



**Missouri State**  
U N I V E R S I T Y

## **School of Defense and Strategic Studies**

### **Summer 2026 Course Highlights**

#### **DSS 797 Special Topic: Arctic Security**

Dr. James Anderson  
ZOOM modality  
Monday, 6-9 p.m. ET

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 prospects for regional conflict and cooperation.

#### **DSS 797 Special Topic: Great Power Competition**

Dr. Jared McKinney  
MS TEAMS modality  
Thursday, 6-9 p.m. ET

Great power competition has become the paradigm for understanding contemporary international politics. Often, analysts leave the impression there is something new about the current era. But competition between major powers sharing an international system has characterized much of “modern” history since 1500. This course seeks to contextualize the present competition by studying the interplay between cooperation, competition, deterrence, and war in the previous historical epoch. To do this, we will collectively read and study the single most-important book published on the topic, Paul Kennedy’s *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (1987), and isolate the key political, military, economic, and cultural variables that have determined the relative success – and fate – of nations. But the discussion will not be left in the past.

The course will intensely explore how military innovation is shaping relative advantage today in both competition and potential war. It will investigate how different approaches to International Relations – Classical Realism in particular – suggest different models for success in an uncertain world. And it will study and reflect upon how another key rising power, the People’s Republic of China, has interpreted the “lessons of the past.” By the end of the course, students will be ready to describe past great power rivalries, contextualize the current great power competition, and scrutinize grand strategic options for the United States.

**SCHOOL OF DEFENSE AND STRATEGIC STUDIES**  
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