IR/PO 450 INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND GEOPOLITICS: A SPANISH AND EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE
IES Abroad Madrid

DESCRIPTION:
The relevance reached by International Security during the Cold War has been further increased by rapid changes in the global strategic environment ever since the fall of the Berlin Wall. The beginning of the 21st Century was marked by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, which radically transformed our perception of security. But new factors, such as globalization, regional instability and conflicts, international terrorism, migrations, transnational crime, new trends in warfare and the growing influence of non-state actors in the national and international arena, have caused a radical evolution of the global security landscape, with the advent of new risks and threats. We need to understand all these changes to be able to tackle present and future challenges.

The aim of this course is to develop the students´ awareness and understanding of the international situation, as well as to provide them with skills to research and analyze the current issues in a holistic way and to seek solutions to the dilemmas they pose for the future.

The course is made up of four modules:
- The Strategic Environment in a Globalized World
- Challenges, Risks and Threats to International Security
- Geopolitical Regions of Interest
- International Organizations and Global Security

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

COURSE FREQUENCY: Two sessions per week

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: Spanish
Note: Some required readings are available only in English due to the lack of equivalent Spanish versions. The instructor will provide supporting materials and explanations in Spanish when needed.

INSTRUCTOR: [redacted]

PREREQUISITES: Previous coursework in Public Policy (PO) and/or International Relations (IR) (or related disciplines), and advanced Spanish proficiency (SP 352 or above, or equivalent). Students should be able to read academic texts, participate in class discussions, and produce written work in Spanish.

ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Lectures are designed to provide students with the required knowledge about specific issues and to allow them to engage in subsequent discussions. In addition, class sessions will emphasize seminar-style discussion in which students critically evaluate assigned readings, compare competing theoretical perspectives, and apply them to contemporary security challenges. Students are expected to read selected texts, so that they will be prepared for the classes. They must also actively participate in class discussions. Equally important, they will need to engage in independent study to broaden their knowledge of the subject and prepare a case study presentation.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Midterm Exam - 30%
- Case Study Analysis and Presentation - 30%
- Final Research Paper and Presentation - 30%

- Participation in Class - 10%

Midterm Exam
The *midterm exam* will assess students' understanding and application of the principal concepts, theories, and debates covered in the first two modules of the course. In addition to conceptual questions, the exam may include analytical exercises requiring students to interpret international developments, identify relevant actors, and apply theoretical frameworks from International Relations and Security Studies to specific cases. Responses should demonstrate analytical reasoning, clear argumentation, and the appropriate use of disciplinary terminology.

Case Study Analysis and Presentation
The *case study analysis and presentation* will require students to examine a contemporary challenge in international security, which may focus on a conflict, a region, a security policy, or a transnational phenomenon. Students will formulate an analytical question, conduct independent research using academic literature and, where appropriate, primary sources such as official documents, security strategies, policy reports, treaties, or international organization publications. Findings will be presented orally to the class and followed by a structured discussion. Students are expected to lead a scholarly discussion by responding to questions, defending their methodological choices, and critically engaging with alternative interpretations offered by classmates. Assessment will be based on both the preparatory research and the oral presentation. The written preparation and supporting research materials will account for 30% of the assignment grade, while the oral presentation, discussion leadership, and responses to questions will account for 70%. Evaluation will consider the quality of the analysis, the ability to connect theory and empirical evidence, the use of relevant sources, the clarity of the presentation, and participation in the subsequent discussion. Students will work in small groups to prepare and deliver an oral presentation of approximately 20 minutes, followed by a class discussion and question-and-answer session. Topics will focus on geopolitical regions of interest and their relevance to European and international security. Detailed assignment instructions, topic allocation, and presentation schedules will be provided through Moodle. Oral performance, analytical depth, use of evidence, and participation in discussion will be considered in the assessment.

