

Defense & Diplomacy

Spring 2018 – Draft Syllabus

Friday | 9-11:50a

Location TBA

Instructor: Saad Ansari | Office hours by email

COURSE DESCRIPTION

“Indeed, helping to train and equip host nation forces in the midst of an insurgency is akin to building an advanced aircraft while it is in flight, while it is being designed, and while it is being shot at.” – General Petraeus

Public servants starting out in American foreign policy through the Department of Defense or (increasingly *and*) State find themselves in similar, albeit less extreme, circumstances. They must navigate the labyrinths of the US government’s massive institutions while figuring out how to use them for intended policy outcomes. Humility saves them from “whiz kid” blunders, but then what makes them effective? From both intellectual and pragmatic points of view, this course asks students to figure out how to navigate defense and diplomatic institutions, while proposing necessary reforms, for the sake of delivering on policy goals.

Despite many noble efforts, neither the US government nor the world comes with a reliable user manual. Using the tools of defense and diplomacy varies drastically based on policy area, administration, and banalities like managerial personalities. So, this course will focus on developing durable, versatile skills, like designing a simulation. To that end, we will explore a few exemplary cases in which the tensions between the Departments of Defense and State become clear, such as the United States' involvement with reconstruction after war. At the course’s end, equipped with skills, lessons learned, and a bit of theory, we will return to synthesizing lessons around defense & diplomacy as a class.

The overriding spirit of this course is to co-create with you a valuable experience to prepare for your public service goals – feedback and recommendations are always encouraged to that end.

THE COURSE GOAL is to help students develop core skills for public service, namely:

1. Leading simulations/tabletop exercises to design solutions using collective intelligence. Syria’s reconstruction is this course’s main case as reconstruction around conflict highlights tensions between defense and diplomacy while defining America's greatest foreign policy successes (Germany, Japan), failures (Iraq, Afghanistan), and historical pivot (The Civil War).
2. Knowledge theory and tools for policymakers. This includes the uses and abuses of intelligence, forecasts, academia, data, and history (e.g. lessons learned).
3. Mapping institutions to navigate them for the sake of designing/executing policy. The Departments of State and Defense are the big two; there are also many important players including states, IGOs, private companies, and technology innovators.



ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

- 15% Daily discussion questions
 - Students will submit two analytical or synthetic questions about the readings by Wednesday night before the next day's course. Instructor will organize the questions and send out the night before the course for use in discussion.
- 15% Open assignment
 - TBD - Completed by week 4.
- 30% Pre-simulation case building
 - Using best-in-class case examples and research, build out pre-simulation material on a specific area of the Syria Reconstruction case, e.g. legal reconstruction, transitional security, basic public services, etc. Due week 6
- 5% Lessons learned as literature
 - If you can't remember something, it's like the learning never happened. Write out your top lessons learned in any format you deem most memorable, such as aphorisms or a short play. Due before last class.
- 35% Final simulation report
 - For your reconstruction area, write a final report based on simulation findings. With your sub-group, write a final report synthesizing all findings, also recommending short and long term institutional reforms for the Departments of Defense, State, and any other institutions (anything is fair game). Due at the end of the semester.

This course is open to graduate students from the MPP Program and other programs at the University of Chicago. Other students may email the instructor.

Instructor background: I recently served as a member of the Obama Administration where I learned to navigate the labyrinth between the Department of Defense and the Department of State, and often, the White House and Congress. After working on postwar reconstruction (aka "stabilization") policy, my final role was advisor to the Under Secretary of the Navy, where I led an initiative to explore the future of AI and robotics in the Fleet and Force. I taught discussions at Yale University on similar topics, and started up a program to link Yale with universities in Iraq for student-led "dual-country classes."



SESSIONS & PRELIMINARY READINGS SCHEDULE

Depending on class comfort with load and interests, readings may be slimmed down and changed. Article packet info will be sent in advance. Discussions constitute the first half of the course, the second half focuses on the simulation as a means towards exploring the institutions, policies, and operations of Defense & Diplomacy.

Session 1: Introduction to the challenges of being a new public servant in government and the “&” in “Defense & Diplomacy”

Holbrooke, Richard. *To End a War: The Conflict in Yugoslavia—America’s Inside Story—Negotiating with Milosevic*. Modern Library, 2011.

Articles Packet

Session 2: The *institutions* of Defense & Diplomacy – how did they come to be, how do they interact, and how do they affect policy options and outcomes? Why?

