International Security Affairs

Professor Robert Axelrod
Class: Fridays 2-4, 1220 Weill
Office hours: Tuesdays 2-4, 4116 Weill

This is a policy-oriented course on international security issues of the contemporary era. The course deals with fundamental problems of security, and the ways that these problems might manifest themselves in the future. Among the fundamental problems that will be considered are:

1. The major forces in the world today, including religion, nationalism, ethnicity, and energy dependence.

2. Selected global issues such as terrorism, changing relative powers of states, and proliferation.

3. Emerging regional issues and opportunities, especially in South Asia and East Asia.

4. Long run trends and opportunities in the world, such as the effects of the information revolution, changing roles of nation-sates, transnational movements, democratization and international organizations.

SPP 560 will be useful but is not a prerequisite.

Office hours are Tuesdays 2-4 at 4116 Weill. The phone number is 763-0099. I can also be reached on e-mail at axe@umich.edu.

Final grades will be calculated in the following way:

- Class participation: 25%
- Class presentation: 15%
- Draft First Policy Paper (due October 5): 15%
- Final First Policy Paper (due October 26): 15%
- Second Policy Paper (due December 7): 30%

If you do an optional First Draft of the Second Policy Paper, it will due November 16, and both the draft and the final versions will be worth 15% each.

The policy papers should be written in the form of a memo to a specific person such as a senior staff person at the UN, a member of U.S. Congress, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, or a counterpart in another country. The paper should state the
scope of the issue, and then advocate a policy. It should consider alternative policies and evaluate the full range of relevant considerations. The paper will be evaluated on the basis of the sophistication and completeness of the argument. A good idea is to imagine that the reader is well informed, but slightly skeptical about the position you are advocating. For three examples of student policy papers, see Weeks 6 and 12 below.


Huntington, Samuel, Clash of Civilizations (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), pp. 81-101


U.S. Department of State, Country Reports on Terrorism 2006, Read Chapter 1, the part of Chapter 2 dealing with Near East and North Africa, and Chapter 3 from the start through the report on Kazakhstan. http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2006/


5. **Southwest Asia and Proliferation. Oct 5.**


6. **East Asia. October 12.**


Landweber, Mike, “U. S. Military Involvement in the South China Sea,” Student Report, April 10, 1998. Used with permission

Hassig, Ralph and Oh, Kongdan, “The Twin Peaks of Pyongyang,” *Orbis*, vol. 50, issue1, Winter 2006, pp. 5-21


Note: President Bush said that the book that summarizes how he feels is Sharansky, Nathan, The Case for Democracy: The Power of Freedom to Overcome Tyranny & Terror (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).


McMaster, H., R. Review of Desch, Michael C. "Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam." ORBIS 42.n3 (Summer 1998): 473(8).

8. WMD, October 26.


Bracken, Paul, “The Structure of the Second Nuclear Age,” Orbis, vol. 47, no. 3, Summer 2003, pp. 399-413. (Review from week 5.)


9. Revolution in Military Affairs, November 2.


GlobalSecurity.Org, American K2 Airbase at Khanabad, Uzbekistan, near the Afghan border. Click on images to see the quality of the photos publicly available.


Barnett, Thomas Barnett, 20 minute briefing on reorganizing the Department of Defense and civilian agencies involved in international affairs. The briefing is intended to sell a simple (and not necessarily original) idea with a lot of showmanship. Note that the first page links to a biography of the speaker. http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/view/id/33


Further readings to be assigned.


