Defense and Strategic Studies Program
DSS 5320
U.S. National Security
Online Syllabus
(Last revised Jan 2023)

Instructor: Dr Joe Bassi, PhD (Lt Colonel, US Air Force, Retired)

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Location: Lompoc, CA (next to Vandenberg SFB---USA/Pacific Time Zone)

Instructor Welcome and Bio:

Welcome to the fascinating, complex, turbulent, and controversial world of US national security/national defense!

Dr. Joe Bassi is your professor for this course. He completed his PhD in History at the University of California, Santa Barbara in June 2009 and specialized in the history of modern US physical science. He was a senior project engineer with the Aerospace Corporation supporting national security space efforts at Vandenberg AFB and then an assistant professor with Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University until retirement from there. During his PhD program, Dr. Bassi also was an Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation National Science Foundation IGERT Public Policy and Nuclear Threats research fellow at University of California, San Diego and also was a Guggenheim pre-doctoral fellow in Space History at the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Dr. Bassi is a retired US Air Force officer with twenty-six years of active duty. He at various points in his military career served as Director of the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (Guam), Professor of Strategic Studies at the DOD's Joint Military Intelligence College, Headquarters US Air Force Action Officer and Program Element Manager, Chief of the Acquisition Meteorology Office at Air Force Space Systems Division, and Assistant Professor of Physics at the USAF Academy. After retirement from active service, Dr. Bassi served as a space policy analyst in the Office of the Secretary of Defense while working for the Aerospace Corporation.

In addition to the PhD, he has graduate degrees in Meteorology from Penn State, Astrophysics from the University of Colorado, and History from the George Washington University. While at GWU, he was a NASA Space Grant Research Fellow at the Space Policy Institute, Elliot School of International Affairs. Dr. Bassi graduated from Manhattan College in 1974 with a BS in Physics (Phi Beta Kappa) and was a distinguished graduate of the Air Force ROTC program. His current interests include the role of technology in national security, national space policy, and US space science history. He has a book out titled "A Scientific Peak: How Boulder became a World Center for Space and Atmospheric Science" (American Meteorological Society Press, 2015). This work is a study of how US science funding policies changed in the mid-20th century, and how these changes played out in Boulder, Colorado.

Course Description

This course offers a comprehensive theoretical and organizational examination of the development of contemporary U.S. national security/defense policy and strategy. The course's primary purpose is to introduce you the basics of US national security and defense. So, the course examines the U.S. national security apparatus, the security environment, homeland security, the history of US national security/defense, and key defense issues and policies. ***Please note, this is not a course in general public policy, "current events," or US politics, so we will only address those areas when they directly and significantly impact national security/defense issues.***

Course Objectives

After completion of the course students will be able to:

- Discuss critically some of the new trends in the application of force in international relations
- Analyze the role and limits of the use of force to counter future threats
- Outline the contours of the debate related to US military transformation and its consequences
- Evaluate the efficacy of emerging technologies and their impact on future warfare
- Assess the impact of socio-political factors on future warfare
- Demonstrate understanding of the various forms future warfare could take
- Critically assess the use of scenario to complement strategic thinking
- Discuss some of the key challenges of defense planning

Textbook & Readings

1. The Future of War: A History. Lawrence Freedman
(New York, Public Affairs Press), 2017

ISBN-13: 978-1610393058
ISBN-10: 1610393058

2. The Kill Chain: Defending America in the Future of High-Tech Warfare. Christian Brose
(Hatchette Books), 2020

ISBN: 9780316533539 (Hardcover)
ISBN: 9780316533362 (ebook)

Students should purchase these books and read the relevant sections as assigned every week. Most of the weekly readings are based on this textbook together with additional articles from academic journals and other relevant sources. Some of the textbook chapters are not part of the weekly readings, but student are encouraged

to read the whole book. Additional articles will be accessible via blackboard. If you have trouble accessing some journal articles, please contact the instructor. ***Doing the readings is a requirement to pass this course.***

Any additional required readings and materials are available online in the course modules.

Requirements

The assessments will be weighted as follows:

You will be assessed on a weekly basis and will receive feedback online. Here is an outline of the main assignments for this course. More information on the assignments will be provided
each week.