This session features unusually heavy reading to lay the theoretic ground work for more practical work throughout the rest of the course; such loads are not uncommon in government. For this section only, please submit 3 questions.

Brimley, Shawn, Paul Scharre, and Valerio Pellegrini. “Ctrl+ Alt+ Delete.” *Foreign Policy*, no. 206 (2014): 58.

Davidson, Janine. “The Contemporary Presidency: Civil-Military Friction and Presidential Decision Making: Explaining the Broken Dialogue.” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (2013): 129–145.

Levitt, Barbara, and James G. March. “Organizational Learning.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 14, no. 1 (1988): 319–338.

Locher III, James R. *Victory on the Potomac: The Goldwater-Nichols Act Unifies the Pentagon*. Vol. 79. Texas A&M University Press, 2004.

Neustadt, Richard E. *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers*. Simon and Schuster, 2011.

Schake, Kori N. *State of Disrepair: Fixing the Culture and Practices of the State Department*. Hoover Press, 2013.

Articles Packet, incl. <https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1866/diplomacy-development-defense-planning-guide>



Session 3: The *policies and operations* of Defense & Diplomacy - what *past* lessons have we learned and how? When do those lessons become integrated into defense and diplomatic institutions? Why does this question matter?

Brooks, Rosa. *How Everything Became War and the Military Became Everything: Tales from the Pentagon*. Simon and Schuster, 2017.

McChrystal, General Stanley, Tatum Collins, David Silverman, and Chris Fussell. *Team of teams: New rules of engagement for a complex world*. Penguin, 2015.

Articles Packet

Session 4: Introduction to simulations - The goal is clear, lessons have been learned, and institutions are ready. How do you convert your preparedness into a plan for uncertain futures?

Zenko, Micah. *Red Team: How to Succeed by Thinking like the Enemy*. Basic Books, 2015.

Articles Packet

Session 5: Micro - What have we learned from US and partner engagements with reconstruction and what might those lessons mean for Syria?

Baker III, James A., Lee H. Hamilton, and Iraq Study Group. *The Iraq Study Group Report*. Vintage, 2006.

Dobbins, James F. "America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq." *Survival* 45, no. 4 (2003): 87–110.

Fukuyama, Francis, ed. *Nation-building: beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*. JHU Press, 2008.

Taw, Jennifer M. *Mission Revolution: The US Military and Stability Operations*. Columbia University Press, 2012.

Articles Packet + Students pick one reconstruction case and do their own research on to present a longer analytical question on

Session 6: Grand - How do you strategize for foreign policy outcomes and what do national (or personal) conceptions of value have to do with it?

Bass, Gary J. *The Blood Telegram*. Random House India, 2013.

Dower, John W. *Embracing defeat: Japan in the wake of World War II*. WW Norton & Company, 2000.

Hill, Charles. *Grand Strategies: Literature, Statecraft, and World Order*. Yale University Press, 2010.

Thornberry, Mac, and Andrew F. Krepinevich Jr. "Preserving Primacy: A Defense Strategy for the New Administration." *Foreign Aff.* 95 (2016): 26.

Articles Packet



Session 7: The home front – how do domestic politics, economy, and other considerations like technology affect our foreign affairs and vice versa?

Goodwin, Doris Kearns. *No Ordinary Time: Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II*. Simon and Schuster, 2013.

Articles Packet

Session 8: Simulation Day I

Read all case briefings from fellow students in your team area, skim the rest.

Session 9: Simulation Day II and outbrief

Session 10: Synthesis - what are the implications of institutions<>policy, past<>future, micro<>grand, domestic<>abroad considerations for reform in and between defense<>diplomacy? For your goals as the individual public servant?

TBD

POLICIES: Attendance at all sessions and timely submission of assignments are expected – valid excuses should be emailed in advance. Please turn off cell phones before class – and the results are in, [using laptops during class is contagiously distracting](#), so please keep them packed (New OCR apps let you snap and search written notes pretty well now). Of course, no plagiarism or recycling old work. Due to some unpredictability around my work schedule, we will also designate a make-up day as a class that works for everyone in case a session is missed – ideally this would be by combining sessions 8 and 9.

ADA STUDENT ACCOMODATIONS: Any student who believes they may need assistance should inform the Office of Student Disability Services the end of the first week of class. Once you have received an accommodation letter, it should be presented to the course instructor immediately. <https://disabilities.uchicago.edu/>