

Course Professor
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TTH 3:20 - 4:50 in Miller 101



I. Rationale:

PO 351: National Security Policy is an upper division political science course centered in the sub-field of foreign policy analysis. For IRGA students, this is a Group "A": international relations and foreign policy course. For political science majors this is a Section "A" American politics course.

Foreign policy analysis is a subfield of study that seeks to explain how policy decisions about international relations are made. The scholarship investigates the relative importance of causal factors from different levels of analysis on the state's behavior: strategic, ideological, economic, domestic political and psychological.

Now that the Iraq War is over, most Americans and scholars consider it to have been a misadventure of serious consequences. So, the pivotal decision to go to war in Iraq in 2003, as one strategic response to 9/11, offers us an excellent case study for "lessons learned." *What were they thinking* and did it matter who *they* (decision-makers) were? There are a range of approaches to explaining the Iraq War from the claim that "it was all about oil," to recognizing a genuine American fear (however misplaced) of Iraq's belligerence and WMD program in a post 9/11 world. Some focus simply on the personality and worldview of the president.

We will give the alternative explanations for the causes of this war a fair hearing and given the historical evidence, work out the complex puzzle of motivations, politics and power. In the process we might become more self-conscious about our own reasoning and judgments in the face of challenges from a rapidly changing world.

II. Course Aims and Objectives:

Aims:

The course seeks to explore:

- Alternative scholarly explanations for the causes of war in general and the Iraq War in particular through a levels of analysis framework;
- The assertion that the difference between good and bad policy decisions is the people who make them;
- The "wiring" of the mind that must deal with both inherent uncertainty (the natural fog surrounding complex, indeterminate intelligence issues) and induced uncertainty (the man-made fog fabricated by denial and deception operations).
- The effects of cognitive and other "unmotivated" biases, such as the tendency to see information confirming an already-held judgment more vividly than one sees "disconfirming" information.

Specific Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Hone their own judgments about the identification and merit of alternative explanations for why certain policy decisions are made;
- Better critique the work of peers by raising questions of theoretical coherence, strength and validity of supporting evidence and applying other intellectual standards to their work.
- Better understand events and political phenomena beyond isolated occurrences, thereby strengthening their ability to analyze political outcomes;
- Write more fluidly and succinctly in a less descriptive, more questions based analytical style.
- Function as a discussant colleague with ease.
- Pay more honor to doubt.
- Be more humble about the writ of your research findings.

III. Format and Procedures:

This is a small writing and discussion intensive class. I will prepare and deliver introductory comments on the each particular body of literature to supplement and expand on the assigned reading each week. We will then move to an open discussion of the week's material, including your written analyses and discussant colleague oral critiques.

IV. My Assumptions:

I assume that this course will require considerable time from each of you. Since this course is an elective, I assume you both want to be here and have chosen to engage this material in a critical and disciplined way.

You should know that as an American Foreign Service officer for the first 26 years of my professional life, I practiced public diplomacy -- a form of strategic political communication across cultures. I have lived as well as studied this material and will no doubt bring my personal experience to bear in my teaching of this subject.

V. Course Materials & Requirements:

Class attendance and participation policy: Eckerd College expects students to attend all classes for which they are registered. It is important to me that you attend and participate fully in every one of the course sessions we will have this semester. Should you choose not to attend class with any degree of frequency, you can expect a serious negative impact on your grade. Five absences for any reason will trigger an "F" in the discussant colleague portion of the course. I expect you to arrive at class on time. I consider tardy arrivals to be disrespectful and will note them.

Course Materials:**Required:**

Cramer, Jane K. & Thrall, A. Trevor eds. (2012). *Why Did the United States Invade Iraq?* New York: Routledge, Global Security Studies, ISBN 978-0-415-78213-5

Duffield, John S. & Dombrowski, Peter J. (2009). *Balance Sheet: The Iraq War and U.S. National Security*, Stanford: Stanford Security Studies, ISBN: 13:978-0804760133

Haass, Richard (2010). *War of Necessity, War of Choice: A Memoir of Two Iraq Wars*, New York: Simon and Schuster; ISBN:-10:14165444903X

Harvey, Frank P. (2011). *The Iraq War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, ISBN: 9781107676589

Jervis, Robert (2010). *Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War* (Cornell Studies in Security Affairs) Cornell: Cornell University Press, ISBN-13: 978-0801447853

MacDonald, Michael (2014). *Overreach: Delusions of Regime Change in Iraq*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, ISBN 978-0-674-72910-0

Steve. Yetiv (2013). *National Security through a Cockeyed Lens: How Cognitive Bias Impacts U. S. Foreign Policy*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, ISBN: 9781421411255

Recommended:

Chollet, Derek & Goldgeier, James (2009). *Between the Wars: From 11/9 to 9/11; The Misunderstood Years Between the Fall of the Berlin Wall and the Start of the War on Terror*, New York: PublicAffairs; ISBN-10: 1586487051

It is always a good idea to keep a copy of Roselle & Spray's *Research and Writing on International Relations* at hand. The book is an excellent guide to writing political science papers.

