WAR, TECHNOLOGY AND STRATEGY GRADUATE SEMINAR FALL 2012 (38973)

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DESCRIPTION

The 20th century was tainted by two world wars and many other conflicts which varied by their degree of intensity. That century also witnessed the rapid evolution of military technologies, the exponential growth of armed forces worldwide and the development of new doctrines and strategies.

In this seminar we will follow the links between technology, strategies and conflict by zooming in on one main unit of analysis – special operations forces starting in the late 19th century.

While the seminar will follow a chronological trajectory we will emphasize the need for conceptual and theoretical frameworks and approach the various questions from analytical and critical perspectives.

GOALS

The goal of the seminar is to assess the current state of the research in the field and push it forward. Students will be encouraged to conduct independent or collaborative research in accordance with their academic needs.

PhD students who write dissertations in the field will be expected to complete a proposal or a chapter of their dissertation.

MA students will submit 50% of their thesis by the end of the semester.

I will invite students who write their dissertations and theses on other topics to join me and engage in collaborative research efforts. By the end of the semester we will have a draft of a paper. Grades will be based on the respective contribution of each student to the joint effort.

EVALUATION

The final grade will be based on:

1) Attendance and active participations in class discussions (20%). Receiving full grade for active participation requires work. I exercise discretion when assigning grades for active participation. I usually consider the following elements: class attendance, active participation in discussions and the display of extra interest in the course.
2) Presenting your research in class (30%)

3) Dissertation and theses chapters, or an article manuscript (50%)

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with the UT Austin policy and equal access laws, the TA is available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities. Students who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (voice: 471-6259 or TTY: 471-4641).

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE

Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances.

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
TOPICS AND READINGS

Please make sure to read the materials which are attached to each topic in advance.

MEETING 1 – INTRODUCTION: CONTEXTUALIZING THE SEMINAR

No readings

MEETING 2 – THE FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH IN SECURITY STUDIES

No readings

MEETING 3 – CONCEPTUALIZING SOFS: ACADEMIC AND POLICY PREDICAMENTS


MEETING 4 – MILITARY INNOVATIONS, POWER AND THE EVOLUTION OF SOFS


MEETING 5 – BANDITS, GUERRILLAS AND COMMANDOS: FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO WWI


MEETING 6 – PARATROOPERS, RECONNAISSANCE UNITS AND COMMANDOS IN WWII


MEETING 7 – OFFICERS OR POLITICIANS? THE EVOLUTION OF SOFS DURING THE COLD WAR


MEETING 8 – SOFS AND THE REVOLUTION IN MILITARY AFFAIRS


**MEETING 9 – THE WAR ON TERROR**


**MEETING 10 PRESENTATIONS IN CLASS TOPICS, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND CONCEPTS**

Individual reading list (TBD)

**MEETING 11 – CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN SECURITY STUDIES**

No readings

**MEETING 12 – PRESENTATIONS IN CLASS CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE, ARGUMENTS**

Individual reading list (TBD)

**MEETING 13 – CONCLUDING SESSION**