- **Instructor questions** will test your understanding of the weekly readings. These questions will typically require short and concise answers (a handful of sentences), or brief definitions. You will not get extra credit for lengthy answers. Your answers to these questions will only be visible to the instructor who will grade them each week. You are expected to reply to these instructor questions **by the end of Thursday each week.**

- **Discussion questions** will test your understanding of the key concepts and your ability to discuss them coherently and convincingly. These questions will tend to be more open-ended, and aim to generate debates between the students. Your answers to these questions will be visible to all. These questions will require longer, more structured answers (a few paragraphs, never more than 800 words) and will be worth more points. You are expected to reply to these instructor questions **by noon on Friday each week.**

- **Weekly comments:** Students must also post a minimum of two comments weekly **before noon on Saturday.** These comments should be related to other students' answers to the discussion questions and preferably be helpful and constructive.

Weekly Assignment Grading Rubric **(indicative)**

Low grade (below 80%)	Medium grade (80-90%)	High grade (90-100%)
▪ Responds partially to questions or not at all ▪ Grammatical or spelling errors detract heavily ▪ Postings don't reflect other readings at all or inadequately ▪ Does not present ideas clearly ▪ Facts are incorrect ▪ Readings were poorly understood	▪ Responds adequately to questions asked ▪ Some grammar or spelling errors ▪ Postings tie in other readings to support answer ▪ Presents ideas adequately ▪ Facts are correct but with minor errors ▪ Satisfactory grasp of readings	▪ Responds fully, concisely, and thoroughly to questions ▪ Writing is free or almost free of errors ▪ Postings incorporate other readings very well ▪ Presents ideas clearly and persuasively ▪ Facts are detailed and correct ▪ Readings fully understood

In week 6, Select one of Krepinivich's scenarios and summarize its most important aspects and assess its quality using your own criteria. Post your review on the discussion board (and attach a copy in .doc) **by the end of Thursday** and comment on two other papers by **the end of Sunday**. The scenario review should be about 1000 words (ie about 4 pages, double space, 12 pt), excluding bibliography and bibliographical footnotes. The review must be of a suitable scholarly standard, with all quotations/citations **properly referenced**. Students should use the APA or **Chicago referencing style.** A full **bibliography** must also be included at the end of the scenario review listing all sources used in alphabetical order.

In week 7, present a short analytical paper: " Planning for the future" (Week 7)
Write a briefing paper emphasizing the key capabilities the US military will need to successfully fulfill its missions in the long-term. Make sure to consider possible futures (and related threats, challenges, etc.). Your paper should focus on force planning and make good use of the weekly readings. Feel free to use more resources. Students are encourage to make use of the section on analytical reports in the INSS writing guide. This is not an essay, but an analytical report. The briefing paper should be about **3000 words long** (excluding the bibliography). It must be typed, single-spaced, 12 font, Arial or Times New Roman. It must be submitted either in .doc or in .pdf format. The paper must be of a suitable scholarly standard, with all quotations/citations **properly referenced**. Students should use the **Chicago referencing style.** A full

bibliography must also be included at the end of the scenario review listing all sources used in alphabetical order.

Students looking for help to find additional readings/sources in order to prepare for their assignments are welcome to contact the instructor by e-mail.

You must ask for extensions to avoid significant grade penalties for late work.

Grading Criteria for the scenario review and the analytical paper	
Criterion	*Extent to which criterion is met*
Argument	Stated in introduction? Clear? Convincing?
Analysis	Critical discussion/evaluation of facts? Conclusions logical?
Coherence	Line of argumentation? Contradictions? Terms used consistently?
Structure	Is the paper structured? Logical structure? Systematic approach?
Research	Enough relevant sources? Quality of sources? Primary sources?
Language and form	Grammar/punctuation? Page numbers? Paragraphs? Referencing? Bibliography? Respecting the word-count?