Final Research Paper
The final research paper will consist of an individual research project of between 3,000 and 4,000 words on a topic related to international security and approved by the instructor. The paper must formulate a clearly defined research question, develop a coherent argument supported by evidence, engage with academic literature, incorporate relevant primary and secondary sources when appropriate, and apply the concepts, theories, and debates studied throughout the course. Students will be expected to situate their analysis within the existing scholarly literature, identify competing theoretical perspectives, and clearly justify the analytical framework adopted in their research. In addition to the written paper, students will deliver an oral presentation of their findings and participate in a question-and-answer session with their peers. Three class sessions will be devoted to these presentations. The written research paper will account for 30% of the assignment grade, while the oral presentation and discussion of findings will account for 70%. All written assignments and oral presentations will be completed in Spanish and will be assessed on the basis of both academic content and the appropriate use of advanced disciplinary language. Students will submit a short research proposal (approximately 300-500 words) outlining their topic, research question, preliminary argument, and initial bibliography. This proposal is not graded but is intended to provide formative feedback and support the development of the final research paper. Following final submission of the paper, students will deliver an oral presentation of their findings of approximately 10 minutes, followed by discussion and questions from peers and the instructor. Students may use audiovisual support materials if desired.

Participation in Class
Active participation is an essential component of the course. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before each session and contribute regularly to discussions and analytical activities. Participation will be evaluated on the basis of informed contributions to class discussions, critical engagement with the readings, the ability to relate current developments to relevant theoretical concepts, the formulation of thoughtful questions, constructive feedback on classmates' presentations, and participation in structured debates on contemporary international security issues.

Key Dates:
- Midterm Exam: Session 13
- Research Proposal Due: Session 18
- Final Research Paper Due: Session 26
- Final Research Presentations: Sessions 27-28

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
At the end of the course, students must be able to:

- Critically analyze the principal political, legal, and strategic challenges affecting the contemporary international system.
- Evaluate the role of state and non-state actors in shaping peace, security, and stability at the regional and global levels.
- Compare and apply different theoretical approaches from International Relations and Security Studies to the analysis of conflicts, threats, and security policies.
- Interpret and use primary sources, including official documents, security strategies, treaties, resolutions, and international reports, together with specialized academic literature.
- Design, defend, and critically evaluate evidence-based arguments by synthesizing theoretical perspectives, primary sources, and scholarly literature through independent research.
- Evaluate the crisis-management strategies and security frameworks of major international organizations, assessing their strengths, limitations, and effectiveness in different international contexts.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
As a member of our class community, you are expected to be present and on time every day. Attending class has an impact on your learning and academic success. For this reason, attendance is mandatory for all IES Madrid classes, including course-related excursions. Attendance will be monitored by the Absence Committee, and the student is responsible for regularly checking their attendance record in Moodle throughout the semester.

You are allowed a maximum of two unexcused absences for once-a-week courses and four unexcused absences for twice-a-week courses. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a deduction of 3 percentage points from your final grade and/or disciplinary action. Accumulating 8 or more unexcused absences in twice-a-week courses, or 4 or more in once-a-week courses, may result in a failing grade for the course.

Only when surpassing the allowed number of unexcused absences will you be able to excuse an absence. Absences should be reserved for documented medical or family emergencies only. Students should not, under any circumstances, plan their absences in advance for personal reasons other than those specified in the List of Authorized Absences.

Students are responsible for communicating with their instructor(s) regarding any missed graded in-class coursework or the in-class submission of a graded assignment resulting from an absence. Opportunities to make up missed graded in-class coursework or receive deadline extensions are granted at the instructor's discretion. Students must not be absent for exams except in cases of documented medical or family emergencies.

Punctuality is essential for the smooth functioning of academic activities. Arriving more than 10 minutes later will be recorded as a late (L). Accumulating three lates will be considered equivalent to one absence (A). Additionally, arriving more than 20 minutes late will automatically be considered an absence.

For more information, please refer to the full Attendance and Punctuality Policy document.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Required and recommended readings
Session 1	**Introduction to International Security Studies**	● McGlinchey, S., & Gold, D. “International Relations Theory”. E- International Relations, Jan 9, 2017.

