

Political Science 4806A: NATO and World Order

Winter 2026

Seminar: Thursdays 11:35am-2:25pm

This course will be held remotely online

Instructor: Dr. Aaron Ettinger

Email Address: aaron.ettinger@carleton.ca

Office Hours: By appointment via videoconference

Brightspace link: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/286240>

All email communication is to be via official Carleton University e-mail accounts and/or Brightspace, not personal emails.

Reading list begins on page 5.

II Course Description

The NATO alliance has long been considered the linchpin of transatlantic security. However, for much of its existence, this seemed to be more of a cliché than fact. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has tested that claim like no other event in NATO's three-quarters of a century existence. The restoration of Donald Trump to the US presidency only adds urgency to questions about transatlantic solidarity. Indeed, NATO's first secretary general Lord Hastings Lionel Ismay was right when he deemed NATO's purpose to "keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down." Eight decades later, Ismay's cheekiness still seems relevant. This class will explore the past, present, and future of NATO. It addresses NATO's historical development during the Cold War, adaptations in the 1990s and 2000s, and the suite of contemporary challenges it faces. This class assesses the history and politics of NATO, from its founding through to the Trump era, and forward to 2030.

II. Preclusions

There are no preclusions for this course

III. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this twelve-week course, students will be able to:

- (1) Identify political trends in the transatlantic alliance in the post-Cold War era;
- (2) Explain how NATO politics has evolved over time;
- (3) Speak clearly about the theoretical and empirical aspects of the transatlantic alliance;
- (4) Write clearly and persuasively about the complexities of NATO.

IV. Texts & Course Materials

All readings are available on Brightspace or through ARES at no cost to the student.

V. Course Format

This course will be held entirely online. Each week at the scheduled time, we will meet in a synchronous, real-time Zoom class. All communication with the instructor will be undertaken through Zoom meetings or email.

Contact Policy:

Email is the best way to get in touch with the professor outside of usually scheduled office hours. Students should remember the following things when emailing:

ALWAYS USE your Carleton email account! Non-Carleton messages don't always get through
INCLUDE the subject line "PSCI 4806A"

ADDRESS emails to the professor (i.e. Dear Dr. Ettinger).

SIGN OFF with your first and last name and student number.

VI Evaluation at a Glance

Assignment	Due Date	% of Final Grade
Single page commentaries	Four submissions during weeks 2-7	25%
Policy Critique	February 27	25%
Research Paper	April 8	40%
Course Engagement	Ongoing	10%
		100%

VII Evaluation in detail

25% - Single Page Written Commentaries x 4, due before the start of each class, weeks 2-7

You will write four (4) single-page commentaries in response to the required readings prior to the reading week. Each commentary will be graded out of 10. The total score out of 40 will be worth 25 percent of the term for this portion of the coursework. Commentaries should be no longer than one page single-spaced. There is no need to provide citations or a bibliography. If you cannot resist the urge to cite, refer to the author of the article in parenthesis and I will assume that it corresponds to the syllabus. The point is that these commentaries fit onto a single page.

Commentaries must address subject matter raised by the week's readings. Within those parameters, the discussion may address any component of the readings that piques your interest. Treat the commentaries as editorial reflections on the material at hand. This may include specific objections to the literature, broad commentaries, issues you would like to explore, et cetera. Though the direction is up to you, the compositions should avoid trivial concerns or

summarizing the readings. The commentaries should be submitted by 11:35am at the start of class. Why? So you think deeply about the issue before the class discussion.

25% - Policy Critique Essay, 1500 words, due Friday, February 27 at 11:59pm

Students will read the 2022 NATO Strategic Concept and write a critique of the policy. Your policy critique will assess the policy as a practical guide to organizing NATO's posture in the world in the 2020s based on what you now know about NATO. Your paper will make an overall evaluation of the policy (and have a thesis statement) and will offer a well-reasoned analysis that defends your position.

