Syllabus

SEST 573-01
Security Issues in South Asia
Fall 2019
Monday: 5:00 – 7:30 pm
Professor: C. Christine Fair, Ph.D.

Place: Car Barn 205A
Office hours: Monday, 3-4 p.m. and by appointment
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About Me: A Content Warning

I am not a political scientist although I am frequently mistaken for one due to the kinds of work I do and the scholars with whom I collaborate. In fact, I completed by PhD in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilization—which is formally in the humanities—and an MA from the Harris School of Public Policy, also at the University of Chicago. I suffered about ten years at the RAND Corporation and another four years at the United States Institute of Peace before being fortunate enough to join the faculty at Georgetown. (You can read more at my website: christinefair.net.) This means that I have spent the vast majority of my adulthood studying various political and military affairs of South Asia, particularly in the countries of Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. My own research is mixed methods in that I draw upon qualitative and quantitative data. As I am fond of saying, if someone like me with a PhD in Punjabi literature can figure out data…anyone can. While my strong suit is South Asia, I have a solid grounding in interdisciplinary research.

I believe learning—and teaching—should be an enjoyable activity rather than a pestiferous undertaking. Therefore, I bring to my classroom my (often peculiar) sense of humor. (If you’re not having fun…at least I’ll be having fun.) As a warning, I have a ribald sense of humor and some of my lectures will reflect that. If you want to see what you are getting into before signing up for my course, you can peruse videos at my Youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/TheChristinefair. You can also peruse some of the quotidian (gendered, anti-Semitic, boorish) nonsense that a woman in this business has to endure by perusing the comments! (Trigger warning: some of them are vile.) Consequently, if you believe that professors should be ponderous, plodding, desporting about in suits and (bow)ties, and dreadfully serious all of the time, I may not be the best choice for you. Note that you have been warned.

I believe in being direct in providing verbal and written feedback, as this is most efficient means of communicating. (Translation: I will not preface my criticisms with an inventory of your past brilliance to lessen the pique of necessary critique. Take this as a sign of respect rather than discourtesy.)

My exams are also straight forward. There are no trick questions. If you have done the readings and taken notes on them, come to class and paid attention to the discussion and participated in the same, you will do well. Experience tells me this. The students who have difficulty with the exams are those who did not do the readings, did not take notes on the readings, did not attend the class discussions
and/or pay attention to them. However, as one student remarked I am “unreasonably unacceptable of failure.” (That’s a real quote. But we both agreed s/he failed.)

Finally, I use a red font—sometimes in bold—to indicate things that are important. Why? Red is the universal color that says “Look! You need to seriously pay attention to this!” This should not be a concern as some students have repined in the past. (I also use other font colors on occasion.)

Background to South Asia and this Course

South Asia includes the countries of Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and the Maldives. Some definitions of South Asia also include Afghanistan. I do as well for purposes of this course.

South Asia has long hosted some of the most serious challenges to U.S. national security interests. India and Pakistan have been locked in an intractable security competition since 1947 over the disputed disposition of Kashmir. There have been four Indo-Pakistani wars (1947, 1965, 1971, and 1999), a protracted proxy conflict since 1989, and numerous crises that have threatened to develop into full-scale conflicts. Pakistan has hosted Islamist militants that operate in India since 1947 and in Afghanistan since the 1970s. Since the overt nuclearization of the sub-continent in 1998, when India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons, the stakes of their competition have increased, with any war possibly resulting in inadvertent or inadvertent nuclear use. Attacks in India by Pakistan-based and backed militants remain one of the most likely precipitants of future Indo-Pakistan crises. Preventing such crises and concomitant nuclear escalation remains a prominent US regional priority.

While India’s security competition with Pakistan is well known, India also has outstanding territorial disputes with China, which defeated India in the Sino-Indian War of 1962. Indeed, it was this loss that motivated India’s pursuit of nuclear weapons. The rise of India and China impose a number of security challenges on the United States as it manages its interests in South Asia and beyond. Indeed, managing the rise of China has been a principal driver of developing the US-India strategic relationship. For New Delhi, the growing peer competition with Beijing has surpassed the old Indo-Pakistani rivalry as a driver of defense planning and strategy. For all the focus on Pakistan, Afghanistan, and their fragilities, it is the contest between Asia’s rising giants that will shape the future of the region, and the world.

Throughout the 1980s, the United States — principally with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia — raised, supported, and missioned Islamist insurgents (“mujahideen”) to wage a guerilla war against the Soviet occupation. With the Soviet withdrawal and collapse of the U.S.S.R., as well as the invocation of proliferation-related sanctions against Pakistan, Washington’s interests in the region lapsed. With the 9/11 terrorist attacks by al Qaeda, U.S. attention again focused upon Afghanistan and Pakistan. After being routed in late 2001, the Taliban fled to Pakistan’s tribal areas, where they regrouped and launched an unexpected insurgent campaign against the United States, NATO, and the Afghan government. Currently, the Taliban have the initiative and the United States and its allies are struggling to retard and possibly reverse Taliban successes to increase the likelihood that the Afghan government can secure the state at some point in the near future.