Session 2	**Geopolitics of the 21st Century**	• Sánchez Herráez, P. (2024, 10 de enero). Siglo XXI, reconfiguración geopolítica: ¿y la geopolítica de la esperanza? • Kaplan, R. D. "Geopolitics and the New World Order". https://time.com/31911/geopolitics-and-the-new-world-order/
Session 3	**Current Security Concepts**	• Muhammad, A. and Riyanto, S. "International Security Studies: Origins, Development and Contending Approaches". Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations, Vol. 10 No. 20 (2021). • https://seer.ufrgs.br/index.php/austral/article/view/117331/66033 • Buzan, B., Wæver, O., & de Wilde, J. (1998). Security: A new framework for analysis. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
Session 4	**International Conflict and its Management**	• International conflict and conflict management, edited by Andrew P. Owsiak, J. Michael Greig and Paul F. Diehl, First published 2023 International Conflict and Conflict Management • UN Charter: Preamble and Chapters I, VI, VII, VIII. https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter • Panorama Geopolítico de los Conflictos 2025. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/panorama-geopol%C3%ADtico-de-los-conflictos-2025
Session 5	**Western security strategies**	• "National Security Strategy. Sharing a Common Project". Government of Spain, 2021. https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/documents/estrategiaseguridad_baja_julio.pdf • NATO 2022 Strategic Concept. https://www.nato.int/en/about-us/official-texts-and-resources/strategic-concepts • National Security Strategy of the United States of America 2025-National-Security-Strategy.pdf

Session 6	**International terrorism**	• "Global Terrorism Index 2026". Vision of humanity Global Terrorism Index | Countries most impacted by terrorism • "Grey Rhinos 2025: Terrorism". Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 25 Dec 2024. https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/grey-rhinos-2025- terrorism-194892 • "What is Hezbollah" Council on Foreign Relations. Last updated 29 Oct 2024. • https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hezbollah • Todas las noticias sobre Hamás publicadas en EL PAÍS. Información, novedades y última hora sobre Hamás. https://elpais.com/noticias/hamas-movimiento-resistencia-islamico/ • Ataques y atacantes yihadistas en Europa: Francia, Alemania y España en el período 2015-2025. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-ataques-yihadistas-europa-articulo-investigacion-04
Session 7	**Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction**	• Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Princeton University. https://www.princeton.edu/~ota/disk1/1993/9341/934106.PDF • U.S.-Russia Nuclear Arms Control https://www.cfr.org/articles/us-russia-nuclear-arms-control • "Iran and Nuclear Weapons Production". Congress.gov. https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IF12106
Session 8	**Fragile States and Organized Crime**	• "Fragile States Index". The Fund for Peace. https://fragilestatesindex.org • INTERPOL. Crimes section. https://www.interpol.int/Crimes/Organized-crime • Preventing and Countering Organized Crime Office on Drugs and Crime. United Nations. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/humanrights/areas/organized-crime.html
Session 9	**Regional conflicts**	• "10 Conflicts to Watch in 2025". International Crisis Group. https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/10-conflicts-watch-2025 • "Conflict Barometer 2023". Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research.

		https://hiik.de/conflict-barometer/current-version/?lang=en
Session 10	**Natural Resources, Energy Security and Risk Drivers**	• Marino, Francesco. "What 2025 could look like for the EU energy policies". NEU, Newsletter for the European Union, 28 December 2024. https://www.newslettereuropean.eu/what-2025-could-look-like- for-the-eu-energy-policies/ • Igini, Martina. "Why Global Food Security Matters". EARTH.ORG, 16 Oct 2024. https://earth.org/global-food-security/ • Dos desafíos a la seguridad energética europea: la crisis del gas ruso y la dependencia de China en las tecnologías de la transición energética. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-dos-desafios-seguridad-energetica-europea-analisis46
Session 11	**Cyber Security and Maritime Security**	• "What is Cyber Security? Definition and Best Practices". https://www.itgovernance.co.uk/what-is-cybersecurity • Larsson, O. L. and Widen, J.J. "The European Union as a Maritime Security Provider – The Naval Diplomacy • Perspective". Taylor & Francis Online, 6 April 2023. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1057610X.2022.20 58863 • Median, Natalia. "Maritime Security Strategy 2024". Atalayar, 06/04/2024. hhttps://www.atalayar.com/en/articulo/politics/maritime-security- strategy-2024/20240406080000198337.html • Poder, geopolítica, soberanía y tecnología. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-poder-geopolitica-soberania-tecnologia-analisis40
Session 12	**Review for the Midterm Exam**	
Session 13	**MIDTERM EXAM**	
Session 14	**Russia**	• Kivimäki, T. "Russian Sphere of Influence: What is it? What Could It Be?" The World Financial Review, March 1, 2022. https://worldfinancialreview.com/russian-sphere-of-influence- what-is-it-what-could-it-be/ • Sabanadze, N. "Russia is using the Soviet playbook in the Global South to challenge the West – and it is working". Chatham House, 16 May 2024. https://www.chathamhouse.org/2024/05/russia-using-soviet- playbook-global-south-challenge-west-and-it-working

