Introduction

Course and Instructor Introduction

Hello all, and welcome to INSS 5306 'Contemporary Security Studies'! This course aims to introduce you to both the broad academic field of Security Studies and how it can help us understand the global security environment writ large, including a whole host of specific security issues within that. As we will see, examining global security and current trends in Security Studies still involves 'traditional' security subjects such as war, conflict, and terrorism. However, the study of security has moved towards issues like health security (I think we can all appreciate the importance of this now), poverty reduction, migration flows, energy, environmental security, and much more. This course will help us understand these issues and why this shift to broader security concerns has happened. To do this, I also aim to introduce you to deeper issues and roots informing global security, such as theories of International Relations, the salience of political ideologies, some more profound modern history, and the darker logics of societal and regime security. In short, we are going to pack a lot in! I hope you will get some new and fresh perspectives on security issues amongst it all.

My name is Dr. Paul Ashby. I suppose I should stop saying I am a recent arrival to El Paso, TX from the U.K. (specifically a seaside town called Ramsgate). I have been here for over seven years now and coming here much
longer. I have taught numerous courses in International Relations (I.R.) and Security Studies for... gosh a long time now! That has been both here and in the U.K., and both face-to-face and online. My personal research explores U.S. security interaction with Mexico in the context of Mexico's drug-related security crisis, U.S. Homeland Security, and North American regional security, and really my major research interests are in U.S. foreign policy and grand strategy.

The aim of this class is a bit different from many others within the INSS program. The idea is to really think globally for its own sake and to really engage with often quite complex and cutting-edge academic ideas and even political debates. This helps us understand the academic and practical global context that U.S. national security operates in, which is crucial to 'doing' good security policy and understanding it. However, it is also worth understanding for its own sake!

**Contacting Dr. Ashby**
Outside of our official classroom time, it is very much best to email me directly with any questions, and indeed I will be emailing you directly, too. Keep an eye on your UTEP email accounts. I will always try and respond to you within 24 hours and always try to help where I can. It will be especially important to contact me if you need any guidance with work.

I will be holding official office hours on Mondays and Wednesdays before class. I should be in the office from 9am on those days. Now, that office should be in Prospect Hall Room 206. **BUT!** Right now, Dr. Bolsinger and I are basically office-less! I will keep you posted on this, hopefully it'll be resolved soon. We have virtual options, and a space in the Education Building we can use.

**Important Note!** I am looking forward to working with you all on this course! I am aware that all of you have busy schedules, responsibilities, and commitments. Rest assured, I will remain as flexible to your needs and commitments as the class progresses as I can, whilst also maintaining the standards of a Master's program. You can always discuss issues with me directly and on an individual basis. We can work together to ensure you get the best possible experience from the course! **I will be flexible!**

**Information in the Syllabus**
This Syllabus document is meant to be an introductory guide to the Course, giving you the critical information necessary prior to its commencement. It is a bit long but hopefully provides answers to many questions you may have at this point! This includes information on learning in this continuing pandemic crisis. You should also use the Blackboard Shell, which contains a clear breakdown of each Module, its required readings, core questions, and work due. I will also share a Work Guidance Document that gives more profound guidance and advice for all the assessed work on the course.

**Online Classroom**
We will use Blackboard as our online classroom. I will post all the necessary course materials and module materials there. Work will be posted here. If you are not familiar with Blackboard, please reach out.

I will try to help with any technical issues, but if you require technical support related to Blackboard, it is best to contact the UTEP Helpdesk at (915) 747-5257 or helpdesk@utep.edu.

**The Course**

**Course Description**
This course serves as an introduction to academic and practical concepts applying to Security Studies. Reflecting changes in both the world and academic discipline, the course will cover the origins of and changes within Security Studies. It gives us a working knowledge of multiple theoretical and analytical tools that can then help us understand a complex and increasingly fractious global security environment from different perspectives. We will interrogate several contemporary security issues, challenges, and debates. Broadly speaking, the early parts of the
course will give us a solid background in necessary history and big picture dynamics to our modern world, and the core theories, themes, concepts, developments, in the study of security and international relations that (in theory) help helps us understand that world! Then we will aim to apply these to real-world contemporary security issues.

Some particular attention will be devoted to the "new security agenda." This has moved the study and the subject of Security Studies beyond "traditional" core concerns of 'national security,' to a much broader and broader understanding of what security is, means, encompasses, and looks like. Security Studies now covers everything from the environment down to the individual. We will discuss the relative usefulness, applicability, strengths, and weaknesses of the "new security agenda" and the widening of Security Studies, again from several differing perspectives.

However, we will also consider that the "traditional" concerns of Security Studies – not least interstate rivalry, war, and conflict, have come roaring back in recent times. I will try to link the broadening and deepening of Security Studies with this reality.

The main aim of the course is to structure and broaden students' understanding of contemporary global security issues and debates and give them the critical and analytical tools to do so. This will help your general knowledge and your ability to think critically about issues in all their glorious and terrifying complexity.

