On December 1, 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton addressed the Afghan people: “We have a window of opportunity to work together as partners to improve Afghanistan’s government to make it more capable, accountable, and effective so it better serves you, the Afghan people. We seek to improve access to education and justice, to strengthen the rule of law and improve governance, and most importantly, to widen economic opportunity and increase jobs so people have the chance to support their families.” It is now January of 2012, what has happened to those goals? How can we understand the shift in goals from from, in former President G.W. Bush’s words, “build[ing] a flourishing democracy” to what is now known as “Afghan good enough?”

This class offers an introduction to understanding the history, context, and consequences of the timeline of the global war on terror—from 9.11 to Afghanistan—with our focus primarily on Afghanistan and, now, Pakistan. It will also offer an introduction to how, precisely, the goals that Secretary of State Clinton identifies may or may not be met, both in partnership with the people of Afghanistan and, also, with the support (or not) of its allies and neighbors.

This course is predicated on class discussion and participation, and I expect all of us to contribute equally to class. To best facilitate our exploration and discussion, I expect that all of us attend class having read the material closely and prepared to participate fully. Please do take this expectation seriously, I take it very seriously.

Equally important for this class, is my expectation that all of discussions will be engaged, lively, and consistently respectful of differences in opinion, attentive to differences of interpretation, and responsive to differences in experience.

Required Books (More or less in order of reading). I expect you to have each of these books well in hand before they are required reading. They are also on reserve at College Library. Please plan appropriately:

REQURED!
*Steven Coll: Ghost Wars
* Mary Habeck: Knowing the Enemy
*Terry McDermott: Perfect Soldiers:
*Marcus Luttrell: Lone Survivor:
*John Kelsay: Arguing the Just War in Islam
* Omar Nasiri: Inside the Jihad: My Life with the Taliban.
* Malalai Joya: A Woman Among Warlords:
* Sebastian Junger: War
* Bing West: The Wrong War
* Sherard Cowper-Coles: Cables from Kabul
* Gretchen Peters: Seeds of Terror
* Ahmed Rashid: Descent into Chaos:

RECOMMENDED!
Seymour Hersch: Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib
Soufan, Ali (with Daniel Freedman). The Black Banners: The Inside Story of 9/11 and
the War Against al-Qaeda.
Zahid Hussain: Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle with Militant Islam

We will also be drawing on current news to illustrate particular points from the
textbook, so please read a daily international or national newspaper and/or watch news
shows--- e.g New York Times, Washington Post, Jerusalem Post, International Tribune,
The Guardian, Christian Science Monitor, Al Jazeera, Jon Stewart and so forth. For
example, this website translates certain articles from a selection of international papers
into English: http://www.watchingamerica.com/index.shtml

Please note, whatever grade you earn is the grade you will receive, so set a goal and
let me know what I can do to help you achieve it.

Paper#1: 20%: February 28th
Paper #2 20%: April 10th
Paper #3: 25%: May 15th
Attendance: 10%
Presentation: 10%
Participation: 15%

Papers: Must be 8-10 pages. Do not require outside research. They will be inclusive of
the books read before the paper is due, and you will have a choice of two questions to
answer in each paper. I will not accept late papers.

I will also explain more about the papers in the first class, and will be happy to answer
questions. After one paper is handed in, I expect to meet each one of you individually to
go over it. Please plan accordingly.

Presentations: Your primary responsibility is to teach/involve the class in the readings.
This can be a difficult task, so you and your partner(s) should brainstorm ways to
generate excitement and interest—from role-playing, to jeopardy style games, to
simulations, to theater . . . the choice is yours. Importantly, each presentation should
conclude with 4 effective questions to pose to the class to lead both general/small group
discussions—so think creatively about what you would like us to debate, learn, and
conclude from the readings. These are to be approximately 15-20 minutes.
Think about these as goals for your presentation:

1) **understanding** and **conveying** descriptively the three major points made in each reading, that is make sure to identify and state the principle theses;

2) **critically engaging** these three major points—e.g., does the author present a convincing argument regarding these points, how so, why or why not, what counts as evidence, in what theories or traditions are these arguments situated, is there an obvious or not so obvious blind spot in the author’s reasoning and so forth, and;

3) **relating** the argument of one reading to at least 2 of the other readings—e.g., showing how one argument is disproved or improved if another argument is accounted for, showing how one each argument responds to or builds upon another.

4) Asking **effective** questions; namely ones that helps us comprehend new ideas, construct an improved argument, generate debate, orient or introduce a unique approach.

**Please note:** if you use a computer to take notes during class, you must sit in the front two rows of our classroom. Please respect your colleagues by abiding by this rule, and by not using any other electronic equipment in class.

**FINALLY:**

Anybody who wishes to discuss specific academic/learning concerns or requirements that could affect participation in this course please let me know immediately.

I will assume that all are aware of and responsive to the academic standards, e.g. regarding plagiarism, set forth by the University of Wisconsin, and all violations of those standards will be handled accordingly. Incompletes will only given in case of extreme emergency and demonstrable hardship.

*Note: For the second and third weeks, I assigned the heaviest reading load, but it is necessary background for the rest of the course. Try to pace it, but also try to get through it.

WEEK ONE: 1/24 Introductions, explanations, context

WEEK TWO: 1/31 Stephen Coll: Ghost Wars Chps, 11-20

WEEK THREE: 2/7 Stephen Coll: Ghost Wars Chps, 21-32

WEEK FOUR: 2/14 Mary Habeck: Knowing the Enemy

WEEK FIVE: 2/21 Terry McDermott: Perfect Soldiers

WEEK SIX: 2/28 **PAPER #1 DUE IN CLASS** (movie day!)

WEEK SEVEN: 3/6 Marcus Luttrell: Lone Survivor

WEEK EIGHT: 3/13 John Kelsay: Arguing the Just War in Islam
WEEK NINE: 3/20 Omar Nasiri. Inside the Jihad: My Life with the Taliban

WEEK TEN: 3/27 Malalai Joya: A Woman Among Warlords

WEEK ELEVEN: SPRING BREAK: work on paper and read Junger’s book

WEEK TWELVE: 4/10 Sebastian Junger: War, Paper #2 Due in class!

WEEK THIRTEEN: 4/17 Bing West: The Wrong War

WEEK FOURTEEN: 4/24 Sherard Cowper-Coles: Cables from Kabul

WEEK FIFTEEN: 5/1 Gretchen Peters: Seeds of Terror

WEEK SIXTEEN: 5/8 Ahmed Rashid: Descent into Chaos

5/15: PAPER #3 Due by 4 pm!