While Islamist militants are well known in Pakistan and Afghanistan, Bangladesh too has witnessed the emergence of Islamist militants operating in and from the country, often enjoying linkages to Pakistani groups. India, long a victim of Pakistan-backed Islamist terror groups, has been afflicted by
a number of ethnic and religious-based insurgencies since 1947 and is now witnessing the emergence of indigenous Islamist militant groups in the Indian heartland that are motivated by grievances disconnected from the famed Kashmir dispute but are likely enjoying support from Pakistan.

In addition, Sri Lanka has experienced some three decades of ethno-nationalist insurgency with the Tamil Tigers waging a vicious war on the Government of Sri Lanka. Nepal too has undergone several years of Maoist insurgency. (We will not cover Nepal in this course.)

Course Learning Goals

During this course, you will garner an understanding of the following concepts:

- The partition of the sub-continent and its consequences.
- An overview of the Indian and Pakistani armies and the roles they play at home and abroad.
- Sources of Indo-Pakistani security competition, including the Kashmir dispute.
- The past and present dimensions of the Sino-Indian security competition.
- The emergence of Bangladesh from the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war and its implications for Pakistani identity formation and other aspects of regional security.
- New sources of Islamist militancy in India and Bangladesh, with important ties to founding militant groups in Pakistan.
- The various proximal and distal threats to international and regional security due to ongoing conflict in Afghanistan.
- The effects of nuclearization of the Indo-Pakistan security competition.
- The regional and global consequences of the rise of India as well as China.
- The main insurgencies confronting modern India including, the Kashmir Insurgency, the Sikh Insurgency, the insurgencies in India’s North East, and the various Naxalite movements.

This is not a course on “current events.” If you expect to devote considerable time to what is in the newspapers or social media feeds, this is not the course for you. The course aims to enable you to understand the current events in the region. You are welcome to raise events that arise that are salient to the topics under study in a given week, as well as events that are momentous for the region that do not particularly relate to the topics of the week. These will be rare and must indeed be momentous rather than quotidian events that characterize the region.

This is not intended to be a lecture-style course; rather, it is a seminar. I expect all students to come prepared and engage in a class discussion that is structured around questions and answers to illuminate key aspects of the course readings. While I will end the course discussions with key takeaways, you are expected to fully contribute. Note: This cannot be a discussion-based course if you have not done the readings.

Email Etiquette

This is not the only course I teach, you are not my only students and teaching is not my only obligation. I receive about 100 emails each day. Please expect that it will take one full business day to respond to you. If you email me between Friday evening and Monday morning, expect that I will get
back to you by late Monday or Tuesday morning. Also, please do not address your emails to me using my first name. If this guidance strikes you as odd, let me provide you some reading on this issue:


**Policy on Computers, Phones and Social Media**

It is expressly forbidden to film or record these lectures. Students who do so will be asked to leave the class and you will receive no credit for attending the class. I will also report this to SSP leadership. It is also forbidden to post quotes or photos to other social or other media attributable to me, this class or your classmates. This is to ensure that we all can have a safe environment to engage the literature and the intellectual objectives of this course. There will be no exceptions.

**Assessing Learning**

To assess students’ progress in meeting this course’s learning objectives students will take two exams, described below. In addition, there will be several brief “pop quizzes” throughout the semester that I will administer during the class at a time of my choosing. I address each of these below in turn.

**Quizzes:** There will be quizzes. These are intended to ensure that students have done the required readings. These will be posted to Canvas and you are to complete the readings before the start of class. Late quizzes we will receive a score of zero.

**Group Projects:** There will be two group projects in this course that will be discussed at the appropriate time. The first group project is a collective effort that will result in a brief analytical memo. The second has both a written and oral component. The final class of this course is reserved for a final group project that involves oral presentations.

**Exams:** There will be two exams that will be comprised of short answer and essay questions. These exams will be “take home,” open book, open-net and untimed. Most students require at least three hours to complete the exam. Plan accordingly. I expressly forbid all collaboration and I will treat it as an honor code violation, as I will any other violation of the honor code (plagiarism, making up data, etc.). Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Honor Code.

*Exams that are submitted late will receive a failing grade. Because glitches do happen: save your confirmation email that you in fact e-mailed me your exam. Include yourself on the CC line as
evidence. The onus of providing evidence of timely submission is upon you. Note that for grading purposes, exams must be uploaded to Blackboard. Do that before emailing me a backup copy.

Class Participation and Commentary: Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions. Class participation includes completing assigned readings, attending all classes (unless a student is ill, has a religious obligation, or has some other emergency), and contributing to class discussion.

