

INTA 689
American Grand Strategy
Spring 2021

Tuesdays, 9:35 am-12:15 pm
Room 1110

Zoom Link:

<https://tamu.zoom.us/j/95221070784?pwd=UGZRUVFEQ29tdXkvT09EOEhISXgrZz09>

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Note: This course will be delivered primarily face-to-face. That said, I welcome enrollment by students who have a compelling reason to participate remotely. Please consult with me if you plan to participate remotely.

Course Description

What are American interests? How should the United States use its power to advance its interests? To answer these questions is to grapple with grand strategy. Grand strategy has been aptly defined by Barry Posen as “a political-military, means-ends chain, a state’s theory about how it can best ‘cause’ security for itself.”¹ It provides guidance on what goals a nation’s leaders should aim for and how best they can use the instruments of power at their disposal to attain them. In the American context, some presidents have been more systematic than others about developing grand strategy, but all have made some effort to define the national interest, identify threats, and channel policy accordingly. Such exercises are the essence of grand strategy.

This course provides students with a wide-ranging survey of the literature dealing with American grand strategy. Specifically, it deals with the following questions:

- 1) What is grand strategy? Why is it important? What are its limits?

¹ Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Cornell, 1984), p. 13.

- 2) What explains the rise of American hegemony?
- 3) What grand strategic alternatives are available to the United States today?
- 4) What light can a grand strategic perspective shed on issues such as nuclear weapons, alliances, economics, and the rise of China?
- 5) Where should American grand strategy go from here?

Students should leave the course armed with a mixture of theoretical, historical, and practical knowledge that will position them well to consume and contribute to the American grand strategy debate.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Analyze and assess grand strategy as a process, including its importance and limitations.
- Analyze and assess the grand strategies the United States has pursued historically, including the factors that have most heavily shaped its behavior.
- Analyze the strategic position the United States finds itself in today, as well as the grand strategic alternatives available to it to advance its interests.
- Evaluate where American grand strategy should head next.

Course Requirements and Grading

Grades are based on active class participation (25%), a response paper (25%), and a group project (50%).

- Active class participation:
 - This is a graduate seminar. Each week we will be reading an important book (or an equivalent number of articles) that addresses the topic at hand. For the seminar to be successful, you must come to class having digested the reading, so that we can discuss it intelligently. Those who consistently demonstrate a sharp understanding of the reading and who use that understanding to move the discussion forward will earn an excellent participation grade.
- Response paper:
 - To reinforce your reading, I am asking you to write a 5-page response paper during the semester. For the response paper, you will select a reading, summarize its main arguments, and derive a grand-strategic insight that follows from its logic.
 - A “grand-strategic insight” is any attempt to apply the arguments from the reading to American grand strategy. Such insights can vary from the general (the US should pursue offshore balancing) to the specific (the United States should balance against China). The purpose of the response papers is to get you into the habit of thinking like a grand strategist.
 - The only requirement is that you turn in the response paper by the end of the term. That is, there is no requirement that you turn in a paper responding to Week 3’s reading that week. It can be turned in later. *I do ask that your response paper be turned in by Week 10 of the course.*

- While I encourage critical thinking, please remember that the point of the papers is to relate arguments from the reading to American grand strategy. If you can do that while weaving in a point of critique or two, all power to you. But keep your eye on the ball.
- Group project:
 - At the beginning of the semester, students will be divided into groups. Each group will be charged with producing a “Grand Strategy for America” by the end of the course. The “Grand Strategy for America” should address the following three questions: How should American national interests be defined? What are the most important threats to American national interests? What grand strategy should the United States pursue in response? The finished document should be about 30 pages in length, draw on the course material, and flow logically from interests to threats to grand strategy. Please highlight relevant historical experience where applicable. The “Grand Strategy for America” is due at the beginning of the last class session and is worth 30% of the final grade.
 - During the Week 8 class session, each group will present an outline of its grand strategy. This will allow groups to 1) get an early start on the final project; and 2) compare their thinking to those of other groups. The presentation is worth 20% of the final grade.

Note: All written assignments should be double-spaced, using a standard twelve-point font with one-inch margins. Footnotes are preferred to endnotes. There will be a penalty of one letter grade for each day late.

Grading Scale

90%-100%	A	Extraordinary, excellent work and mastery of concept
80%-89%	B	Good work and solid command of concept
70%-79%	C	Adequate work and sufficient understanding of concept
60%-69%	D	Poor work, little understanding of concept
0%-59%	F	Lack of work, no understanding of concept

Attendance Policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

"The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#).)

Required Books

Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *America Abroad: The United States' Global Role in the 21st Century* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Colin Dueck, *Age of Iron: On Conservative Nationalism* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Francis J. Gavin, *Nuclear Weapons and American Grand Strategy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2020).

