distinctly describes the four required Phase One deliverables
- Key concepts are evident and clearly articulated
- Strong concluding position

### **SUPPORT**

- Credibility of material
- Assumptions validated
- Relevance to theme
- Verbal / Visual presentation synergy

### **STYLE**

- Persuasively presented
- Professional and engaging
- Pace, tempo, clarity of delivery
- Audience engagement
- Though a slide template is provided, JPG must still ensure slides are not overcrowded and graphs, tables, or images are appropriately sized for audience legibility

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Completed within allotted time limit of 30 minutes
- Response well to questions
- Managed discussion
- All members participated in Q&A

#### **D. Student Preparation**

None

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-11

### SDX PHASE ONE REHEARSAL

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#### A. Session Overview

At the beginning of this session each of the seminar's JPGs will present a Power Point briefing, not to exceed 30 minutes, that synthesizes each of the four Phase One SDX deliverables. This session is intended as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-13. Special attention should be given to timing, ensuring there is a "Golden Thread" that clearly connects the JPG's thought process for each of the deliverables, and presents the material in a clear, concise, and compelling manner.

This session along with SDX-12 concludes the preparation phase of SDX Phase One. The seminar should be prepared to present their strategic proposal briefing to the Professor in a format that closely resembles the final product that will be graded. JPGs should utilize the presentation checklist included at the end of SDX-10 to guide them in FA-10. The Professor will provide feedback to each JPG's presentation in preparation for the graded presentation. Edits in response to this feedback may be incorporated into the final presentation and will be due to the Professor (with no additional updates) no later than the start of SDX-13. This version of the Phase One briefing will be the same version presented and graded in SDX-15.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Conduct a rehearsal of the seminar's Phase One presentation and receive feedback from the Professor.
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, not to exceed 30 minutes in length, that outlines the JPG's four Phase One deliverables.
  - Incorporate Professor feedback and guidance into the JPG's Phase One deliverables and presentation.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.

- CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
- Supports NWC PLO-2.

**C. Guidance Questions**

None

**D. Student Preparation**

None

**E. Student Deliverables**

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-12

### SDX PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

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#### A. Session Overview

This session provides each of the seminar's JPGs valuable seminar time to synthesize and fine-tune each of the four Phase One SDX deliverables in preparation for the graded Phase One presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Special attention should be given to timing, ensuring there is a "Golden Thread" that clearly connects the JPG's thought process for each of the deliverables, and presents the material in a clear, concise, and compelling manner.

Each of the seminar's JPGs will have until the beginning of SDX-13 to provide a final copy of their Phase One briefing slides to the Professor. After the Phase One briefing has been submitted no additional changes or updates may be made to the presentation or the briefing materials.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Effectively organize, develop, and communicate a presentation, not to exceed 30 minutes in length, that outlines the JPG's four Phase One deliverables.
  - Incorporate Professor feedback and guidance into the JPG's Phase One deliverables and presentation.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### C. Guidance Questions

None

#### **D. Student Preparation**

None

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

In SDX-11, the JPG will present FA-10, the full 30-minute Phase One presentation as a dry run for the graded presentation that will occur in SDX-15. Note that the 10-minute Phase Two briefing will also occur in SDX-15 and does not have a dry run.

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

**STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-13**  
**SDX PHASE TWO REFRAMING MOMENT**

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**A. Session Overview**

Phase Two of the SDX provides each JPG an opportunity to put their strategic proposal to the test during a fictional national security event within the Indo-Pacific region. To demonstrate the practical feasibility and utility of the proposed strategy, seminars will be presented with a regional “reframing moment” at the beginning of SDX-13 that describes a specific set of events within the region. The objective of Phase Two is to test the JPG’s ability to apply and critically assess their own strategic proposal. Throughout TSDM, students have been asked to critically analyze grand strategy and foreign policy case studies; now the seminar must turn that critical light upon their own ideas. Each JPG will critically analyze and assess how their strategic proposal meets the challenge described in the reframing moment and determine potential areas of weakness or blind spots, as well as areas where their proposed theater strategy is well suited to meet the challenge. JPGs are encouraged to be very thorough in their critical analysis and seek to determine areas where they could strengthen the effectiveness of their strategy considering the events of the reframing moment. Likewise, if the JPG determines that their strategic proposal effectively mitigates the effects of the reframing moment, those findings should be highlighted as well.