Moodle: Readings will also be posted or linked on the course Moodle site and occasionally provided as hard copy handouts and e-mail attachments.

VI. Assessment:

Fifty-percent (**50%**) of your grade will derive from the best five of six essays. On alternate weeks, each student in this seminar will prepare an essay in response to a prompt on the assigned readings. Students will be assigned to Teams A & B and alternate weekly responsibility for drafting. The essays will be 3 - 4 pages in length (750 words). You must post on-line by midnight on the Wednesday prior to the Thursday session during which you will present and defend your essay. Late submissions will be penalized. Grading will be based on critical thinking and writing standards.

Twenty-five percent (**25%**) of your grade will be based on your oral critical responses to colleagues' essays. Each student not required to prepare an essay that week, will be required to read the posted essays to evaluate and respond to them. The critiques, in the form of oral response to the week's essays will be evaluated on the basis of critical thinking and oral presentation standards.

Twenty-five percent (**25%**) of your grade will come from your final summative paper (8 - 10 pages). This final essay will cycle back through the alternative perspectives we have considered and offer your individual summative judgment of the causes of the war against Iraq in 2003. You must identify the primary and secondary factors involved and the causal

mechanism that led to the war effectively using evidence from the texts and additional research as warranted.

VII. Grades:

Grades will be letter grades with the plus or minus option exercised.

VIII. Academic Integrity:

Eckerd College definitions of cheating and plagiarism apply to all work required in this course. Eckerd students are expected to know and honor these standards without exception. On each paper please write out and sign "pledged." This will indicate to me that you know and adhere to the Eckerd honor code: On my honor, as an Eckerd College student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to tolerate these behaviors in others. Violators of academic standards will be referred to the Academic Honors Council.

IX. Accommodations for students with disabilities:

If you have a disability or believe that you qualify for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or other laws, please contact Disability Support Services at extension 8248 or via email at dss@eckerd.edu as soon as possible. Appropriate accommodations can only be arranged through that office, and may not be made retroactively.

X. Course Schedule

Unit I: Systems Level (third image) Theories -- the primary question is whether or not the American choice for war with Iraq is best explained by the theory that states go to war to increase their power, security and wealth in a high threat international environment. Anarchy in the international system is the cause, state behavior is the effect.

Week #1: Course overview and introduction

Sessions on Tuesday, Jan. 27 & Thursday, January 29, 2015

Read: Jack Levy, "Theories and Causes of War," chapter 2 in The Handbook on the Political Economy of War, (pp. 13 - 33)

Read: Why Did The United States Invade Iraq? Chapters 1 & 2 (pp. 1 - 48)

Choice: Make your team selection on Moodle by Feb 3.

End of Add/Drop period: February 3, 2015

Week #2: Post 9/11 American Strategic Thinking

Sessions on Tuesday, February 3 & Thursday, February 5, 2015

Due: Team A Essay #1, Team B critiques

Read: Why Did The United States Invade Iraq? Chapters 3 & 4 (pp. 50-100)

Read: Richard Ned Lebow, "Fear, interest, and honor: outlines of a theory of international relations," *International Affairs* 2,3 (2006) 9 (pp. 431-448)

Read: Gaddis, "A grand strategy of transformation," *Foreign Policy* 133 (Nov/Dec 2002): 50-57.

Read: National Security Strategy 2002

Read: Bush West Point Speech, June 2002

Read: Mearsheimer, John J; Walt, Stephen M., "An Unnecessary War," *Foreign Policy* 134 (Jan/Feb 2003): 50-59

Read: John J. Mearsheimer (2005), "Hans Morgenthau and the Iraq war: realism versus neo-conservatism" posted on [Open Democracy](#) (6 pages)

Week #3: Primacy Overreach

on Tuesday, February 10 & Thursday February 12, 2015

Due: Team B Essay #1, Team A critiques

Read: MacDonald, Overreach, Chapters 1 - 4 (pp. 1 -141)

Week #4: Primacy Overreach

Sessions on Tuesday, February 17 & Thursday, February 19, 2015

Due: Team A Essay #2, Team B critiques

Read: MacDonald, Overreach, Chapters 5 - conclusion (pp. 142-266)

Read: Why Did The United States Invade Iraq? chapter 10 (pp. 201-244)

Unit II: State and Societal Level (second image) Theories: the focus is on factors internal to the United States: political culture, system, and history. Considerations might include an ideological preference for democracy, capitalism and human rights or to consolidate the positions of key domestic elites.

Week #5: Oil, Israelis, Neocons -- Oh My!

