

Political Science 457: International Conflict Processes

Fall 2009 — University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Instructor

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Course Information

Meeting Times: T-Th 9:30-10:45pm, Murphy 115 Office Hours: Th 1:30–4:30pm,

Course Description

This course is an advanced seminar on the causes and patterns of international conflict. We begin with the assumption that there may be recognizable patterns of behavior that influence the occurrence of violent political conflict. Our task is to evaluate the scholarly attempts to uncover these patterns and the underlying causes of conflict, its escalation to war, and its termination.

The course presupposes basic familiarity with international politics as taught at the level of POLI 150. The emphasis will be on developing your analytical capacity to examine and assess scholarly arguments. The ability to memorize factual material is taken for granted, but it is not the primary goal of the course. Please note that this is *not* a current events course. Current events will be incorporated when relevant to learning about and evaluating the theories and empirical investigations at hand, but they are just tools for learning.

Grading

Papers	50% (25% each)
Final Exam	30%
Discussion Leadership	10%
Class Participation	10%

Class Participation

The majority of the class will be devoted to discussions of scholarly readings. The class will proceed in a seminar format, with as little lecturing as possible. You are expected to have read the assigned material when we discuss it in class. I (and you) will ask questions, and the class will be responsible for providing the answers. Students should feel free to ask questions and debate the topics at hand. There are no wrong questions, and you are strongly encouraged to participate even if you found the readings difficult or problematic. The participation grade evaluation will be based on the quantity and quality of comments and questions and demonstration of knowledge of the course material. Attendance *per se* will not be evaluated, but if you are not in class you cannot participate. We will also break into active learning sessions several times throughout the semester to apply the skills you are acquiring to the study of a particular puzzle in international conflict. Your enthusiasm and attention in these sessions directly impacts your participation score.

In addition, you will each have an opportunity to lead a discussion in class. Working in teams of two or three, your job will be to introduce the material and guide the class into a discussion. It is also a chance to highlight portions of the reading that are challenging or problematic. Keep in mind that leading a discussion does not mean that you are required to understand everything in the readings. You may choose to start the class with a formal presentation, or you may choose an active learning exercise to lead the class through the analysis. Creativity is welcomed, but the ultimate goal is effectively enhancing the learning environment.

Papers

During the semester you will be responsible for writing two (2) short papers (roughly 10 pages each) that address the course readings. For each paper, I will give you a list of possible questions/topics that you could address in your paper. You should not feel constrained by these prompts. If you have a different idea for a paper that addresses the relevant readings, contact me and we can work something out. Each paper will be worth 25% of your total grade. To excel in these assignments, you must go beyond a basic review of the readings. Instead, you will need to analyze the authors' arguments and/or identify and assess the overall impact and agenda of the works. Note: you do not have to agree with the author(s) or assume that they have accomplished what they have set out to do.

Exam

In addition to the papers, there will be a final exam. The exam will require you to step back and process the material in the course beyond the individual contributions of each reading. Mere demonstration of knowledge of the material will be regarded as an average performance. To excel on the exam you will have to demonstrate an ability to synthesize and analyze the material relevant to the questions on the test.

Course Materials

The following books are available in the UNC Bookstore. All other readings are available electronically via the UNC library e-journals and e-resources databases.

- Axelrod, Robert . 2006 (Revised) *The Evolution of Cooperation* Basic Books.
- Kydd, Andrew. 2005. *Trust and Mistrust in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Schelling, Thomas C. 1966. *Arms and Influence*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Walter, Barbara F. 2002. *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Important Dates

- Paper 1 due: October 13
- Paper 2 due: December 8
- Final Exam: December 17 (Thursday): 8-11am

Class Schedule

Part 1: Systemic and Domestic Theories of Conflict

Week One: Introduction

Tuesday

- No reading

Thursday: Thinking Theoretically about Conflict

- Zinnes, Dina. 1980. "Three Puzzles in Search of a Researcher." *International Studies Quarterly* 24(3): 315-42
- Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, "Toward a Scientific Understanding of International Conflict: A Personal View, in Symposium: Methodological Foundations of the Study of International Conflict, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 2. (Jun., 1985), pp. 121-136.

Week Two: Scientific Study of Conflict

Tuesday

- Huth, Paul, Chris Gelpi, and D. Scott Bennett, 1993. "The Escalation of Great Power Militarized Disputes," *American Political Science Review* 87(3): 609-623
- Bremer, Stuart A. 1992. "Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate War, 1816-1965." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36(2): 309-41

Thursday: No Class (APSA Meeting)

Week Three: Democracy and Peace

Tuesday: Empirical Analyses of the Democratic Peace

- Early Work: Maoz, Zeev, and Bruce Russett. 1993. "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986." *American Political Science Review* 87(3): 624-638.
- Current Explanations: Kenneth Schultz. 1999. "Do Democratic Political Institutions Constrain or Inform? Contrasting Two Institutional Perspectives on Democracy and War." *International Organization* 53:233-266.

