This course, which is taught at both the PhD and MA levels, is concerned with how the so-called ‘critical turn’ in International Relations has been reflected specifically in thinking about Strategy and Security.

‘Critical Security Studies’ is, in its broadest sense, a collection of approaches all united by a profound dissatisfaction with so-called ‘traditional’ security studies. Critical Security Studies seeks to question, though not always completely do away with, the foundations upon which the dominant state-centrism and military-centrism is built.

This course deals with a number of these approaches: from the ‘conventional’ constructivists, through the ‘Copenhagen’ and ‘Aberystwyth’, or ‘Welsh’, Schools, to more ‘critical’ constructivist positions. In doing so, not only does it seek to illuminate the main theoretical assumptions underpinning each of the various approaches, but also to explore just how they are ‘critical’; that is, in what ways they challenge traditional security studies, and in what ways they compare and contrast with each other. While the course is mainly theoretical in its orientation, much emphasis is also placed on empirical application; how, and to what kind of cases, each of the approaches can be profitably applied.

Teaching Method
For this course, there are no lectures. Instead, students will participate in seminars where they are expected to form their own opinions through ‘critical’ evaluation of the readings. For each seminar, there will be one or two key texts (which are in the course reader). Seminar discussion will be structured around a short presentation of the text(s), in which students will summarise and critically evaluate the readings. Seminar discussion therefore depends on serious preparation: it is crucial that students do all of the reading required and come into the seminar fully prepared to actively take part in the discussion. For the topics discussed, there is not necessarily a right answer. What is important is to focus on the way that people think.
Method of Assessment

Each student will be assessed through a combination of seminar contribution, oral presentation, and written work.

For MA students, the requirement is two literature reviews and one research paper. The literature review is 1,500 words long (plus/minus 10%); the research paper is 4,000 words long (again, plus/minus 10%), and can be, if chosen an extension to one of the prior literature reviews. For the final grade: 25% is given to each literature review (40%); 50% to the research paper; with the remaining 10% being allotted to seminar attendance and contribution.

For PhD students, the requirement is three in-class, oral presentations, three literatures reviews (as extensions of the oral presentations), and one reflection paper. The literature review is 2,500 words long (plus/minus 10%); the reflection paper is 5,000 words long (again, plus/minus 10%). For the final grade: 20% is given to each oral presentation and literature review taken as a whole (60%); 30% to the reflection paper; with, again, the remaining 10% being allotted to seminar attendance and contribution.

For MA Students, the First Literature Review is due at the end of week 6; the second at the end of week 10. All other deadlines for assessed work will be established in the first, introductory seminar.

Guidelines for the Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review is essentially two-fold: one, to situate the chosen key text within the wider debate(s); and two, to make a critique of the key text informed by the existing literature.

Any text can be situated in a wider debate: its theoretical/conceptual standpoint and the more specific arguments that derive from that standpoint can only be properly understood when set against other works. Together, these texts collectively constitute a written conversation. Some texts may exemplify a particular debate; others might be read as belonging to several, overlapping written conversations. The literature review thus demands that students not only identify the general context within which the key text can be situated, but are also explicit as to the specific nature of the debate according to which they will structure their critique.
In terms of structure, one or two introductory paragraphs should be devoted to the above task (context and debate). Following on from this, the main body should then put in place a coherent and sustained, critical evaluation of the key text. Some concluding paragraph is also warranted, although the exact content of that paragraph is dependent on the purpose of the critique. The main points of the critical evaluation should derive explicitly from the wider literature. Given the length of the literature review; just 1,500 words (for MAs) it is reasonable to expect that no more than 4-5 other works are utilized, likewise informing no more than just a couple of critical points. For PhDs, with a bigger limit of 2,500 words, the inclusion of more sources will be appropriate.

Please keep in mind that the key text remains the focus of the literature review, and will thus serve to structure both the general nature of the debate and the specifics of the critical evaluation.

Method of Assessment
Each student will be assessed through a combination of seminar contribution and written work. In terms of seminar contribution, each student will make one oral presentation. For written work, two papers are required; one mid-term and one end-term. For the mid-term paper, students will write a Literature Review of 2,500 words (+/- 10%); for the end term, a Research Paper of 4,500 words (+/- 10%). The topics for the papers are of the students’ own choosing, although each paper much reflect a different topic. For the Research Paper, 40% of the overall grade is allocated; for the Literature Review, 30%; for the oral presentation, 20%; with the remaining 10% being allocated to seminar attendance and contribution.

