

Political Science 457: International Conflict Processes
Spring 2008 — University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Instructor

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Course Information

Meeting Times: T-Th 2:00-3:15 pm, Murphey 115
Office Hours: W 2:00–5:00 pm or by appointment
Course Website: blackboard.unc.edu

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 conflict. Our task is to evaluate the scholarly attempts to uncover these patterns and the underlying causes of war and its termination.

The course presupposes basic familiarity with international politics as taught at the level of POLI 150 (formerly POLI 86). 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 addressed only when relevant to learning about and evaluating the theories and empirical investigations at hand.

Grading

Paper 1	30%
Paper 2	30%
Final Exam	35%
Class Participation	5%

Class Participation

The majority of the class will be devoted to discussions of scholarly readings. You are expected to have read the assigned material when we discuss it in class. I will ask many 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.

Papers

During the semester you will be responsible for writing two (2) short papers (8–10 pages) 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 30% 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 this 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 required books are available in the UNC Bookstore:

- Goemans, H. E. 2000. *War and Punishment*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- 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.

All other readings will be available online in e-journals. Links to all articles can be found on Blackboard.

Schedule

Part 1: Systemic and Domestic Theories of Conflict

Thursday, January 10: Scientific Study of Conflict

- No reading

Tuesday, January 15: Structural Realism vs. Classic Liberalism

- James, Patrick. 1995. "Structural Realism and the Causes of War." *Mershon International Studies Review* 39(2): 181-208.
- Doyle, Michael. 1986. "Liberalism and World Politics." *American Political Science Review* 80(4): 1151-69.

Thursday, January 17: Democratic Peace

- Maoz, Zeev, and Bruce Russett. 1993. "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986." *American Political Science Review* 87(3): 624-638.
- Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 1999. "An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace." *American Political Science Review* 93(4): 791-807.
Focus on pp. 791-794, 802-805.

Part 2: Deterrence and the Security Dilemma**Tuesday, January 22: Rational Choice & Game Theory**

- 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.

Thursday, January 24: Security Dilemma

- Jervis, Robert. 1978. "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma." *World Politics* 30(2).
Only read pp. 167-186.

Tuesday, January 29: Violence and Coercion

- Schelling, Ch. 1, pp. 1-34

Thursday, January 31: Commitment and Credibility

- Schelling, Ch. 2, pp. 35-91

Tuesday, February 5: Brinkmanship and Risk

- Schelling, Ch. 3, pp. 92-125

Part 3: Bargaining and Conflict**Thursday, February 7: Rationalist Explanations for War**

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

Tuesday, February 12: Theory of War Termination

- Goemans, Ch. 1 & 2, pp. 3-52

Thursday, February 14: WWI: Germany & France

- Goemans, parts of Ch. 4 & 6, pp. 72-81, 87-115, 134-139, 147-180

Tuesday, February 19: WWI: 1914-1918

- Goemans, Ch. 8 & 9, pp. 232-309

Part 4: Commitment, Trust, and Agreements**Thursday, February 21: Commitment and Civil War Termination**

- Walter, Ch. 1 & 2, pp. 3-44

Tuesday, February 26: Civil War: Zimbabwe & Rwanda

- Walter, Ch. 6 & 7, pp. 109-159

Thursday, February 28: Durability of Peace Agreements

- Fortna, Virginia Page. 2003. "Scraps of Paper? Agreements and the Durability of Peace." *International Organization* 57(2): 337-372.
- Werner, Suzanne, and Amy Yuen. 2005. "Making and Keeping Peace." *International Organization* 59(2): 261-292.

Tuesday, March 4: Alliance Reliability

- 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 Aliances: Why Do States Abrogate Agreements?" *Journal of Politics* 69(4): 1118-1132.

Thursday, March 6: TBD

- ***PAPER 1 DUE***

Tuesday, March 11 & Thursday, March 13: Spring Break

- No class

Tuesday, March 18: Theorizing Trust in a Rational Framework

- Kydd, Ch. 1 & 2.

Thursday, March 20: Fear and the Origins of the Cold War

- Kydd, Ch. 3 & 4.

Tuesday, March 25 & Thursday, March 27: ISA Conference

- No class

Tuesday, April 1: Reassurance and the End of the Cold War

- Kydd, Ch. 7-9

Part 5: Recent Studies in Strategy and Conflict**Thursday, April 3: Transnational Rebel Groups**

- Salehyan, Idean. 2007. "Transnational Rebels: Neighboring States as Sanctuaries for Rebel Groups." *World Politics* 59: 217-242.

Tuesday, April 8: Bargaining and Terrorism

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

Thursday, April 10: Reputation and History

- Crescenzi, Mark J.C. 2007. "Reputation and Interstate Conflict." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(2): 382-396.

Tuesday, April 15: Military Intervention

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

Thursday, April 17 & Tuesday, April 22: Simulation

- In-Class Simulation

Thursday, April 24: Wrap-up & Review

- ***PAPER 2 DUE***

Tuesday, April 29: Final Exam

- 12:00 pm in Murphey 115