Thursday: Democratic Peace Debated

- Farber, Henry and Joanne Gowa. 1995. "Politics and Peace," *International Security* 20 (Fall 1995), pp. 123-146.
- Gartzke, Erik. 2007. "The Capitalist Peace." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(1): 166-91

Week Four: Military Intervention**Tuesday**

- Regan, Patrick. 2002. "Third Party Intervention and the Duration of Interstate Conflicts *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46:1.
- Kathman, Jacob D. 2009. "Civil War Contagion and Neighbor State Intervention. 2009. Revised and resubmitted to *International Studies Quarterly* (on blackboard).

Thursday

- Gent, Stephen E. 2007. "Strange Bedfellows: The Strategic Dynamics of Major Power Military Intervention." *Journal of Politics* 69(4): 1089-1102.

Part 2: Deterrence and the Security Dilemma**Week Five: Coercion, Violence, and Brinkmanship****Tuesday**

- Schelling, Ch. 1, 2

Thursday

- Schelling, Ch. 3, 6

Week Six: Deterrence**Tuesday**

- Applying what we know: how can we test Schelling's arguments? (no additional readings)

Thursday

- Paul Huth, 1988. "Extended Deterrence and the Outbreak of War, *American Political Science Review*, 82.
- James D. Fearon, 1994. "Signaling versus the Balance of Power and Interests: An Empirical Test of a Crisis Bargaining Model," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 236-269.

Week Seven: Alliances**Tuesday**

- Stephen Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Spring, 1985), pp. 3-43

Thursday

- Leeds, Brett Ashley. 2003. "Alliance Reliability in Times of War: Explaining State Decisions to Violate Treaties. *International Organization* 57(4): 801-827.
- Leeds, Brett Ashley, and Burcu Savun. 2007. "Terminating Alliances: Why Do States Abrogate Agreements?" *Journal of Politics* 69(4): 1118-1132.

Part 3: Bargaining, Cooperation and Conflict**Week Eight:****Tuesday *Paper 1 Due***

- Axelrod, Robert. *The Evolution of Cooperation*, Part I

Thursday

- Axelrod, Robert. *The Evolution of Cooperation*, Parts II & III

Week Nine:**Tuesday**

- Axelrod, Robert. *The Evolution of Cooperation*, Parts IV & V
- In class exercise: Simulation.

Thursday: No Class (Fall Break)**Week Ten: Rationalist Explanations for War****Tuesday**

- Fearon, James D. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49(3): 379-414.

Thursday

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2006. "Game Theory, Political Economy, and the Evolving Study of War and Peace." *American Political Science Review* 100(4): 637-42
- Lake, David A. 2007. Escape from the State of Nature: Authority and Hierarchy in World Politics. *International Security* 32 (1): 47-79.

Part 4: Commitment and Trust**Week Eleven: Commitment and Civil War Termination****Tuesday**

- **Civil War & Commitment Problems:** Walter, Ch. 1 & 2, pp. 3-44

Thursday

- **Civil War: Zimbabwe & Rwanda:** Walter, Ch. 6 & 7, pp. 109-159

Week Twelve: Trust & Mistrust in International Politics**Tuesday**

- Theorizing Trust in a Rational Framework: Kydd, Ch. 1 & 2.

Thursday

- Fear and the Origins of the Cold War: Kydd, Ch. 3 & 4.

Week Thirteen: Trust & Cooperation**Tuesday**

- **Reassurance:** Kydd, Ch. 7

Thursday

- Applying what we know: how does Trust work in world politics?

Part 5: Recent Studies in Strategy and Conflict**Week Fourteen****Tuesday**

- Enterline, Andrew J. & Michael Greig. 2005. "Beacons of Hope? The Impact of Imposed Democracy on Regional Peace, Democracy, and Prosperity." *Journal of Politics* 67(4): 1075-98.
- Salehyan, Idean. 2007. "Transnational Rebels: Neighboring States as Sanctuaries for Rebel Groups." *World Politics* 59: 217-242.

Thursday: Happy Thanksgiving!**Week Fifteen****Tuesday**

- **Credibility:** Press, Daryl G. 2004 "The Credibility of Power: Assessing Threats during the 'Appeasement' Crises of the 1930s." *International Security* 29(3): 136-69
- **Reputation and History:** Crescenzi, Mark J.C. 2007 "Reputation and Interstate Conflict." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(2).

Thursday

- **Bargaining and Terrorism:** Bapat, Navin A. 2006. "State Bargaining with Transnational Terrorist Groups." *International Studies Quarterly* 50(1): 213-230.

Week Sixteen: Wrap Up**Tuesday**

- **Wrap-up & Review:** No Reading
- ***Paper 2 Due***

December 17: Final Exam

- 8:00 to 11:00 am in Murphy 115