Midterm Examination

This exam consists of three essays, each of which must not exceed 500 words. The exam is due electronically by 1:15pm on Tuesday, July 22. Please email your exams to both Alex (ahm@stanford.edu) and Todd (tsechser@stanford.edu).

The exam is open-book and open-note, but you may not collaborate with any other individual in writing the essays. Violation of this policy will result in a failing grade on the exam. The exam is worth 50% of your final grade in the course.

The best essays will accomplish three tasks:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the readings. Refer to assigned articles early and often. Show that you have read and absorbed them. You are also encouraged (although not required) to refer to optional or outside literature in your essays. Footnotes are the preferred means of citing articles and books.

2. Make a clear argument. It is essential that you get to the point immediately and explicitly. Make a concise and finite argument in the first paragraph of the essay, and use the remaining space to support it in ways that are clearly stated. Do not ramble. Stick to your point. Essays that defend a few arguments thoroughly are generally superior to those that make several weakly-supported arguments.

3. Demonstrate critical thinking. There is no need for elaborate summaries of the articles; we have already read them. Develop your own arguments. Think creatively and imaginatively about the course material.

Late exams will be penalized one letter grade for each hour (or fraction thereof) that they are late.

Good luck!
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This question is required of all students:

On one of the course flyers, underneath “How States Win Wars,” someone wrote, “By deception, naturally.” Compare and contrast what the opinions of Sun Tzu and Clausewitz might be on this statement.

Answer exactly two of the following four questions:

1. Backsight Forethought offers 22 lessons from the Defense of Duffer's Drift. Compare and contrast these lessons with Sun Tzu's recommendations on tactics.

2. Compare and contrast the National Security Strategy of the United States and Schwartz and Layne's Offshore Balancing. Either:
   a. Explain how they are similar and different along the dimensions of Realpolitik/Liberal strategy and Engagement/Isolationism, or
   b. Argue whether one or the other is more likely to be undermined by the pathologies listed by Betts.

3. Explore how geography and technology might influence a state's decision to adopt a particular type of offensive or defensive strategy.

4. Barry Posen argues that militaries deplore interference from politicians in matters of battlefield operations and doctrine. Indeed, President Clinton's administration was heavily criticized by the military for intervening in operational issues such as target selection (in the war against Serbia) and the use of specific types of weapons (in Somalia). What might Clausewitz say about this?