

The War Studies Masterclass in Strategy

Convenor: Professor Theo Farrell, Head of War Studies

Overview

“Strategy” is among the most widely misused, and conceptually misunderstood, of terms. Yet it is central to the study of war. This short course, for MA students in War Studies, will examine how national leaders and senior policymakers actually *do* strategy. As former very senior civilian and military leaders, the course speakers will give MA students privileged insight into how the United Kingdom has attempted to act strategically in tackling the key challenges of the past decade – countering terrorism, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and managing the transatlantic relationship.

The course will begin with a discussion by a panel of academic experts on the origins, meaning and practice of strategy. Strategy, as the concept is applied in War Studies, is commonly understood as the relationship between means and ends in national policy. In contrast, this course will focus on the role of strategy in preserving national policy options in the context of uncertainty created by imperfect information, and often mounting pressure for action.

This is an elective non-credit course. There are no assignments or assessment. Some preparatory readings are suggested below to aid understanding, but these are not compulsory. The format will be a 45 minute lecture by the speaker, followed by 45 minute Q&A session.

Lectures 2-6 will be conducted strictly under the Chatham House rule. This means that nothing said by a speaker, in his lecture or his answers to questions, may be attributed to that speaker. It is vital that participants observe this rule so that speakers may have the confidence to speak frankly about their experiences in government.

Time and Location

5.00 – 6.30 pm, Room K4U.12, Strand Campus.

Thematic Outline

1. Strategy: origins, meaning, purpose (5 February 2014)
2. Intelligence and counter-terrorism (12 February 2014)
3. American power in the 21st century (19 February 2014)
4. Generalship and strategy (26 February 2014)
5. British strategy in Afghanistan (5 March 2014)
6. Alliances and military coalitions (12 March 2014)

Recommended text

Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2013).
Details from [OUP website](#).

Lecture 1: The War Studies Panel

“Strategy: origins, meaning, practice”

The purpose of this first session is to introduce you to the origins, meanings, and practice of strategy. Lawrence Freedman is unable to launch the mini-course this year, so in his place will be a panel of experts on strategy from War Studies, **Dr David Betz**, **Prof Theo Farrell** and **Dr Jan Willem Honig**. We will be reflecting on Sir Lawrence's new monumental study on strategy, and also more generally discussing the contested meanings and recent practice of strategy.

Recommended reading:

Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Hew Strachan, “The Lost Meaning of Strategy,” *Survival* 47(3), 2005.

Daivd Betz and Anthony Cormack, “Iraq, Afghanistan and British Strategy,” *Orbis*, 2009, download: https://www.academia.edu/1461365/Iraq_Afghanistan_and_British_Strategy

Lecture 2: Sir David Omand

“The uses and abuses of intelligence in formulating strategy”

The lecture will examine cases where the availability, and also the absence, of secret intelligence has affected the development of strategy, and will examine in particular the construction of counter-terrorism strategy after 9/11 in that light.

Speak Biography

Sir David Omand was the first UK Security and Intelligence Coordinator, responsible to the Prime Minister for the professional health of the intelligence community, national counter-terrorism strategy and “homeland security”. He served for seven years on the Joint Intelligence Committee. He was Permanent Secretary of the Home Office from 1997 to 2000, and before that Director of GCHQ. Previously, in the Ministry of Defence as Deputy Under Secretary of State for Policy, he was particularly concerned with long term strategy, with the British military contribution in restoring peace in the former Yugoslavia and the recasting of British nuclear deterrence policy at the end of the Cold War. He has been a visiting Professor in the Department of War Studies since 2005-6.

Recommended reading:

David Omand, “Countering International Terrorism: the Use of Strategy,” *Survival* 47(4), 2005-06.

David Omand, *Securing the State* (Hurst, 2010), chapters 2 and 8.

Lecture 3: Sir Nigel Sheinwald

“American power in the 21st century”

The lecture will aim to discuss the international landscape now and in the decades ahead, particularly the US role; explain some of the challenges for political leadership against this

backdrop; and address the role of the transatlantic relationship in a rapidly changing world. It will use examples and material from the speaker's experiences in London, Washington and Brussels over the past decade.

