

SS472: The State and the Solider

NOTE: This is a SAMPLE syllabus, made available for reference purposes only. The actual course syllabus may vary depending on semester and instructor.

CLASS DESCRIPTION

The role of the military in the state stands as an omnipresent question since the dawn of collective governance. Those deputized with the use of force to protect the greater good also possess the destructive power to topple other elements of the government. How then do states institute regulations and norms that prevent this destructive behavior? In this course, we grapple with this question along with many others relevant to the role of the military in our polity.

Much of the course will tackle questions without a “right” or universally agreed upon answer. This should not bring you discomfort. Rather, when we get to such a topic, you should expect difficult grappling with the readings to assess if you think the argument is compatible with the current understanding of human behavior. We will draw upon historical and theoretical arguments to assess normative elements. But we will not stay purely abstract. Where empirical implications can be measured and drawn out, we will engage questions through a social science lens.

COURSE GOALS

1. Understand the regulations governing officers in the United States military
2. Describe the nature of civil-military relations in the United States.
 - a. Understand prominent theories in the field
 - b. Explain key concepts related to civil-military relations
3. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the military as stated in the US constitution.
4. Understand past views of civil-military relations and how those nest with our modern understanding.
5. Weigh multiple perspectives for officers faced with challenges related to multiple principals, setting the agenda, formulating policy, and implementing policy.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

The class will reading every session that you are expected to have completed when you walk in the door. I will provide you with questions to think about as you read. Come prepared to discuss those questions in the seminar. Other topics will develop as the seminar unfolds. We will discuss those when each arises. However, you should not plan to come in a “riff” your way through participating off those conversations. It will be clear if you have or have not completed the reading based upon the comments that you have during each seminar.

Each block of readings will have an assigned paper. You will get the possible prompts to consider along with the requirements for the assignment at the start of each block. Answering those questions well will at times require more readings and research than what is listed on the syllabus. I reserve the right to return your paper for revision and assign you a weighted average of the first submission and the revised paper.

I will evaluate your performance based on the graded events listed below. The overarching goal is to assess your understanding of course material and your ability to apply what you learn. This class forces you to engage with weighty ideas and grapple with tough topics that may not have a correct answer. You will not be evaluated for your ability to memorize information and then spit it back out to me. Rather, you'll be asked to think through arguments and extend them to current situations. As such, you'll be evaluated based upon those deeper thoughts and understandings of the topic. The method for conducting such evaluations will be written products.

LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

This course will have substantial reading associated with each lesson. You will be expected to have read all of the assigned readings prior to each course. Reading does not mean just being able to tell me what was on a particular page. Rather, I want you to be able to understand the argument of the author and the evidence used to make the claim. We'll spend the class session assessing the merits of both. During the sessions, I will steer your conversations and only contribute to be the devil's advocate to positions that have your universal support. Your discussions will be what makes the class interesting. The expectation is that you stay grounding in the material. I will course correct any deviant forms of argumentation.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Books:

Beehner, Lionel, Risa Brooks, and Daniel Maurer, eds. *Reconsidering American Civil-Military Relations: The Military, Society, Politics, and Modern War*. Oxford University Press, 2020.

Huntington, Samuel P. *The soldier and the state: The theory and politics of civil-military relations*. Harvard University Press, 1981. (Renewed edition, not the 1957 version).

Nielsen, Suzanne C., and Don M. Snider, eds. *American civil-military relations: The soldier and the state in a new era*. JHU Press, 2009.

Skowronek, Stephen. *Building a new American state: The expansion of national administrative capacities, 1877-1920*. Cambridge University Press, 1982.

All other readings listed in the syllabus are required but I will provide copies to you.

LESSONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Lesson #	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	4 JAN	Introduction and Ground Rules	Syllabus, US Constitution, DoD Directive 1344.10, AR 600-20
2	6 JAN	Thinking about Early State Capacity	Wilson Bureaucracy Chapter 1 (scan provided), Huntington 2
3	10 JAN	State Building in 19 th Century America	Skowronek Chapter 1 & 2
4	13 JAN	State Building – the Army	Skowronek Part II Introduction, Chapter 4
5	18 JAN	State Building – Regulating Industry	Skowronek Chapter 5
6	20 JAN	Reconstituting the Army	Skowronek Chapter 7
7	24 JAN	Reconstituting Industry	Skowronek Chapter 8
8	27 JAN	A Theory of Civil-Military Relations	Huntington Chapter 1 & 4
9	31 JAN	Conservative Realism and the Professional Military Ethic	Huntington Chapter 3
10	2 FEB	The Conservative Constitution and Civilian Control	Huntington Chapter 7 Paper 1 Due
11	4 FEB	No Class	
12	7 FEB	Before and After Huntington – Maturing CMR Studies	Nielsen & Snider Chapter 4 BBM Chapter 1
13	11 FEB	Who has “Skin in the Game”	Nielsen & Snider Chapter 5
14	14 FEB	Separation of Powers and Department Structure	Huntington Chapter 15 & 16
15	17 FEB	Civilian Oversight in the Pentagon	BBM Chapter 4
16	22 FEB	Enhancing Civilian Control	Nielsen & Snider Chapter 12 Paper 2 Due
17	24 FEB	Conflicting Loyalties in CMR	BBM Chapter 3
18	28 FEB	Framing CMR	Nielsen & Snider Chapter 2 Nielsen & Liebert, Armed Forces and Society Article
19	4 MAR	Militaries and Political Advocacy	Nielsen & Snider Chapter 11 Paper 3 Due
20	14 MAR	CMR and Trust Building	Nielsen & Snider Chapter 13
21	16 MAR	Potential Pitfalls for Public Trust	BBM Chapter 7
22	18 MAR	No Class	

23	22 MAR	Public Trust in the US Military	BBM Chapter 8
24	25 MAR	Military Popularity and Partisanship	BBM Chapter 9
25	28 MAR	Crisis of Civilian Control?	Karlin Chapter 4 (scan provided)
26	30 MAR	Military Participation in the Public Square	Griffiths and Simon, Armed Forces and Society
27	1 APR	No Class	
28	4 APR	A Broken Dialogue? An Example of CMR Tension	Nielsen and Snider Chapter 3
29	6 APR	No Class	
30	8 APR	No Class	
31	11 APR	No Class	
32	13 APR	Cyber Operations and CMR	BBM Chapter 13 Paper 4 Due
33	15 APR	CMR and Emerging Technology	BBM Chapter 14
34	19 APR	CMR in the Gray Zone	BBM Chapter 12
35	22 APR	Is military experience bad for the Sec Def?	Online Readings
36	25 APR	No Class	
37	27 APR	No Class	
38	2 MAY	No Class	
39	4 MAY	AAR	Final Paper Due
40	5 MAY	No Class	