

Missouri State University
School of Defense and Strategic Studies

Doctorate Program Course Highlights for Spring 2026 Semester

DSS 840 Advanced National Security Strategies

NEW! DSS 841 Advanced National Security Strategy Current Challenges

*U.S. National Security Strategies, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow:
History, Context, and Major Themes*

DSS 840, the Defense and Strategic Studies (DSS) program's senior graduate seminar on National Security Strategies, offers an in-depth examination of the evolution of strategic thought in the United States national security community, and of U.S. national security strategies since the late 19th century, with a particular emphasis upon the post-1945 era. The purpose of this seminar is for students to understand the historical context and reasons for successive U.S. administrations' national security strategies, and these strategies' impact and relative degree of success. The seminar is both historical and conceptual in its focus, giving students an introduction to and familiarity with several generations of U.S. national security policymaking as American leaders have struggled with how to engage with a challenging and ever-evolving security environment.

- Building upon the historical and conceptual foundation provided by DSS 840, a companion course – **DSS 841** (to be offered for the first time in Spring 2026) – will examine current challenges facing U.S. national security strategy on a thematic basis, covering topics such as near-peer strategic competition from China and Russia, U.S. military alliances, WMD and missile proliferation, terrorism, migration, cyber threats, and the changing domestic policymaking environment.
- Together, DSS 840 and DSS 841 will provide students with an essential historical and intellectual foundation for gradual-level study in the DSS program and valuable background and overview knowledge about that will help prepare them for success in other more specialized DSS classes and in their choice of and implementation of DSS doctoral research and writing projects. However, students may enroll in either DSS 840 or 841 or in both sequentially.
- The instructors are both well-known scholars and practitioners, drawing on long experience in senior national security policy positions.

For Spring 2026, because DSS 841 is a new course, it will be offered under the DSS 797 banner.