Speaker Biography

Sir Nigel Sheinwald is a former senior British diplomat and Visiting Professor in War Studies at KCL. He was British Ambassador to the United States (2007-12), Foreign Policy and Defence Adviser to the Prime Minister (2003-7) and British Permanent Representative to the EU in Brussels (2000-03). In a 35 year career, he served in a wide range of other roles, including Foreign Office Press Secretary in the 1990s, Deputy Head of Policy Planning in the 1980s, and in the Embassy in Moscow in the 1970s.

Recommended reading:

Joseph S. Nye, "The Future of American Power," *Foreign Affairs*, Nov/Dec 2010.
Jonathan Powell, *The New Machiavelli* (Vintage, 2011), chapter 11.

Lecture 4: Lieutenant General Jonathan Riley

"Strategic leadership on operations"

This lecture will provide a General Officers' view of Generalship and the relationship between theatre command and higher strategic imperatives. The general's requirement to connect strategic mandates with available means; the demands on resources; managing strategic messaging; and the role of a host nation in an expeditionary operation.

Speaker Biography

Lieutenant General Jonathan Riley has unrivalled experience in the high-level command of British forces within multinational coalitions. He was Deputy Commanding General Multi-National Division (South-West) in Bosnia, 1998 – 1999; UK Joint Task Force Commander in Sierra Leone in 2000-2001, Deputy Commanding General, Coalition Military Advisory and Training Team, Iraq, 2003 – 2004; Commanding General, Multi-National Division (South-East) and General Officer Commanding British Forces Iraq, 2004 - 2005, Deputy Commander of the NATO International Security Force, and General Officer Commanding British Forces Afghanistan, 2007-08. General Riley holds a PhD in Modern History from Cranfield University, and is a visiting professor in War Studies at King's College London and Birmingham University. In addition, Lieutenant-General Riley has published fifteen books.

Recommended reading:

Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force* (Penguin, 2006), chapters 7-9.

Lecture 5: Tim Willasey-Wilsey

"British strategy in Afghanistan"

Britain's campaign in Afghanistan is entering its twelfth year. The initial invasion of Afghanistan

quickly achieved the primary objective of overthrowing the Taliban and thereby denying the country as a base of operations for Al Qaeda. Why did Britain and the NATO allies stay to stabilize and rebuild the country? How did Britain end up deploying forces into Helmand Province in 2006? Why has the conflict dragged on for so long? This lecture will explore the evolution of British policy on the Afghan conflict since 2001, and assess the extent to which Britain has had a strategy for the Afghanistan.

Speaker Biography

Tim Wilsey served for 27 years with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, latterly as a Director. He served in 4 overseas posts; Angola (1983-86), Central America (1986-89), Pakistan (1993-96) and Geneva (1999-2002). His early career was mainly in Africa and Central America. Since 1993, the speaker's main focus has been on Asia; in particular India, Pakistan and Afghanistan and the challenges of terrorism, insurgency, the narcotics trade and wider regional dynamics. He retired from the FCO in 2008 and was appointed Senior Visiting Research Fellow at KCL in 2012.

Recommended reading:

David Betz and Anthony Cormack, "Iraq, Afghanistan and British Strategy," *Orbis*, 2009, download: https://www.academia.edu/1461365/Iraq_Afghanistan_and_British_Strategy

Matt Cavanagh, "Ministerial Decision-Making in the Run-up to the Helmand Deployment," *RUSI Journal* 157(2), 2012.

Lecture 6: Lieutenant General Jonathan Riley

"Command of alliances and coalitions"

This lecture will provide a practitioner's view of commanding troops from many nations; the different dynamics of coalitions versus alliances; the effect of national caveats; the interplay between large and small partners and how this translates into burden sharing.

Speaker Biography

Lieutenant General Jonathan Riley has unrivalled experience in the high-level command of British forces within multinational coalitions. For further detail, see lecture 4.

Recommended reading:

Stephen Saideman and David Auerswald, "Comparing Caveats: Understanding the Sources of National Restrictions Upon NATO's Mission in Afghanistan," *International Studies Quarterly* 56(1), 2012.