Your policy critique should include:

- (a) An overall evaluation of the document based on a close textual reading
- (b) Identified strengths and/or weaknesses with explanations
- (c) Analytical connections to material learned so far in this course
- (d) Citations and bibliographic entries as necessary

40% - Research Paper Essay– 4000-4500 words – Due April 8

In this assignment you will write a position paper that makes the case for a specific policy for the next Strategic Concept, most likely to arrive in 2030.

Imagine yourself as a policy adviser to a Minister of Defence or Minister of Foreign Affairs of a NATO country. Your task is to pitch an idea for the *2030 Strategic Concept*. The essay that you will write is a lengthy memorandum about the big idea your Minister should take to the next NATO Summit. You will make a case for why your chosen topic should go into the next Strategic Concept. This is your opportunity to explore an issue that interests you. Topics may flow from classroom conversations or from weekly reflection papers. Students may also select a topic that is not covered on the syllabus, provided it relates to the course's theme.

Your paper will have the following components:

- (1) A draft "paragraph(s)" that you would like to see included in the 2030 Strategic Concept;
- (2) A theoretical basis for your policy;
- (3) An analytical/historical background of this topic;
- (4) A justification about why this new text is important for the future of NATO
- (5) Anticipated problems with implementation and limitations of your proposed policy

The ordinary demands of an academic research paper apply. Your essay must have a bibliography and use a proper citation style.

10% - Class Attendance & Course Engagement

The seminar portion of this course will be held over Zoom each week. A modest percentage of the overall grade is apportioned to participation in this setting. I will assess your participation on

three general criteria. Class participation during the discussion sessions each week, as well as any one-on-one conversations we may have. Accommodations on a case-by-case basis will be made for those who cannot participate online.

AI Policy

Use of Artificial Intelligence for generating content is prohibited in this course. You may use AI for correcting grammar and syntax. However, the point of practicing your writing is to practice thinking. The ideas should be your own; anything else is plagiarism. AI generated writing tends to be bland and the ideas are mediocre. Don't rely on it.

Late Policy:

Where late assignments are accepted, they are penalized at the rate of 1% of the student's final grade in the course. An assignment is considered one day late if it is submitted to Brightspace any time up to 23:59 hours after the deadline. If it is submitted between 23:59 and 47:59 hours after the deadline, it is considered two days late, etc.

A waiver of lateness penalties will only be considered in the event of an officially documented extenuating circumstance. See "Accommodations & Extension Policy for Assignments" below.

Final Submission Date for Assignments

The final submission date for assignments is one week (7 days) after their due date (with the imposition of late penalties). The instructors WILL NOT accept assignments for grading after this time without a documented extenuating circumstance. If an extenuating circumstance may prevent the student from submitting an assignment by its submission date, the student must contact the professor as soon as possible and provide documentation concerning the situation.

Accommodation & Extension Policy for Assignments

If a student is registered, the student should consult with the professor regarding necessary accommodations to allow completion of assignments & exams.

All other requests for assignment extensions must be directed to the professor. The instructor will only consider granting an extension in the event of significant extenuating circumstances (that is, serious personal illness, critical personal or family crisis, etc.). If a situation arises that may prevent a student from completing an assignment, the student should contact the professor as early as possible, ideally before the assignment is due.

Grade Appeals:

Any errors of addition may be raised immediately with the professor. Asking for an explanation of your grade is perfectly fine. Asking for a re-grade requires greater effort on the part of the student. If a student is concerned that an assignment was not graded appropriately, the student should first meet with the professor. To request a review of an assignment, the student must provide a 1-page explanation of why the assignment was improperly graded (i.e. what do you think you did that should have been given more weight?). The explanation should be submitted

to the professor no later than **2 weeks** after the assignment was made available for return. NOTE: Students must take responsibility for picking up their marked work in a timely manner. No appeals will be considered that have been initiated more than 2 weeks after the assignment/exam was returned. **Grades may be either raised, stay the same, or lowered on appeal.**