Sessions on Tuesday February 24 & Thursday, February 26, 2015

Due: Team B Essay #2, Team A critiques

Read: Jack Snyder, Robert Shapiro and Yaeli Bloch-Elkon (2006), "Free Hand Abroad: Divide and Rule at Home," unpublished paper on Moodle (25 pages)

Read: Why Did The United States Invade Iraq? chapters 5 - 8 (pp. 101 - 166)

Read: Norman J. Ornstein & Thomas E. Mann, "When Congress Checks Out," *Foreign Affairs*, 85. 6 (Nov/Dec 2006): 67.

Week #6: Deep Dive into American Political Culture

Sessions on Tuesday, March 3 & Thursday, March 5, 2015

Due: Team A Essay #3, Team B critiques

Read: Harvey, *Explaining the Iraq War*, Chapters 1 - 4, (pp. 1 - 146)

Recommended Read: America Between The Wars chapters 7 - 11 (pp. 178 - 330) [The entire book is worth reading.]

Week #7: The Counterfactual Continued & Reviewed

on Tuesday, March 10 & Thursday, March 12, 2012

Due: Team B Essay #3, Team A critiques

Read: MacDonald, *Overreach*, Chapters 5 - end of book, (pp. 147-306)

Read: Lebow, *Review Essay on Frank P. Harvey. Explaining the Iraq War: Counterfactual Theory, Logic and Evidence.* (pp. 1-5)

***Sat., Mar. 14, 2015
Spring recess begins.***

Week #8: Perception/Misperception

Sessions on Tuesday, March 24 & Thursday March 26, 2015

Due: Team A Essay #4, Team B critiques

Read: Why Intelligence Fails chapters 1, 3 & 4

Read: Kevin Woods, James Lacey, and Williamson Murray, "Saddam's Delusions: The View From the Inside," *Foreign Affairs*, 85. 3 (May/Jun 2006): 2.

Read: Woods and Stout, "Saddam's Perceptions and Misperceptions: The Case of 'Desert Storm,'" *Journal of Strategic Studies* (2010) 33:1, (pp. 5-41)

Unit III: Individual level (first image) theories -- here the primary focus is on the decision-makers themselves. The argument is that the only way to understand the decision for war with Iraq in 2003 is to open the black box and look at the individuals who made the decisions: their motivations, beliefs, governmental roles and decision-making processes.

Week #9: Cognitive Bias

on Tuesday, March 31 & Thursday, April 2, 2015

Due: Team B Essay #4, Team A critiques

Read: Yetiv, National Security Through a Cockeyed Lens, entire book (pp. 1 -119)

Week #10: Walk in a Policy Maker's Shoes

Sessions on Tuesday, April 7 & Thursday, April 9, 2015

Due: Team A Essay #5, Team B critiques

Read: War of Necessity, War of Choice chapters 6 - 9 (pp. 168 - 278) [The entire book is a useful read for the comparisons between the decision making in the Gulf War and the Iraq War from an insider perspective.]

Read: The Contemporary Presidency: Condoleezza Rice as NSC advisor: a case study of the honest broker role."

Withdraw with "W" Deadline: April 10, 2015

Week #11: Individuals: The Personal Element I

Sessions on Tuesday, April 14 & Thursday, April 16, 2015

Due: Team B Essay #5, Team A critiques

Read: Jonathan Renshon, "Stability and Change in Belief Systems: The Operational Code of George W. Bush," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 52, no. 6 (2008): 820-849.

Watch: George W. Bush: The Iraq War Decision on *Frontline*

Read: Rothkopf, "Inside The Committee That Runs The World," *Foreign Policy*, 2011, (pp. 1-11)

Explore: Angler: The Cheney Vice Presidency by Barton Gellman

Read: Select a Bush Administration decision-maker of your choice and research the appropriate memoir, biography or insider stories to evaluate the evidence of powerful personal elements driving the decision to go to war.

Week #12: Individuals: The Personal Element II

Sessions on Tuesday April 21 & Thursday, April 23, 2015

Due: Team A Essay #6, Team B critiques

Watch: "The War Behind Closed Doors" on Frontline

Listen: Conversation with James Mann (2008), author of The Rise of the Vulcans: Bush's War Cabinet.

Read: Mark Bowden, "Tales of The Tyrant," Atlantic Magazine, May, 2002, (pp. 1-29)

Read: "Unilateralist: A Conversation with Paul Wolfowitz," by James Fallows in the Atlantic Monthly, 2002

Read: Select a Bush Administration decision-maker of your choice and research the appropriate memoir, biography or insider stories to evaluate the evidence of powerful personal elements driving the decision to go to war.

Week # 13: Integrating Perspectives & Evaluating Outcomes

on Tuesday, April 28 & Thursday, April 30, 2015

Due: Team B Essay # 6, Team A critiques

Read: Toward a Balance Sheet entire book

Read: "Was Iraq an unjust war? A debate on the Iraq war and reflections on Libya"

Week #14: Looking at Obama: Out of and Now Back in Iraq

Sessions on Tuesday, May 5 & Thursday, May 7, 2015

Readings TBD

Final Papers Due before Tuesday, May 12, 2015 at 3 P.M.