		• Konstantinovsky, Anya. "China, Russia, and Ukraine: October 2024". Council on Foreign Relations, 4 Nov 2024. https://www.cfr.org/article/china-russia-and-ukraine-october-2024 • La guerra ruso-ucraniana: mutación estratégica de un conflicto existencial. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-guerra-rusia-ucrania-opinion56
Session 15	**Middle East**	• Clarke, Collin P. "A Year of War Transformed Hezbollah". The New York Times, 27 Nov 2024. https://www.nytimes.com/2024/11/27/opinion/hezbollah-israel- lebanon-ceasefire.html • "Iran and Saudi Arabia Restore Ties". The Iran Primer, United States Institute for Peace, June 6, 2023. https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2023/mar/10/iran-and-saudi- arabia-restore-ties • El Mediterráneo ampliado como espacio estratégico https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-mediterraneo-ampliado-espacio-estrategico-documento-opinion-80 • Leila Ouhri, Kate Springs, and Yaseen Rashed "2024: A year in the Middle East". Atlantic Council, 19 Dec 2024. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/2024-a-year-in- the-middle-east/
Session 16	**North Africa and Sahel**	• "Grey Rhino 2025: The Sahel". Italian Institute for International Political Studies, 26 Dec 2024. https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/grey-rhino-2025-the- sahel-194931 • "West Africa and the Sahel". Security Council Report, 30 June 2024. https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2024- 07/west-africa-and-the-sahel-12.php • La proyección estratégica de Rusia en el Sahel y su entorno regional. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-rusia-sahel-opinion40
Session 17	**Sub-Saharan Africa**	• Okoli, Maurice. "Bridging Africa's Economic Horizons In 2025: Broader Strategic Perspectives – Analysis". Eurasia Review, 30 Nov 2024. https://www.eurasiareview.com/30112024-bridging-africas- economic-horizons-in-2025-broader-strategic-perspectives- analysis/ • "Africa in 2025: G20 presidency and a new UK approach to Africa". UK Parliament, House of Commons Library, 8 Jan 2025. https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/africa-in-2025-g20- presidency-and-a-new-uk-approach-to-africa/ • Nantulya, Paul. "What to Expect from Africa-China Relations in 2025". Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 7 Jan 2025. https://africacenter.org/spotlight/africa-china-relations-2025/

Session 18	**Indo-Pacific 1** • **Research Proposal Due (300-500 words)**	• Borrell, Josep. "Europe's and Indo-Pacific's security are closely linked". European External Action Service, 14 Nov 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/europe-and-indo-pacific- security-are-closely-linked_en • "Scenarios: South China Sea security report". Janes 9 Dec 2024. https://www.janes.com/osint-insights/defence-and-national- security-analysis/post/scenarios-south-china-sea-security-report • "What's behind China-Taiwan tensions?" BBC NEWS, 14 Oct 2024. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-34729538 • Howell, Edward. "Countering the China, Russia, Iran, North Korea Challenge". Chatham House, Research Paper, 4 Dec 2024. https://www.chathamhouse.org/2024/12/north-korea-and-russias- dangerous-partnership/introduction
Session 19	**Indo-Pacific 2**	• Kawai, Daisuke. "Japan's Defence Budget Surge: A New Security Paradigm". RUSI, Commentary, 2 Dec 2024. https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/japans-defence-budget-surge- new-security-paradigm • "AUKUS security partnership". House of Lords Library. Published Monday, 19 February 2024. https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/aukus-security-partnership/ • Ladwig, Walter. "The Indo-Pacific in Indian Foreign Policy". Royal • United Services Institute, Policy Briefings, 30 April 2024. https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/policy- briefs/indo-pacific-indian-foreign-policy
Session 20	**Latin America**	• Venezuela: statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the events of 10 January 2025 https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/01/10/venezuela-statement-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-events-of-10-january- 2025/ • Haiti, January 2025 Monthly Forecast, Security Council Report, 30 Dec 2024. https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2025- 01/haiti-28.php • Deputy High Commissioner updates on the human rights situation in Nicaragua. United Nations, Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner, 9 Dec 2024.

