

## **U.S. Grand Strategy in Times of Transition** *(400 level Seminar – 14 sessions)*

Charles de Gaulle coined the phrase “great reshuffling of the cards” to describe those transitional moments in a nation’s history when it must adapt to fundamental changes in international relations. Governments often respond to the risks and opportunities associated with such transitional situations by creating a new grand strategy. This senior seminar will survey the history of U.S. strategic adjustments during periods of transition, beginning with the Treaty of Paris (1763) and ending with the current American debate over strategic “rebalancing”.

The first few class sessions will introduce students to the concept of grand strategy and to the major theories and theorists that have shaped our understanding of this concept. Students will also be introduced to the literature on civil-military relations in the United States – a topic that will be developed throughout the semester.

During the last few weeks of the semester students will be given the opportunity to discuss the priorities that should guide the formulation of contemporary U.S. Grand Strategy and the challenges that America is likely to face in the near future.

### Course Themes

- Transitions as opportunities for grand strategy and statesmanship
- Power: Available, Useable, Effective
- Elements of Power: DIME
- Determinants of Strategy: Ideas, Institutions, Actors, Events, Trends, Values, Interests.
- Strategy formulation: Ends / Ways / Means
- International, Domestic and Intermestic Contexts of Strategy
- Civil-Military Relations
- Leadership: Transactional and Transformative
- International Relations Theory / theorists / practitioners

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1. Introduction: What is Grand Strategy (GS)? Understanding Grand Strategy as a concept. Why (and when) is Grand Strategy Important? What are some examples of successful and unsuccessful GS? What determines success? What causes failure?  
Possible historical examples:
    - a. Shocks: Pearl Harbor; 9/11
    - b. Great Power Challenges: Soviet Union (1945-47); China (2013)
    - c. Complex and interdependent problems: (Economic constraints, Climate change, Resource depletion, Failed and failing states, etc.)

2. Principles and Foundations of Grand Strategy I: International Contexts  
 When and how does the structure of the international system determine the likelihood of war? Under what circumstances can the negative effects of the security dilemma be mitigated?  
 Theories of the International system:
  - Thucydides: Power, national interest and national security
  - Hedley Bull: Anarchical Society
  - Arnold Wolfers: Discord and Collaboration
  - Kenneth Waltz: Man, the State and War
  
3. Principles and Foundations of Grand Strategy II: Domestic contexts.  
 When and how does leadership determine grand strategy? Are certain types of political systems more likely to engage in aggression? How can a government “reconcile a military strong enough to do anything the civilians ask with a military subordinate enough to do only what civilians authorize? (Peter Fever)
  - a. Thucydides: Leadership, regime type, economics, rationality, citizenship and civil-military, military instruments of power, honor.
  - b. IR Theory: First and second level analysis

Suggested Readings for Sessions 1-3:

Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* (c.400 B.C.), translated by Richard Crawley, edited by T.E. Wick (New York: The Modern Library Hill, 1982)

Strassler, Robert B., ed. *The Landmark Thucydides*. New York: The Free Press, 1996.

Donald Kagan, *The Peloponnesian War* (New York: Viking Press, 2003)

Donald Kagan, *Thucydides: The Reinvention of History* (New York: Viking Press, 2009)

Laurie Bagby, ‘The Use and Abuse of Thucydides’, *International Organization* 48, no. 1 (Winter 1994): 131-53.

Robert D. Kaplan, “A Historian for Our Time,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, January-February 2007.

Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, (New York, Columbia University Press, 2002).

Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962).

Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1959).

B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd ed. (New York: Faber & Faber, 1967).

Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (6th cent. B.C.), translated by Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963).

- Edward Mead Earle, with Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert, eds., *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971).
- Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1513-1514), translated and with an introduction by Harvey C. Mansfield, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
- Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (New York: Knopf, 1993)
- Michael I. Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought*, 2nd ed. (London: Frank Cass, 1996).
- Williamson Murray, MacGregor Knox and Alvin Bernstein, eds., *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War* (New York: Cambridge University Press., 1994),
- Paul Kennedy, ed., *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991).
- Edward N. Luttwak, *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987).
- Peter Paret with Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert, eds., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986).
- Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History* (New York, Random House, 2002).
- Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command* (New York, Free Press, 2002).
- Murray, Williamson, and Jim Lacey, eds. *The Making of Peace: Rulers, States, and the Aftermath of War* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- Kalevi Holsti, *Peace and War: Armed Conflicts and International Order, 1648-1989* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- H.J. Mackinder, "The Geographical Pivot of History", *Geographical Journal* 23, no. 6 (April 1904): pp. 421-423, 432-437.
- A.T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783* (1890) (New York: Dover Publications, 1987).
- Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

Edward N. Luttwak, *Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire: From the First Century A.D. to the Third* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979).