**B. Objectives**

- Session Objectives
  - Critically analyze and assess Phase One strategic proposal in light of a major regional national security event.
  - The seminar must prepare a short set of slides (3-5) to present the results of their critical analysis. These slides will be presented after the 30-minute Phase One presentation, and prior to the question-and-answer period. The seminar is allotted 10 minutes to present its Phase Two presentation. Phase Two slides are due to the Professor no later than 48-hours prior to the start of SDX-15.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.

- CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
- Supports NWC PLO-2.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

1. Has the JPG critically analyzed and assessed how the strategic proposal meets the challenge described in the reframing moment?
2. Has the JPG determined potential areas of weakness or blind spots, as well as areas where the strategic proposal is well suited to meet the challenge?
3. Has the JPG been thorough in their critical analysis and sought to determine areas where the JPG could strengthen the effectiveness of the strategy considering the events of the reframing moment?
4. If the JPG determines that their strategic proposal effectively mitigates the effects of the reframing moment, have those findings been highlighted?

### **D. Student Preparation**

1. The entirety of TSDM curriculum.

### **E. Student Deliverables**

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-14

### SDX PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

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#### A. Session Overview

This session provides seminar time to continue development of SDX Phase One and Phase Two deliverables in preparation for the graded presentation in SDX-15.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Critically analyze and assess Phase One strategic proposal in light of a major regional national security event.
  - The seminar must prepare a short set of slides (3-5) to present the results of their critical analysis. These slides will be presented after the 30-minute Phase One presentation, and prior to the question-and-answer period. The seminar is allotted 10 minutes to present its Phase Two presentation. Phase Two slides are due to the Professor no later than 48-hours prior to the start of SDX-15.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

#### C. Guidance Questions

1. Has the JPG critically analyzed and assessed how the strategic proposal meets the challenge described in the reframing moment.
2. Has the JPG determined potential areas of weakness or blind spots, as well as areas where the strategic proposal is well suited to meet the challenge.
3. Has the JPG been thorough in their critical analysis and sought to determine areas where

the JPG could strengthen the effectiveness of the strategy considering the events of the reframing moment.

4. If the JPG determines that their strategic proposal effectively mitigates the effects of the reframing moment, are those findings highlighted?

#### **D. Student Preparation**

1. The entirety of the TSDM curriculum.

#### **E. Student Deliverables**

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE-15

### SDX PHASE ONE AND PHASE TWO PRESENTATION

#### (SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT 4)

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#### A. Session Overview

Each JPG will their briefing (Phase One and Two, consecutively) to the Professor as SA-4. The Professor will award an overall group grade for each JPG that is consistent with the Presentation Grading Rubric below. The Phase One briefing will be no longer than 30 minutes and followed by the Phase Two briefing which will be no longer than 10 minutes. Following the two briefings there will be a 15-minute question and answer (Q&A) period with the Professor.

#### B. Objectives

- Session Objectives
  - Demonstrate an understanding of TSDM course concepts and PLO-2 through the presentation of SDX deliverables.
  - Identify and prioritize U.S. national interests in the Indo-Pacific region, distinguishing between vital, important, and peripheral interests in the context of long-term strategic competition.
  - Conduct a strategic assessment of the Indo-Pacific region over the next eight (8) years, identifying key security, political, economic, and technological trends that may impact USINDOPACOM's ability to advance U.S. interests in the region.
  - Develop a coherent strategic framework that links clearly defined strategic *ends* to operational and institutional *ways*, grounded in the realities of the projected security environment.
  - Construct a rank-ordered list of capabilities—joint, interagency, and multinational—that represent the necessary *means* to implement the proposed strategy effectively.
  - Apply the *ends–ways–means* construct to evaluate strategic sufficiency, internal logic, feasibility, and *risk* across time, domains, and operational theaters.
  - Assess risk arising from misalignment or shortfalls in *means*, and recommend mitigations or adaptations to ensure strategic success in a resource-constrained environment.
  - Communicate strategic reasoning clearly and concisely, demonstrating the ability to justify strategic choices through evidence, doctrinal grounding, and sound logic.