		https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/12/deputy-high-commissioner-updates-human- rights-situation-nicaragua • América Latina ante un cruce de caminos. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-america-latina-cruce-caminos-analisis-50
Session 21	**United Nations and Peacekeeping Operations**	• United Nations Peacekeeping. https://peacekeepingun.org/en • Blair, R. A., & Di Salvatore, J., & Smidt, H. M. "When Do UN Peacekeeping Operations Implement Their Mandates?" • American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 66, No. 3, July 2022, Pp. 664–680. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/ajps.12650
Session 22	**North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**	• "NATO Strategic Concept 2022". https://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/ • "Washington Summit Declaration". NATO, 10 July 2024. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_227678.htm • Ankara 2026: la OTAN sigue viva. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-ankara-otan-viva-documento-informativo-05
Session 23	**European Union (EU) Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP)**	• Solana, J. "European Foreign Policy and Its Challenges in the Current Context." BBVA OpenMind. https://www.bbvaopenmind.com/en/articles/european-foreign- policy-and-its-challenges-in-the-current-context/ • "A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence". https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/strategic_compass_en3_web.pdf • "A new era for European Defence and Security". European Commission. https://commission.europa.eu/priorities-2024-2029/security-and-defence_en • "Common security and defence policy". Fact Sheets on the European Union. European Parliament. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/159/common-security-and-defence-policy

Session 24	**Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)**	• "Fact Sheet: What is the OSCE?" OSCE, 30 May 2023. https://www.osce.org/whatistheosce/factsheet • "31st Meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council I Joint statement on Securing the OSCE's Future: Principles and Action". U.S. Mission to OSCE, Dec 2024. https://osce.usmission.gov/31st-meeting-of-the-osce-ministerial-council-i-joint-statement-on-securing-the-osces-future- principles- and-action/
Session 25	**African Union and Other Regional Organizations**	• Harsh Mahaseth and Aryaman Keshav. "The Role of The African Union and Agenda 2063 in Paving the Future of Africa". Modern Diplomacy, 18 Oct 2024. https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2024/10/18/the-role-of-the-african- union-and-agenda-2063-in-paving-the-future-of-africa/ • Umarov, T. "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is Ineffective and Irrelevant". Carnegie Politika, July 5, 2024. https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2024/07/sco-summit-china-russia?lang=en
Session 26	• Research Workshop and Final Paper Development • Final Paper Submission Due	
Session 27	**Case Study and Final Research Presentations – Session I**	
Session 28	**Case Study and Final Research Presentations – Session II**	

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- A visit to a military museum may take place during the course. The visit will allow students to examine the historical evolution of military strategy, defense policy, and security challenges discussed throughout the course and connect theoretical concepts with historical case studies.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Blair, Robert A., Jacopo Di Salvatore, and Hanne M. Smidt. "When Do UN Peacekeeping Operations Implement Their Mandates?" American Journal of Political Science 66, no. 3 (2022): 664–680. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12650
- Buzan, Barry, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde. Security: A New Framework for Analysis. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998.
- Departamento de Seguridad Nacional. Estrategia de Seguridad Nacional 2021: Un proyecto compartido. Madrid: Presidencia del Gobierno de España, 2021. https://www.dsn.gob.es/es/publicaciones/estrategia-de-seguridad-nacional-2021
- Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research. Conflict Barometer 2023. Heidelberg: HIIK, 2024. https://hiik.de/conflict-barometer/current-version/?lang=en