Bolt, Coletta, and Shackelford, eds., *American Defense Policy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), Chapter 1 “American Defense in the Context of History and Values,” pp. 5-30; Chapter 4 “The Constitutional and Legal Basis for American Defense and National Security,” pp. 87-126.

Richard Betts, “Is Strategy an Illusion?” *International Security* 25(2), Fall 2000, pp. 5-50.

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4. Transitional Moments. Why Study Transitions?

The American Revolution as a transitional moment.

What factors convinced American leaders to challenge the authority of the British Crown in 1776? Did the American revolutionaries have a grand strategy for winning the war with Britain? What combination of fears and interests guided the decisions of American leaders following the Revolution? What fears and goals guided America’s westward expansion?

Competing Strategies for a New American Nation

- a. Road to war, grievances, goals
- b. Revolutionary War strategy, the quest for allies
- c. Post-revolutionary grand strategy debates – Hamilton, Jefferson, etc.

5. Consolidation and Expansion: US Grand Strategy from the End of the Civil War to World War I

Did US leaders have a grand strategy after the Civil War? Was the expansion and consolidation of American power during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a case of “empire by absent-mindedness?” What arguments divided the imperialists and anti-imperialists during the 1890’s?

- a. Domestic: civil war, reconstruction, new American state, manifest destiny, industrial revolution, protectionism, Spanish American War and its domestic consequences.
- b. International: Clausewitz, British adjustment to American power, Industrial revolution, imperialism, open door, technological change, changing nature of warfare, Spanish American War and its international consequences.

6. World War I as a Transitional Moment.

Versailles (Option here: simulation or debate)

What were the grand strategies of the major European powers prior to the start of World War I? Why did the US stay out of the war at first, and then enter the war in 1917?

What were the defining elements of Woodrow Wilson’s “new and more wholesome diplomacy”? Did America have a grand strategy during the interwar period?

7. World War II as a Transitional Moment. Creation of Post-World War II Liberal Order: Truman, Kennan, Nitze, Marshall, and Acheson.  
Did FDR “push Japan into initiating a preventive war?” (Taliaffero)  
What were the key elements of agreement and disagreement between FDR, Churchill and Stalin during World War II? How and why did the US-Russia wartime alliance disintegrate? Was the Cold War inevitable?
8. Containment as Grand Strategy  
What were the goals and fears that guided the foreign policies of American presidents from 1945 until 1989? Was the Cold War an impressive example of a coherent grand strategy articulated by Kennan and pursued by every US leader from Truman to Reagan?
  - a. America’s construction of a postwar Liberal International Order
  - b. Solarium
  - c. Cuban Missile Crisis (option here: simulation or debate)
  - d. Vietnam
  - e. Détente

Suggested Readings for Sessions 4-8:

Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison, *The Federalist*, with an introduction by Edward Mead Earle (New York: Modern Library College Editions, no date).

Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation* (New York: Knopf, 2006).

John Meacham, *Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power* (New York, Random House, 2012).

Ron Chernow, *Alexander Hamilton* (New York, Penguin, 2005).

John Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflections on the Military Struggle for American Independence* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1990).

- Chapter 5, “American Society and Its War for Independence,” pg. 117-132.

- Chapter 6, “American Strategy: Charles Lee and the Radical Alternative,” pg. 133-162.

- Chapter 11, “The Legacy of the American Revolutionary War,” pg. 245-265.

George Washington, “Farewell Address,” 1796.

[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/washing.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp)

Monroe Doctrine, December 2, 1823. [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/monroe.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/monroe.asp)

John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (New York: Knopf, 2001), pp. 99-131, 174-263.

Robert W. Merry, *A Country of Vast Designs: James K. Polk, the Mexican War, and the Conquest of the American Continent* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009).

- Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1973).
- John Hay's "Open Door Note" September 6, 1899.  
<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/opendoor.htm>
- Winston Churchill, *The Gathering Storm* (London, Mariner Books, 1986)
- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1835), vol. 1, Vintage Classics Edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), p. 434.
- Pearlman, Michael D. *Warmaking and American Democracy: The Struggle Over Military Strategy, 1700 to the Present* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999).
- McPherson, James M. *Tried by War: Abraham Lincoln as Commander in Chief* (New York: Penguin, 2008).
- Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 2005).
- Jeffrey Taliaferro, Norrin Ripsman, and Steven Lobell, eds. *The Challenge of Grand Strategy* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012).
- E. Pendleton Herring, *The Impact of War: Our American Democracy Under Arms* (New York, Farrar and Rinehart, 1941).
- Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2003).
- Woodrow Wilson, *Fourteen Points*, January 8, 1918.  
[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/wilson14.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp)
- John Maynard Keynes, 'Introductory' in Keynes' *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (New York: Dover Publications, 1920), pp. 1-6
- Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).
- George Kennan, *American Diplomacy*, expanded ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1984).
- Douglas Stuart, *Creating the National Security State* (Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 2008).
- Frank Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century: U.S. Foreign Policy Since 1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

Gaddis Smith, *American Diplomacy during the Second World War, 1941-1945*. Second Edition, (McGraw-Hill, 1985).