- Critically analyze and assess Phase One strategic proposal in light of a major regional national security event.
- Learning Outcomes
  - CLO-1: Understand the professional and ethical responsibilities and challenges associated with decision-making as a national security professional.
  - CLO-2: Analyze the global security environment and how U.S. national security interests influence the development of U.S. security strategies.
  - CLO-3: Analyze the factors that influence national security decision-making and the relationships between the institutions responsible for U.S. national security.
  - CLO-4: Examine and apply the processes used to develop military strategy to achieve desired end-states and the relationship between ends, ways, and means to ensure the advancement of U.S. interests.
  - Supports NWC PLO-2.

### **C. Guidance Questions**

None.

### **D. Student Preparation**

1. The entirety of the TSDM curriculum.

### **E. Student Deliverables**

Summative Assessment: During SDX-15, each JPG is required to successfully present their SDX briefing and Q&A as SA-4 addressing CLOs 2-4 and PLO-2. Specific instructions for this requirement can be found on Blackboard with additional guidance provided by the Professor.

## **SDX PHASE ONE PRESENTATION RUBRIC**

**Work of exceptionally high quality and clearly above the average graduate level**

### **National Interests**

- Presentation clearly identifies U.S. national interests within their ocean region. National interests are prioritized, and entire strategic proposal is consistently and logically anchored to these interests in accordance with their priority level.

### **Theater Strategic Estimate**

- Acknowledging time limitations, the presentation provides a comprehensive overview of the USINDOPACOM security environment including military, economic, political, and social, and environmental issues. Estimate is presented in near (0-2 year) and mid-term (3-8 year) timelines. U.S. strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the theater are clearly identified. The likelihood and severity of threats and challenges is considered and communicated. Regional impact to U.S. global strategy and possible seams and challenges to interagency and whole of government efforts are considered and communicated.

### **Theater Strategy Outline**

- Clearly presents desired theater conditions for both near (0-2 year) and medium (3-8 year) time frames. Desired conditions consider the likelihood and severity of threats and challenges identified in strategic estimate. Heading-level detail is provided through concise descriptions of desired conditions within the theater. Sub-heading level detail is provided through concepts (ways) that comprehensively describe activities, required resources, actors, processes, and policy implications necessary to accomplish strategic heading-level objectives. Risk to each concept is presented and mitigation is discussed. Strategy closely aligns with existing U.S. strategic guidance.

### **Required Capabilities**

- Presents four capabilities (Means) required to carry out its theater strategy. Capabilities are presented in a defensible prioritized order with clear, logical connections to elements of strategic proposal. DoD-centric capabilities are conceptualized across the DOTMLPF-P with descriptions of how the capability would be employed in the field. Whole of government capabilities are presented with consideration of actors and processes used to attain the capability, as well as whether regional CCDR staff is required to effectively coordinate across the interagency to integrate the capability in the region.

### **Effective Organization, Timing, and Delivery**

- Presentation has a clearly identifiable “Golden Thread” (logical connective theme) that consistently ties all elements together and ensures cohesion between interests, strategic estimate, desired conditions, strategy, and required capabilities. Helps ensure audience retention and impact. Verbal transitions between elements and speakers are smooth and

efficient. A minimum total of 3 different speakers are utilized (2 in Phase One, 1 in Two) Presenters speak clearly with minimal verbal pauses and minimize distracting movement or body language. The brief is completed within allotted 30 minutes.

### **Effective Style and Format**

- Slides use the provided template. Written portions are free from grammatical or spelling errors. All tables, graphs, or images are sized to allow the audience to read and understand the content. Slides are not overcrowded and make use of white space to allow for effective visual communication in concert with spoken narration.

## **SDX PHASE ONE PRESENTATION RUBRIC, CONTINUED**

**Work of very good quality. Expected performance of the average graduate student.**

### **National Interests**

- Presentation clearly identifies U.S. national interests within the Indo-Pacific region. National interests are prioritized, but strategic proposal has loose and inconsistent connections to the interests and prioritization.

### **Theater Strategic Estimate**

- The presentation provides a broad overview of the regional security environment including military, economic and political issues. Estimate is presented in near (0-2 year) and mid-term (3-8 year) timelines. U.S. strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the ocean region are clearly identified. Regional impact to U.S. global strategy is considered and communicated.

### **Theater Strategy Outline**

- Presents desired theater conditions for both near (0-2 year) and medium (3-8 year) time frames. Desired conditions consider the likelihood and severity of threats and challenges identified in strategic estimate. Heading-level detail is provided through effective descriptions of desired conditions within the theater. Sub-heading level detail is provided through concepts (ways) that describe some activities, required resources, actors, processes, and policy implications necessary to accomplish strategic heading-level objectives. Risk to each concept is presented but mitigation is NOT discussed. Strategy aligns with existing U.S. strategic guidance.

