

**POLS 572 U.S. Defense Policy
Fall 2004 Midterm Exam Answers**

Grade distribution

Grade:	100	95	90	85	80	75	70	65	60	
# exams:	3	10	11	9	6	6	2	0	2	

PART I (Total 60%)

1. (10%) *According to the Morris and McCoubrey article on “Law, Politics and the Use of Force” in Strategy in the Contemporary World, what are three ways that international law impacts the US military?*

Answers on this were all over the map. What I was looking for would come out of an outline-level summary of the article

- International law provides a variety of norms that the US military and other international actors operate within
- *Jus ad bellum* provides norms for when the military can go to war
- *Jus in bello* provide very specific rules—notably the Geneva and Hague conventions—for how war is conducted.

There were a variety of more amorphous answers that I gave partial credit for. There were also some articles asserting exactly the opposite of what the article argued—variants on “international law is irrelevant”—which did not get credit.

2. (10%) *Briefly describe the purist and fusionist models of military policy making.*

Almost everyone got this—purist model assumes that civilians set the overall policy and then the military implements it in whatever fashion makes the most military sense; fusionist is the Clausewitzian approach that says all military actions are partly political and there should be an integration between the two,

3. (10%) *Briefly describe two **disadvantages** to the policy of U.S. unilateralism that Benjamin Schwarz and Christopher Layne assert in their Atlantic Monthly article “A New Grand Strategy”.*

There were an assortment of possibilities here, but the most commonly cited were:

- Causes the US to be resented in the rest of the world
- Runs the risk of “imperial overstretch;” US gets involved in a lot of places it wouldn’t otherwise be
- Is very expensive and the US bears all of the costs;
- It won’t last forever and encourages the emergence of a countering coalition
- Encourages the development of asymmetrical warfare (e.g. terrorism) since US can’t be matched in regular warfare

4. (15%) *Briefly describe two uses of peacekeeping that were considered successful and one that was considered a failure in the period since the end of the Cold War.*

Most commonly cited successes: Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, East Timor, Desert Storm. The latter was collective security but it is typically considered a model for the later efforts
Most commonly cited failure was Somalia, but Bosnia prior to 1995 and Rwanda were also used.

5. (15%) *What is the doctrine of strategic bombing, where did it originate (that is, in what theoretical writings and/or military practice), and why is it controversial?*

This is the approach of bombing civilian factories and other infrastructure in order to reduce the ability of a country to supply its military and weaken the morale of civilians. The concept was introduced by Douhet, applied briefly in WWI and broadly in WWII. It is controversial because it involves a great deal of damage to civilians (either deliberately or because in WWII the bombs weren't accurate), and also because it doesn't seem to work except when a country is almost totally destroyed. I took off two points if you didn't mention Douhet or give an extended description of the historical development.

A few people got this mixed up with the contemporary precision bombing strategy I called "operational bombing"—I gave half credit for this if all the appropriate details were there.

PART II -- ESSAY (40%) -- Answer only one

Note: These answers were written by students. They are not necessarily perfect but they are "A" examples.

6. Choose **one** of the following "grand strategy" options discussed by Posen and Ross—selective engagement, cooperative security, and primacy—and assess the appropriateness of the current configuration of US forces and military commitments for implementing that strategy. In other words, if your selected strategy were chosen as the primary strategy of the United States, what changes (if any) would need to be made to implement it?

Distribution of choices:

Primacy	19
Selective engagement:	7
Cooperative security	7
Couldn't tell from answer	2

Answer focusing on primacy

The article by Posen and Ross outlined four competing strategies that could be used as a US grand strategy for national security and foreign policy. The one that seems to be most fully utilized by the current Bush administration is primacy, though certain changes may need to occur before it can be considered our definite policy.

As discussed in Andrew Bacevich's article on American imperialism, the US has long been moving toward the creation and domination of a global empire. It is rarely discussed as such, as seen with the backlash when Wolfowitz described US policy as being hegemonic and unilateral (Bachevich calls this "Wolfowitz's indiscretion") but with the current Bush administration this is beginning to change.

The war in Iraq was initiated almost entirely by the US and Britain against the will of the UN and NATO; this is very much in keeping with primacy and a general distrust of multinational organizations. The US is not currently interested in what the global community thinks.

The Iraq conflict is also in keeping with primacy because the US interest in Iraq is indirect; that is, it is not directly concerned with our oil supplies as most of the US oil comes from the US, Canada and other areas closer to the US, but our interest in Middle Eastern oil is that Japan, China, and other major powers rely on it and if we don't protect their oil supply, they may build military strength to do it themselves. This may be dangerous for many reasons and in any case it is politically and economically beneficial for the US to control supply.

