

SCENARIO WRITING AND PATH GAMING: INTA 4014/6014

Prof. Chris McDermott

COURSE INFORMATION

Friday, 11:00am – 1:45pm
Room: G17, Habersham Building

CONTACT INFORMATION

Chris McDermott
Office: Habersham 156
Email: chris.mcdermott@gatech.edu

Office hours: By appointment (please email)

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This class introduces students to the construction and presentation of formalized scenarios for international planning and the formulation, implementation and assessment of path games. Path gaming and scenario writing are two contemporary tools widely utilized in business and government policy planning processes. This is a “how to” course to organize and prepare the student to conduct these games and develop scenarios professionally. Scenarios are narratives of alternative environments in which the consequences of alternate decisions and policy directions can be explored. They are neither predictions nor strategies; rather, they serve to build structured hypotheses of different futures specifically designed to highlight the risks and opportunities involved at various critical junctures given a spectrum of possible policy choices. In order to be effective, credible and engaging stories that are both technically accurate and policy-relevant are critical to success. The first part of this class will guide students through the creation of original futures scenarios centered around various aspects of the strategic and tactical implications of strategic space. The second portion of this class will engage students in a path game which is a competitive exercise performed by students organized into teams in which the participants attempt to fashion domestic and international policies while negotiating treaties and agreements amongst all teams involved. Students from the undergraduate seminar will then form country or institutions specific teams and the graduate course participants will function as the control group, planning and guiding and critiquing the progress of the game.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- *Problem Solving in International Affairs.* Students will be able to use their knowledge of international affairs in a practical problem-solving way to address issues of immediate international concern. This includes knowledge of key issues, familiarity with methods to assess solutions, data-gathering research skills through which to put different methods into place.
- *Scientific analysis of international politics.* Students will be proficient in basic analytical skills and be able to formulate problems in international affairs mathematically if appropriate. Use software, process and analyze information, quantitative and qualitative methods. Students will demonstrate the ability to construct formalized scenarios that can be used in international planning.

REQUIRED TEXT/VIDEO:

Peter Schwartz. *The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World*. Doubleday, 1996. First or second editions. (Book available at Barnes and Noble Campus Bookstore)

Movie – “Dr. Strangelove: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb”
Available to rent on Amazon Prime or YouTube

GRADING – UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Reading Quizzes (10%): There will be reading quizzes on every class for which there is assigned reading.

Scenario Building (45%):

- A group presentation (15%)
- A written narrative (15%) – a **DRAFT** is due for the final scenario presentation, the **FINAL** version is due on the date mentioned later in the syllabus
- An annotated scenario briefing (15%)

Path Game (45%):

- 10-page report on your assigned country (15%)
- 15-page final report on the path game (15%)
- Participation and peer evaluation (15%).

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Path Game (45%):

- **Students in Control:**
 - Initial Pathgame Briefing (10%),
 - 25-30 page final report on the path game (25%)
 - Participation and peer evaluation (10%)
- **Students representing a country:**
 - 10-page report on your assigned country (10%)
 - 25-30 page final report on the path game (25%)
 - Participation and peer evaluation (10%)

DUE DATES:

Undergraduate Students:

- Scenario deliverables
 - Final Written narrative – October 18
 - Annotated briefing – October 18
- Path Game deliverables:
 - Country report – October 10
 - Peer review – November 22
 - Path game Presentation – November 22
 - Final path game report – December 9

Graduate Students

- Scenario deliverables
 - Written narrative – October 18
 - Annotated briefing – October 18
- Path Game deliverables
 - Initial Pathgame Briefing – October 10
 - Country report – October 10
 - Peer review – November 22
 - Path game Presentation – November 22
 - Final path game report – December 9

***Please note that all papers should be double spaced, 12 point, Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins, with proper citations.

GRADING PROCEDURES

A = 100-90; B = 89-80; C = 79-70; D = 69-60; F = 59 and below. Mid-term grades or progress reports will be listed as S = Satisfactory, meaning 70 and above, or U = Unsatisfactory, indicating a grade below 70. If you are taking the class Pass/Fail, then the same mid-term grade standard will also be applied for a final grade of “S” = Satisfactory as well.

UNIVERSITY and COURSE POLICIES

Statement of Inclusion: The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology’s commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

Request for Modification - If you are a learner that requires some adaptations for you to succeed in this course or are a student with disabilities that requires accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability at (404) 894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu> (Links to an external site.) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your needs and obtain the appropriate accommodations letter. Any student requiring instructional modifications due to a documented disability should make an appointment to meet with me as soon as possible so that the appropriate accommodations can be made. I am happy to do whatever I can to ensure that you succeed.

Academic Integrity - By attending Georgia Tech you have all committed to upholding the ideals of honor and integrity as well as refusing to betray this trust that has been bestowed upon you as a member of our academic community ([http://w \(Links to an external site.\)www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/academic-honor-code](http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/academic-honor-code) (Links to an external site.) or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>). (Links to an external site.) Any student who is suspected of violations of this honor code including but not limited to cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be automatically reported to the Office of Student Integrity. This office will investigate the incident as well as recommend the penalties for the violations.

Attendance Policy - You are expected to attend and participate in every class. If you miss more than one class without an approved excuse, you will be penalized by one full letter grade.

I am flexible and willing to work with everyone. I ask that you contact me via email beforehand so that I am aware, and that you please provide appropriate documentation. Communication from all parties is key, so please do not hesitate to reach out if you need to.

Classroom Policies - Professional behavior will be required of all students at all times. The following behavior is not appropriate: foul language, bigoted language, and disrespect toward other students or professor. Students engaging in these behaviors will be reported to the appropriate personnel.

Correspondence - All course-related concerns/email will be addressed. Monday through Friday, your emails will be returned within 48 hours. Please email me if you wish to discuss course material or performance.

All policies subject to review by the professor and are subject to change with written notice to the students ahead of time.

*****Note: Syllabus subject to change*****

Course Schedule

August 23: Course Introduction

- In class:
 - Introduction to the course
 - Sample Scenario on Taiwan/China

August 30: Scenarios

- Read before class:
 - *The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World*
- In class:
 - Discussion of readings
 - Sample Scenario on Russia
 - Assign teams and meet in groups

September 6: Grand Strategy

- Read before class:
 - Grand Strategy Hal Brands, *A Good Grand Strategy*, (Cornell University Press, 2013), Introduction.
 - Robert Art, *A Grand Strategy for America* (Cornell University Press, 2013), Chapters 1-2
- In class:
 - Discussion of readings
 - Sample Scenario on China

September 13: Discussion on escalation and deterrence

- Read/watch before class:
 - *Dr. Strangelove* – view on Amazon Prime or YouTube
 - Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pages 181-189
 - Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*, pages 187-203
 - Herman Kahn, *Thinking About the Unthinkable*, selections TBD
 - Bernard Brodie, *Escalation and the Nuclear Option*, pages 97-112
 - Thomas Powers, The Nuclear Warrior, *The New York Review of Books*, January 2018.
- In class:
 - Discuss readings/film
 - Pathgame protocols/example

September 20: Scenario Presentation on Building Blocks

**** Each team will present their scenario building blocks in class.**

September 27: Scenario Presentation on Narrative.

**** Each team will present their scenario narrative in class.**

October 4: Final Scenario Presentation

**** Each team will present their full scenario in class. ****

October 11: Path Game

October 18: Path Game

October 25: Path Game

November 1: Path Game

November 8: Path Game

November 15: Path Game

November 22: Path Game/Potluck

****Final Papers due by 5:00pm on the scheduled day of the final, Monday Dec. 9th****

Additional Readings on Emerging Technologies and IR (all on Canvas)

- Paul Bracken. “New Technologies and International Order,” in *Strategic Latency: Red, White, and Blue: Managing the National and International Security Consequences of Disruptive Technologies*, eds. Zachary S. Davis and Michael Nacht
- James M. Acton. “Escalation through Entanglement How the Vulnerability of Command-and-Control Systems Raises the Risks of an Inadvertent Nuclear War Control in East Asia,” *International Security*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (Summer 2018), pp. 56–99.
- Erik Gartzke and Jon Lindsay, “Thermonuclear Cyberwar,” *Journal of Cybersecurity* 3:1 (2017) 37-48.
- Libicki, Martin, “Pulling Punches in Cyberspace,” in *Deterring Cyber Attacks: Informing Strategies and Developing Options for US Policy*, Nation Research Council
- Jon R. Lindsay, “Tipping the scales: the attribution problem and the feasibility deterrence against cyberattack.” *Journal of Cybersecurity* 1:1 (2015): 53-67.
- Eleni Ekmektsioglou. “Hypersonic Weapons and Escalation,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* Vol. 9, No. 2 (Summer 2015), pp. 43-68
- Jeffrey Smith. “Hypersonic Missiles Are Unstoppable. And They’re Starting a New Global Arms Race,” *New York Times*, June 19, 2019.
- Tong Zhao, “Conventional Challenges to Strategic Stability: Chinese Perceptions of Hypersonic Technology and the Security Dilemma, in *The End of Strategic Stability?: Nuclear Weapons and the Challenge of Regional Rivalries*, Lawrence Rubin and Adam N. Stulberg, eds.
- Charles L. Glaser and Steve Fetter. “National Missile Defense and the Future of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy,” *International Security*, Vol. 26, Issue 1 (Summer 2001) p.40-92.
- US Missile Defense Review, 2019. Skim https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Interactive/2018/11-2019-Missile-Defense-Review/The%202019%20MDR_Executive%20Summary.pdf

Additional Resources

- <https://www.guwargaming.org/>
- <https://www.map.army/>
- <http://www.wargaming.co/index.htm>
- <https://paxsims.wordpress.com/about/>