

HERTOG 2022 POLITICAL STUDIES PROGRAM

U.S. GRAND STRATEGY

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At the end of World War II, the United States and its victorious allies established a rules-based international system that has led to decades of peace, prosperity, and freedom for the American people and much of the rest of the world. Washington deepened and expanded this system after the end of the Cold War. In recent years, however, this system has come under unprecedented attack from revisionist autocratic great powers, Russia and China; rogue states like Iran; and transnational challenges, including international terrorism.

How can we understand the past, present, and future of the U.S.-led international system? Do the United States and its allies have the right strategies and policies to deal with the myriad international challenges they face today? How can Washington preserve its traditional international leadership role while adapting to the realities of a new era? These are the questions this course will discuss.

Course Materials

- Course Reader
- H. R. McMaster, *Battlegrounds* (Harper, 2020)
- Matthew Kroenig, *The Return of Great Power Rivalry* (Oxford University Press, 2020)

Resources:

To learn more about the ideas and figures discussed in this course, we encourage you to explore a project supported by the Hertog Foundation: **The Great Thinkers** (<http://thegreatthinkers.org/>) and **Contemporary Thinkers** (<http://contemporarythinkers.org/>) websites.

Monday, July 25, 2022

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM ET

Session I: The U.S.-Led Order

Readings:

- Robert Kagan, *The World America Made* (2013)
- Matthew Kroenig and Ash Jain, *Present at the Re-Creation*, Atlantic Council, (2019), pp. 1–29
- Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, White House, March 2021
- Fact Sheet: 2022 National Defense Strategy, U.S. Department of Defense, March 28, 2022

Discussion Questions:

- 1) What are the key features of the U.S.-led international system?
- 2) What have been the results for the American people and the world?
- 3) Would an alternative system have produced better results?

Tuesday, July 26, 2022

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM ET**Session II: China & the Indo-Pacific****Readings:**

- H. R. McMaster, *Battlegrounds*, Chs. 3–4
- Matthew Kroenig, *The Return of Great Power Rivalry*, Ch. 12 (*entire book optional*)

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Is the U.S. government correct in characterizing China as the greatest threat to U.S. national security?
- 2) Do the United States and its allies have a clear strategy to compete with China?
- 3) How could U.S. and allied strategy be strengthened?

Wednesday, July 27, 2022

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM ET**Session III: Russia & Europe****Readings:**

- H. R. McMaster, *Battlegrounds*, Chs. 1–2
- Matthew Kroenig, *The Return of Great Power Rivalry*, Ch. 11
- Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin, Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on the International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development, February 4, 2022

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Did the Russian invasion of Ukraine usher in a new phase of great-power politics?
- 2) How should the West revise the European security architecture?
- 3) Can Washington deal with Russia and China at the same time, and if so, how?

Thursday, July 28, 2022

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM ET**Session IV: Iran & the Middle East****Readings:**

- H. R. McMaster, *Battlegrounds*, Chs. 7–10

- Matthew Kroenig, “Time to Attack Iran,” *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2012)

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Why does Washington oppose a nuclear-armed Iran?
- 2) Was the Iran deal successful in stopping Iran’s nuclear ambitions?
- 3) How can the U.S. and its allies and partners improve strategy and policy toward the Middle East?

Friday, July 29, 2022

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM ET

Session V: Nuclear Strategy

Readings:

- Matthew Kroenig, “The Special Role of U.S. Nuclear Weapons,” Issue Brief, Atlantic Council, September 2021
- Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., “The New Nuclear Age,” *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2022)

Discussion Questions:

- 1) How has great-power competition changed the deterrence environment for nuclear weapons?
- 2) How should the U.S. meet the challenge of “strategic tripolarity,” where it faces two near-peer nuclear powers?
- 3) Is limited nuclear war more likely? How can the U.S. deter such a war, and what options does it need to fight one?