

**DSS 5320 – Future Warfare**  
**UTEP/National Security**  
**Studies Institute**  
**Department of Criminal**  
**Justice**

**Summer 2021**

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

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**Email:** [jbassi@utep.edu](mailto:jbassi@utep.edu) (This is the best way to get me! I most often will get back to you very quickly). *I am on US Pacific Coast time.* **NOTE:** When you send me an email, and I respond, **PLEASE LET ME KNOW YOU GOT MY RESPONSE**—I am amazed how many times I will respond to a student, and then never know if the student got my response and/or if it was satisfactory or not.

**Instructor Bio:**

Joseph P. Bassi is an (online) adjunct lecturer at the National Security Studies Institute, University of Texas/El. He retired as an assistant professor of arts and sciences at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University/Worldwide programs in 2017. Dr Bassi completed his PhD in History of Science at the University of California, Santa Barbara in June 2009. He specialized in the history of modern US space and atmospheric sciences. He was a senior project engineer with the Aerospace Corporation supporting national security space efforts at Vandenberg AFB from 2009-2010. During his PhD program, Dr Bassi was a Guggenheim pre-doctoral fellow in Space History at the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

A retired US Air Force officer with twenty-six years of active duty, he at various points in his military career had many space-related assignments including Director of the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (Guam), Professor of Strategic Studies at a DOD 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, Professor Bassi served as a space policy analyst in the Office of the Secretary of Defense while working for the Aerospace Corporation. He has given invited lectures at Cambridge University, National Air and Space Museum, National Center for Atmospheric Research, National Intelligence University, and Baylor University. Dr. Bassi is also a (volunteer) NASA JPL Solar System Ambassador.

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. He 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.

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This online (*7 week*) course explores the development of warfare in the twenty-first century, with a particular focus on the defense and security challenges facing the United States in the future. It examines pressing strategic issues facing strategists and decision-makers as they try to prepare for future military deployments. The course is conceptually driven and puts an emphasis on the methodological challenges encountered when studying futures. Equal consideration is paid to technological and socio-political factors and their impact on future warfare. The course then moves on to the types, forms and dimensions of war in the future. The two last weeks seek to ground the debates and make them more policy-relevant via scenario building and defense planning.

This is a graduate class in which students are expected to independently research the topics and to form their own opinion. The course uses a conceptual approach to the study of future warfare to enable students to think critically about it.

On completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Discuss critically some of the new trends in the application of force in international relations
- Understand how the Geo-political environment is changing with the rise of multiple “near peer” competitors to US interests
- 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 impact on future warfare
- Demonstrate understanding of the various forms future warfare could
- Critically assess the use of scenario to complement strategic thinking

## **READINGS:**

There are two **texts** required for this course:

**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 (New York, Hachette Books), 2020

*ISBN: 978-0316533593*

*ISBN: 978-0316533362 (e-book)*

*NOTE: Any versions of these texts should work, and can be easily purchased from a number of venues.*

*Students should obtain these books and read the relevant sections as assigned every week. Most of the weekly readings are based on these textbooks together with additional articles or videos from relevant sources. Some of the textbook chapters are not part of the weekly readings, but students 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 and demonstrating that you have understood them is a requirement to pass this course.***

### **INSTRUCTOR ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

If you want to do well in this course, **YOU MUST** read the announcements that Dr Bassi will post, especially in the first few weeks of the course—these will give important guidance on assignments, additional information on material, research suggestions, course updates, etc. *And, of course, if you have any questions on these postings or any other class issues, just email Dr Bassi—no problem!*

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

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 in the course modules.

- **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 discussion among students. These questions will require longer, more structured answers (a few paragraphs, about 400-500 words). You are expected to reply to these instructor questions **by Thu night each week**.
- **Weekly comments:** Students must also post a minimum of two comments weekly before Saturday night. These comments should be related to other students' answers to the discussion questions, and preferably be helpful and constructive. You are encouraged to question assumptions or related issues and make pertinent comments that may encourage further discussion or debate.

*Weekly Assignment Grading Rubric (indicative)*

<b>Low grade (below 80%)</b>	<b>Medium grade (80-90%)</b>	<b>High grade (90-100%)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responds partially to questions or not at all</li> <li>▪ Grammatical or spelling errors detract heavily</li> <li>▪ Postings don't reflect other readings at all or inadequately</li> <li>▪ Does not present ideas clearly</li> <li>▪ Facts are incorrect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responds adequately to questions asked</li> <li>▪ Some grammar or spelling errors</li> <li>▪ Postings tie in other readings to support answer</li> <li>▪ Presents ideas well</li> <li>▪ Facts are correct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responds fully, concisely, and thoroughly to questions</li> <li>▪ Writing is free or almost free of errors</li> <li>▪ Postings incorporate other readings very well</li> <li>▪ Presents ideas clearly and persuasively</li> </ul>

**In week 6, Select one of Krepinivich’s scenarios (EXCEPTING THE ONE ON PANDEMICS) and summarize its most important aspects and assess its quality relating to the future of war using your own criteria. The scenario review should be about 1000 words (ie about 4 pages, double space, 12 pt), excluding bibliography and bibliographical footnotes. *Research is expected beyond the scenario itself*. The review must be of a suitable scholarly standard, with all quotations/citations properly referenced. Students should use Chicago, APA, or MLA styles. A full **bibliography** must also be included.**

Email directly to Dr Bassi.

**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 *near* future, ie, next 10-15 years. To help you focus and narrow the topic, **PICK ONLY ONE SERVICE** to analyze and discuss (Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Space Force). *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. This is not an essay, but an analytical report. The briefing paper should be about 2500-3000 words long (excluding the bibliography). It must be typed, double-spaced, 12 font, Arial or Times New Roman and posted on the week’s discussion board. The paper must be of a suitable scholarly standard, with all quotations/citations properly referenced. Students should use either Chicago/Turabian or APA formats. 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 email.

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

<b>Grading Criteria for the scenario review and the analytical paper</b>	
<i>Criterion</i>	<i>Extent to which criterion is met</i>
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?

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

<b>Types of assignment</b>	<b>Unit1</b>	<b>Unit2</b>	<b>Unit3</b>	<b>Unit4</b>	<b>Unit5</b>	<b>Unit6</b>	<b>Unit7</b>
Task	25						
Instructor questions	30	30	30	30	30		
Discussion questions	30		30	30	30		
Comments (in discussion grade)							
Scenario review						250	
Analytical paper			10	25			400
Course evaluation							20 pts
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>420</b>

***NOTE: 1000 pts total. (So, you can easily figure out your final grade at the end of the course, eg, 900 pts or greater in an A, 800 or greater is a B, etc).***

## **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty Statement**

Cheating is unethical and not acceptable. Plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper without giving credit to the source of that information or wording; it is also not acceptable. Do not submit work under your name that you did not do yourself. You may not submit work for this class that you did for another class. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing, you will be subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP catalog policy.

## **Disabilities Statement**

If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) in the East Union Bldg., Room 106 within the first two weeks of classes. CASS can also be reached in the following ways:

Web: <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>

Phone: (915) 745- 5148 voice or TTY

Fax: (915) 747- 8712

Email: [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu)