

[home](#) > [events](#) > [sept2011](#) > brian pollins[September](#)*National Security Speaker Series*[October](#)

Brian Pollins

[November](#)

"The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and U.S. Interests in Asia"

[December](#)

Monday, September 19, 2011

[January](#)

Noon

[February](#)

Mershon Center for International Security Studies

[March](#)

1501 Neil Ave., Columbus, OH 43201

[April](#)*View event recording in [Flash](#)*[May](#)*View event recording in [RealPlayer](#)*[Event Archives](#)*View event recording in [Windows Media](#)**Download podcast on [Mershon subscription page](#)***Brian Pollins**Professor Emeritus of
Political Science
The Ohio State University

Brian Pollins was an active member of The Ohio State University Department of Political Science from 1983 to 2007, and now holds Emeritus status there. For many of those years, he was also a Research Fellow at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies. His research has long focused on the ways in which interstate economic relationships and conflict dynamics influence one another.

Before coming to Ohio State, Pollins was at the Science Center Berlin, and has also served as visiting faculty at the University of Michigan School of Business, and in the ICPSR Summer Program in Statistics. His work has appeared in a variety of journals including *International Studies Quarterly*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, and *The American Political Science Review*.

Abstract

In 2005, a young, six-nation Inter-Governmental Organization that had heretofore received scant international attention called openly for the closure of all U.S. military bases in Central Asia as soon as possible. This not only complicated the war efforts of the U.S. in Afghanistan and Iraq, it stood athwart American plans to develop economic, diplomatic and military ties with former Soviet republics in Central Asia. This action as well as subsequent developments have led many in the U.S. diplomatic and military communities to view this organization - the Shanghai Cooperation Organization -- as the "Anti-NATO"; a Sino-Russian design to frustrate and defeat American interests, particularly in Asia.

The work described here examines the origins and development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Its inner workings are interesting in how the large powers (Russia and China) use it to balance against one another, while the smaller members (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan) also use it to balance against their larger co-members.

At the same time, all six members have used the SCO quite effectively to push forward common interests in suppressing terrorist/irredentist groups, drug traffic, and settling border disputes, some of which were long-standing. Political cooperation had enabled growth in commerce. And over the years, there has emerged a world view championed by the SCO called "The Shanghai Spirit" which we show stands in clear opposition to the IMF's Washington Consensus and George W. Bush's "Freedom Agenda."

In the final analysis, the United States and its NATO allies should realize that they face both a potential rival and a potential partner in the SCO. Hard line, negative attitudes toward the SCO are guaranteed to be counterproductive. At the same time, there are key interests and objectives of China, Russia and the U.S. and its allies which are not in alignment and will need to be negotiated. The outcome as rival or partner will be determined as much by western diplomacy as by SCO identity.

© 2006-12 Mershon Center for International Security Studies

1501 Neil Ave.

Columbus, OH 43201

Phone: 614.292.1681

Fax: 614.292.2407

Email: mershoncenter@osu.edu