**International Security in a Changing World**

POLISCI 114S / INTLPOL 241S

Winter Quarter 2020-2021

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

*International Security in a Changing World* examines some of the most pressing international security problems facing the world today: nuclear crises, nuclear non-proliferation, terrorism, and climate change. Alternative perspectives – drawing on the disciplines of history, political science and science, technology and society studies - are used to analyze these problems. What is the international order and how did it come about? How have nuclear weapons influenced global politics? What new technologies pose dangers or promise benefits to international security? What do we know about violent non-state actors, such as terrorists and insurgents, and the threats that they pose? Will states be able to cooperate to address threats to global commons, such as to climate? The class includes an award-winning two-day international simulation, which this year will pit teams of students playing the role of national security leaders of two nuclear-armed states as part of an online experimental wargame.

The course has three main objectives:

* To teach students various social science theories and methodologies for understanding contemporary international security problems, in conjunction with in-depth analyses of the historical circumstances and contexts of various conflicts. Students will become familiar with the different methodologies and perspectives offered by political science, history, and science, technology and society studies, and they will learn to use them in examining security challenges;
* To explore and assess the policy options that are available to decision-makers in the United States and in other states; and
* To give students the intellectual tools and the desire to continue to study international security issues after the course concludes.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

**Block 1: Big Picture International Relations**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Topic** | **Monday Class** | **Wednesday Class** |
| **1** | What is security? | January 11 | January 13 |
| **2** | Origins of the state system and the international order | MLK Jr Day Holiday(make up January 22) | January 20 |

**Block 2: Challenges of Today**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **3** | Great power and other rivalries | January 25 | January 27 |
| **4** | States in Conflict | February 1 | February 3 |
| **5** | Deterrence and impact of Nuclear Revolution | February 8 | February 10 |
| **6** | Armed Non-State Actors in conflict | Presidents Day Holiday(make up Feb 19) | February 17 |

**Block 3: Challenges of Tomorrow**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **7** | New Security Challenges | February 22 | February 24 |
| **8** | Securing the global commons | March 1 | March 3 |
| **9** | Nuclear Crisis Stability Simulation | March 8 | March 10 |
| **10** | Conceptual and policy frameworks  | March 15 | March 17 |