

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
Department of Political Science

Political Science 284/495
American Grand Strategy
Winter 2004

Instructor: John Mearsheimer
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Course Description: This course examines the evolution of American grand strategy since 1900, when the United States first emerged on the world stage as a great power. The focus will be on assessing how its leaders have thought over time about: 1) which areas of the world are worth fighting and dying for, 2) when it is necessary to fight in those strategically important areas, and 3) what kinds of military forces are needed for deterrence and war-fighting in those regions. Attention will be paid to issues such as America's entry into World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War; the influence of America's location in the Western Hemisphere on its grand strategy; the superpower competition in the Cold War; the strategies of containment, massive retaliation and flexible response; the impact of domestic politics on US grand strategy; the relationship between America's economic and military position in the world system; the impact of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of al Qaeda on US grand strategy; the future of America's Cold War alliances; the Bush Administration's national security strategy; and the prospects for building an American Empire in the twenty-first century.

Course Requirements: This course is oriented around the readings and the lectures. It is expected that every student will do all the reading and attend every lecture. Moreover, each student will be expected to attend a discussion section once a week. The grade will be based on a comprehensive final examination (75%) and classroom participation in the discussion section (25%).

Readings and Books: These books have been ordered through the Seminary Co-op Bookstore:

- Robert J. Art, *A Grand Strategy for America* (Cornell Univ., 2003, hardcover).
- John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (Oxford Univ., 1990 [1982], paperback).
- George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy*, expanded ed. (Univ. of Chicago, 1985, paperback).
- Russell Frank Weigley, *The American Way of War* (Indiana Univ., 1987 [1973], paperback).

All of the above books are on 24-hour reserve at Regenstein Library.

Legend: ** 2-hour reserve and e-reserve at Regenstein Library
 (Catalog) Link from periodical's entry in library catalog
 (Ingenta) <http://www.ingentaselect.com>
 (JSTOR) <http://www.jstor.org>

Course Outline:

PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. January 6, 2004 (Tu): Organizational Meeting and Overview
2. January 8 (Th): Defining Grand Strategy
 - Art, *Grand Strategy for America*, pp. 1–86.

PART II: AMERICAN GRAND STRATEGY, 1900–1945

3. January 13 (Tu): Changing American Interests, 1900–1939
 - Kennan, *American Diplomacy*, chap. 1–4.
 - Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (W. W. Norton, 2001), chap. 7, “The Offshore Balancers.”**
4. January 15 (Th): Development of the Military Instrument, 1900–1939
 - Weigley, *American Way of War*, part 3.
5. January 20 (Tu): Isolationism, 1900–1941
 - Art, *Grand Strategy for America*, chap. 5.
 - Bruce M. Russett, *No Clear and Present Danger* (Westview Press, 1997 [1972]), chap. 2, “The Impending Stalemate in Europe,” and chap. 3, “A Hobson’s Choice for Japan.”**
6. January 22 (Th): World War II
 - Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, “Plan Dog” memorandum (Nov. 12, 1940).**
 - Weigley, *American Way of War*, part 4.

PART III: AMERICAN GRAND STRATEGY, 1945–1989

7. January 27 (Tu): Containment
 - Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” in *American Diplomacy*.
 - Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, chap. 1–2.
8. January 29 (Th): The Nuclear Revolution
 - Robert Jervis, “Why Nuclear Superiority Doesn’t Matter,” *Political Science Quarterly* 94, no. 4 (winter, 1979–80): 617–633. (JSTOR)
 - Mearsheimer, *Tragedy*, pp. 128–133 (to be handed out in class), 224–232.**
9. February 3 (Tu): The Early Cold War
 - David Alan Rosenberg, “The Origins of Overkill,” *International Security* 7, no. 4 (spring 1983): 3–71. (JSTOR)
 - Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, skim chap. 3–6.
10. February 5 (Th): The Third World
 - Steven R. David, “Why the Third World Matters,” *International Security* 14, no. 1 (summer 1989): 50–85. (JSTOR)
 - Stephen Van Evera, “Why Europe Matters, Why the Third World Doesn’t,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 13, no. 2 (June 1990): 1–51.**
11. February 10 (Tu): The Vietnam War–I

- Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, chap. 8.
- Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War* (Univ. of California, 1999), chap. 12, “Choosing War.”**

12. February 12 (Th): The Vietnam War–II

- George C. Herring, *America’s Longest War*, 3d ed. (McGraw-Hill, 1996), chap. 5, “On the Tiger’s Back,” and chap 6, “A Very Near Thing.”**
- John E. Mueller, “The Search for the ‘Breaking Point’ in Vietnam,” *International Studies Quarterly* 24, no. 4. (Dec. 1980): 497–519. (JSTOR)
- Guenther Lewy, “Vietnam: New Light on the Question of American Guilt,” *Commentary* 65, no. 2 (Feb. 1978): 29–49.**

13. February 17 (Tu): The Persian Gulf

- Charles A. Kupchan, *Persian Gulf and the West* (Allen & Unwin, 1987), chap. 2, “The Setting, 1946–73,” and chap. 4, “Iran, Afghanistan, and the Evolution of the Carter Doctrine.”**

PART IV: AMERICAN GRAND STRATEGY, 1990–2001

14. February 19 (Th): Unipolarity

- Charles Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment,” *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (1990–1991): 23–33. (Catalog)
- William Wohlforth, “The Stability of a Unipolar World,” *International Security* 24, no. 1 (summer 1999): 5–41. (Ingenta)
- Art, *Grand Strategy for America*, pp. 87–92.

15. February 24 (Tu): Clinton Administration Grand Strategy

- Art, *Grand Strategy for America*, chap. 4.
- Michael Mandelbaum, “Foreign Policy as Social Work,” *Foreign Affairs* 75, no. 1 (Jan./Feb. 1996): 16–32. (Catalog)

16. February 26 (Th): Was Military Disengagement Possible?

- Eugene Gholz, Daryl G. Press, and Harvey M. Sapolsky, “Come Home, America,” *International Security* 21, no. 4 (spring 1997): 5–48. (JSTOR)
- Art, *Grand Strategy for America*, re-read chap. 5.

PART V: AMERICAN GRAND STRATEGY SINCE SEPT.11, 2001

17. March 2 (Tu): The Bush Doctrine

- Condoleezza Rice, “Campaign 2000: Promoting the National Interest,” *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 1 (Jan./Feb. 2000): 45–62. (Catalog)
- George W. Bush, State of the Union address (Jan. 29, 2002).
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html>
- Bush, “Remarks by the President at 2002 Graduation Exercise of the United States Military Academy” (June 1, 2002).
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html>

- Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (The White House, Sept. 17, 2002). <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html>

18. March 4 (Th): The Case for American Empire

- Stephen Peter Rosen, "An Empire, If You Can Keep It," *The National Interest*, no. 71 (spring 2003): 51–61. (Catalog)
- Robert D. Kaplan, "Supremacy by Stealth," *The Atlantic Monthly* 292, no. 1 (July/Aug. 2003): 66, 68–69, 72, 74–83. (Catalog)
- Max Boot, "The New American Way of War," *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 4 (July/Aug. 2003): 41–58. (Catalog)
- Bush, Veterans Day address (Nov. 11, 2003).
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/20031111-10.html>

19. March 9 (Tu): The Case Against American Empire

- Mearsheimer, "Hearts and Minds," *The National Interest*, no. 69 (fall 2002): 13–16. (Catalog)
- Barry R. Posen, "Command of the Commons," *International Security* 28, no. 1 (summer 2003): 5–46. (Ingenta)
- Stephen M. Walt, "Beyond bin Laden," *International Security* 26, no. 3 (winter 2001/02): 56–78. (Ingenta)
- Paul W. Schroeder, "Iraq: The Case Against Preemptive War," *The American Conservative* 1, no. 2 (Oct. 21, 2002): 8–13, 15–20. http://www.amconmag.com/10_21/iraq.html
- Richard K. Betts, "Striking First," *Ethics & International Affairs* 17, no. 1 (2003): 17–24. (Catalog)

March 18 (Th): **FINAL EXAM**