Small States and International Security

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International Program Geneva
Boston University

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1. Course Overview

“At the beginning of the 21st century, we face a world of extraordinary challenges—and of extraordinary interconnectedness. We are all vulnerable to new security threats, and to old threats that are evolving in complex and unpredictable ways. Either we allow this array of threats, and our responses to them, to divide us, or we come together to take effective action to meet all of them on the basis of a shared commitment to collective security.”

(Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General, 1997-2007)

This course will describe the value of small states in the international system, emphasising predominantly Switzerland’s contributing role to global peace and security. The course will then widen its scope to describe the major international security issues which define the post Cold War world. Lectures will focus primarily on contemporary global security and the broadening security environment describing the main actors (states and institutions) and their multilateral and unilateral approaches to security. The course will then focus on the increasing importance of new security issues that defy individual government control, climate change, pandemics, migration, and terrorism which have called for new approaches to international security. States can no longer solve these issues on their own, they must collaborate multilaterally and with the aid of intergovernmental agencies -- both International Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations to develop new forms of global governance. Simultaneously, theorists and policymakers have acknowledged that the very concept of security has changed. The traditional approach of security which referred to traditional military threats to the security of states and their national boundaries have been eclipsed by new more complex security threats. In the 1980s, Barry Buzan introduced a more broadened definition of security to include five dimensions: military, political, economic, environmental and societal security.

The terrorist attacks in the US on 9/11 which were closely followed by military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq have recently triggered a new debate about the sources of security and the different policy responses to them. National and ‘homeland security’ have once again emerged as predominant security issues. Especially transnational issues such as terrorism, organised crime, small arms and nuclear proliferation have become predominant security issues.
The World Watch Institute has highlighted this broadening of security in its annual State of the World Report:

- The meaning of security has changed radically since 1989. It is no longer confined to state or national security and the preservation of national integrity;
- The sources of insecurity are no longer restricted to threats to national borders and do not stem primarily from military sources;
- Peace is more than the absence of war or hostilities, just as security is more than the guarantee of national security interests and territorial integrity. The primary agents of security are human beings, alongside states;
- No single country can achieve its security or safeguard against threats in isolation, because the world is more interconnected than ever before. Cooperative responses to peace and security are increasingly essential and unavoidable;
- Conflict and insecurity often have regional dynamics and contexts. Each region has a different context and set of factors determining its security. Nevertheless, beyond regional analysis and cooperation, there is also a need for international and global cooperation.

This course will explore these issues through a series of readings, and discussions that begin with the traditional concepts and practices of security and end with the broadening definition of security.

2. Incoming Competency of the Student Expected by Instructor:
The course is aimed at undergraduates in their third or fourth year, with an interest in history, politics, international relations and security issues. There are no prerequisites but background reading is required.

3. Course objectives:
   (a) to provide an assessment of the new security challenges in the post Cold War world;
   (b) to understand how governments and international organizations meet these security challenges;
   (c) to understand the most appropriate responses in dealing with our current security challenges;
   (d) to determine how global risks will affect peace and security in the future.

3. Terms and conditions

Class participation: since this course is taught by seminar, it is expected that each student does the reading and comes to class prepared to discuss the readings. Attendance at every session is compulsory unless an acceptable excuse is provided (e.g. written medical certificate).

Term paper: every student will also write a term paper. The paper should be approximately 7 pages, no longer than 4'000 words (double-spaced), plus bibliography.

Term paper presentation: each student will present their term paper conclusions.

Final test: the final essay test will assess the knowledge gained throughout the course.
4. Course requirements

The course will be evaluated as follows:
Class Participation (10%)
Class IO or NGO Presentation (10%)
Term Paper (25%)
Term Paper presentation (15%)
Final test (40%)

5. Plagiarism

All students are responsible for having read the Boston University statement on plagiarism, which is available in the Academic Conduct Code. Students are advised that the penalty against students on a Boston University program for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be “expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the dean.”

Moreover, students are invited to consult the Nuts and Bolts of College Writing website http://nutsandbolts.washcoll.edu/ in order to learn how to write down their ideas and also to avoid accidental plagiarism.

Week 2. September 5th, 17:30-20:00

**Introduction.** The aim of this introductory session is to introduce students to the concept of security and provide an overview of the different perspectives, concepts, institutions and challenges that are part of security studies. This session will also provide students with an overview of the course and its requirements.

[http://www.newsweek.com/2008/05/03/the-rise-of-the-rest.print.html](http://www.newsweek.com/2008/05/03/the-rise-of-the-rest.print.html)  
[http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2008/05/03/the-rise-of-the-rest.print.html](http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2008/05/03/the-rise-of-the-rest.print.html)

Slaughter, Anne-Marie Slaughter, “Problems will be Global and Solutions will be too: A More Multilateral World is Just Beginning”, Foreign Policy, Sept/Oct. 2011.  
[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/08/15/problems_will_be_global_and_solutions_will_be_too](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/08/15/problems_will_be_global_and_solutions_will_be_too)

Seo, John, “Everything will be too big to fail”, Foreign Policy, Sept/Oct. 2011.  