William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, rev. ed. (New York: Dell, 1962).

John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton NJ: Princeton Press, 2001).

D. Deudney and J. G. Ikenberry, "The Nature and Sources of Liberal International Order," *Review of International Studies* 25(2) (1999): 179–196.

Henry Kissinger, "Three Approaches to Peace: Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill in World War II", in his *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), chapter 16.

Nitze, Paul. —United States Objectives and Programs for National Security, NSC-68 report to the President through the National Security Council, 14 April 1950, reprinted in *Naval War College Review* (May-June 1975).

Aaron Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-Statism and Its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

George Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs* 25, no. 4 (July 1947): 566-582, reprinted in his *American Diplomacy*, expanded ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1984).

Melvin Leffler, "The United States and the Strategic Dimensions of the Marshall Plan," *Diplomatic History* 12 (Summer 1988), pp. 277-306.

Wilson D. Miscamble, "Roosevelt, Truman, and the Development of Postwar Grand Strategy," *Orbis* 53, no. 4 (Fall 2009), pp. 553-570.

Steven Metz, "Eisenhower and the Planning of American Grand Strategy," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 14 (March 1991), pp. 49-71.

Herman Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1960).

Martin Van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York: Free Press, 1991).

John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997)

John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*, revised and expanded edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin, 2005).

John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace: Inquiries Into the History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

Ernest R. May, ed., *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC 68* (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1993)

John Lewis Gaddis, *George F. Kennan: An American Life* (New York, Penguin Press, 2011).

Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power* (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1992).

Robert McNamara, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and lessons of Vietnam* (New York, Random House, 1995).

Michael Hogan, *A Cross of Iron* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York, W.W. Norton, 1969).

Walter Millis, ed. *The Forrestal Diaries* (New York, Viking Press, 1951).

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#### 9. Post-Cold War Transition

Why were policy makers and experts unprepared for the collapse of the Soviet Union? How did George H.W. Bush manage the implosion of the Soviet empire? Did America squander its "unipolar moment"? (Krauthammer) Is America an Empire in Decline? What, if anything, can the US learn from Britain's management of imperial decline? What rules should the US follow to decide when and where to work with allies?

- a. The "unipolar moment"
- b. Globalization, Enlargement and Engagement after the Cold War
- c. Dealing with Failed States and the issue of humanitarian intervention
- d. Going it alone or going it with others

#### 10. Was September 11 a Transitional Moment?

Is the Global War on Terror a War? Is US policy for dealing with existential terrorism guided by a grand strategy? Where do the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq fit in the Global War on Terror?



- a. The Clash of Civilizations
  - b. The Decision to Invade Afghanistan
  - c. The Decision to Invade Iraq
  - d. The Global War On Terror: Ends / Ways / Means
11. Contemporary Strategic Challenges: Power Transition and the Risk of Hegemonic War. US-China Relations and America's "Pivot Toward Asia"  
(Option here: simulation or debate)  
What factors have led to the Obama administration's decision to "pivot toward Asia?" Is the US "pivot" best understood as a recent development or as part of a long-term adaptation to America's Pacific identity? Is US-China conflict unavoidable?
12. Contemporary Strategic Challenges: Changing Power Relationships  
(Option here: simulation or debate)  
Does the US face a "protracted phase of...chaotic realignments"? (Brzezinski) If so, what priorities should guide US strategic choices? Can the US build a new grand strategy "around open and loosely rule-based principles and institutions"? (Ikenberry)
- a. Russia
  - b. India
  - c. Brazil
  - d. Transatlantic Relations
13. Contemporary Strategic Challenges: Transnational Issues  
(Option here: simulation or debate)  
Does the US need new concepts and new institutions to formulate and manage a grand strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Does the US risk losing any coherent sense of grand strategy if it tries to incorporate too many issues into its national security planning?
- a. Climate Change
  - b. Resource scarcity
  - c. Global economy
  - d. Nuclear proliferation
14. Conclusion: Is American Grand Strategy Possible in a Post Cold War, Post 9/11, Post Financial Crisis Era? Domestic Constraints on American grand strategy. Has America pursued "exceptional" grand strategies since the founding of the Republic? What goals should Washington pursue in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century?