**Course Objectives**

Through our course together, and most importantly, your own independent research, thinking, and analysis, you will be expected to demonstrate a strong understanding of the key ground we will cover. On completion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate:

> Stronger appreciation of the creation of the modern world, the looming history of the world wars and Cold War, and the impacts of economic globalization;
> Knowledge of the main theoretical approaches to security;
> Understanding of the key concepts and terminologies in the field of Security Studies;
> Ability to identify and evaluate the assumptions made by different approaches to the study of security;
> Awareness of the history, the evolution and current trends in Security Studies, and major issues in international security;
> An ability to apply the above to specific contemporary security issues, including in evaluation and analysis;
> A deeper and broader understanding of contemporary issues and concerns in Global Security;
> An ability to critically evaluate the usefulness/applicability of competing theories and concepts within Security Studies and beyond;
> An ability to evaluate the "new security agenda" from differing standpoints
> Knowledge of the ‘return’ of geopolitics, and how that interacts with the new security agenda
> A more profound knowledge of some of the key global security issues ready to take forward to other courses and your career

**Textbooks and Recommended Reference Materials**

We will use the following as our textbooks. Chapters from the first will be made available to you as PDFs! However, you can also purchase or rent if you wish (always nice to have copies to make notes on, etcetera!) The second will be available at the UTEP bookstore, but I will try to provide some material from it if purchase is a struggle? Please do email with any issues.


This is an introductory book for Security Studies, covering the major theoretical debates and many specific security topics in an accessible way. I switched to it recently because of its international focus. We will use it extensively throughout the course, and it will should be helpful for other INSS courses.

Perhaps the book of the 'new security agenda' spearheaded by the Copenhagen School takes us more profoundly into the subjects and nuances of debates – and into graduate-level territory!

Course Module Breakdown
Here is a simple, at-a-glance breakdown of the weekly module topics on the course (see onto next page).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Class Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1. What is Security Studies? getting to know a discipline</td>
<td>01.18.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading – Ch 1 and 2 Oxford Handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2. The Rise of Modernity</td>
<td>forging our world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See Blackboard for readings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3. Deeper Roots</td>
<td>globalization, politics, and security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ch 21 and 22 Oxford Handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>4. Still the Big Question? warfare, ‘great powers’, and global stability</td>
<td>02.06.23/02.08.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ch 15 and 43 Oxford Handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>5. Theories of Security</td>
<td>realism and liberalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ch 6 and 8 Oxford Handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Theories of Security</td>
<td>&quot;the new security agenda,&quot; constructivism, and securitization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Textbook Reading – Ch 7 Oxford Handbook and selection from Buzan et al</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>6. Theories of Security</td>
<td>critical approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ch 4 and 5 Oxford Handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>7. Contemporary Threats</td>
<td>rising nationalisms, rising competition?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ch 28 Oxford Handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Spring Break!!! March 13th-March 17th</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>8. Contemporary Threats</td>
<td>wars old and new, and how to stop them...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ch 16, 31 and 45 Oxford Handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>9. Contemporary Threats</td>
<td>the return of the nuclear specter?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ch 23 and 25 Oxford Handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>10. Contemporary Threats</td>
<td>global terrorism, transnational organized crime, and the dark side of globalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ch 33 and 34 Oxford Handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>11. Contemporary Threats</td>
<td>health security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ch 42 Oxford Handbook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Task Breakdown

This course has several tasks and assessments, which will be due and weighted as follows (see onto next page, and refer to Blackboard):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>% of Overall Grade</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Introduction</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>01.22.23 11:59 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Classroom Contribution (Physical and Online)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>In each module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Assigned after course starts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory and Concept Applications (3)</td>
<td>21% (7% each)</td>
<td>In Modules 3, 5, and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Blog Pieces (3)</td>
<td>21% (7% each)</td>
<td>In Modules 8, 11, and 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Assignment Plan</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>04.21.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Assignment</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>05.12.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Evaluation Credit</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>By UTEP deadline (TBC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The achieved grades will be given numerically in percentages on the UTEP grading scale:

59 & below (F) | 60-69 (D) | 70-79 (C) | 80-89 (B) | 90-100 (A)

### Course Expectations and Key Advice

**My Expectations of You...**

My expectations are straightforward - I expect you to try your best on this course, keep to deadlines - or keep me informed if you need some extra time - and complete the work required! This course relies on the participation of all the people in the class to make it
successful. The pace of these 7-week courses is pretty frenetic and requires significant motivation and self-discipline.

As this is a graduate course, the reading is quite extensive, and very important. This is the key thing I expect each week – for you to have completed some of the required reading. This reading, and some extra effort, is key to your work being strong, and the quality of your Final Assignment. Indeed, reading is the key to success! In my experience, there is almost always a correlation between those who demonstrate they have read carefully and widely during the course and those who get the highest marks!

What you can expect of me
You should expect flexibility from me and understanding of any situations that might impact your work.

