

Topics in International Security

Instructor: Brian Blankenship

Course Location: TBA

Course Meeting Time: TBA

Office Hours: TBA

Course Description

This course explores how and why states and non-state actors use violent and non-violent strategies in international politics. While not all topics in international security can be covered thoroughly in one semester, this course will give a sampling of many of the topics, including military doctrines and strategies, diplomatic policies, social forces, civil wars, and roles of individuals. Though historical and current events will be used as examples to illustrate how various theories work, students should keep in mind that this is not a course on current events.

All of the readings are posted online. There are no books to buy.

Learning Objectives

In addition to substantive knowledge, students can expect to develop the following skills over the duration of the course:

- Students will come to a critical understanding of competing theories and debates on important issues in international politics, including the causes of war and peace, terrorism, and nuclear proliferation and deterrence.
- Students will improve their persuasive and analytical writing skills.
- Students will learn how to dissect, restate, and critique theoretical and empirical arguments in scholarly political science work.

Requirements

Attendance and Participation: 30%

Attendance and weekly readings are mandatory, and students should come prepared with discussion points and questions based on the week's materials. Class may not be missed except in case

of exceptional emergency, religious observance, or illness with a doctor's note, and I must be informed as far ahead of time as practicable. Absences harm not only the participation grade, but affect grading of all other work as I am less able to assess the student's understanding of and engagement with the relevant texts. Make-up work may be assigned for approved absences.

Quizzes: 10%

Four quizzes will be given throughout the semester. Quizzes consist of several short answer questions, and will cover the readings that have been assigned since the previous quiz. The goal is simply to verify that students have completed the readings. Answers of a few sentences are sufficient.

Midterm Exam: 25%

Final Exam: 30%

The midterm and final exams will consist of several essay questions, from which students will have to pick two to write on.

Course Schedule

Section 1. Theory and International Security

- Jack Snyder, “One World, Rival Theories.”
- Robert Jervis, “Realism, Neoliberalism, and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate.”

Section 2. Power

- Leslie Gelb, “GDP Now Matters More Than Force.”
- Joseph Nye, “Soft Power.”
- Robert Art, “The Fungibility of Force.”
- David Baldwin, “Force, Fungibility, and Influence.”
- Arvind Subramanian, “The Inevitable Superpower.”
- Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth, “The Once and Future Superpower.”

Section 3. War

- Kenneth N. Waltz, “The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory.”
- Robert Gilpin, “Hegemonic War and International Change.”
- Daniel Kahneman and Jonathan Renshon, “Why Hawks Win.”
- Sigmund Freud, “Why War?”
- Margaret Mead, “Warfare Is Only an Invention – Not a Biological Necessity.”
- James Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War.” (read pp. 379-386, 390-411)

Section 4. Peace

- Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace.”
- Robert Jervis, “Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma.” (read pp. 186-214)
- William Wohlforth, “The Stability of a Unipolar World.” (read pp. 5-28, 37-41)
- John Mueller, “The Obsolescence of Major War.”
- Page Fortna, “Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace?” (read pp. 269-277, 288).
- Richard Betts, “The Delusion of Impartial Intervention.”

Section 5. Domestic Politics and Individuals

- Robert Jervis, “Do Leaders Matter and How Would We Know?”
- Robert Jervis, “Hypotheses on Misperception.”
- Michael Doyle, “Liberalism and World Politics.”
- Christopher Layne, “Kant or Cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace.”
- Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, “Democratization and the Danger of War.”

Section 6. Strategy and Threat Assessment

- Thomas Schelling, “The Diplomacy of Violence.”
- Robert Art, “The Four Functions of Force.” (read pp. 4-14)
- Keren Yarhi-Milo, “In the Eye of the Beholder.” (read pp. 7-20)
- Andrew Kydd, “Sheep in Sheep’s Clothing.” (read pp. 114-129, 139-147)
- Eyre Crowe, “The German Threat? 1907.” (read pp. 397-405, 414-419)
- Neville Henderson, “The German Threat? 1938.”
- Vladimir Putin, “The Threat to Ukraine from the West.”
- Eliot A. Cohen, “The Crisis in Ukraine.”
- Nathan and Scobell, “How China Sees America.”

Section 7. Alliances and Cooperation

- James Morrow, “Alliances: Why Write them Down?” (read pp. 63-73)
- Kenneth Waltz, “Anarchic Orders and Balances of Power.”
- Stephen Walt, “Explaining Alliance Formation.” (read pp. 17-40)
- Thomas Christensen and Jack Snyder, “Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks.”
- Patricia Weitsman, “Theory of Alliance Formation and Cohesion.” (read pp. 11-33)
- Joshua Shifrinson, “Sound and Fury, Signifying Something? NATO and the Trump Administration’s Second Year.” (<https://networks.h-net.org/node/28443/discussions/2059521/issf-policy-series-sound-and-fury-signifying-something-nato-and>)
- Abraham Newman and Daniel Nexon, “Here’s Why Trump is Wrong on American Allies.”
- Michael Mandelbaum, “What Trump Gets Right About NATO.”

Section 8. Terrorism

- Martha Crenshaw, “Logic of Terrorism.”
- Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter, “Strategies of Terrorism.”
- Ayann Hirsi Ali, “A Problem from Heaven.”
- William McCants, “Islamic Scripture Is Not the Problem.”
- Daniel Byman, “Beyond Counterterrorism.”
- John Mueller, “The Terrorism Delusion.” (read pp. 95-110; skim the rest)
- Kenneth Pollack, “Fight or Flight?”
- Charles Glaser and Rose Kelanic, “Getting Out of the Gulf.”

Section 9. Nuclear Weapons

- Kenneth Waltz, “More May Be Better.”
- Scott Sagan, “More Will Be Worse.”
- Keir Lieber and Daryl Press, “Nuclear Weapons in the New Era of Counterforce.” (read pp. 9-18; skim the rest)
- Nina Tannenwald, “Renewing a Regime of Nuclear Restraint.” (<https://issforum.org/roundtables/policy/1-4-nuclear>)
- Daryl Kimball, “Taking First-Use of Nukes Off the Table.”
- Al Mauroni and David Jonas, “All Cards on the Table.”
- Ivo Daadler and Jan Lodal. “The Logic of Zero.”
- Charles Glaser, “The Flawed Case for Nuclear Disarmament.”

Section 10. Cyber Security

- Erik Gartzke, “The Myth of Cyberwar.”
- Rebecca Slayton, “What Is the Cyber Offense-Defense Balance?”
- Erik Gartzke and Jon Lindsay, “Weaving Tangled Webs.”
- Erica Borghard and Shawn Lonergan, “The Logic of Coercion in Cyberspace.”
- Adam Klein, “The Hacking Bear.”

Section 11. Ethics and Norms

- Niccolo Machiavelli, “Doing Evil in Order to Do Good.”
- Michael Walzer, “Just and Unjust Wars.”
- Edward Hallett Carr, “Realism and Idealism.”
- Nina Tannenwald, “Stigmatizing the Bomb.”
- Scott Sagan and Benjamin Valentino, “Revisiting Hiroshima in Iran.”