The changes and improvements required to fully implement the policy of primacy would mostly entail more military spending, much more recruitment to build a larger standing military, or possibly a draft if recruitment proves inefficient.

The current commitment of troops in Iraq is already proving insufficient and if a minor or major conflict were to break out anywhere else in the world (e.g. North Korea) or if it becomes necessary to invade Iran our military will be insufficient. This is what the assertion that the US needs to be prepared to fight 1-1/2 wars was discussing.

As far as policy changes go, the US is already committed to unilateral operations, disregarding the advice of the UN security council, and working to denounce Cold War alliances. If this continues, primacy will become the primary strategy.

Answer focusing on selective engagement

If the US were to adopt totally the strategy of selective engagement it would need to implement several changes.

First, the US would need to reconfigure its force placement around the world. This would involve pulling nearly all troops out of Europe since there is no longer a major threat there and Europe is able to handle its own problems, more or less. These troops could then be deployed to other areas where the US sees a need to protect its interests such as the Korean Peninsula, possibly Haiti, and especially the Middle East.

The US would also need to place less emphasis on a smaller, more mobile force and instead look at a more traditional force since a selection engagement model would reduce greatly the need to send troops to regions in a short period of time in order to do peacekeeping or conduct operations of collective security. Instead the US would seek to establish several large bases of operations which could be used to protect areas of interest (e.g. several large bases in Iraq could garrison a force capable of permanently protecting US energy interests in the Middle East.)

Finally, the US would probably be able to reduce the size of its military somewhat since under a selective engagement mode, the US would refrain from peacekeeping and would place troops only in several strategic spots around the world. Also, once permanent bases are established in places like Iraq and Afghanistan and troop numbers in Iraq draw down somewhat the turnover rate of troops coming and going would be reduced, because instead of security patrols we would see something closer to a "bases in Germany" model where troops are stationed on a more permanent basis where they can live with their families and with amenities (unlike the ad hoc overseas duty where rotation is more frequent)

In sum, the US military would need nly a few major changes in order to be suited solely for selective engagement

[Other point that might be made explicitly here is that the US would shift its attention almost exclusively to the traditional balance of power among industrial nations, rather than worrying about issues such as peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention, which usually occur in the Third World (former Yugoslavia is an exception). Also nuclear non-proliferation becomes a high priority.]

7. *At the professional level, does the success of the U.S. military in the 21st century depend more on their ability as warriors (experts at “breaking things and killing people”¹) or as managers (experts at moving things and motivating people)? Be sure to consider the impact of 20th century changes in technology and U.S. policy in your answers. As I noted in class, this is one of the most contested questions within the military itself, so I’m not concerned about which position you take on the issue but on how well you use arguments and evidence.*

[14 answers; all but one emphasized “managers”]

The success of the US military in the 21st century relies more on their ability as managers, not warriors. While the success of any military depends on “breaking things and killing people,” the primary way the US military does this is through the management of people and sophisticated technology. Furthermore, today’s US military must be capable of a large array of action, from intervention to peacekeeping, and still be able to fight wars to US strategic interests and protection.

As the largest and best equipped and trained military in the world, the US military can take for granted its ability to “break things and kill people” if those resources are properly used. Therefore, fighting well isn’t as critical to the US military as getting there with the right weapons and personnel. The size of the force available, and the array of weapons at hand requires that managing the force efficiently onto and in the field of battle is the key to accomplishing objectives.

An important corollary to the efficient use of size is the efficient management of technology. Using the weapons like laser guided bombs, satellite images, and stealth technology well isn’t a matter of individual soldiers capability but rather making sure they are functioned properly, and utilized in ways in which they cannot be compromised, which are question on managing on behalf of senior officers.

So success, in terms of acquiring objectives, depends not so much on the capability of the individual soldiers or their weapons, but on getting them to the right place at the right tie, and being used in the right way. This is particularly true when military objectives vary widely in scope, ranging from intervention to peacekeeping. For example, ejecting Saddam and the Iraqi army from Kuwait takes a completely different set of forces and weapons systems than preventing Iraq from sending SCUD missiles into Israel. Occupying Iraqi cities and providing security for elections takes a whole different type of force, In either case, the military’s success depends not so much on its ability as warriors, which is quite unmatched. Instead, it requires the management of a large force and a large variety of weapons

[Other points that were made in other essays:

- This movement to a high-technology (and therefore management-dependent) military accelerated in WWII—use assorted examples from the chapters on air, sea and ground forces
- The US method of warfare generally relies on attrition, overwhelming force, and the strength of the US economy to win wars
- When the US shifted to a global military presence, again starting with WWII, the logistical requirements increased dramatically.

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¹ *the phrase used by retired Marine General Anthony Zinni to describe this aspect of the military*