



PICT8050

Strategic Thinking

Session 2, Online-flexible 2024

Department of Security Studies and Criminology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

Lavina Lee

lavina.lee@mq.edu.au

Contact via By email

Room 352A, 25 Wally's Walk Building B, Faculty of Arts Precinct, Macquarie University
TBC

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Admission to MPICT or MCP ICT or GradDipPICT or GradDipCPICT or PGCertPICT or MPICTMIntSecSt or MCP ICTMIntSecSt or MIntSecStud or GradDiplntSecStud or MSecStrategicStud or M CyberSec or MSecStrategicStudMCrim or MSecStrategicStudMIntell or MSecStrategicStudM CyberSec or MSecStrategicStudMCTerrorism or admission to BSecStudMSecStrategicStud

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit addresses the challenges of formulating, assessing and engaging with strategy in historical and contemporary geopolitical contexts. It exposes students to classical and contemporary approaches to strategic thought, and teaches students how to write policy briefs where they will engage with strategic problems in relation to real-world policy contexts. Content will include the fundamentals of strategy; the challenges of strategy formulation under conditions of uncertainty; the influence of bureaucratic considerations and domestic political pressures; the role of information and strategic narratives; the making of strategy in conventional and unconventional scenarios; and the dynamics of military intervention. Students will further address these issues by identifying and exploring them in cases and assessing their implications for contemporary challenges.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Demonstrate specialised knowledge of key concepts, theories and contemporary issues in the field of strategic studies, aligned with the field's leading thinkers, texts and paradigms.

ULO2: Comprehend the challenges and complexities of strategy-making as well as the main features, applications and relative merits of various strategic approaches.

ULO3: Apply disciplinary knowledge to analyse and critically evaluate real-world historical and contemporary strategic decisions, cases and issues.

ULO4: Apply critical thinking skills in order to cogently and effectively defend intellectual positions and to produce well-reasoned, theoretically informed and empirically substantiated written work.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Active Engagement	20%	No	Ongoing
Online Quizzes	20%	No	Weeks 4, 7, 10 and 12
Policy Memo	20%	No	2024-09-18
Research Essay	40%	No	2024-10-30

Active Engagement

Assessment Type ¹: Participatory task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 10 hours

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

Active engagement by students will increase the unit's value as an exercise in critical thinking, analysis, and communication. Students will demonstrate it by contributing to online activities.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate specialised knowledge of key concepts, theories and contemporary issues in the field of strategic studies, aligned with the field's leading thinkers, texts and

paradigms.

- Comprehend the challenges and complexities of strategy-making as well as the main features, applications and relative merits of various strategic approaches.
- Apply disciplinary knowledge to analyse and critically evaluate real-world historical and contemporary strategic decisions, cases and issues.
- Apply critical thinking skills in order to cogently and effectively defend intellectual positions and to produce well-reasoned, theoretically informed and empirically substantiated written work.

Online Quizzes

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **Weeks 4, 7, 10 and 12**

Weighting: **20%**

You will complete a number of quizzes throughout the unit. Each quiz will be conducted online via the unit's iLearn space. The quizzes are designed to test your knowledge and understanding of core course material.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate specialised knowledge of key concepts, theories and contemporary issues in the field of strategic studies, aligned with the field's leading thinkers, texts and paradigms.
- Comprehend the challenges and complexities of strategy-making as well as the main features, applications and relative merits of various strategic approaches.

Policy Memo

Assessment Type ¹: Professional writing

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **2024-09-18**

Weighting: **20%**

The policy memo is a written brief addressed to a high-level policy-maker who is considering the use of force in a particular situation to advance the government's interests. The memo will identify and analyze the strategic factors that should inform the policy-maker's decision, and recommend a particular course of action.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply disciplinary knowledge to analyse and critically evaluate real-world historical and contemporary strategic decisions, cases and issues.
- Apply critical thinking skills in order to cogently and effectively defend intellectual positions and to produce well-reasoned, theoretically informed and empirically substantiated written work.

Research Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 36 hours

Due: **2024-10-30**

Weighting: **40%**

The completion of a Research Essay allows students to develop core disciplinary knowledge, enhance research skills, show effective written communication skills, and demonstrate originality and critical thinking. The essay should flow logically from the introduction to the evidence in the main body to the conclusion. It should reflect wide reading across a diverse body of academic literature, and should demonstrate critical analysis and objectivity.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate specialised knowledge of key concepts, theories and contemporary issues in the field of strategic studies, aligned with the field's leading thinkers, texts and paradigms.
- Comprehend the challenges and complexities of strategy-making as well as the main features, applications and relative merits of various strategic approaches.
- Apply disciplinary knowledge to analyse and critically evaluate real-world historical and contemporary strategic decisions, cases and issues.
- Apply critical thinking skills in order to cogently and effectively defend intellectual positions and to produce well-reasoned, theoretically informed and empirically substantiated written work.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

TEXTBOOK

We will be using the following book as a textbook for this unit:

Hal Brands (ed.), *The New Makers of Modern Strategy*, Princeton University Press 2023.