### **Required Capabilities**

- Presents four capabilities (Means) required to carry out its regional strategy. Capabilities are presented in a defensible prioritized order with clear, logical connections to elements of strategic proposal. Seminar communicates how capabilities would be employed in the field but does not consider or present how capabilities would be acquired (no mention of actors or processes necessary to realize required capabilities.)

### **Effective Organization, Timing, and Delivery**

- Presentation is organized in a clear, logical, and effective manner. An overarching theme or title is presented but is NOT effectively used throughout the presentation to provide a cohesive “Golden Thread”. The audience is left guessing about the main take away from the strategic proposal or is confused about how the different elements support the “Golden Thread”. A minimum total of 3 different speakers are utilized (2 in Phase One, 1 in Phase Two). Presenters struggle with verbal pauses or are ineffective in their delivery of narration. The brief is completed in no more than 31 minutes.

## **Effective Style and Format**

- Slides use the provided template. Written portions contain minor grammatical or spelling errors. Most tables, graphs, or images are sized to allow the audience to read and understand the content. Some slides are overcrowded and would benefit from additional white space.

## **SDX PHASE ONE PRESENTATION RUBRIC, CONTINUED**

**Acceptable, but below the average performance expected of graduate work.**

### **National Interests**

- Presentation identifies some U.S. national interests within the Indo-Pacific region. National interests are NOT prioritized.

### **Theater Strategic Estimate**

- The presentation provides a partial overview of the regional security environment but fails to examine key areas of emphasis contained in the National Security Strategy. Strategic estimate focuses only on military challenges within the region. U.S. strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are NOT identified. Regional impact to U.S. global strategy is NOT considered.

### **Theater Strategy Outline**

- Presents desired theater conditions but fails to break conditions into near and medium range timelines. Desired conditions are idealistic and do not consider likelihood and severity of threats and challenges. Heading-level detail is provided through vague bullet titles that do not effectively convey strategic objectives. Sub-heading level detail is provided through concepts (ways) that describe activities, required resources and actors, but fail to consider process or policy implications. Risk to each concept is NOT presented. No effective consideration to integration or coordination between interagency partners or other regional CCMDs is considered or presented. Strategy does not align with existing U.S. strategic guidance.

### **Required Capabilities**

- Presents four capabilities (Means) required to carry out its regional strategy. Capabilities are NOT presented in a defensible prioritized order and are NOT clearly tied to elements of their strategic proposal.

### **Effective Organization, Timing, and Delivery**

- The presentation is organized in a logical manner (A-B-C-D), but no overall theme is developed or presented, and some elements are disconnected from one another. Fewer than 3 different speakers are utilized (2 in Phase One and 1 in Phase Two) Presenters do not demonstrate evidence they have rehearsed their script or effectively prepared for their speaking role. The brief takes more than 31 minutes to complete.

### **Effective Style and Format**

- Slides do not use the provided template. Written portions contain significant grammatical or spelling errors. Tables, graphs, or images are too small to be read by the audience.

## **SDX PHASE ONE PRESENTATION RUBRIC, CONTINUED**

**Poor (failing) quality. Well below the average performance expected of graduate work.**

### **National Interests**

- Presentation does not identify U.S. national interests within the Indo-Pacific region.

### **Theater Strategic Estimate**

- The presentation fails to provide an overview of the regional security environment or fails to communicate how identified trends or concerns directly impact U.S. national security interests.

### **Theater Strategy Outline**

- Presents desired conditions that are well outside the 8-year horizon, are idealistic, and do not consider likelihood and severity of threats and challenges. Heading-level detail is provided through ineffective one-word titles. Sub-heading level detail is NOT presented or is presented in a single phrase without amplifying details in narration. Strategy drastically departs from existing U.S. strategic guidance.

### **Required Capabilities**

- The seminar fails to present four distinct capabilities or fails to connect all four capabilities to their strategic proposal.

### **Effective Organization, Timing, and Delivery**

- The presentation is not organized in a logical manner and separate elements are not clearly identifiable. The brief takes more than 32 minutes to complete.

### **Effective Style and Format**

- Slides are a disaster and completely detract from the seminar's attempt to communicate their strategic proposal.