Suggested Readings for Session 9-14:

Josef Joffe, "Bismarck" or "Britain?: Toward an American Grand Strategy After Bipolarity", *International Security* 19, no. 4 (Spring 1995): 94-117.

Mikhail Gorbachev, *Memoirs* (New York: Doubleday, 1996).

Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 7, #1, 1990-91, pp. 23-33.

- Henry Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 2001).
- Hal Brands, *From Berlin to Baghdad: America's Search for Purpose in the Post-Cold War World* (Lexington, Kentucky, University of Kentucky Press, 2008).
- Robert Art, *A Grand Strategy for America* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2003).
- Niall Ferguson, *Colossus* (New York, Penguin, 2004).
- John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, W.W. Norton, 2003).
- Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York, Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1999).
- Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1996).
- Ricks, Thomas. *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Books, 2007).
- Gaddis, John Lewis Gaddis, "Grand Strategy in the Second Term," *Foreign Affairs* (Jan./Feb. 2005), pp. 2-15.
- Benny Miller, "Explaining Change in U.S. Grand Strategy: The Rise of Offensive Liberalism and the War in Iraq," *Security Studies* 19, 1 (January 2010), pp. 26-65.
- Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States. *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2004.
- Kilcullen, David. *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power* (New York, Basic Books, 2012).
- Ronald Tammen, et. al., *Power Transitions: Strategies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (New York, Chatham House, 2000).
- Micheal Hunt and Steven Levine, *Arc of Empire: America's Wars in Asia from the Philippines to Vietnam* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2012).
- Van Tol, Jan, with Mark Gunzinger, Andrew Krepinevich, and Jim Thomas. *AirSea Battle: A Point-of-Departure Operational Concept* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2010).

- U.S. Department of Defense. *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*. Washington, DC: Department of Defense, January 2012.  
[http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense\\_Strategic\\_Guidance.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf)
- Emily Goldman, *Power in Uncertain Times: Strategy in the Fog of Peace* (Stanford CA, Stanford University Press, 2011).
- Stephen Flanagan and James Schear, *Strategic Challenges* (Washington D.C., National Defense University Press, 2008).
- FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency* (Department of the Army, December 2006).
- Carolyn Pumphrey, ed. *Global Climate Change: National Security Implications* (Carlisle, US Army War College, May 2008).
- Franklin Kramer, et al. eds., *Cyberpower and National Security* (Washington, D.C., NDU Press, 2009).
- Ashley Tellis, et al, eds. *Strategic Asia, 2010-11* (Washington D.C., National Bureau of Asian Research, 2010).
- Joshua Goldstein, *Winning the War on War* (New York, Penguin, 2011).
- Tony Smith, *America's Mission*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, (Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 2012).
- Jeremi Suri, "American Grand Strategy from the Cold War's End to 9/11" *Orbis* 53 (Fall 2009), pp. 611-629.
- John Gerald Ruggie, "Third Try at World Order? America and Multilateralism after the Cold War," *Political Science Quarterly* 109, No. 4 (Autumn 1994), pp. 553-570.
- Paul Kennedy, *Grand Strategies in War and Peace*. 1991. Chapter. 10 "American Grand Strategy, Today and Tomorrow: Learning from the European Experience," pp. 167-184.
- Klare, Michael T., *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict*. New York: Owl Books, 2003.
- U.S. National Security Strategy 2010.  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf)
- P.D. Feaver. *American Grand Strategy At the Crossroads: Leading From the Front, Leading From Behind, or Not Leading at All,* " America's Path: Grand Strategy for the Next Administration. Center for New American Security, May, 2012.
- John Mearsheimer, "Imperial by Design," *The National Interest*, Jan-Feb 2011.

Robert M. Gates, "A Balanced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age," *Foreign Affairs* (Jan/Feb 2009), pp. 53-78.

Gordon Adams on the Slippery Slope of Defense Spending --  
<http://cts.vresp.com/c/?TheHenryL.StimsonCen/da445ad07e/9bd6b9fa29/cea9b7a251>

Gordon Adams on "Building Down" DoD Build Down in an Era of Declining Budgets (Oct 27, 2011)  
<http://outerdnn.outer.jhuapl.edu/rethinking/VideoArchives/AdamsPresentationVideo.aspx>

Max Boot, National Security in an Age of Austerity (1 December 2011)  
<http://outerdnn.outer.jhuapl.edu/rethinking/VideoArchives/BootVideoPresentation.aspx>