You should always feel comfortable approaching me for help, guidance, and advice. If you do need something, let me know. I will endeavor to respond to any email queries within 24 hours. I really do encourage you to contact me about your assignment topics early on.

Instructions and what you need to do to perform well in particular assessment tasks and on the course as a whole should be clear from the material provided you within and without of class.

I will endeavor to provide assessment feedback within seven days of the due date. I will let you know if there is any likely delay to that. This has been a tough aim during the extra responsibilities I have gathered in work and life but, for those of you in my recent classes, you should know I aim to meet this. Working on a more even work-life balance this year!

Expectations of each other!
If there is anything you are unsure of, let me know! Again, communication between us will only ever help.

If you require content-related help and support, please reach out. You can use the ‘Ask the Professor’ forum in the Blackboard shell - if you are wondering about something, probably other people are wondering too, and you are helping everybody out by being the brave one who asks! Plus, you can of course contact me directly anytime. I will aim to help with content, and with any situations that are affecting or likely to affect your work. I am always available! You just need to reach out – you won’t find out unless you ask! 😃

Be courteous in online communication. Stick to the rules and expectations of academic integrity! More on those below.

Late Policies
As this course lasts only 7 weeks, it is essential to be organized and manage your time wisely. However! If, because of work, illness or family emergency, you find yourself struggling to keep up with what is expected, please email me as soon as possible. I know that on occasion
life does of course intrude on other plans! I am aware that you have existing commitments and responsibilities. DSS students are busy people with day jobs - I will be flexible as long as you communicate with me!

If you require an extension on course work because of extenuating work, health or family reasons, email me at least 24 hours before the relevant assignment deadline. Briefly explain your situation and request an extension of a specific length (e.g. 1 day). I will reply as soon as possible. Depending on the case, you may need to submit supporting documentation (e.g. a doctor's note).

*In cases where an extension has not been arranged and no contact has been made between me and the student, work submitted late will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day.*

*Assignments will not be accepted after they are 5 days late and there has been no communication between us; they will be given a grade of 0.*

**IMPORTANT!** To repeat! I will work with you on these issues! I know how busy you all are in the program, often with full time work commitments and everything else life throws at us! All I ask is that you make sure you let me know what is going on, and I will help.

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

Cheating, plagiarism and collusion are all violations of the UTEP *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Again, for more on this see the relevant section of the UTEP *Curriculum and Classroom Policies*. 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.

*NOTE* Large tracts of texts copied verbatim, even if you have a reference for them, can be considered technical plagiarism, especially if they are not indicated with quotations. Repeating your own work can be a form of self-plagiarism. These will not be formally acted upon but be aware your grade will be severely affected if you do this. It limits the quality of your work profoundly.

We will cover this again ‘in class’. However, if you have any questions or concerns about this please do let me know. If in doubt – check!

**Evaluations**

We will have an official evaluation near the completion of the course through UTEP. UTEP greatly appreciates your input and opinion on courses. From a personal perspective, I take your feedback seriously and will always try to incorporate it into the course where appropriate. We therefore greatly appreciate you taking the time to complete these evaluations.
IF I GET A 70% EVALUATION RESPONSE RATE, I WILL GIVE EXTRA CREDIT!

The Online Learning Community
Learning 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. Before you begin the course, take a few minutes to review the core rules of online communication. The key thing - be as respectful online as you would offline! Disagreement is healthy and natural; insults and ad hominem are not! Read other’s post carefully, respond with mutual respect, and remember we’re a community learning together.

Other Important / Helpful Information
UTEP Course Drop Policy
If unforeseen circumstances happen where a drop is necessary, students are responsible for initiating any course drop. It is the student’s responsibility to determine how dropping courses may affect financial aid. Students are limited to dropping no more than 6 courses over their entire academic career of all courses taken at any public college or University in Texas.

You should contact me as your advisor about this.

a) Students who drop a course before the “official census date,” the course will not appear on the transcript, and doesn’t count toward the 6-course drop limit.

b) Dropping a course after the official census date, but before the “course drop date” will generate a “W” in the course—although the drop shows on your transcript, a “W” does not lower your GPA. However, a “W” counts against your 6-drop limit.

c) If the course is dropped after the “course drop date” or if the student just stops participating, taking tests, etc., UTEP requires the instructor to issue an “F” in the course that permanently remains on the transcript.

d) UTEP also allows instructors to administratively drop any student because of too many times the student fails to submit assignments, discussion questions, or because of disciplinary reasons. In this case, the student will be notified of the course drop through their UTEP student email account. A “W” or an “F” will be issued. A “W” for these reasons counts against the 6-drop limit.

Accessibility Statement
Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. If you have a condition that may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, it is your responsibility to contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at (915) 747-5148 (voice or TTY) or cass@utep.edu. CASS has a new portal for students and instructors that makes the whole system electronic – there’s information in the link above.

You are also encouraged to discuss this in confidence with me, preferably before classes begin.
Copyright & Fair Use
Much of the material that is posted within this course is protected by copyright law. These materials are only for the use of students enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further retained or disseminated.