G. John Ikenberry, *A World Safe for Democracy: Liberal Internationalism and the Crises of Global Order* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020).

Rebecca Lissner and Mira Rapp-Hooper, *An Open World: How America Can Win the Contest for Twenty-First Century Order* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020).

Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

Mira Rapp-Hooper, *Shields of the Republic: The Triumph and Peril of America's Alliances* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020).

Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions: America's Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018).

Stephen Wertheim, *Tomorrow, The World: The Birth of U.S. Global Supremacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020).

Note: Required books will need to be purchased on-line. Articles are easily accessible via the library's electronic databases (such as JSTOR, Project Muse, and EBSCO).

Schedule with Topics and Readings

Introduction

Week 1- Introduction to Grand Strategy

Hal Brands, [*The Promise and Pitfalls of Grand Strategy*](#) (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2012).

Nina Silove, "[Beyond the Buzzword: The Three Meanings of 'Grand Strategy,'](#)" *Security Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (January-March 2018), pp. 27-57.

Rebecca Friedman Lissner, "[What is Grand Strategy? Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield,](#)" *Texas National Security Review*, Vol. 2, Issue 1 (November 2018).

Paul C. Avey, Jonathan N. Markowitz, and Robert J. Reardon, "[Disentangling Grand Strategy: International Relations Theory and U.S. Grand Strategy,](#)" *Texas National Security Review*, Vol. 2, Issue 1 (November 2018).

Richard K. Betts, "[The Grandiosity of Grand Strategy,](#)" *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (2019), pp. 7-22.

Daniel W. Drezner, Ronald R. Krebs and Randall Schweller, "[The End of Grand Strategy: America Must Think Small,](#)" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 99, No. 3 (May/June 2020), pp. 107-117.

Week 2 – The Rise of American Hegemony I: History

Stephen Wertheim, *Tomorrow, The World: The Birth of U.S. Global Supremacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020).

Week 3- The Rise of American Hegemony II: Theory

Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

Grand Strategic Alternatives

Week 4- Offshore Balancing/Restraint

Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "[Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy](#)," *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Winter 1996-1997), pp. 5-53.

Eugene Gholtz, Daryl Press, and Harvey Sapolsky, "[Come Home, America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation](#)," *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Spring 1997), pp. 5-48.

Christopher Layne, "[From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy](#)," Vol. 22, No. 1 (Summer 1997), pp. 86-124.

John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Updated Edition (New York, NY: Norton, 2014), Chapter 7 (pp. 234-266).

Barry R. Posen, "[Pull Back: The Case for a Less Activist Foreign Policy](#)," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 92, No. 1 (January/February 2013), pp. 116-128.

John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, "[The Case for Offshore Balancing: A Superior U.S. Grand Strategy](#)," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 95, No. 4 (July/August 2016).

Week 5- Deep Engagement/Primacy

Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *America Abroad: The United States' Global Role in the 21st Century* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Week 6 – Liberal Internationalism

G. John Ikenberry, *A World Safe for Democracy: Liberal Internationalism and the Crises of Global Order* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020).

Week 7- Conservative Nationalism

Colin Dueck, *Age of Iron: On Conservative Nationalism* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Week 8- Group Presentations

Issues in American Grand Strategy

Week 9- Nuclear Weapons

Francis J. Gavin, *Nuclear Weapons and American Grand Strategy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2020).

Week 10- Alliances

Mira Rapp-Hooper, *Shields of the Republic: The Triumph and Peril of America's Alliances* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020).

Week 11- Economics

Michael Mastanduno, "[Economics and Security in Statecraft and Scholarship](#)," *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Autumn 1998), pp. 825-854.

Daniel W. Drezner, "[Military Primacy Doesn't Pay \(Nearly as Much as You Think\)](#)," *International Security*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Summer 2013), pp. 52-79.

Charles L. Glaser, "[How Oil Influences U.S. National Security](#)," *International Security*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Fall 2013), pp. 112-146.

Robert D. Blackwill and Jennifer M. Harris, "[The Lost Art of Economic Statecraft: Restoring an American Tradition](#)," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2016).

Henry Farrell and Abraham L. Newman, "[Weaponized Interdependence: How Global Economic Networks Shape State Coercion](#)," *International Security*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (Summer 2019), pp. 42-79.

Daniel W. Drezner, "[Counter-Hegemonic Strategies in the Global Economy](#)," *Security Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (2019), pp. 505-531.

Week 12- The Rise of China

Thomas J. Christensen, "[Fostering Stability or Creating a Monster? The Rise of China and US Policy toward East Asia](#)," *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006), pp. 81-126.

