This course explores the concept of grand strategy in International Relations and U.S. foreign policy. The main purpose is to analyze the ways in which nations formulate, implement and assess strategic options to advance their perceived interests in the international arena. How do states allocate their resources to achieve their goals? Special attention is placed on the study of political, military, economic, and diplomatic resources in the context of American foreign policy. The course has three components. The first addresses the main theoretical approaches to grand strategy in International Relations literature. The second traces the historical development of U.S. grand strategy. The third evaluates the policy relevance of grand strategy options available to the U.S. today. Some of the questions that will guide our discussions are: what is grand strategy and what is it for? What are the sources of grand strategy and how are grand strategies formulated? What are the main tools to implement a grand strategy? How and when did the U.S. develop its first grand strategy? Should the U.S. engage in an active internationalist strategy or retreat from its international commitments?

INSTRUCTOR
Dr. Sergio Imparato
sergioimparato@fas.harvard.edu
Office hours: after class and by appointment in CGIS Café

COURSE WEBSITE
https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/63678

GRADE DISTRIBUTION
30% - Attendance and participation
20% - Four class presentations
20% - Two short response papers (3-4 pages each)
30% - Final Research Paper (12-15 pages)
Attendance and Participation (30% of the course grade)
The seminar relies on active and informed participation in class. Students are expected to complete the assigned weekly readings before class and to be prepared to discuss them. Participation is measured by the quantity and quality of class engagement.

Four class presentations (20% of the course grade)
Students will give 15/20 minutes oral presentations of a reading of their choice. The presentations should address four main questions:
1. What is the research question and why did the author choose that question?
2. What is the problem the author tried to address?
3. What is the main argument?
4. What evidence, and what sources did the author use to support the argument?

Two short response papers (20% of the course grade)
Students will submit short response papers addressing a topic of their choice from the assigned readings. The response papers will take the form of mini-essays offering a counterargument to the position established by another author.

Final research paper (30% of the course grade)
The final research paper is the course capstone project. Students must discuss potential research questions with the instructor and obtain permission on a final paper topic no later than the seventh week of class. More details on how to write the final research paper will be provided in class and the course website.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

February 16 at 10 PM – First response paper due
March 22 at 10 PM – Second response paper due
May 5 at 10 PM – Final Research paper due

COURSE MATERIALS

The following books are on reserve at Lamont Library:
2. Jeffrey Legro, Rethinking the World (Cornell University Press, 2005)

All the other course readings will be available on the course website.
COLLABORATION POLICY

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics and to share sources. You may find it useful to discuss your chosen topic with your peers or course instructional staff (TF/TAs, course assistants, faculty), particularly if you are working on the same topic as a classmate. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing and that it reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you received any help with your writing (feedback on drafts etc from peers or course instructional staff), you must also acknowledge this assistance.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1
January 28

Introduction: What is grand strategy? What is it for?


Week 2
February 4

Theories of Grand Strategy I


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<th>Week 3</th>
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<td><strong>February 11</strong></td>
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<td>Theories of Grand Strategy II</td>
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<th>Week 4</th>
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<td><strong>February 18</strong></td>
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<td>Elements of grand strategy formulation</td>
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<th>Week 5</th>
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<td><strong>February 25</strong></td>
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<td>Tools of grand strategy implementation</td>
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**Week 6**  
**March 3**

The origins of the U.S. strategy debates

1. Hamilton, Alexander. Federalist no. 24


4. John Quincy Adam’s speech: “Warning against the search for ‘monsters to destroy’” (1821).


**Week 7**  
**March 10**

No readings.

Guest speaker:  
Kathleen Sheehan,  
Research Librarian

**Spring break**  
**No class**  
**on March 17**
Week 8  
March 24

Grand strategies and the rise of the U.S. as a great power

3. Theodore Roosevelt’s State of the Union Address, 1904, ‘Roosevelt corollary’.

Week 9  
March 31

The grand strategy doctrine(s) of the Cold War


Week 10  
April 7

Grand strategies in the context of unipolarity


**Week 11**

**April 14**

Deep vs. selective engagement strategies


**Week 12**

**April 21**

Retrenchment and the profitability of Grand Strategies


Week 13

April 28

No readings.

Class presentations