UCSD Political Science 142I: US National and International Security (Spring Quarter 2011)

Dr. Randy Willoughby (rwilloug@sandiego.edu)

Office Hours: Mondays 845 to 1000 pm Round Table

TAs: Francisco Cantu (fcantu@sandiego.edu) and Jeff Kaplow (jkaplow@ucsd.edu): Hours TBA

Course Description: This course explores a broad spectrum of security challenges with an emphasis on the US predicament and perspective. (It complements another course on comparative security—142M.) We will spend about half the quarter discussing nuclear dynamics, including missile defense, strategy, arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation, and the about half of the course examining conventional military forces, defense political economy, the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, energy security, and terrorism.

Readings: One book should be purchased for this course: Powaski’s Return to Armageddon. Most of the rest of the required readings are on UCSD electronic reserve, with a residual few available on line. The recommended readings from journals can be found by way of UCSD full text data bases and the ones from books should be available on over the counter reserve. Students read three journal articles and/or book chapters per week, except for the week selected for a literature review, in which case they read all four readings. Doing the reading and doing most of it on schedule is essential to succeeding in the course.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend class and are responsible for any updates and modifications announced in class; students should not expect to get these updates by email, but should instead consult their colleagues or the instructor and teaching assistants during their office hours.

Exams and Quizzes: Quizzes will be offered throughout the quarter and will represent around 25 per cent of the course grade. Normally, but not always, guidance will be provided regarding the material relevant for the upcoming quiz. The final exam will count 50 per cent of the course grade. Quizzes and exams both are organized around questions requiring short essay responses—typically around 10 to 15 minutes long—which test student command of readings, lectures, and guest lectures. Students who miss or are unsatisfied with a quiz may substitute a summary of the recommended reading for that week, but they may only do so once over the course of the quarter.

Papers: Students will write a literature review on one of the weekly topics using the four articles (the three required and the one recommended) on the syllabus. No outside research is needed or wanted for the essay, which should be organized around three themes with corresponding subheadings, which should compare at least two authors in each theme, and
which should run six pages, including an introduction and conclusion and excluding a cover page. Guidelines will be provided. Papers will represent 25 per cent of the course grade and will be due Monday May 16 at the start of class—hard copy. Papers submitted on May 23 will be accepted but will be given a full grade penalty (A becomes a B.) Papers will not be accepted electronically or outside of class sessions on May 16 and 23.

Readings and Schedule (both subject to adjustment)

Readings with # are on UCSD Central Library electronic reserve.

Recommended Readings are relevant for those who want to read more on the subject, for those who miss a quiz or do poorly on a quiz (a one time opportunity), and for the literature review papers.

Session One (March 28): Introduction (including Shahar Azani, former Israeli diplomat, speaking on Israel and the Middle East)

#Miller, et al, Chapter 2, Germs.

#Pape, The True Worth of Airpower, Foreign Affairs (March April 2004.)

#Bunn and Wier, "The Seven Myths of Nuclear Terrorism," in Howard and Forrest, Weapons of Mass Destruction and Terrorism.

(Recommended) Keegan, Chapter 8, "Human Intelligence and Secret Weapons," Intelligence in War.

Session Two (April 4): Energy Security

#Froggatt and Levi, "Climate and Energy," International Affairs (November 2009.)

#Joskow and Parsons, "The Economic Future of Nuclear Power," Daedalus (Fall 2009.)


(Recommended) Union of Concerned Scientists, Chapters 4 and 6, Nuclear Power in a Warming World.
Session Three (April 11): Conventional Forces (including Mike Dobbs, formerly US Navy Submarine Commanding Officer, speaking on Military Robotics)

#Boot, Chapter 12, War Made New.


(Recommended) Johnson, Chapter 4, "US Military Bases," Nemesis.

Session Four (April 18): Conventional Forces (continued)

#Pelton, Chapter 4, "Confirmed Kills," Licensed to Kill.

#Jane Mayer, "The Predator War," New Yorker (October 26, 2009.)

#Rashid, Descent into Chaos, Chapter 17, "The Taliban Offensive."

(Recommended) Howell and Pevehouse, "When Congress Stops Wars," Foreign Affairs (Sept/Oct 2007.)

Session Five (April 25): Nuclear Nonproliferation

Powaski, Nuclear Proliferation Pages.

#Steve Cohen, Chapter 6, "India as a Nuclear Power," India: Emerging Power.


(Recommended) Hersh, "Defending the Arsenal," New Yorker (November 16, 2009.)

Session Six (May 2): Ballistic Missile Defense


(Recommended) Brodie, Chapter 6, "Is There a Defense," Strategy in the Missile Age.
Session Seven (May 9) Wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya (including Jim Coyle, former US Department of State Foreign Service Officer, speaking on ongoing Middle East developments)

#Boot, Chapter 11, War Made New.

#Steve Simon, "The Price of the Surge," Foreign Affairs (May/June 2008.)

#Simon and Stevenson, "How Much is Enough," Survival (October November 2009.)

(Recommended) Kaplan, "CENTCOM,"Imperial Grunts.

Session Eight (May 16): Nuclear Strategy and History (Papers Due 530 pm in class)


#Lieber and Press, "The Nukes We Need," Foreign Affairs (Nov Dec 2009.)


(Recommended) Sokolsky, "Demystifying the US Nuclear Posture Review," Survival (Autumn 2002.)

Session Nine (May 23): Disarmament and Arms Control


Powaski, Arms Control Pages.

#Fetter and Oelrich, "Verifying a Prohibition on Nuclear Weapons," in Blechman and Bollfrass, eds., Elements of a Nuclear Disarmament Treaty.


Session Ten (May 30 No Class, Memorial Day Holiday): Terrorism: AQ

#Anonymous, Chapter, "Not Down, Not Out," Imperial Hubris.

Farrall, How Al Qaeda Works (Foreign Affairs) March April 2011.

#Cronin, "How Al Qaeda Ends," International Security ().

(Recommended) Mendelsohn, "Al Qaeda's Palestinian Problem, Survival (Aug Sep 2009.)

Concluding Sessions (Sunday, June 5 and Friday, June 10): Review Session will be offered Sunday, June 5, 700 to 900 pm. Final Exam will be offered Friday, June 10, 700 to 900 pm.