This course is designed to help students explore several national and international security challenges. The seminar will also aim to assist you in gaining some of the knowledge, skills and abilities that will be needed for working in the field of international policy, namely in the arena of international security and nonproliferation policy.

We will touch upon some of the key national and international security policy challenges of our time: terrorism, major power rivalries, cyber-security, and weapons proliferation. We will look at how the United States is seeking to respond to these challenges knowing that many of you will be looking to work in the U.S. policy community upon graduation.

Careers working in policy often require oral presentations and written reports. This class will provide you the opportunity to hone your skills in making presentations and preparing briefs for an increasingly hurried policy community. You will receive critical feedback on both your ability to communicate orally and in writing.

We will also have practitioners and others from the policy community speak to you about their work in an effort to shed light on key international issues as well as the skills that they use in their work.

We will discuss current national and international security issues over the course of the semester: these include challenges from China and Russia, terrorism, cyber-attacks and security, North Korea and Iran, and other issues. We will also talk about how the United States and others respond to these issues using statecraft and sanctions, intelligence, and military action. All students should regularly read the New York Times and consider a subscription to Foreign Policy (online) and the Foreign Policy Situation Report.

**Grading:**

**Class Participation (20%)**
Each student is expected to complete the required reading and to be prepared to participate actively in discussions. One student will be selected for each seminar to lead a discussion of the week’s readings. This can be done by either preparing a Powerpoint presentation on the key points of readings and overall themes, or by preparing a handout. The content and delivery of the briefings will be evaluated along with participation in additional class discussions each week. Pop quizzes may be administered to ensure that reading is being completed.

**Issue Briefs (20%)**

You are expected to prepare 2 policy briefs that address a contemporary international policy challenge. The issue briefs from various “think tanks” in Washington can serve as models. Consider taking a look at the “Backgrounder” published by the Council on Foreign Relations or Brookings Policy Brief Series. The brief can explain a particular policy problem and policy options, or the brief can include an explanation of the problem and proposed policy recommendations with justification. The briefs are to be 2-5 pages in length. The first brief is due by October 21. The second brief is due by November 20. Alternatively, students may provide a summary of one of the recommended books in the syllabus. This summary will be shared with all students in the class.

**Exam (30%)**

This exam will be a take home exam and will include a range of essay questions that ask you to reflect upon the readings and discussions from the semester. As such, it is important that you take notes on readings and presentations.

**Research Paper (30%)**

Students will have an opportunity to explore a policy issue that is of interest to them. All students will be expected to develop a research paper. The paper should have a clear hypothesis/argument along with supporting evidence. The paper should be focused on a national or international security policy issue. Each student should identify a topic and provide a general outline for the research paper by week 4 of the class. Students will also be asked to present their research papers to the class at the end of the semester.

**Readings**

I have provided a list of readings for each week’s seminar. Students should come prepared to discuss having taken a few notes on readings. Most of the readings are available via Galileo. You may wish to purchase books online via Amazon. Students will be asked to identify and share other readings relevant to the week’s topic.

15 weeks:

**Week 1 (August 11): Class Overview, Introductions, and Careers in International Policy**
**Week 2 (August 18): Great Power Conflict: The Russia Challenge**


**Recommended:**


**Week 3: Rising China (August 25)**


**Week 4 (September 1): Nuclear North Korea and Proliferation Concerns**


Recommended:


Week 5 (September 8): Terrorism and WMD Threats (September 8)


Recommended:

Week 6 (September 15): Transnational Organized Crime


Recommended:


Week 7 (September 22): Cybersecurity


Week 8 (September 29): Sanctions and Statecraft (September 29)


Recommended:


Week 9 (October 6): Sectoral Sanctions and “Smart” Sanctions


Week 10 (October 13): U.S. Counterterrorism and Intelligence Policy


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**Week 11 (October 20): Developing a Grand Strategy for Security?**


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**Week 12 (October 27): U.S. Defense Policy**


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**Week 13 (Nov. 3): International Policy and Program Evaluation — GAO and others**


Week 14 (November 10): Skill Sets for International Policy Careers: Communication, Interpersonal, Cultural, Project Management, Problem Solving, Strategic Thinking

Week 15 (November 17): Student Research Presentations