GOV 388L: International Security  
University of Texas at Austin, Spring 2012  
Thursday 930a-1230p, Batts Hall 1.104  
Updated: December 5, 2011

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Course Description and Objectives

This course is designed to give students an understanding of recent research, both theoretical and empirical, into the causes of war and peace. We will adopt a definition of war as “organized violence,” which allows us to consider conflicts that straddle the traditional IR/comparative divide. As such, we will examine both interstate and intrastate wars with an eye to their fundamental theoretical similarities, not their apparent differences.

In addition to surveying the recent literature, we will also work towards the development of student research (which will culminate in a research-oriented paper to be turned in at the end of the semester). Time permitting, we will throughout the semester set aside time to discuss research topics—where students can give and receive feedback on their ideas—and, if possible, we may schedule brainstorming sessions outside of class (they will, however, be purely optional). These will be important in developing your ideas, in learning how to engage the ideas of others, and in learning how to take and make use of feedback.

Requirements

Your grade is determined by three elements:

20% Participation and Attendance. Both, of course, are essential. Read each item on the required list closely each week, and come to class prepared to pick the readings apart in excruciating detail. I want you to do most of the talking, not me. Courses of this type are designed for you to learn how to work out your own ideas while engaging literatures in greater depth, to learn what good (and bad) science looks like, and to start thinking about doing your own research (that is, after all, why you’re here).

40% Review Papers (2). Students will be required to write two 5-page papers that review and critique the assigned readings in a given week, identifying (1) the common research question, (2) answers to the question, (3) relations between competing answers, and (4) which competing explanations are superior to the others. Think of this paper as a scaled-down version of review articles you see in journals, or even as a lit review that ties them together with a specific goal in mind. One of the papers will be assigned to a given week during the first
session, and students in their assigned weeks will use their paper (which is due the same day that the readings will be discussed in class) to help lead class discussion. Students are free to choose the set of readings on which they will write the second paper (and there are no presentational duties assigned to this one), but note that this second paper is also due on the same day that we will discuss those readings. Late review papers will not be accepted.

40% **Research-Oriented Paper.** The last formal requirement is an original research-oriented paper. By “research-oriented” I mean an approximately 14-18 page essay that sets the stage for a full-blown research paper that you can one day present and/or submit for publication. The centerpiece of the paper will be an original idea on which you can build a research project. By idea, I mean a theoretical contribution, one that is well-motivated by an empirical puzzle and situated within the relevant literature. You don’t need to execute the research design: the goal here is to think about the role of good theory and how, once properly developed, the appropriate research design will be clear. (But theory always comes first.) Your paper should (1) motivate the research question, (2) review the shortcomings of recent literature and identify your points of departure, (3) present the argument, paying close attention to logical consistency and validity, (4) present hypotheses and empirical implications, and (5) discuss the contributions of the effort (if it were to become a full-fledged research paper).

**University and Campus Policies**

1. **Students with disabilities.**

   Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

2. **Accommodations for religious holidays.**

   By university policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

3. **Academic dishonesty.**

   “Scholastic dishonesty... includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without prior permission of the instructor, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act” (Section 11-802 (b), Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities).

   If you have any questions about what constitutes scholastic dishonesty, you should consult with me and the following website: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/academicintegrity.html. Any student that violates this policy will fail this course and have the details of the violation reported to Student Judicial Services.
4. Emergency evacuation policy.

In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as the way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Faculty members must then provide this information to the Fire Prevention Services office by fax (512-232-2759), with “Attn. Mr. Roosevelt Easley” written in the subject line.

Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at http://www.utexas.edu/emergency.

**Readings**

Four texts are required for this course, all of which are available at the bookstore:


All other readings will be available electronically. I also expect that you will have completed the readings before the sessions for which they are assigned.

**Course Outline and Schedule**

**Session 1. Theoretical Foundations**

*Required*


**Recommended**


**Session 2. Bargaining and War**

**Required**


**Recommended**

Session 3. Power and War

Required


Recommended


Session 4. Signaling I

Required


Recommended


**Session 5. Signaling II**

*Required*

• Kydd 2005, whole book.

**Session 6. War Duration and Termination**

*Required*


*Recommended*


Session 7 (17 March). The Duration of Peace

Required


Recommended


Session 8. Domestic Politics I: Guns, Butter, and Distributive Politics

• Powell 1999, Chapter 2.


**Session 9. Domestic Politics II: The Democratic Peace**

*Required*


• Wagner 2007, Ch. 6


*Recommended*


Session 10. Domestic Politics III: Audience Costs

Required


Recommended


Session 11. Domestic Politics IV: Leaders

Required


Recommended


**Session 12. Third Parties I: Alignment and Intervention**

*Required*

• Powell 1999, Ch. 5.


*Recommended*


**Session 13. Third Parties II: Honor, Face, and Prestige**

*Required*

Session 14. *Inter- and intra-state War*

**Required**


Session 15. *International Institutions*

**Required**


**Recommended**