*I strongly encourage students to take notes on the readings to facilitate recall during our class discussions. Please note carefully the main argument of the reading, the empirical bases for the reading’s argument, specific important details germane to the topic and argument of the reading, and whether you agree or disagree with the theses advanced.*

Class participation is not a part of your formal grade; however, it will play a factor in determining borderline grades. For example, if a student’s grade is a B+ but is very close to an A- and the student was an effective partner in classroom discussions and demonstrated that s/he had a competent mastery of the reading, I will give her/him an A-. If s/he was not a participant in class discussions and/or evidenced little understanding of the assigned readings, she/he will get the B+.

Final course grades

You will receive grades commensurate with the quality of the work irrespective of the performance of others in the class. (That is: materials for this course are not graded on a curve.) For sample of criteria of grades, please see Appendix A. Below I indicate how I weight the items for your final grade.

10%: Average Quiz Score
10%: Group Projects
40%: First exam
40%: Second exam

Policy on Grade Disputes: I make every effort to be fair. Ultimately, grading of products for this course may be subjective on occasion. If you believe that I was unfair in my assessment, you must request a reconsideration of your grade within 48 hours of receiving your grade. However, be aware that while I may have mistakenly assessed your paper downward by overlooking some critical virtue(s), I may also have missed serious flaws upon first review and unfairly assessed it upward. *My re-grade of your paper will reflect the results of this complete review of your exam, be it positive, negative, or neutral. Make your case wisely. You have the option of appealing this grade by emailing the director of SSP (Professor Kier Lieber). He will form an appeal board. The board’s grade is final.*

Policy on missed classes: Consistent with SSP guidelines, students may not miss more than two classes and pass this course. Please plan vacation and work schedules accordingly. I take attendance weekly. If you are ill or will miss a class due to religious observance, please let me know in advance of class. If possible, I would like students to at least call in during these absences. *A call-in does not mitigate the fact that you missed the class. If you are absent on a day on which I give a quiz, you will receive zero points. I will not give a quiz on a day of religious observation if I know in advance.*

Academic honesty
Please be certain that you understand Georgetown’s policy and procedures regarding academic honesty. It is available here: [https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/policies](https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/policies).

For additional guidance please read “What is plagiarism?” ([https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/whatisplagiarism](https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/whatisplagiarism)) and “Plagiarism checklist” ([https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/https%3A/honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/faculty/plagiarism-checklist](https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/https%3A/honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/faculty/plagiarism-checklist)).

**Notes**

**Note on physical or learning disabilities.** If you have a documented physical or learning disability, I will make appropriate accommodations. Please contact me so that we can discuss these arrangements.

**Religious obligations:** If you anticipate any conflicts between this schedule and your religious obligations, please inform me so that we can make alternate arrangements.

**Plan for Class Continuity During University Closures**

The Washington D.C. metropolitan area can experience severe weather. In some cases, the University will close the campus. Given that our classes meet once a week and given your varied schedules, it is nearly impossible to reschedule a cancelled class. *For these reasons, classes will NOT be cancelled when the university is closed.*

For this reason, I have arranged for a conference call. Details are below:

- **Conference Dial-in Number:** (515) 603-3171
- **Host Access Code:** 288542*
- **Participant Access Code:** 288542#

**University Policy on Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination in Education**

Georgetown University's Center for Securities Studies (CSS) and the Security Studies Program supports the University's commitment to diversity. The University has a policy on Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination in Education. Additionally, the University considers acts of hate and bias unacceptable and antithetical to its commitment to an inclusive and respectful community.

Students who have concerns about treatment that they have experienced are encouraged to discuss these concerns with the director of SSP. You may also reach out to the representative of the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action (IDEAA).

Students wishing to pursue a formal complaint of discrimination in a non-academic matter may do so through IDEAA: [http://ideaa.georgetown.edu](http://ideaa.georgetown.edu). Additionally, students may report concerns of hate and bias at [http://biasreporting.georgetown.edu/](http://biasreporting.georgetown.edu/). A member of the Hate & Bias team will discuss your concerns with you.

**Required Books**


Shrinath Raghavan. *War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years* (Bangalore: Orient Blackswan, 2010).

Course Outline

**Class 1 (Wed. Aug. 29): The Legacy of the Raj; Partition & Portents of Conflict**


Shrinath Raghavan. *War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years* (Bangalore: Orient Blackswan, 2010), Chapters 2 and 3 (pp. 26-100).

In addition, students are expected to familiarize themselves with the politics and demographics of religion in South Asia throughout the course. One stop shopping for this can be had at the CIA World Factbook: [https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/). Pay attention to religious and ethnic diversity.

**Class 2 (Mon. Sept. 10): Part I: Indian and Pakistani armies**

These two publications are paired. Read their arguments carefully to understand the differences in their argument and evidentiary bases.


Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*, Chapter 2 (pp. 51-86).

**Part 2: Kashmir Background and Wars: Enduring Rivalry?**

Shrinath Raghavan. *War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years* (Bangalore: Orient Blackswan, 2010), Chapter 4 (pp. 101-148).

N.B. This piece is no doubt dry. But it is the first piece using Pakistani sources that demonstrates Pakistani state involvement in the 1947 “raid into Kashmir.”


**Class 3 (Mon. Sept. 17): China in the Region**

**Part 1: Sino-Indian Rivalry**


Shrinath Raghavan. *War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years* (Bangalore: Orient Blackswan, 2010), Chapters 7, 8 (pp. 227-310)

**Part 2: Sino-Pakistan Relations**


For a Pakistani account, you may want to peruse the below reading but it is optional:


**Class 4 (Mon. Sept. 24): Bangladesh: Birth of a Nation, Seeds of Conflict**

**Part 1: The 1971 War and the Creation of Bangladesh**

Read this piece first to get an understanding of the demographics.


In reading these three accounts, focus upon the differences in their accounts even if they generally agree upon the “facts” of the case.

Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*, 87-129.


**Part 2: Islamism, Islamist militancy in Bangladesh**


**Class 5 (Mon. Oct. 1): Afghanistan**

**Part 1: The Soviet Jihad and the Birth of the Taliban**

Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*, pp.159-197.


**Part 2: Afghanistan under the Taliban and After**


*No Class on Oct. 8 (Columbus Day)*

**Class 6 (Mon. Oct. 15): First mid-term exam, no readings. In-class film.**

**Class 7 (Mon. Oct. 22): Islamization of Pakistan and its Enduring Impacts**


**Part II: After 9/11, the “Military-Militant-Mullah” Consensus Begins to Break Down**


**Class 8 (Mon. Oct. 29): Nuclearization of South Asia**


Read the below pieces as a “conversation.” How do their arguments differ?


The below is an account of a Pakistani scholar. How does her argument differ from the others?


**Class 9 (Mon. Nov. 5): India’s Insurgencies**

Begin with this piece:


In this monograph, read the part by Sahni only. What are India’s key security challenges? How does the rhetoric of the “Muslim threat” align with the data? Consider India’s complex internal security apparatus. Also consider India’s political structure and how this structure renders reforms extremely difficult.


*Sikh Insurgency*


**Insurgency in Assam**


**Naxalites**


**Class 10 (Mon. Nov. 12) Indian Grand Strategy?**

Shrinath Raghavan. *War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years* (Bangalore: Orient Blackswan, 2010), Chapter 1 (pp. 12-25).

C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon*, pp. 1-115, 142-72, 204-236 (Chapters 1-4, 6, 8)


For a contrarian view, see:


**Class 11 (Mon. Nov. 19): The Civil War in Sri Lanka**


We will watch a film titled the *No Fire Zone: The Killing Fields of Sri Lanka* (2017), produced by Callum Macrae. You can find information about this film here: https://nofirezone.org/about

Class 12 (Mon. Nov. 26): Group project presentation.


Appendix A: Sample Explanation of Grading Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>100 pt.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>Brilliant and original work; nearly publishable. Commendably clear and thoroughly analytical; comprehensively supported by, and systematically substantiated with, voluminous empirical evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>Excellent work; powerful analysis with distinctive, well-structured argument; critical and full awareness of the literature alongside masterful use of empirical evidence to support and substantiate the arguments presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>Very good; fine analysis with a coherent argument, most of the most important points are developed in a structured discussion; well-substantiated with clear and firm command of supporting empirical evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>Good; sound analytical skill shown from identification and understanding of the core intellectual problem accompanied by a clear discussion of the subject substantiated with some (albeit, perhaps insufficient) empirical evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>Satisfactory; basic analytical skills apparent from identification of the intellectual problem and an insufficiently developed discussion of it. Poorly structured with inadequate empirical evidence provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>Average; little analysis and an insufficiently developed argument. Some, albeit cursory knowledge of the main intellectual problem; some key empirical points may have been identified and touched on, basic, but are anemically developed. No detailed familiarity with the literature evident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>Below average; weak analysis and an incoherent argument, bare evidence of ability to identify intellectual problem, little use of empirical evidence and minimal knowledge of literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0-72</td>
<td>Totally unsatisfactory, absence of argument, analysis; and Little if any reference to, much less knowledge of, the literature.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After reading this syllabus, you should be in no doubt about class policies and assignments. If you have any remaining questions, I strongly encourage you to contact me as soon as possible.

Please sign the below statement and return this page on our second day of class.

I have carefully read the syllabus for SEST 573-01 Security Issues in South Asia and understand its contents.

______________________________
Printed Name

______________________________
Signature  Date