

Foundations of Security Studies

17.468

Professor Barry R. Posen

Fall 2003

Thursdays, 3-5pm

Meeting in Room 4-153

Office in E38-634

Office Hours: By Appointment - Phone ex. 3-8088 or 3-0133

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to a selection of the original sources of the most important ideas that form the basis of security studies as a subfield of political science.

We will read twelve books, one per week. The books are organized into four general subject areas: The international political system, the state, the military, and the war. Our purpose is to confront each of these works as an extended argument, on its own terms, as the authors wrote them. PhD students in security studies and in other fields who are preparing dissertations will find this approach particularly useful. As the course develops we shall examine how the works relate to one another.

Students will be evaluated on the basis of a single seminar paper as well as classroom participation. That paper will draw on the theories presented in two or three of the works examined in the course to examine a historical or current policy question to be determined mutually between the student and the professor. The purpose of the paper is to put the theories to work, and by doing so to develop an intimate acquaintance with the theory. Depending on course size, students may be called upon to act as discussion organizers one or more times during the semester.

Week 1 - Sept. 4 - Organization and Overview

THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SYSTEM:

Week 2 - Sept. 11 - Geoffrey Blainey, The Causes of War

Week 3 - Sept. 18 - Hans Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations (*please buy photocopied book, the 1950's edition, available as a course reader at the copy center in E52*)

Week 4 - Sept. 25 - Kenneth Waltz, Theory of International Politics

Week 5 - Oct. 2 - Stephen Walt, Origins of Alliances

Week 6 - Oct. 9 – John Mearsheimer, Tragedy of Great Power Politics

WAR:

Week 7 - Oct. 16 - Carl von Clausewitz, On War, Princeton University Press Edition

Week 8 - Oct. 23 - Thomas Schelling, Arms and Influence

Week 9 - Oct. 30 - Robert Pape, Bombing to Win, Air Power and Coercion in War

THE STATE:

Week 10 - Nov. 6 - Gelb and Betts, The Irony of Vietnam

Week 11 - Nov. 13 - Robert Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics

THE MILITARY:

Week 12 - Nov, 20 - Samuel Huntington, The Soldier and The State

Week 13 - Dec. 4 - Jack Snyder, The Ideology of the Offensive