

International Security

Last Updated: Mon, 01/05/2026

Course prefix: INTA

Course number: 6103

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):

26511

Instructor First Name: Robert

Instructor Last Name: Hines

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

This graduate-level course (for MA and PhD students) surveys prominent scholarship on the theory and practice of international security. Although this course covers several topics central to the study of international security, it is by no means exhaustive. Thus, graduate students preparing for comprehensive exams are encouraged to read more widely, including recommended readings in this syllabus and other syllabi on security studies. Some of the topics that will be covered in this course include debates about the security studies field, deterrence, coercion, bargaining, audience costs, war termination, causes of war, leaders, psychology, status, reputation, emotions, memory, power transitions, grand strategy, alliances, offense-defense balance, military doctrine, strategic culture, nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction, civil war, terrorism, humanitarian intervention, and emerging technologies. This course will draw on a combination of classical works in the field of security studies as well as more contemporary policy-focused works. Throughout the course, students will ask what security means, what constitutes threats, how the nature of conflict has changed (or not) in world politics today. Students will develop a foundation of knowledge about important debates in the field of international security and draw upon concepts from the course to understand contemporary events in international security. In addition to the content on international security, students will also develop their policy writing, research, and analysis skills. Due to time constraints, the course cannot cover every topic in international security, and it will only provide cursory overviews of some topics that are regularly offered and covered much more thoroughly in other INTA courses (i.e., terrorism, WMDs, nuclear weapons). Students are strongly encouraged to take courses offered by other INTA faculty for a deeper study of these topics. Similarly, while these course draws upon concepts from international relations theory, it does not duplicate material covered in INTA 6102, International Relations Theory.

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of this course:

- Students will be able to apply research skills to address problems in the field of international affairs.
- Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of principal contemporary global challenges in the field of international security
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the influences that drive security policy formulation and execution.

Required course materials:

Most readings for this course are available online through the Georgia Tech Library or are open access. I have uploaded any readings that are not available through the library or online to Canvas.

Grading policy:

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%

D 60-69%

F 0-59%

Attendance policy:

Your success in this course depends on careful preparation for and active engagement in seminar discussions. You are expected to read and study all assigned materials, come to class prepared to contribute to the seminar, and engage in thoughtful and critical discussions with your classmates and instructor. Attendance is mandatory and a prerequisite for participation. Moreover, it is important to emphasize that good participation is measured not by the quantity of times you speak, but by the quality of your contribution, with your comments demonstrating not only comprehension of the course materials but also critical thinking skills.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.