## **SDX PHASE TWO PRESENTATION RUBRIC**

**Work of exceptionally high quality and clearly above the average graduate level**

### **Critical Analysis**

- The seminar applies a thorough and effective process of critical analysis against their strategic proposal. A methodology is developed or utilized to ensure a wholistic examination of all elements of their strategic proposal. Strengths AND weaknesses are clearly and evenly identified and discussed as appropriate. Blind spots are considered and presented. Possible opportunities are identified in relation to strengths, while possible mitigation efforts against weakness are presented.

### **Effective Organization and Timing**

- The brief is completed within the allotted 10 minutes. Both Phase Two elements are provided sufficient time for all desired points to be made.

### **Effective Style and Format**

- Slides use the provided template. Written portions are free from grammatical or spelling errors. All tables, graphs, or images are sized to allow the audience to read and understand the content. Slides are not overcrowded and make use of white space to allow for effective visual communication in concert with spoken narration.

## **SDX PHASE TWO PRESENTATION RUBRIC, CONTINUED**

**Work of very good quality. Expected performance of the average graduate student.**

### **Critical Analysis**

- The seminar applies a process of critical analysis against their strategic proposal. One or more elements of the strategic proposal are omitted from critical analysis. Strengths OR weaknesses are excessively highlighted at the cost or neglect of the other category. Possible opportunities are identified in relation to strengths, while possible mitigation efforts against weakness are presented. Blind spots are NOT considered or discussed.

### **Effective Organization and Timing**

- The brief is completed in no more than 11 minutes. Poor time management results in one of the two Phase Two elements being cut short or insufficiently presented due to lack of time.

### **Effective Style and Format**

- Slides use the provided template. Written portions contain minor grammatical or spelling errors. Most tables, graphs, or images are sized to allow the audience to read and understand the content. Some slides are overcrowded and would benefit from additional white space.

## **SDX PHASE TWO PRESENTATION RUBRIC, CONTINUED**

**Acceptable, but below the average performance expected of graduate work.**

### **Critical Analysis**

- The seminar provides a shallow analysis of their strategic proposal considering the events of the reframing moment. Simplistic conclusions are drawn such as “we got it all right”, or “we should probably scrap the whole thing and start over.”

### **Effective Organization and Timing**

- Brief takes more than 11 minutes to complete.

### **Effective Style and Format**

- Slides do not use the provided template. Written portions contain significant grammatical or spelling errors. Tables, graphs, or images are too small to be read by the audience.

## **SDX PHASE TWO PRESENTATION RUBRIC, CONTINUED**

**Poor (failing) quality. Well below the average performance expected of graduate work.**

### **Critical Analysis**

- The seminar does not conduct a critical analysis of their strategic proposal or demonstrates the inability to apply critical analysis techniques learned and applied in the course curriculum (specifically FPA case study analysis) against their own strategic proposal.

### **Effective Organization and Timing**

- Brief takes more than 12 minutes to complete.

### **Effective Style and Format**

- Slides are a disaster and completely detract from the seminar's attempt to communicate their strategic proposal.

## SDX Q&A RUBRIC

### **Work of exceptionally high quality and clearly above the average graduate level**

- Seminar members effectively answer all questions in a clear and concise manner. The seminar employs a question fielding strategy that makes efficient use of time and seminar member knowledge. The seminar avoids piling on to one question, allowing one to three members to contribute to the answer, while leaving ample time for additional questions from the panel. The seminar ensures participation of all members in either the presentation speaking roles or the question-and-answer period.

### **Work of very good quality. Expected performance of the average graduate student.**

- Seminar members effectively answer all questions in a clear and concise manner. The seminar allows 4 or more people to provide an answer to a single question to demonstrate participation. This strategy may reduce the panel's number of questions asked and should not be utilized. One or two seminar members fail to participate in either the presentation speaking roles or the question-and-answer period.

### **Acceptable, but below the average performance expected of graduate work.**

- Seminar members do not answer one or two of the panel's questions in a satisfactory manner and demonstrate significant gaps in knowledge of key TSDM course concepts. More than two seminar members do not participate in either presentation speaking roles or the question-and-answer period.

### **Poor (failing) quality. Well below the average performance expected of graduate work.**

- Seminar members fail to answer 50 percent of the panel's questions in an effective manner and demonstrate a lack of knowledge and understanding of TSDM course concepts.

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