

**War Studies Advanced Program, Winter 2016**  
**U.S. CIVIL MILITARY RELATIONS IN THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**  
**Instructors: Fred Kagan, Kim Kagan, Gen. John Allen (Ret.), LTG. Jim Dubik (Ret.)**  
**Washington, D.C.**

This course will introduce you to the theory and practice of civil-military relations in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It will examine the civic, ethical, and evolving legal basis of civilian control over the military; the relationship between commanders and presidents; the relationship between Congress, presidents, and commanders; and the impact of these systemic factors on military success.

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**Saturday, January 2, 2016, 9:00 am to 6:00 PM**

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***Morning: Origins and Dimensions of the American Civil-Military Relationship, Part I***

Reading:

- Constitution.
- Title X and Title 50.
  - *Title 10 U.S. Code Assignments:*
  - Sections 113,114, 118. 123a, 123b, 131, 151-155, 161-165, 167, 311-312, 331-334, all of Chapter 18, 948b
  - *Read also Title 50 U.S. Code Assignments:*
  - Sections 3002 and 3043 (This is from the National Security Act of 1947 giving the intent of Congress)
- Matthew Moten, *Presidents and Their Generals: An American History of Command in War* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 2014), pages 1-9. (Introduction)
- Andrew J. Polsky, *Elusive Victories: The American Presidency at War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) pages 3-81. (Introduction and Chapter 1)
- Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 1957), pages 1-3 and 80-97. (Introduction and Chapter 4)
- Russel F. Weigley, "The American Civil-Military Cultural Gap: a Historical Perspective, Colonial Times to the Present," in Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn, editors, *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2001), pages 215-246.

Discussion Questions:

1. Who is responsible for what according to Constitutional and legal grounds?
2. What are the central points of contention in American civil-military relations?
3. Can these points of contention be readily resolved? What are each author's perspectives? Upon what issues do they agree?
4. Upon which do they disagree, and why?

## ***Afternoon: Origins and Dimensions of the American Civil-Military Relationship, Part II***

### Reading:

- Dale R. Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency: Civil-Military Relations from FDR to George W. Bush* (Lawrence, Kansas: the Univeristy Press of Kansas, 2005), pages 1-22.
- Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command* (Chapters 6 and 7)
- Peter Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003) pages 1-95. (Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2)
- Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn, "The Gap and What It Means for American National Security," in *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security*, pages 459-473.
- Richard Betts, "Are Civil-Military Relations Still a Problem?" in Suzanne C. Nielsen and Don M. Snider, editors, *American Civil-Military Relations: The Soldier and the State in a new Era* (Baltimore, Maryland: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), pages 11-41.
- Christopher P. Gibson, "Enhancing National Security and Civilian Control of the Military," in *American Civil- Military Relations*, pages 239-263.

### Discussion Questions:

1. What is the best framework within which to understand civil-military relations?
2. What is the purpose of asking how the military should relate to civilian authority?
3. To what extent is the friction between civil and military leaders a matter of personality, experience, institutional background, or structure? (Before you simply say, "some combination of all of the above, be prepared to identify the friction that emanates from each of these elements.)
4. How do you compare and contrast Cohen's and Feaver's approaches?
5. How does each differ from Huntington's objective control model?
6. How do you assess the strengths and weaknesses of Cohen's, Feaver's, and Gibson's approaches?
7. What are the purposes of the civil-military relationship?

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**Sunday, January 3, 2016, 9:00 am to 6:00 PM**

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### ***Case I: World War II***

### Reading:

- Matthew Moten, *Presidents and Their Generals*, pages 186-224 (Chapter 8)
- Dale Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency*, pages 23-51 (Chapter 2)
- Anderew J. Polsky, *Elusive Victories*, pages 133-200 (Chapter 3)
- Mark A. Stoler, *George C. Marshall: Soldier-Statesman of the American Century* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1989), pages ix-x and 68-130 (Preface and Chapters 5-7)
- David Kaiser, *No End Save Victory: How FDR Led the Nation into War* (New York: Basic Books, 2014) pages 1-56 and 97-204. (Introduction, Chapters 1, 3-5)

Discussion Questions:

1. Does American success in World War II demonstrate that civil-military relations during that conflict were good?
2. How would you characterize the World War II civil-military relationship between the president and his senior military subordinates?
3. What are the relationship's personal dimensions and what are its organizational dimensions? In what ways are the two related?
4. How did the alliance aspect of World War II impact the personal and organizational dimensions of the relationship?
5. How would you assess the strengths and weaknesses of this relationship?
6. Where were the friction points, and how were they mitigated, if they were?

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**Monday, January 4, 2016, 9:00 am to 6:00 PM**

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**Case II: The Vietnam War**

Reading:

- Matthew Moten, *Presidents and Their Generals*, pages 271-311 (Chapter 10)
- Dale Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency*, pages 150-183 (Chapter 6)
- H. R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997) pages 85-106, 137-154, and 275- 322 (Chapters 5, 7, 14, and 15)
- Andrew J. Polsky, *Elusive Victories*, pages 202-272 (Chapter 4)
- Richard Kohn, "Building Trust: Civil-Military Behaviors for Effective National Security," in Suzanne Nielsen and Don Snider, editors, *American Civil-Military Relations: The soldier and the State in a New Era* (Baltimore, Maryland: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), page264-289.

Discussion Questions:

1. To what extent did poor civil-military relations contribute to the mistakes that led to American involvement and defeat in Vietnam?
2. What were the pathologies exhibited in the civil-military relationship of the Johnson administration?
3. Which were personality-based and which institutions-based?
4. Which were "normal" behaviors of bureaucracies, and which went well beyond "normal"?
5. What checks and balances were in place to mitigate thee behaviors?
6. Why didn't they work, or did they?
7. What are the potential positive and negative consequences of the resignation of a senior military leader?
8. Is resignation ever a legitimate option? If so, under what conditions; if not, why not?

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**Tuesday, January 5, 2016, 9:00 am to 6:00 PM**

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***Goldwater-Nichols and its Impact***

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**Wednesday, January 6, 2016, 9:00 am to 6:00 PM**

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***The First Gulf War***

Reading:

- Matthew Moten, *Presidents and Their Generals*, pages 312- 339 (chapter 11)
- Dale Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency*, pages 297-330 (Chapter 11)
- Marvin and Deborah Kalb, *Haunting Legacy: Vietnam and the American Presidency from Ford to Obama* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2011) pages 115-149 (Chapter 5)
- George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998) 416-493 (Chapters 17-19)
- Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor, *The Generals' War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the Gulf* (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 1995) pages vii-xv, 31-53, 400-432, and 463-478 (Preface, Chapter 2 and 19, and Epilogue)

Discussion Questions:

1. Did America's stunning success in the Gulf War demonstrate the restoration of "proper" civil-military relations?
2. What was the strategic context within which the First Gulf War was fought, and what were the strategic controversies about that context?
3. What are the potential positive and negative aspects of the civil-military relationships that existed leading up to the war?
4. How did these play out during the war, and how did they factor into the war's end?
5. In what ways were the pathologies of the Vietnam era healed, and in what way were they not? Were any new pathologies evident?