Course Overview and Objectives

The scourge of war has been a major shaping force of human history, as well as the source of its greatest tragedies. The current global political landscape is still shaped largely by the shadow of World War II and the Cold War. Since the end of the Cold War, however, the outbreak of a war between superpowers or major powers seems very unlikely. This does not mean that we have solved the problem of war, as we have also seen a rise in the use of global terrorism and a spike in the outbreak of civil wars and internationalized civil wars since the end of the Cold War. States devote an enormous amount of resources to defense. Furthermore, hostility between states inhibits cooperation in a variety of areas including trade, environmental protection, and the like. In short, solving the problems of conflict and war may be a prerequisite for addressing other problems around the globe.

The major focus of this course is the study of the causes of conflict and war. We begin with an overview of the scientific approach to the study of conflict, and then proceed to focus on the major research programs in the scientific study of conflict. These include the role of territory, alliances, arms, power, domestic politics (including the democratic peace), as well as concluding the course with a focus on internationalized civil conflict and conflict management.

This course’s goal is twofold: first, to familiarize graduate students with the major research programs in the scientific study of peace and conflict, and secondly, for students to write a research paper on their own that answers a research question related to international conflict. While the focus of the course is largely on quantitative research, a qualitative research paper will be allowed, provided the research design is rigorous and is testing hypotheses that can be applied generally.

Required Books


Graduate Writing Guides by Andrew Enterline and James Stimson (will send via email, should be read over the course of the semester and used as a reference for structuring papers.)

Other required readings are journal articles that are accessible via ASU’s digital library.

**Course Requirements**

The grade for the course will be based on performance on two exams and a research paper:

1. Research Paper: 50%
2. Reaction Papers: 25%
3. Participation: 25%

**Research Paper (50%)**

The major assignment of the course is a complete research paper. This paper should pose a general question relating to international conflict. This will be a semester-long endeavor and students will be working on the paper from very early on in the semester. We will be spending approximately a third of each meeting discussing paper ideas, revisions and so forth.

Individual sections of the paper will be sent to the entire class the FRIDAY before the class in which we discuss them. Students should include revised portions of previous section with each new section turned in.

In addition, before the final version of the paper is turned in, on the last meeting. Students will be presenting their papers in class in a standard conference format of 12 minute power point presentations followed by 10 minutes of discussion. Students are asked to follow the formatting guidelines suggest by Enterline in his guide for this. The slides do not need to be sent in ahead of time for this.

**Paper sections and due dates:**

Research Question (1-2 pages): September 2
Literature Review: September 23
Theory and Hypotheses: October 7
Research Design: October 28
Full draft, with analysis: November 18.
Presentations: December 2.
Revised, final draft: December 9 by 5pm.
Response Papers (25%)

Students will be asked to complete 4 response papers throughout the semester, no longer than 2 single-spaced pages. These will be assigned at the beginning of the semester. 2 students will be turning in a response paper every week, as well as coming up with 4 discussion questions based on the readings for use in the class. These papers will critique (not just summarize) the arguments and/or tests in the works. This means discussing briefly but thoroughly the major strengths of the works as well as their weaknesses. Papers should also discuss possible extensions of the research or additional research questions facing that area of the literature. The questions should also be asked with the goal of spurring discussion on not only strengths and weaknesses of the works, but also the extensions of that research or applicability to the students’ own research papers. Papers and questions should be emailed to all course participants by 5:00 PM on the Monday before class. This portion of the grade will be based on both the quality of the response papers themselves, as well as the quality of the questions.

Participation (25 %)

Students are expected to complete the assigned readings each week. Student-led discussion of the readings will occur in each class meeting. All students should arrive prepared with comments regarding the assigned readings.

Course Schedule

Note: I reserve the right to change the assigned readings with a 1 week notice.

Week 1 (August 26): Introduction to course and overview.

Required:

MS 1989, Chapters 1-3
SSIP, Chapter 1 by Kadera and Zinnes.

Recommended:


**MS 1989** all.

**Week 2 (September 2): Systemic Approaches to Conflict, General Theory, and Two Major Datasets**

**Required:**

SSIP, Chapter 3 by Hensel, Chapter 6 by Rasler and Thompson


**Recommended:**


**Week 3 (September 9): Game Theory and Bargaining**

**Required:**

SSIP Chapter 2 by Zagare and Slantchev.


**Recommended:**


Powell, Robert. 2006. “War as a Commitment Problem” *International Organization*


**Week 4 (September 16): Democratic Peace and Domestic Politics**

**Required:**

SSIP Chapter 9 by Chan.


