

Charles University
Faculty of Social Sciences
PPE (Politics, Philosophy & Economics)



Introduction to Security Studies
Winter Semester 2023/24
6 ECTS

Lecturers

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Course description

Security Studies is an ever-growing field of research, covering various topics from the traditional ideals of war and armed conflict to the more nuanced and critical understanding of society's in(security). Therefore, topics will include the International Security System, Armed Conflicts, Hybrid Warfare, the Far-Right, and other aspects of the concept we are just beginning to consider. The different topics covered throughout the semester will give students a starting point for exploration into an important realm of research, offering an engaging overview of what is meant when we use the word **security**.

Aims of the course

The curriculum introduces students to the many layers we as scholars examine in security studies, providing an overview of both traditional and non-traditional approaches to the broadly-conceived concept. We will start by reviewing the concept of security itself and outlining the contrasts between **traditional and non-traditional ways of thinking**. We will then branch off into various subjects, split in three sections: (1) traditional lenses, (2) non-traditional or critical perspectives, and (3) future security threats. The conventional lens includes topics on the International Security System, **the traditions of war and war-time thinking, and the threat of hybrid warfare**. We will turn our attention to the non-traditional viewpoint, including topics like **Conflict, Political and Social imbalances**, and other **emerging critical security issues**. Finally, new and emerging threats – **Space, Technology, and Health** – have made the field its most dynamic and challenging since its inception. Thus, students will gain a broadly encompassing starting point for security studies research by the end of the course.

Teaching methods

The core of the course consists of lectures that guide the students through the basics of security studies, covering its different theoretical and practical bases while exploring the divergent perspectives in the field. In the mid-semester exam, students will be asked to recall information from the lectures, readings, and the in-class discussions while also being invited to think critically about the concept of security and provide their interpretations as to why certain elements matter. Additionally, at the beginning of the semester, students will be formed into working groups, which will collaborate to produce a final policy project by the end of the term. The group project will encourage teamwork and cooperative skills, creating an essential step-by-step piece of research that includes a draft and a final report. Each of these steps will encourage students to dive-deep into a topic of interest while providing a valuable opportunity to see how practitioners tackle and conceptualise security problems. Finally, seminars will provide an avenue for class discussion and participation. By the end, the student's final work will represent their deeper understanding of what is meant by "security," how one develops a policy report on the topic, and why their chosen topic matters within the field.

Learning outcomes

Upon completing the course, students will have a basic conceptualisation and understanding of the many facets of what constitutes security studies. This subject will enhance the students' knowledge and critical understanding of what is meant by "security" and allow them to explore different aspects of the field they find interesting. **The midterm exam will challenge the students' knowledge obtained from the lectures and required readings and inspire them to think critically**, with questions that are both conventional and nonconventional in academic studies. **The groupwork on the draft and final report will encourage and develop the students' collaborative skills and allow them to immerse themselves into a facet of security studies. Finally, the seminar sessions will inspire class discussion and debate on important topics.** Ultimately, the course will provide a taste of what security specialists study and why it is essential, inspiring students to continue their exploration of the field of security.

Grading scheme

General Grade	Grade Specification	Percentage
A - excellent	Excellent upper (1)	100 – 96
	Excellent lower (2)	95 - 91
B – very good	Very good upper (1)	90 - 86
	Very good lower (2)	85 – 81
C - good	Good upper (1)	80 – 76
	Good lower (2)	75 – 71

D - satisfactory	Satisfactory upper (1)	70 – 66
	Satisfactory lower (2)	65 – 61
E - sufficient	Sufficient upper (1)	60 - 56
	Sufficient lower (2)	55 - 51
F - fail		50 - 0

Course requirements

Midterm Exam (45 %)

The goal of the mid-term exam is to stimulate students to apply the knowledge they have learned from the lectures and required readings while also encouraging critical thinking on issues within the security studies field. The midterm will take place **during class time on Week 9**, where students will be offered the full hour and twenty minutes to complete the exam.

Seminar Presentation & Participation (30%)

Seminar sessions will be held every week – divided into two groups alternating between even/odd weeks – of the winter semester (**excluding week 1, 2, 9, & 10**). These sessions are designed for interactivity and discussion, where students will deliver a 10-minute presentation on a self-chosen topic:

Taking advantage of the international nature of the group, students will present on one of their home country's security concerns. These concerns can be from any discussion points throughout the class, or another issue not covered. Students are asked to briefly introduce the topic (using any appropriate visual aids) for 10 minutes and prepare for potential questions from the instructor and or peers.

Group Project (25 %)

In the second week of class, students will be divided into groups in which they will work together throughout the semester. Groups will be able to select their topic (or if necessary be given one by the lecturers) to explore more deeply one of the layers of security discussed within the class or beyond. *The students will be asked to outline, in policy report format, the chosen security issues of the topic, demonstrate the current challenges faced, and come up with possible recommendations to better the current system.*

Divided among a draft and final report, students will be given guidance on how to produce a meaningful and important piece of research.

Draft (5 %) – 750 Words +/- 10%

An important part of any writing process in academia is the draft. Thus, in **Week 6**, groups will be asked to submit an outline of their work which will include a brief introduction to the topic, its

importance to the field of security studies, the structure and or concepts of the work, and 10-20 scholarly articles and or policy papers that you aim to work with.