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/08/15/problems_will_be_global_and_solutions_will_be_too

**Week 2. September 6th, 9:00-11:00**

**Introduction to Switzerland.** This session will introduce Switzerland exploring its geography, customs, and culture. This session will also describe in detail the Swiss political system, political instruments, political customs and military. It will introduce some of major foreign policy challenges of small states by focusing specifically on Switzerland’s foreign policy issues: outlining and describing some of Switzerland’s greatest security threats and challenges.

**Require Reading:**


Möckli, Daniel, Swiss Neutrality: Rhetoric and Relevance, CSS Report, September 2007  

The 2010 Annual Report on Switzerland’s International Cooperation Distributed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)  

**Suggested Readings and Links:**


Websites also provide overview:  
http://www.ch.ch  
http://www.admin.ch

**Select International Organization/Non-governmental Organization for class presentation**
Week 2: September 8th  17:30-20:00

Small States and International Security
This session will introduce the concept of small states in world politics and international relations theory while exploring the all-important question of power and the various dimensions of diplomacy.

Required Readings


Week 3: September 12th, 17:30-20:00

Swiss Peoples Party. This session will describe its meteoric rise and its effect on other populist parties in Europe. This session will also explore the rise of the radical right in Europe describing their ideology as well as their foreign and security policy goals.


Suggested Readings:

Schori Liang, Christina, Europe for the Europeans, the Foreign and Security Policy of the Populist Radical Right, Chapter 1, Routledge, 2007.

Week 3: September 13th, 9:00-11:00

The changing face of security and conflict. This session will describe human security. This session will outline our new global security threats including climate change, pandemics, migration and terrorism and will define the instruments and institutions needed to improve global governance and some of the instruments created to protect against human security violations.

Required Readings


Suggested Readings:


Suggested Reading:
Week 3: September 15th, 17:30-20:00

**International Organizations and NGOs:** This session will describe the importance of International Organisations and NGO’s in improving global security. The important work of some of the major international organisations in Geneva will be described.

**Required Readings**


[http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+Role+of+Geneva+in+the+Years+to+Come.-a074583384](http://www.thefreelibrary.com/The+Role+of+Geneva+in+the+Years+to+Come.-a074583384)


UN Millennium Development Goals  

Week 3: September 16th, 14:00-17:00

**Presentations of International Organisations and NGOs in Geneva**

Week 4: September 19th, 17:30-20:00

**Presentations of International Organisations and NGOs in Geneva**
Week 4: September 21st, 9:00-11:00

**Politics of International Migration** This session will describe the politics of international migration. We will have a guest speaker for this session.

Required Reading:


“Fields of Tears. They came to America illegally, for the best of reasons” The Economist, December 18th, 2010, United States, pp. 87-89. [http://www.economist.com/node/17722932](http://www.economist.com/node/17722932)

Week 5: September 26th, 17:30-20:00

**Global Dynamics:** This session will continue to describe the rise of the BRICS. This session will focus on meteoric rise of Brazil, Russia, India and China.

**Required Readings:**


http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/13104_85_1clark.pdf

**Week 5: September 27th, 17:30-20:00**

**Tackling terrorism.** This session will describe the globalisation of terrorism emphasising the problems that governments face in preventing transnational and decentralized terrorist networks which are becoming increasingly difficult to eradicate. The session will also focus on the growing nexus of terrorism and organised crime.

**Required Readings:**


Stohl, Michael, 'Old myths, new fantasies and the enduring realities of terrorism', *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 2008, 1: 1, 5 — 16  
http://pdfserve.informaworld.com/246998_791258012.pdf


**Suggested Readings:**


Week 5: September 29th, 17:30-20:00

**Tackling Organized Crime.** This session will describe the globalisation of crime, emphasising the problems that governments face in preventing transnational and decentralized criminal networks which are becoming increasingly difficult to eradicate. This session will focus specifically on organized crime and human trafficking.

**Required Readings:**


Schori Liang, Christina, Shadow Networks: The Growing Nexus of Terrorism and Organised Crime, GCSP Policy Paper, September, 2011 (available online as of September 2011)

**Suggested Readings:**


Links

http://www.apcss.org/core/Library/Bibliography/trans.htm

**Week 5: September 30th, 14:00-16:30**

Presentations by students of their core paper findings.

**Week 6: October 5th, 9:00-11:00**

**Looking Back to the Future.** This lecture will not be covered in the exam.

**Core Papers Due at 9:00 sent electronically to the drop box and in hard copy**

**Week 6: October 6th, 10:00-12:30.**

**Final Exam**

**Supplemental Readings:**