**Recommended:**


**Week 5 (September 23): Contiguity, Territory and Conflict**

**Required:**

SSIP Chapter 7 by Tir and Vasquez


Wright, Thorin M. and Paul F. Diehl. 2015. “Unpacking Territorial Disputes: Domestic Political Influences and War.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (available via online first option)


**Recommended**


**Week 6 (September 30): Role of Alliances and Arms Races**

**Required:**

SSIP Chapter 8 by Leeds and Morgan


**Recommended:**


**Week 7 (October 7): International Rivalry**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**Week 8 (October 14): Research Design, Data, and Methods Issues in Conflict Research**

**Required:**

SSIP, Chapter 5 by Morrow.


Recommended:


Week 9 (October 21 ): Economics and Conflict

Required:


**Recommended:**


**Week 10 (October 28): International Aspects of Civil Conflict**

**Required:**

SSIP Chapter 10 by Moore and Tarar, Chapter 11 by Salehyan and Thyne


**Recommended:**


**Week 11 (November 4): Conflict Management and Resolution**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**

SSIP Chapter 13 by Hartzell and Yuen


**Week 12 (November 11): CLASS CANCELED: Traveling to Peace Science Conference**

**Week 13 (November 18): Emerging Topics in Conflict Research: Climate Change, the Environment, and Conflict**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**Week 14 (November 25: CLASS CANCELED: Day before Thanksgiving**

**Week 15 (December 2:) Wrap-Up and Class Presentations**

**Required:**

SSIP, Chapter 14 by Maoz


**Remember, final papers are due December 9 by 5pm**

**Further Reading on Other Important Topics**

**Power Transition Theory**


**Diversionary Theory and Other Domestic Influences**


**Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence**


**Decision-Making and Conflict**


**General Works**


Disability Accommodations

Qualified students with disabilities who will require disability accommodations in this class are encouraged to make their requests to me at the beginning of the semester either during office hours or by appointment. Note: Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Their office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: 480-965-1234 (V), 480-965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc. Their hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Disability information is confidential.

Title IX

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at http://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs/students.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Student Obligations (from the official University Academic Integrity Policy: https://provost.asu.edu/sites/default/files/AcademicIntegrityPolicyPDF.pdf). Also see: http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity

Each student must act with honesty and integrity, and must respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments. A student may be found to have engaged in academic dishonesty if, in connection with any Academic Evaluation or academic or research assignment (including a paid research position), he or she:

- A. Engages in any form of academic deceit;
- B. Refers to materials or sources or uses devices (e.g., computer disks, audio recorders, camera phones, text messages, crib sheets, calculators, solution manuals, materials from previous classes, or commercial research services) not authorized by the instructor for use during the Academic Evaluation or assignment;
- C. Possesses, reviews, buys, sells, obtains, or uses, without appropriate authorization, any materials intended to be used for an Academic Evaluation or assignment in advance of its administration;
- D. Acts as a substitute for another person in any Academic Evaluation or assignment;
- E. Uses a substitute in any Academic Evaluation or assignment;
• F. Depends on the aid of others, including other students or tutors, in connection with any Academic Evaluation or assignment to the extent that the work is not representative of the student’s abilities;

• G. Provides inappropriate aid to another person in connection with any Academic Evaluation or assignment, including the unauthorized use of camera phones, text messages, photocopies, notes or other means to copy or photograph materials used or intended for Academic Evaluation;

• H. Engages in Plagiarism;

• I. Uses materials from the Internet or any other source without full and appropriate attribution;

• J. Permits his or her work to be submitted by another person in connection with any Academic Evaluation or assignment, without authorization;

• K. Claims credit for or submits work done by another;

• L. Signs an attendance sheet for another student, allows another student to sign on the student’s behalf, or otherwise participates in gaining credit for attendance for oneself or another without actually attending;

• M. Falsifying or misrepresenting hours or activities in relationship to an internship, externship, field experience, clinical activity or similar activity; or

• N. Attempts to influence or change any Academic Evaluation, assignment or academic record for reasons having no relevance to academic achievement.

There are severe sanctions for cheating, plagiarizing and any other form of dishonesty. Please see the Student Code of Conduct and Student Disciplinary Procedures. An initial incident will result in the student receiving an E and zero points for exam. A second incident will result in a failure (E or possibly an XE failure for academic dishonesty) for the course. All work must be yours and it must be original to this class. If you have questions about this, please ask us. All instances of academic dishonesty will, per CLAS policy, be reported to the appropriate authority in CLAS.