Guidelines for Assessment
The research paper is the most important element as part of the overall assessment. In terms of grading the term paper, the categories below provide some guidance as to what qualities assessors are looking for, and what kinds of weakness may incline assessors towards giving a lower mark.

A Work of exceptional quality that authoritatively demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the topic. Well argued, organised, and structured. Critical awareness of the theoretical and/or empirical material, and shows originality of thought.
A- Work of high quality that is well above the average for a postgraduate paper. Not necessarily faultless in terms of the above, but still shows some originality of thought.

B+ A very competent piece of work displaying substantial knowledge and understanding. There may well be room for improvement in terms of organisation and structure, although in general terms the work is solid.

B Again a piece of some competence. More improvement than the above will be required organisationally and structurally. Work at this level may also display some oversimplification and irrelevance.

B- An adequate piece of work, but where significant improvements must be made. Too much oversimplification and irrelevance. Required points are missing. Work may also contain serious grammatical errors.

C+ Inadequate. A work displaying far too many of the above weaknesses.

F A totally unacceptable piece of work. Fail.

Week 1/Seminar 1. Introduction

Week 1/Seminar 2. No Class

Week 2/Seminar 3. Third Generation Strategic Culture: Global Norms

Key Text:

Week 2/Seminar 4. Third Generation Strategic Culture: Institutional Culture

Key Text:

Further Reading for 2/3 & 2/4:


**Week 3/Seminar 5. Societal Security**

**Key Text:**


**Further Reading:**


Key Text:

Further Reading:
Richard Jackson, Writing the War on Terrorism (Manchester: MUP, 2005).

Week 4/Seminar 7. Ontological Security: Social Dependence and Routinisation
Key Text:

Key Text:

Further Reading (for 4/7 & 4/8):
Steele, Organizational Processes and Ontological (in)Security: Torture, the CIA and the United States’, *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol.52, no.1, 2017,
Week 5/Seminar 9. Securitization

Key Text:

Further Reading:
Collins (ed.), Contemporary Security Studies, Chapter 9: Ralf Emmers, ‘Securitization’.

Week 5/Seminar 10. ‘Second Generation’ Securitization

Key Text:

Further Reading:
Week 6/Seminar 11. Contextualising Securitization

Key Text:

Further Reading:

Week 6/Seminar 12. No Class

Week 7/Seminar 13. The Ethics of Securitization

Key Text:

Further Reading:


**Week 7/Seminar 14. The ‘Paris School’: Securitization as Practice**

**Key Text:**


**Further Reading:**


Week 8/Seminar 15. Desecuritisation

Key Text:

Further Reading:
Mark Salter, ‘Securitization and Desecuritization: A Dramaturgical Analysis of the Canadian Air Transport Authority’, *Journal of International Relations and Development*, vol.11, no.4, 2008.
Kristian Atland, ‘Mikhail Gorbachev, the Murmansk Initiative, and the Desecuritization of Interstate Relations in the Arctic’, *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol.43, no.3, 2008.

Week 8/Seminar 16. Risk

Key Text:

Further Reading:

Week 9/Seminar 17. Marginalisations, Nothings, Images

Key Text:

Further Reading:

**Week 9/Seminar 18. Human Security, Development and Biopolitics**

**Key Text:**

**Further Reading:**
Week 10/Seminar 19. Security as Emancipation

Key Text:

Further Reading:

Week 10/Seminar 20. No Class.

Week 11/Seminar 21. Militarised Feminities

Key Text:

Further Reading:
Laura Sjoberg & Caron E. Gentry, ‘Reduced to Bad Sex: Narratives of Violent Women from the Bible to the War on Terror’, *International Relations*, vol.22, no.1, 2008.


**Week 11/Seminar 22. The Gendering of Political Violence**

**Key Text:**


**Further Reading:**


Week 12/Seminar 23. ‘Positive-‘, ‘Negative-‘, and ‘Anti-Security’

Key Text:

Further Reading:


**Key Text:**

**Further Reading:**