Final Grade Approval

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

VIII Course schedule

January 8	Introductions
January 15	The Transatlantic Scene in 2026
January 22	NATO's Origins & Purpose
February 29	NATO in the '90s
February 5	NATO After 9/11
February 12	NATO and Russia's War in Ukraine
	Reading Week
February 26	NATO & the Authoritarian Great Powers
March 5	Canada & NATO
March 12	Burden Sharing & Defence Spending
March 19	Climate Change & the Arctic
March 26	NATO & the Women, Peace and Security Agenda
April 2	New Threats

Week 1 – January 8: Introductions (20 pages)

Sperling, James, and Mark Webber. 2025. Understanding NATO. In *The Oxford Handbook of NATO*, edited by James Sperling and Mark Webber. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 3-23.

Week 2 – January 15 The Transatlantic Scene in 2026 (84 pages)

Flockhart, Trine. 2025. "Global Order." In *The Oxford Handbook of NATO*, edited by James Sperling and Mark Webber. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 24-39.

Hofmann, Stephanie C., and Michael John Williams. 2025. "Domestic Politics." In *The Oxford Handbook of NATO*, edited by James Sperling and Mark Webber. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 40-56.

Sloan, Stanley R. 2025. "Whither NATO? A History of NATO's Futures." In *The Oxford Handbook of NATO*, edited by James Sperling and Mark Webber. Oxford University Press. pp. 94-110.

Gheciu, Alexandra, and Stéfanie von Hlatky. 2024. "Irreconcilable Differences? NATO's Response to Russian Aggression Against Ukraine." *International Journal* 79 (2):275-296.

Scholz, Olaf. 2022. "The Global Zeitenwende." *Foreign Affairs* 102 (1): 22-38.

Week 3 – January 22: NATO's Origins & Purpose (65~ pages)

NATO. 1949. *The North Atlantic Treaty*, North Atlantic Treaty Organization. 4 April
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_17120.htm

Orr, R. James. 2025. "The North Atlantic Treaty." In *The Oxford Handbook of NATO*, edited by James Sperling and Mark Webber, Oxford University Press. pp. 247-260.

Thies, Wallace J. 2009. *Why NATO Endures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters. 3 and 4. Pp. 87-139.

Week 4 – January 29: NATO in the '90s (62 pages)

Howard, Michael. 1999. NATO at Fifty: An Unhappy Successful Marriage: Security Means Knowing What to Expect. *Foreign Affairs* 78 (3): 164-175.

Sarotte, M.E. 2021. "Containment Beyond the Cold War: How Washington Lost the Post-Soviet Peace." *Foreign Affairs* 100 (6): 22-36.

Mearsheimer, John J. 2014. "Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault." *Foreign Affairs* 93 (5):77-89.

Marten, Kimberly. 2020. "NATO Enlargement: Evaluating its Consequences in Russia." *International Politics* 57 (3): 401-426.

Week 5 – February 5: NATO After 9/11 (82 pages)

Hallams, Ellen. 2009. "The Transatlantic Alliance Renewed: The United States and NATO Since 9/11." *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 7 (1): 38-60.

Giegerich, Bastian, and Stéfanie von Hlatky. "Experiences May Vary: NATO and Cultural Interoperability in Afghanistan." *Armed Forces & Society* 46 (3):495-516.

Carati, Andrea. 2015. "No Easy Way Out: Origins of NATO's Difficulties in Afghanistan." *Contemporary Security Policy* 36 (2): 200-218.

von Hlatky, Stéfanie, and Thomas Juneau. 2022. "When the Coalition Determines the Mission: NATO's Detour in Libya." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 45 (2):258-279.

Week 6 – February 12: NATO & Russia’s War in Ukraine (86 pages)

McFaul, Michael. 2020. “Putin, Putinism, and the Domestic Determinants of Russian Foreign Policy.” *International Security* 45 (2):95-139.

Goldgeier, James, and Brian D. Taylor. 2025. “NATO Did Not Cause Putin’s Imperial War.” *The Washington Quarterly* 48 (4):67-82.

