Paul Roe  
Department of International Relations  
‘Strategy, Security, and Contemporary Warfare’  
(Fall Semester, 2018-19)

In its more ‘traditional’ (often Realist/neo-Realist) form, Security Studies has been primarily concerned with the threats and uses of force in the international system; what is usually referred to as ‘Strategic Studies’. This course is focused mainly on Strategic Studies; on the discipline’s major assumptions about the military sector of international security, from both traditional and more non-traditional (‘Critical’) perspectives. In doing so, the course will engage both IR (war as a generic phenomenon) and Foreign Policy (war as a policy-specific outcome) perspectives in analyzing the nature of contemporary warfare.

Set against the so-called 'Revolution in Military Affairs' (RMA); in particular, against the 'Contemporary RMA', changes in warfare, be they technological, organisational, or political, have raised fundamental questions about the strategy and ethics of the use of force in world politics, as well as challenge some of the core assumptions of the Security Studies discipline. In this course, the aim is to explore both the form of the Contemporary RMA as well as the attempts of Security Studies scholars to justify the continuing relevance of existing conceptual approaches. It does so by focusing on a number of prominent shifts: the first, in the increased technologicalisation of organized militaries; the second, in the appearance of new modes of warfare (cyber- and non-linear, to name but a few); and the third in the increasing plurality of actors (from organized non-state through to terrorism and other forms of political violence.

Teaching Method

For this course, there are no lectures. Instead, students will participate in seminars where they are expected to form their own opinions through ‘critical’ evaluation of the readings. For each seminar, there will be one or two key texts (which are in the course reader). Seminar discussion will be structured around a short presentation of the text(s), in which students will summarise and critically evaluate the readings. Seminar discussion therefore depends on serious preparation: it is crucial that students do all of the reading required and come into the seminar fully prepared to actively
take part in the discussion. For the topics discussed, there is not necessarily a right answer. What is important is to focus on the way that people think.

**Method of Assessment**

Each student will be assessed through a combination of seminar contribution, oral presentation, and written work. There will be one oral presentation for each student, and which concentrates mostly on the assigned ‘key text’. In terms of written work, two literature reviews and one research paper is required. The literature review is 1,500 words long (plus/minus 10%), and should be written on topics different to the student’s oral presentation. (See guideline below). The research paper is 4,000 words long (again, plus/minus 10%), and can be an extension to one of the prior literature reviews.

For the final grade: 15% is given to the oral presentation; 20% to each critique (40%); 35% to the research paper; with the remaining 10% being allotted to seminar attendance and contribution. Deadlines for all assessed work will be established in the first, introductory seminar.

**Guidelines for the Literature Review**

The purpose of the literature review is essentially two-fold: one, to situate the chosen key text within the wider debate(s); and two, to make a critique of the key text informed by the existing literature.

Any text can be situated in a wider debate: its theoretical/conceptual standpoint and the more specific arguments that derive from that standpoint can only be properly understood when set against other works. Together, these texts collectively constitute a written conversation. Some texts may exemplify a particular debate; others might be read as belonging to several, overlapping written conversations. The literature review thus demands that students not only identify the general context within which the key text can be situated, but are also explicit as to the specific nature of the debate according to which they will structure their critique.

In terms of structure, one or two introductory paragraphs should be devoted to the above task (context and debate). Following on from this, the main body should then put in place a coherent and sustained, critical evaluation of the key text. Some concluding paragraph is also warranted, although the exact content of that paragraph is dependent on the purpose of the critique. The main points of the critical evaluation should derive explicitly from the wider literature. Given the length
of the literature review; just 1,500 words, it is reasonable to expect that no more than 4-5 other works are utilized, likewise informing no more than just a couple of critical points.

Please keep in mind that one of the key text remains the focus of the literature review, and will thus serve to structure both the general nature of the debate and the specifics of the critical evaluation.

Students should choose key texts from two of the following six subject areas: one, Security Dilemma (and Ethnic Conflict)/Offence-Defence Theory (gendering of); two, Deterrence (of terrorism)/Arms Control and Disarmament; three, Strategy and Morality; four, The Contemporary RMA/Cybersecurity; five, Strategic Culture; and six, Security Communities. The first Literature Review is due at the end of the working day, Thursday of week 5; the second at the end of the working day, Thursday of week 9. The due date of the Research Paper is to be established.

**Week 1/Seminar 1. Introduction**

In this introductory class, discussion will centre on the nature of the course itself; what is expected from the students in terms of seminar contribution, the oral presentation, and written work. (Here, initial oral presentations will be assigned.)

**Week 1/Seminar 2. No Class**

**Week 2/Seminar 3. Theorising the Security Dilemma: Classical (?) Realism**

**Key Text:**

**Week 2/Seminar 4. Theorising the Security Dilemma: Neo-Realism**

**Key Text:**

**Further Reading for 2/3 & 2/4:**


**Week 3/Seminar 5. Offence-Defence Theory (ODT)**

Key Text:


**Week 3/Seminar 6. Gendering ODT**

Key Text:


Further Reading for 3/5 & 3/6:


**Week 4/Seminar 7. The Security Dilemma in Practice**


**Further Reading:**

**Week 4/Seminar 8. Deterrence Theory**

**Key Text:**

**Further Reading:**

Week 5/Seminar 9. Arms Control & Disarmament (and NOD)

Key Text:

Further Reading:
**Week 5/Seminar 10. Gendering Strategic Discourse**

**Key Text:**

**Further Reading (& also for 3/6):**
Rebecca Grant & Kathleen Newland (eds.), *Gender and International Relations* (Milton Keynes: OUP, 1991), Chapter 2: Grant, ‘The Sources of Gender Bias in IR Theory’.

**Week 6/Seminar 11. No Class (National Holiday)**

**Week 6/Seminar 12. Strategy and Morality: Realism and ‘Military Necessity’**

**Key Text:**
Week 7/Seminar 13. Strategy and Morality: Dresden, Hiroshima, and ‘Supreme Emergency’

Key Texts:

Further Reading for 6/12 & 7/13:
Anne Schwenkenbechen, ‘Collateral Damage and the Principle of Due Care’, *Journal of Military Ethics*, vol.13, no.1, 2014.

Week 7/Seminar 14. No Class (National Holiday)

Week 8/Seminar 15. The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict

Key Text:

Further Reading:

**Week 8/Seminar 16. Deterring Terrorism**

**Key Text:**

**Further Reading:**

**Week 9/Seminar 17. The Contemporary Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA)**

**Key Text:**

**Week 9/Seminar 18. Gendering the ‘Contemporary’ RMA**

**Key Text:**

**Further Reading for 9/17 & 9/18:**


**Week 10/Seminar 19. Cybersecurity**

**Key Text:**


**Further Reading:**


**Week 10/Seminar 20. Strategic Culture**

**Key Text:**


**Further Reading:**


**Week 11/Seminar 21. Private Military Companies (PMCs)**

**Key Text:**

**Further Reading:**

**Week 11/Seminar 22. Security Communities**

**Key Text:**

**Further Reading:**


**Week 12/Seminar 23. Conclusions**

**Week 12/Seminar 24. No Class**