**Special Operations: Raids, Rescues, and Relationships**

**PA388K**

**LBJ School of Public Affairs**

**University of Texas at Austin**

**Fall 2024**

Wednesdays, 9:00am-12:00pm

**Instructor: VADM Joseph Maguire, USN (Ret) Classroom:** SRH 3.214

**Course Summary:** This seminar introduces students to U.S. Special Operations as a strategic instrument of national power and explores how (and under what conditions) policymakers turn to Special Operations Forces (SOF) to help solve a spectrum of national security and foreign policy challenges. ***By the end of the course, students will understand the political, military, and diplomatic risks, challenges, and opportunities involved with strategic decisions to conduct Special Operations in support of the nation’s security.*** The professor — who spent 34 years as a Navy SEAL and also served as the Acting Director of National Intelligence — will draw upon his military, leadership, and Cabinet-level experiences to shed light on the implementation of Special Operations; the full range of international, strategic, and tactical risks that are involved in these operations; and how national policymakers have used and sometimes misused or failed to use SOF in their pursuit of foreign policy objectives.

In addition to the class topics below, this seminar incorporates an impressive list of guest speakers, including but not limited to:

* **Admiral Bill McRaven**, former Chancellor of the University of Texas System and former Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command
* **Michele Malvesti**, Visiting Professor and former Senior Director for Combating Terrorism Strategy on the National Security Council staff
* **Admiral Eric T. Olson**, 8th USSOCOM Commander

* **Mr. Jeff Eggers**, former Senior Director for Afghanistan Policy on the National Security Council staff at the White House

* **Nicholas J. Rasmussen**, former Director of the National Counterterrorism Center and former Senior Director for Counterterrorism on the National Security Council Staff at the White House.

**Class #1: Wednesday, 28 August 2024**

**Foundations, Part 1: Understanding Special Operations: Overview and History**

**Class #2: Wednesday, 4 September 2024**

**Foundations, Part 2: SOF Roles, Missions, and Strategic Utility**

**Class #3: Wednesday, 11 September 2024**

**SOF in the 1980s: Select Issues and Case Studies**

**Class #4: Wednesday, 18 September 2024**

**Policymakers, Risk, and the Use of Force in the International Arena**

**Class #5: Wednesday, 25 September 2024**

**View from the Top: Strategy & Challenges for Today’s Civilian and Military Special Operations Leadership**

**Class #6: Wednesday, 2 October 2024**

**U.S. SOF in the 1990s: Select Issues and Case Studies**

**Class #7: Wednesday, 9 October 2024**

**Post 9/11: Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism in Afghanistan**

**Class #8: Wednesday, 16 October 2024**

**Post-9/11 Rescues**

**Class #9: Wednesday, 23 October 2024**

**Post-9/11 Operation Neptune Spear and the Bin Laden Raid: Policymaker Considerations and Placing the Raid Within the Broader Context of U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy**

**Class #10: Wednesday, 30 October 2024**

**The CIA-SOF Relationship**

**Class #11: Wednesday, 6 November 2024**

**Student Group Presentations: Analyzing Special Operations**

**Class #12: Wednesday, 13 November 2024**

**Student Group Presentations: Analyzing Special Operations**

**Class #13: Wednesday, 20 November 2024**

**Special Operations in Today’s Era of Great Power Competition**

**No Class: Wednesday, 27 November 2024**

**Thanksgiving**

**Class #14: Wednesday, 4 December 2024**

**Course Wrap-Up: Strategic Lessons for the Future**