GRADES

Grading Scale		
%	**Letter Grade**	**Grade Point**
90 - 100	A	4.0
80 - 89	B	3.0
70 - 79	C	2.0
60 - 69	D	1.0
0 - 59	F	0

Types of assignment	**Unit 1**	**Unit 2**	**Unit 3**	**Unit 4**	**Unit 5**	**Unit 6**	**Unit 7**
Tasks	10 pts	5 pts					
Instructor questions	30 pts	30 pts	30 pts	30 pts	30 pts		
Discussion questions	20 pts	20 pts	20 pts	20 pts	20 pts	20 pts	30 pts
Comments (discussion questions)	10 pts	10 pts	10 pts	10 pts	10 pts	10 pts	10 pts
Scenario review + comments						200 + 40 pts	
Analytical paper			15 pts	10 pts			350 pts
Total	**70 pts**	**65 pts**	**75 pts**	**70 pts**	**60 pts**	**270 pts**	**390 pts**

NOTE: 1000 pts total

(NOTE: These numbers may change slightly as the course proceeds to fit changing circumstances, so be sure to be reading course announcements)

Detailed grading criteria are also provided in the instructions for each assignment in the course modules. Reminder: **This is a graduate level course, so your writing should be professional at all times.** Be sure to proof-read all your work, and this means more than just checking spelling.

Late penalties: *Late assignments will be subject to a penalty of 10% per day late.* Assignments will not *be accepted after they are 3 days late.* ***To avoid late penalties, just ask for an extension.***

Scholastic Integrity

As a UTEP student, you are expected to demonstrate scholastic integrity. In particular, you must properly identify and provide references for all material that you quote or paraphrase.

Cheating, plagiarism and collusion are all violations of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action.

Disability Statement

Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. If you have a condition which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, it is your responsibility to contact The Center for Accomodations and Support Services at (915) 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu . You are also encouraged to discuss this in confidence with your instructor, preferably before classes begin.

The Online Learning Community

This course relies on the participation of all the people in the class to make it successful. You should actively engage in the course and be courteous and thoughtful at all times.

While distance education offers greater flexibility than traditional classroom learning, it requires significant **motivation and self-discipline**. In short courses like this one, it is vital that you keep up with the readings and assignments. If, because of work, illness or family emergency, you require a short extension on any assignment, request one from your instructor at least 24 hours before the assignment deadline.

If you require **content-related help and support**, please use the Question & Answer discussion forum. If you are wondering about something, probably other people are

wondering too, and you are helping everybody out by being the brave one who actually asks!

If you would like to discuss more individual issues and concerns, please contact Dr Bassi via email, jpbassi@utep.edu

If you require **technical support** related to Blackboard, please contact the UTEP Helpdesk at (915) 747-5257 or helpdesk@utep.edu .

IMPORTANT: Please be sure to ***READ ALL MY ANNOUCEMENTS***----- Usually I do a couple per week to keep in touch with you, and this is really the only way I can give you current information, course updates/corrections, assignment advice, and other forms of guidance. Try to check your UTEP email at least every 2-3 days. I'm a "hands-on"/interactive type instructor, and this is vital tool for me to help you get the most you can out of the course, in the most efficient way.

Discussion Board (DB): Participation is required. Make one post of about 400-500 words (and not much more or less) for each DB within ***four days of module start (ie, Thursday night).*** *Used proper English at all times* (no twitter-ese, please) and back up any claims with evidence, references, etc. Then, respond to *at least 2* of your colleagues' responses by ***day 6 of the module with substantive comments (about 75-100 words).*** More robust interaction on the DB will increase your score. *Use this opportunity to demonstrate, writing, knowledge and analysis skills.* References are encouraged when you cite facts, numbers stats, etc. I will grade based on the overall quality of the answer, and how well your writing is formulated. Dispute is encouraged, but always treat ideas and comments—even if you disagree---with respect. NOTE: Please use either Chicago/Turabian or APA formats in all writing in this class.

NOTE: The idea of the DB is for scholarly interchange and dialog, not as a forum for "venting" over an issue of concern. It is not a "blog." So, please keep all discussions professional in tone, scholarly in analysis, and well-referenced.

***The University Writing Center*:** The University Writing Center offers free synchronous online one-on-one writing assistance for UTEP Connect students. Graduate and undergraduate consultants work with writers on projects for a wide variety of classes and provide assistance during all parts of the writing process, including: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Online assistance is available by appointment through the UWC's website ([uwc.utep.edu]uwc.utep.edu). Most UWC consultants are bilingual Spanish and English speakers. Consultants will not edit your paper for you, and you are the one ultimately responsible for the work you submit and the grade you earn. Instead, Writing Center consultants will guide you through the writing process and teach you valuable writing skills. Visit the UWC's website to learn more about the services they provide, or make an appointment for an online consultation. Online consultations take place during regular business hours (see website) and must be made at least one day in advance.