It is available for purchase online in both in-print editions and an e-book. There will also be a copy of the e-book in the library.

UNIT REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

- You should spend an average of 12 hours per week on this unit. This includes listening to lectures prior to seminar or tutorial, reading weekly required materials as detailed in iLearn, participating in iLearn discussion forums and preparing assessments.
- Internal students are expected to attend all seminar or tutorial sessions, and external students are expected to make significant contributions to on-line activities.
- In most cases students are required to attempt and submit all major assessment tasks in order to pass the unit.

REQUIRED READINGS

- The citations for all the required readings for this unit are available to enrolled students through the unit iLearn site, and at Macquarie University's library site. Electronic copies of required readings may be accessed through the library or will be made available by other means.

TECHNOLOGY USED AND REQUIRED

- Computer and internet access are essential for this unit. Basic computer skills and skills in word processing are also a requirement.
- This unit has an online presence. Login is via: <https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/>
- Students are required to have regular access to a computer and the internet. Mobile devices alone are not sufficient.
- Information about IT used at Macquarie University is available at http://students.mq.edu.au/it_services/

SUBMITTING ASSESSMENT TASKS

- All text-based assessment tasks are to be submitted, marked and returned electronically.

This will only happen through the unit iLearn site.

- Assessment tasks must be submitted as a MS word document by the due date.
- Most assessment tasks will be subject to a 'Turnitin' review as an automatic part of the submission process.
- The granting of extensions is subject to the university's Special Consideration Policy. Extensions will not be granted by unit conveners or tutors, but must be lodged through Special Consideration: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/my-study-program/special-consideration>

LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENT TASKS

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of, 0 (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue.

This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic

WORD LIMITS FOR ASSESSMENT TASKS

- Stated word limits include footnotes and footnoted references, but not bibliography, or title page.
- Word limits can generally deviate by 10% either over or under the stated figure.
- If the number of words deviates from the limit by more than 10%, then penalties will apply. These penalties are 5% of the awarded mark for every 100 words deviation from the word limit. If a paper is 300 words over, for instance, it will lose $3 \times 5\% = 15\%$ of the total mark awarded for the assignment. This percentage is taken off the total mark, i.e. if a paper was graded at a credit (65%) and was 300 words over, it would be reduced by 15 marks to a pass (50%).
- The application of this penalty is at the discretion of the course convener.

REASSESSMENT OF ASSIGNMENTS DURING THE SEMESTER

- Macquarie University operates a Final Grade Appeal procedure as part of the Assessment policy in cases where students feel their work was graded inappropriately:

<https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=277>

- In accordance with the Grade Appeal procedure, individual works are not subject to regrading.

STAFF AVAILABILITY

- Department staff will endeavour to answer student enquiries in a timely manner. However, emails or iLearn messages will not usually be answered over the weekend or public holiday period.
- Students are encouraged to read the Unit Guide and look at instructions posted on the iLearn site before sending email requests to staff.

RULES ON USE OF GENERATIVE AI

In this course students **are permitted to** use Generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) to complete the policy memo and research essay assessment tasks to:

- clarify concepts, theories, ideas, etc., discussed in class
- generate preliminary ideas for writing
- edit a working draft of the assessment
- read and summarise research and supporting evidence for the assessment

Students **are not permitted to** use Generative AI to:

- generate definitions or writing used in their final submission.
- produce counter-arguments or refine thinking on their final submission

Any of these actions will constitute and be treated as a breach of academic integrity.

Unit Schedule

Class Schedule PICT8050/PICX 8050 Strategic Thinking

Semester Week	Lecture Date	Topic	Assessment
Week 1	22 July	Introduction	
Week 2	29 July	The Fundamentals of Strategy	
Week 3	5 August	Clausewitz: Violence, Chance and Politics	

Week 4	12 August	Strategies of Decisive War, Attrition and Total War	Quiz 1: covering weeks 1,2 and 3. Thursday 15 August
Week 5	19 August	Strategy and WWII: Coalition Warfare and Geopolitical Revolution	
Week 6	26 August	Strategy and WWII: Asia and the Pacific	
Week 7	2 September	Nuclear Strategy	Quiz 2: covering weeks 4, 5 and 6. Thursday 5 September.
Week 8	9 September	No classes: Reading Week	
Mid-Semester Recess	Monday 16 September to Sunday 29 September		Policy Memo Due: Wednesday 18 September
Week 9	30 September	Asymmetric Strategy and Irregular War	
Week 10	7 October	Chinese and US Grand Strategy in Peacetime	Quiz 3: covering weeks 7, 9 and 10. Thursday 10 October.
Week 11	14 October	Winning without fighting: Political Warfare	
Week 12	21 October	Managing Great Power Competition: Strategies of Smaller States	Quiz 4: covering weeks 11 and 12. Thursday 24 October.
Week 13	28 October	No classes	Research Essay due: Wednesday 30 October.
Exam Period	Monday 4 November to Friday 22 November		

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)

- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2024.01 of the [Handbook](#)