- Institute for Economics & Peace. Global Terrorism Index 2026. Sydney: Institute for Economics & Peace, 2026. https://www.economicsandpeace.org/report/global-terrorism-index-2026/.
- McGlinchey, Stephen, and Dana Gold. “International Relations Theory.” E-International Relations, January 9, 2017. https://www.e-ir.info/2017/01/09/international-relations-theory/.
- Muhammad, Azzahra, and Slamet Riyanto. “International Security Studies: Origins, Development and Contending Approaches.” Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations 10, no. 20 (2021): 230–249. https://seer.ufrgs.br/index.php/austral/article/download/117331/66033/501290.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization. NATO 2022 Strategic Concept. Brussels: NATO, 2022. https://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/.
- Organización de las Naciones Unidas. Carta de las Naciones Unidas. San Francisco: Organización de las Naciones Unidas, 1945. https://www.un.org/es/about-us/un-charter/full-text.
- Owsiak, Andrew P., J. Michael Greig, and Paul F. Diehl, eds. International Conflict and Conflict Management. London: Routledge, 2023. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003380832.
- The Fund for Peace. Fragile States Index. Accessed September 14, 2026. https://fragilestatesindex.org/.
- The White House. National Security Strategy. Washington, DC: Executive Office of the President of the United States, 2025. https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-National-Security-Strategy.pdf.
- United Nations Peacekeeping. “United Nations Peacekeeping.” Accessed September 14, 2026. https://peacekeeping.un.org/en.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- BBC News. “What’s Behind China-Taiwan Tensions?” October 14, 2024. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-34729538.
- Borrell, Josep. “Europe’s and Indo-Pacific’s Security Are Closely Linked.” European External Action Service, November 14, 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/europe-and-indo-pacific-security-are-closely-linked_en.
- Congressional Research Service. Iran and Nuclear Weapons Production. IF12106. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2022. https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IF12106.
- Council of the European Union. “Venezuela: Statement by the High Representative on Behalf of the European Union on the Events of 10 January 2025.” January 10, 2025. https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/01/10/venezuela-statement-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-events-of-10-january-2025/.
- Council on Foreign Relations. “U.S.-Russia Nuclear Arms Control.”. https://www.cfr.org/articles/us-russia-nuclear-arms-control.
- EL PAÍS. “Hamás.” Accessed September 14, 2026. https://elpais.com/noticias/hamas-movimiento-resistencia-islamico/.
- House of Commons Library. Africa in 2025: G20 Presidency and a New UK Approach to Africa. London: UK Parliament, January 8, 2025. https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/africa-in-2025-g20-presidency-and-a-new-uk-approach-to-africa/.
- House of Lords Library. AUKUS Security Partnership. London: UK Parliament, February 19, 2024. https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/aukus-security-partnership/.
- Igini, Martina. “Why Global Food Security Matters.” Earth.org, October 16, 2024. https://earth.org/global-food-security.
- Institute for Economics & Peace. Global Terrorism Index 2026. Sydney: Institute for Economics & Peace, 2026. https://www.economicsandpeace.org/report/global-terrorism-index-2026/.
- Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos. América Latina ante un cruce de caminos. Madrid: CESEDEN, Ministerio de Defensa, 2026. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-america-latina-cruce-caminos-analisis-50.
- Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos. Ankara 2026: La OTAN sigue viva. Madrid: CESEDEN, Ministerio de Defensa, 2026. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-ankara-otan-viva-documento-informativo-05.
- Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos. Dos desafíos a la seguridad energética europea: La crisis del gas ruso y la dependencia de China en las tecnologías de la transición energética. Madrid: CESEDEN, Ministerio de Defensa, 2026. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-dos-desafios-seguridad-energetica-europea-analisis46.
- Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos. La guerra ruso-ucraniana: Mutación estratégica de un conflicto existencial. Madrid: CESEDEN, Ministerio de Defensa, 2026. https://www.defensa.gob.es/ceseden/-/ieee-2026-guerra-rusia-ucrania-opinion56.

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APPENDIX A: CASE STUDY ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION RUBRIC

Task Description

Students work in small groups to analyze a geopolitical region of interest and its relevance to European and international security. Each group delivers an oral presentation followed by discussion and response to questions from classmates and the instructor. Assessment focuses on analytical thinking, effective use of evidence, oral communication, and engagement in academic discussion. The written preparation and supporting research materials represent 30% of the assignment grade, while the oral presentation and discussion components represent 70%.

