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SECuRiTy POLiCy
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OVERVIEW
Security Policy Studies (SPS) is a policy-oriented master’s degree program focusing on international security issues, with a particular emphasis on meeting 21st century security challenges. These include: weapons of mass destruction proliferation, transnational threats, terrorism, changing regional power dynamics, weak and failing states, international crime, and the links between security and development. The SPS program prepares U.S. and international students for these international security challenges by combining rigorous academic training with the development of valuable, career-enhancing skills.

IS THIS PROGRAM FOR YOU?
SPS is ideal for those who seek a rigorous academic program and opportunity to develop professional skills for the workplace. The program’s multidisciplinary curriculum combines core and elective courses selected to meet the student’s individual professional goals and intellectual interests. Classes are held in the evenings or over weekends to accommodate the busy schedules of working professionals, and to encourage students to pursue relevant daytime internships in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

CURRICULUM
The multidisciplinary 40-credit-hour M.A. program can be completed in two years of full-time study or over a longer period of part-time study. This program requires:

- A nine-credit core field providing vital historical, political, and defense background knowledge to the study of international security
- Two specialized fields to focus on specific international security, defense, or regional issues, such as:
  - Conflict and Conflict Resolution
  - Defense Analysis
  - Energy Security
  - Homeland Security Policy
  - Intelligence
  - Political Psychology
  - Regional Security
  - Science, Technology, and National Security Policy
  - Security and Development
  - Strategic Concepts and Military History
  - Transnational Security Issues
  - U.S. National Security and Defense Policy
  - Weapons of Mass Destruction
  - or a self-designed field
- An economics requirement to ensure career-relevant knowledge in this subject
- A tool requirement in statistics or in a foreign language to enhance students’ professional qualifications
- Three credits of professional skills courses to provide practical knowledge for effective career performance. Examples include training in Formal Briefing, Political Analysis, Alternative (Red Team) Analysis, Project Management and Evaluation for Security, and Writing for International Affairs Professionals
- A cumulative, four-credit capstone course addressing a security policy problem, using the skills and knowledge acquired in the course of study
FACULTY

The SPS program is a multidisciplinary program in which students can take courses from across the university. Core courses, however, have been designed specifically for SPS students and are taught by the program’s core faculty, including:

Joanna Spear, Director of the SPS program, specializes in the study of the defense industry, the relationship between security and development policies, and transnational relations. Professor Spear teaches seminars on “Transnational Security,” “Security & Development,” and “International Security Politics.”

Stephen Biddle is a security specialist whose work on military power bridges the divide between policy and scholarship, using the methods of modern social science to explain underlying causal relationships on which defense policy positions rest. Professor Biddle teaches seminars on “Methods of Defense Analysis,” “Conduct of War,” and “Military Technology Assessment.”

Alexander B. Downes is a political scientist specializing in the study of civil war, insurgencies, and terrorism. His research has focused on questions of civilian victimization in war and the consequences of foreign-imposed regime change. Professor Downes teaches seminars of “Civil War, Insurgency, and Terrorism” and “Military Power & Effectiveness.”

Charles L. Glaser, Director of the Institute for Security and Conflict Studies, specializes in international relations theory and security policy, with a particular emphasis on the security dilemma, arms races, nuclear issues, and energy security. Professor Glaser teaches the International Affairs cornerstone class.

Christopher A. Kojm, former chairman of the National Intelligence Council, specializes in counterterrorism and homeland security policy, the U.S. intelligence community, and U.S. foreign policy. Professor Kojm teaches seminars on “Terrorism & Counterterrorism,” “U.S. Strategy Toward Asia-Pacific,” and “U.S. Foreign Policy & International Organizations.”

Paul D. Williams, Associate Director of the SPS program, specializes in issues of conflict resolution, international peacekeeping, and warfare in Africa. Professor Williams teaches seminars on “Introduction to Conflict Resolution,” “International Peacekeeping,” and “War & Conflict in Africa.”

Additionally, the SPS program schedules numerous courses each semester which are taught by a variety of part-time professors who work full-time in the U.S. national security apparatus, NGOs, think tanks, and security consulting firms.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The Elliott School offers a variety of career development programs for students from the day of enrollment through graduation and beyond. The Graduate Student Career Development center offers career coaching, workshops, information sessions, and site visits to federal and international agencies, defense contractors, think tanks, non-profits, and other potential employers in the security field. Alumni are employed in the public (42% of graduates), non-profit (29%), and private (24%) sectors in the United States and abroad, and some pursue further education in other fields (2%).

ABOUT THE ELLIOTT SCHOOL

The George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Affairs is one of the world’s leading schools of international affairs and the largest school of international affairs in the United States. Located in the heart of Washington, DC, its mission is to educate the next generation of international leaders, conduct research that advances understanding of important global issues, and engage the policy community in the United States and around the world.

elliott.gwu.edu/sps.html