Final Report (20 %) – 2500 Words +/- 10%

Due on **January 15th, 2024**, groups are to submit their final reports on Moodle. The project should be roughly structured with the following general outline:

1. Introduction to the security issue
2. Why it matters to the security studies field & current challenges in tackling the problem
4. A set of recommendations on how practitioners and or academics are approaching the problem
5. Conclusion from all findings

Structure of the course

Lesson 1 – October 4 (No Seminar)

Introduction and organization of the course, syllabus, and assignments (Lecture)

Reading:

- *course syllabus*

Traditional Security Studies:

Lesson 2 – October 11 (No Seminar)

Defining & Approaching the concept of security & An intro to the traditional and non-traditional lenses of the field

Required Readings:

- Williams, P.D., & McDonald, M. (2018). *Security Studies: An Introduction* (3rd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315228358>

For those interested:

- Williams, P.D., & McDonald, M. (2018). *Security Studies: An Introduction* (3rd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315228358> (Chapters 1-4)

Lesson 3 – October 18 – First Seminar (Odd)

Theoretical Underpinnings of Security Studies (Realism, Liberalism and Social Constructivism)

Readings:

- Fukuyama, Francis. "The End of History?" *The National Interest*, no. 16 (1989): 3–18.
- Mearsheimer, John J. "The False Promise of International Institutions." *International Security* 19, no. 3 (1994): 5–49.
- Waltz, Kenneth N. "Structural Realism after the Cold War." *International Security* 25, no.1 (2000): 5–41

- Wendt, Alexander. "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics." *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 391–425.

For those interested:

- <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/theory-of-international-politics-part-1/id1497916380?i=1000464708954> (**Realism**)
- <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/theory-of-international-politics-part-2/id1497916380?i=1000465026357> (**Realism**)
- <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/wendts-article-world-part-1/id1497916380?i=1000471027925> (**Constructivism**) <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/theory-of-international-politics-part-1/id1497916380?i=1000464708954>
- <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/wendts-article-world-part-2/id1497916380?i=1000471348859> (**Constructivism**)

Lesson 4 – October 25 – First Seminar (Even)

History of War and Military Strategic Culture & A practical look at recent interstate and armed conflicts

Required Reading:

- Sheehan, M. (2013). The Evolution of Modern Warfare'. *Strategy in the Contemporary World*, 4, pp. 39-59.

Non-Traditional Security Studies:

Lesson 5 – November 1

Hybrid Warfare & Combining Traditional and Non-Traditional Views in Armed Conflicts

Required Readings:

- Biddle, S., & Friedman, J. A. (2008). *The 2006 Lebanon Campaign and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy*. US Army War College Press. pp. 9-29
- Galeotti, M. (2022). *The Weaponisation of Everything*. Yale University Press. pp. 7-21. <https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300265132>.

Lesson 6 – November 8

Conflict Studies

Required Readings:

- Conflict Analysis – Applied Knowledge Services (Report). pp. 1-31.

Report Draft Due – the day before class (Online submission)

Lesson 7 – November 15

Political & Social Security – told through the lens of the far-right

Required Reading:

- Rydgren, Jens, 'The Radical Right: An Introduction', The Oxford Handbook of the Radical Right, Oxford Handbooks (2018).

For those interested:

- <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/what-exactly-is-the-radical-right/id1530027387?i=1000491384376>

The Future of Security Studies

Lesson 8 – November 22

Climate, Demographics, and Health Security

Readings:

- Lee, R.J. (2021) Scarcity, abundance and migration: the future of environmental security. In Swain, A. et al. (Eds.) *Handbook of Security and the Environment*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, p. 14-24.
- Kugler, T. (2023) *Power to the Population: The Political Consequences and Causes of Demographic Changes*. Athens: University of Georgia Press. pp. 7-40

Lesson 9 – November 29 (No Seminar)

Midterm Exam

Lesson 10 – December 6 (No Seminar)

Emerging Technologies

Readings:

- Federspiel, F., Mitchell, R., Asokan, A., Umana, C., & McCoy, D. (2023). Threats by artificial intelligence to human health and human existence. *BMJ Global Health*, 8(5), e010435. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2022-010435>

For those interested:

- Paris, B., & Donovan, J. (2019). *DEEPFAKES AND CHEAP FAKES: THE MANIPULATION OF AUDIO AND VISUAL EVIDENCE*. <https://datasociety.net/library/deepfakes-and-cheap-fakes>

Lesson 11 – December 13 (Odd Seminar)

Space Security

Readings:

- Johnson-Freese, J. (2017). *Space warfare in the 21st century*. London & New York: Routledge. pp. 26-55.

Lesson 12 – December 20 (Even Seminar)

Final Discussions & Questions

January 16th, 2024

Final reports due from all groups, submitted to Moodle with only one submission needed per group.

Course rules

The *Code of Study and Examination of Charles University in Prague* provides the general framework of study rules at the university. According to art. 6, par. 17 of this Code, “a student may not take any examination in any subject entered in his study plan more than three times, i.e. he shall have the right to two resit dates; no extraordinary resit date shall be permitted. If a student fails to appear for an examination on the date for which he has enrolled without duly excusing himself, he shall not be marked; the provision of neither this nor of the first sentence shall constitute the right to arrange for a special examination date.”

Any written assignment composed by the student shall be an original piece. The practices of plagiarism, defined by the Dean’s Provision no. 18/2015, are seen as “a major violation of the rules of academic ethics” and “will be penalized in accordance with Disciplinary Regulations of the faculty.”