Nina Silove, "[The Pivot Before the Pivot: U.S. Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia](#)," *International Security*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Spring 2016), pp. 45-88.

Evan Braden Montgomery, "[Contested Primacy in the Western Pacific: China's Rise and the Future of U.S. Power Projection](#)," *International Security*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Spring 2014), pp. 115-149.

Eugene Gholz, Benjamin Friedman, and Enea Gjoza, "[Defensive Defense: A Better Way to Protect US Allies in Asia](#)," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Winter 2020), pp. 171-189.

Charles L. Glaser, "[A U.S.-China Grand Bargain? The Hard Choice between Military Competition and Accommodation](#)," *International Security*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (Spring 2015), pp. 49-90.

Avery Goldstein, “[China’s Grand Strategy Under Xi Jinping: Reassurance, Reform, and Resistance](#),” *International Security*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Summer 2020), pp. 164-201.

Conclusion: Where to Go From Here?

Week 13 - A New Foreign Policy Elite?

Stephen M. Walt, *The Hell of Good Intentions: America’s Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018).

Week 14 – Openness Revisited

Rebecca Lissner and Mira Rapp-Hooper, *An Open World: How America Can Win the Contest for Twenty-First Century Order* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020).

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.”

“Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one’s work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case” ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at aggiehonor.tamu.edu.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Resources in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit disability.tamu.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

Title IX and Statement on Limits to Confidentiality

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

With the exception of some medical and mental health providers, all university employees (including full and part-time faculty, staff, paid graduate assistants, student workers, etc.) are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Title IX Office if the employee experiences, observes, or becomes aware of an incident that meets the following conditions (see [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#)):

- The incident is reasonably believed to be discrimination or harassment.
- The incident is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who, at the time of the incident, was (1) a student enrolled at the University or (2) an employee of the University.

Mandatory Reporters must file a report regardless of how the information comes to their attention – including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Although Mandatory Reporters must file a report, in most instances, you will be able to control how the report is handled, including whether or not to pursue a formal investigation. The University's goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and to ensure access to the resources you need.

Students wishing to discuss concerns in a confidential setting are encouraged to make an appointment with [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS).

Students can learn more about filing a report, accessing supportive resources, and navigating the Title IX investigation and resolution process on the University's [Title IX webpage](#).

Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in proper self-care by utilizing the resources and services available from Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). Students who need someone to talk to can call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-

hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

COVID-19 Temporary Amendment to Minimum Syllabus Requirements

The Faculty Senate temporarily added the following statements to the minimum syllabus requirements in Fall 2020 as part of the university's COVID-19 response.

Campus Safety Measures

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, Texas A&M University has adopted policies and practices for the Fall 2020 academic term to limit virus transmission. Students must observe the following practices while participating in face-to-face courses and course-related activities (office hours, help sessions, transitioning to and between classes, study spaces, academic services, etc.):

- Self-monitoring—Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. **Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction.**
- Face Coverings—[Face coverings](#) (cloth face covering, surgical mask, etc.) must be properly worn in all non-private spaces including classrooms, teaching laboratories, common spaces such as lobbies and hallways, public study spaces, libraries, academic resource and support offices, and outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain. Description of face coverings and additional guidance are provided in the [Face Covering policy](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) available on the [Provost website](#).
- Physical Distancing—Physical distancing must be maintained between students, instructors, and others in course and course-related activities.
- Classroom Ingress/Egress—Students must follow marked pathways for entering and exiting classrooms and other teaching spaces. Leave classrooms promptly after course activities have concluded. Do not congregate in hallways and maintain 6-foot physical distancing when waiting to enter classrooms and other instructional spaces.
- To attend a face-to-face class, students must wear a face covering (or a face shield if they have an exemption letter). If a student refuses to wear a face covering, the instructor should ask the student to leave and join the class remotely. If the student does not leave the class, the faculty member should report that student to the [Student Conduct office](#) for sanctions. Additionally, the faculty member may choose to teach that day's class remotely for all students.

Personal Illness and Quarantine

Students required to quarantine must participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and **must not attend face-to-face course activities**. Students should notify their instructors of the quarantine requirement. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities.

Students experiencing personal injury or illness that is too severe for the student to attend class qualify for an excused absence (See [Student Rule 7, Section 7.2.2.](#)) To receive an excused absence, students must comply with the documentation and notification guidelines outlined in Student Rule 7. While Student Rule 7, Section 7.3.2.1, indicates a medical confirmation note from the student's medical provider is preferred, **for Fall 2020 only, students may use the Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class form in lieu of a medical confirmation. Students must submit the Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class within two business days after the last date of absence.**

Operational Details for Fall 2020 Courses

For additional information, please review the [FAQ](#) on Fall 2020 courses at Texas A&M University.