Dimension	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Improvement
Knowledge and Understanding (15%)	Demonstrates thorough understanding of the assigned region, its geopolitical dynamics, key actors, and its relevance to European and international security.	Demonstrates adequate understanding with minor gaps or inaccuracies.	Demonstrates limited understanding or significant inaccuracies regarding the region and its security relevance.
Analysis and Critical Thinking (15%)	Provides insightful analysis, identifies key security challenges, evaluates competing perspectives, and supports conclusions with well-developed arguments and evidence.	Provides some analysis and interpretation, although discussion may occasionally remain descriptive or underdeveloped.	Limited analysis; presentation relies primarily on description, unsupported statements, or summary.
Oral Communication and Delivery (35%)	Presentation is exceptionally clear, organized, engaging, and professional. Information is communicated effectively and adapted to the audience. Presentation materials support understanding and enhance the discussion.	Presentation is generally clear and organized. Main ideas are communicated effectively, though delivery or organization may occasionally lack clarity.	Presentation lacks clarity, organization, or effectiveness. Audience has difficulty following the argument or understanding key points.
Discussion Leadership and Responses to Questions (35%)	Demonstrates mastery of the topic through thoughtful responses, critical reflection, and the ability to engage classmates in meaningful discussion. Defends arguments effectively and addresses alternative viewpoints.	Responds adequately to questions and participates appropriately in discussion, though answers may occasionally lack depth or supporting evidence.	Struggles to answer questions, defend arguments, or engage in discussion. Responses suggest limited preparation or understanding of the topic.

Note: The written preparation component includes research, source selection, analytical development, and supporting presentation materials. No formal research paper is required for this assignment. The primary assessment instrument is the oral presentation and subsequent discussion.

APPENDIX B: FINAL RESEARCH PAPER RUBRIC

Task Description

Students will complete an individual research paper of 3,000-4,000 words on a topic related to international security. The paper should formulate a clear research question, develop an argument supported by evidence, engage with relevant literature, and demonstrate understanding of key concepts addressed throughout the course.

This rubric evaluates the written portion of the Final Research Project, which represents 30% of the overall Final Research assignment grade. The oral presentation component is evaluated separately using the Final Research Presentation Rubric and represents 70% of the overall assignment grade.

Dimension	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Improvement
Research Question and Focus	Research question is clear, relevant, focused, and sustained throughout the paper.	Research question is apparent but could be more precisely defined or consistently maintained.	Research question is unclear, unfocused, or insufficiently developed.
Analysis and Argumentation	Develops a sophisticated and persuasive argument supported by critical analysis.	Presents a coherent argument with adequate analytical development.	Argument is weak, incomplete, or largely descriptive.
Sources and Evidence	Integrates relevant academic and primary sources effectively and appropriately.	Uses relevant sources with acceptable integration into the discussion.	Limited, inappropriate, or poorly integrated sources.
Organization and Academic Writing	Paper is well organized, clearly written, and professionally presented.	Organization and writing are generally clear with minor issues.	Writing or organization interferes with understanding.
Conclusions and Reflection	Conclusions are well supported and demonstrate critical reflection on the topic.	Conclusions summarize findings appropriately.	Conclusions are unsupported, weak, or absent.

APPENDIX C: FINAL RESEARCH PRESENTATION RUBRIC

Task Description

Students will present the principal findings of their final research project in an oral presentation and respond to questions from classmates and the instructor. The presentation should communicate the research clearly and demonstrate mastery of the chosen topic.

This rubric evaluates the oral presentation component of the Final Research Project, which represents 70% of the overall Final Research assignment grade.

Dimension	Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Improvement
Knowledge of Topic	Demonstrates excellent command of the research topic and its broader security implications.	Demonstrates good understanding with minor gaps.	Demonstrates limited understanding of the research topic.
Analysis and Argument	Clearly communicates a well-developed argument supported by evidence.	Communicates an argument with adequate supporting evidence.	Argument is unclear or insufficiently supported.
Communication	Presentation is clear, organized, and adapted effectively to the audience.	Presentation is understandable and generally organized.	Presentation is difficult to follow or poorly organized.
Responses to Questions	Responds thoughtfully and confidently, demonstrating critical reflection.	Responds adequately to questions.	Struggles to answer questions or demonstrate understanding.

APPENDIX D: PARTICIPATION RUBRIC

Task Description
Active participation is an essential component of the course. Students are expected to complete assigned readings, contribute to discussions, engage respectfully with peers, and connect current international developments to the concepts studied in class.

Score	Description
4	Consistently prepared and actively engaged. Contributions are thoughtful, analytical, and connected to course materials. Demonstrates active listening and respectful engagement with classmates.
3	Generally prepared and engaged. Contributions are relevant and demonstrate understanding of course materials. Participates regularly and interacts appropriately with classmates.
2	Participation is inconsistent. Contributions tend to be descriptive, limited, or only partially connected to course materials. Engagement fluctuates throughout the semester.
1	Rarely participates or demonstrates insufficient preparation. Contributions are frequently off-topic or do not reflect engagement with course materials.