Kaarbo, Juliet, Kai Oppermann, and Ryan K Beasley. 2023. “What If? Counterfactual Trump and the Western Response to the War in Ukraine.” *International Affairs* 99 (2):605-624.

WINTER BREAK: FEBRUARY 16-20

Week 7 – February 26: NATO & the Authoritarian Great Powers (81 pages)

Flockhart, Trine. 2024. “NATO in the Multi-Order World.” *International Affairs* 100 (2):471-489

Larsen, Henrik. 2021. “NATO in an Illiberal World.” *The RUSI Journal* 166 (3): 84-92.

Larsen, Henrik. 2022. “Adapting NATO to Great-Power Competition.” *The Washington Quarterly* 45 (4): 7-26.

Dannreuther, Roland. 2025. “Russia.” In *The Oxford Handbook of NATO*, edited by James Sperling and Mark Webber, Oxford University Press. pp. 855-873.

Cottey, Andrew, and Mark Webber. 2025. “China.” In *The Oxford Handbook of NATO*, edited by James Sperling and Mark Webber, Oxford University Press. Pp. 874-892.

Week 8 – March 5: Canada & NATO (89 pages)

Jockel, Joseph T., and Joel J. Sokolsky. 2009. “Canada and NATO: Keeping Ottawa in, Expenses Down, Criticism Out... and the Country Secure.” *International Journal* 64 (2):315-336.

Massie, Justin. 2019. Why Canada Goes to War: Explaining Combat Participation in US-led Coalitions. *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 52 (3): 575-594.

Ettinger, Aaron, and Jeffrey Rice. 2016. “Hell is Other People’s Schedules: Canada’s Limited-Term Military Commitments, 2001-2015.” *International Journal* 71 (3): 371-392.

Ettinger, Aaron. 2023. “Explaining Canada’s Unsurprising Response to Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine, 2022-2023.” *Desafios* 35 (Especial):1-28.

Week 9 – March 12: Burden Sharing & Defence Spending (83 pages)

- Zyla, Benjamin. 2025. "Burden-Sharing." In *The Oxford Handbook of NATO*, edited by James Sperling and Mark Webber, Oxford University Press, pp. 499-516.
- Greco, Sara, and Stéfanie von Hlatky. 2018. "Soft Contributions are Hard Commitments: NATO and Canada's Global Security Agenda." *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 24 (3): 273-285.
- Badawi, Habib, and Mohamad Zreik. 2025. "Counting Allies' Coins: Trump's NATO Strategy and Its Implications for Transatlantic Relations." *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 23:1-20.
- Massie, Justin, and Barbora Tallová. 2025. "Suckers and Free Riders: The Determinants of Military Burden-Sharing in the Russo-Ukrainian War." *Contemporary Security Policy* 46 (4):913-947.

Week 10 – March 19: Climate Change, the Arctic & Outer Space (57 pages)

- Werrell, Caitlin E., and Francesco Femia. 2016. "Climate Change, the Erosion of State Sovereignty, and World Order." *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 23 (2): 221-235.
- Thomasen, Gry. 2025. "NATO and Climate Change: Towards a Joint Understanding and Response." *International Journal* 80 (2): 312–322.
- Odgaard, Liselotte. 2022. "Russia's Arctic Designs and NATO." *Survival* 64 (4):89-104.
- Depledge, Duncan. 2021. "NATO and the Arctic." *The RUSI Journal* 165 (5-6): 80-90.
- Berge, Jonas Vidhammer, and Liselotte Odgaard. 2023. "NATO in the Global Commons: Defending Outer Space Against Threats from China." *International Journal* 78 (4):634-642.

