



Missouri State

U N I V E R S I T Y

Graduate School of Defense and Strategic Studies

Spring 2025 Selected New Course Highlights

DSS 702 – Regional Security Issues in the Middle East

Professor Ilan Berman
Internet/Asynchronous

This course focuses on the MENA region (encompassing the countries of North Africa, the Levant and the Persian Gulf) who sit at the crossroads of a range of global trends and security problems that are critical to American security planning - and to the safety and security of U.S. allies. This course will examine a range of contemporary topics relating to the region and its place in world affairs, including; Iran's evolution from monarchy to theocracy (and what might come next); the future of Saudi Arabia; Israel and the Palestinians, post-October 7th; Islamist actors, from the Muslim Brotherhood to ISIS; Turkey between East and West, and; The Middle East and "great power competition." Through this seminar, students will get a better understanding of macro-trends affecting the region, and how they are likely to shape the complexion of the MENA - and the role of the United States in it - for years to come.

DSS 712 – American National Security Policy

Professor Mark Hewitt
ZOOM Modality: Wednesday 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

This course evaluates the major actors and components of American national security policy. America's traditional national interests are studied – accenting World War II, the Cold War, and the present day. The course also addresses the circumstances of major foreign policy crises', such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the causes of both successful and unsuccessful American intervention campaigns during the Cold War and after. Additionally, the class considers America's foreign and defense policy in the post-Cold War world, and particular emphasis is placed on American policies towards other great powers such as China, Japan, and Russia, as well as in contemporary foreign and defense policy crises like the War on Terrorism.

DSS 797 – Special Topic: Arctic Security Challenges

Professor Dr. James Anderson
In Resident & ZOOM Modality:
Monday 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

The Arctic region has become an area of intense geopolitical competition in the 21st century. This new course will examine Arctic security concerns primarily through the lens of great power competition. After reviewing the region's history and salient geographic features, the course will examine U.S. and allied defense and security interests. The course will also assess Chinese and Russian aims and strategies in the Arctic. The course will close by assessing the future prospects for regional conflict and cooperation.

DSS 797 – Special Topic: Information Technology, National Security and the Fourth Industrial Revolution

Professor Christopher Whyte
Online/ Asynchronous

Periods of particularly dynamic transformation in human history have often been driven by rapid advances in information technology. Inventions like the printing press and the telegraph have sparked decades of social upheaval, foundational political change and both the dissolution and expansion of empires. This class explores the information revolutions of the present era from the midpoint of the 20th century to the present day, a period which has arguably seen the most profound restructuring of the international system around dynamic technologies like the computer, the Internet and artificial intelligence.

Aimed at a non-technical audience of policymakers and international relations scholars, the class guides students through the history, function and sociopolitical backdrop of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. By exploring how these technologies work and the broad context within which they have been developed and proliferated, this class introduces the idea that digital technologies are inherently insecure. These issues impact the full gamut of international security dynamics involving cyber conflict, automation, and the operation of actors in the grey zone between war and peace.

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Spring 2025 New Selected Course Highlights

**DSS 797 – Special Topic: Revisionist
Competition with the West & Great Power
Competition**
Professor Dr. Christopher Ford
ZOOM Modality: Tuesday 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Both of the last two U.S. presidential administrations have agreed that the United States is in a new era of great power competition, confronted by geopolitical challenges both from large strategic rivals of China and Russia and by regional ones such as Iran. Leaders elsewhere in the world need to meet the challenges these countries present, it's important to understand their geopolitical "psychology." All three of those countries are governed by authoritarian ruling regimes that ground much of their political legitimacy and orient their behavior in large part around the idea that their country has a past that gives it some right to power and status in the modern world, that the country has suffered grievous wrongs at the hands of (and still faces threats from) a malevolent West. This seminar will look at this phenomenon, exploring the politics and geopolitics of such revisionists' claims of grievance against the West (and particularly against the United States), exploring its characteristics and its behaviors, and trying to draw out potential lessons for U.S. leaders. The primary focus of the course will be upon Vladimir Putin's Russia, China under the Chinese Communist Party, and Iran under the ayatollahs. For comparison purposes, however, it will also look at relevant political and international narratives in modern Turkey and India.

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