Week 11 – March 26: NATO & the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda (65 pages)

- Lindsey, Summer. 2025. "UNSCR 1325 Past, Present, and Future: A Twenty-Five Year Retrospective." *Politics & Gender* 21 (3):675-680.
- Hudson, Valerie M. 2025. "Whither Women and Peace and Security?" *Politics & Gender* 21 (3):726-731.
- Wright, Katharine AM. 2016. "NATO's Adoption of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security: Making the Agenda a Reality." *International Political Science Review* 37 (3): 350-361.

Hardt, Heidi, and Stéfanie von Hlatky. 2020. "NATO's About-Face: Adaptation to Gender Mainstreaming in an Alliance Setting." *Journal of Global Security Studies* 5 (1): 136-159.

O'Sullivan, Mila. 2024. "Women, Peace and Security as Deterrence? NATO and Russia's War Against Ukraine." *International Affairs* 100 (2):549-568.

Week 12 – April 3: New Threats (77 pages)

Sperling, James. 2025. "Emerging and Disruptive Technologies." In *The Oxford Handbook of NATO*, edited by James Sperling and Mark Webber. Oxford University Press. pp. 481-498.

Lindley-French, Julian. 2025. "Cybrid Warfare." In *The Oxford Handbook of NATO*, edited by James Sperling and Mark Webber. Oxford University Press. pp. 435-449.

Nye Jr, Joseph S. 2022. "The End of Cyber-Anarchy?" *Foreign Affairs* 101 (1): 32-42.

Jacobsen, Jeppe T. 2021. "Cyber Offense in NATO: Challenges and Opportunities." *International Affairs* 97 (3):703-720.

Willett, Marcus. 2022. "The Cyber Dimension of the Russia–Ukraine War." *Survival* 64 (5):7-26.

Political Science Course Outline Appendix

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Student Mental Health

As a university student, you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus):

<https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton Resources:

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

<https://carleton.ca/wellness/>

Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>

Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>

Academic Advising Centre (AAC):

<https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>

Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS):

<https://carleton.ca/csas/>

Equity & Inclusivity Communities:

<https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>

Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>

Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>

ood2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>

The Walk-In Counselling Clinic:

<https://walkincounselling.com>

Academic consideration for medical or other

extenuating circumstances: Students must contact the instructor(s) of their absence or inability to complete the academic deliverable within the predetermined timeframe due to medical or other extenuating circumstances. For a range of medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may use the online self-declaration form and where appropriate, the use of medical documentation. This policy regards the accommodation of extenuating circumstances for both short-term and long-term periods and extends to all students enrolled at Carleton University. Students should also consult the [Course Outline Information on Academic Accommodations](#) for more information. Detailed information about the procedure for requesting academic consideration can be found [here](#).

Pregnancy: Contact your Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, please contact Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC) at equity@carleton.ca or by calling (613) 520-5622 to speak to an Equity Advisor.

Religious obligation: Contact your Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with

Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, please request your accommodations for this course through the [Ventus Student Portal](#) at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For final exams, the deadlines to request accommodations are published in the [University Academic Calendars](#). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

Survivors of Sexual Violence: As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>.

Accommodation for Student Activities: Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided

to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to write a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply within **three working days** to the Registrar's Office for permission to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully supported by the appropriate documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered. [See Undergraduate Calendar, Article 4.3](#)

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s). Permissibility of submitting substantially the same piece of work more than once for academic credit. If group or collaborative work is expected or allowed, provide a clear and specific description of how and to what extent you consider collaboration to be acceptable or appropriate, especially in the completion of written assignments.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's official withdrawal dates

OFFICIAL FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's Official Exam Period (may include evenings & Saturdays or Sundays)

For more information on the important dates and deadlines of the academic year, consult the [Carleton Calendar](#).

GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system is described in the Undergraduate Calendar section [5.4](#). Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the university's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*" This can include:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*"

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

RESOURCES (613-520-2600, phone ext.)

Department of Political Science (2777)	B640
Loeb	
Registrar's Office (3500)	300 Tory
Centre for Student Academic Success (3822)	4 th floor
Library	
Academic Advising Centre (7850)	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre (6608)	501
Nideyinàn	
Career Services (6611)	401 Tory