Spring 2017

International Conflict and Security

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Course Description

This course explores central issues regarding the use of military force in international politics. Why do states turn to military force and for what purposes? What are the causes of war and peace? What renders the threat to use force credible? Can intervention in civil wars stall bloodshed and bring stability? How can states cope with the threat posed by would-be terrorists? What is the nature of counterinsurgency doctrine? What is the future of military force in global politics? Through theoretical readings, concrete historical cases, and contemporary policy debates, this course examines these questions and others.

The themes covered in this class are often contentious, and fraught with ethical and moral issues, concerning the proper role of violence, and the value of human existence. Much of the course is discussion based, so civility, respect for others, and a respect for the value of free speech and a frank exchange of ideas are all important. As such, you should expect to hear ideas that may make you uncomfortable. I am responsible for ensuring that that we stick to ideas and not personal attacks, but all viewpoints are welcome as long as the presentation remains civil. That includes viewpoints that some might disagree with, or even find offensive.

Readings and Materials

Required readings are listed below for each class session. Most articles and book chapters will be posted online.


Course Objectives

1. Familiarize students with the nature of strategic interaction between states and the major causes of international conflict, both historical and contemporary;
2. Enable students to analyze the main theories and concepts that scholars of international relations use to explain conflict between and among states and non-state actors;

3. Allow students to critically evaluate the ability of these theories and concepts to explain modern warfare, diplomacy, and other elements of international security.

Requirements and Grading

Grading: 500 points

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Components</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/ Participation (20%)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>As = ≥90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers (3 at 50 points each for 30%)</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Bs = ≥80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analytical Book Review (10%)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Cs = ≥70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film, Reaction Piece (10%)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Ds = ≥60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam (30%)</td>
<td>200</td>
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**Participation - 20%**
Active and informed participation in class discussion and activities is extremely important. The grade for participation includes the grade for in-class quizzes and debates. Students will be assigned discussion groups at the beginning of the semester. At the end of the semester, students will rate the other members of their discussion group on the quality of their participation and this will be factored into the grade.

There will be in-class debates throughout the semester. Students will sign up for 3 debate sessions and will write a paper on that topic (see below).

Also, students may not use their laptop or other electronic device during active class time (this does not include any mid-class breaks).

**Response Papers - 30%**
Students will write 3 papers (4-5 pages, typed, double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins). The papers must be on the class readings including the debate topics listed on the syllabus. These papers should lay out the core of at least one argument on the issue at hand and evaluate it critically. Papers should be submitted electronically on blackboard. Later papers are subjected to a penalty, including marking down 1/3 of a letter grade (for example from a B+ to B).

**Analytical Book Review - 10%**
Students will read the book Overreach: Delusions of Regime Change in Iraq by Michael MacDonald and then write a short paper explaining and critiquing some element(s) of the arguments
presented therein. Papers should be 3 pages (typed, double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins) and submitted on blackboard on 5 May 2016.

**Film Reaction Piece - 10%**
During the semester, students must watch one of the following five films. The Battle of Algiers by Gille Pontecorvo will be shown in class in week 12, April 21. The Center for Peace and Conflict Studies is showing four other films during this semester; Saving Private Ryan (Jan 20), Fog of War (Feb 17), Waltz with Bashir (Mar 9), and Blackhawk Down (Apr 13). These films will be shown in the Diplomacy Room in the School of Diplomacy, starting just after 5pm. After watching the film, students will write a reaction paper (maximum 3 pages) on any aspect of the film they found interesting, enlightening, or troubling. The paper should be submitted on blackboard one week after the film is shown.

**Final Exam - 30%**
This will be a take home exam. The exam will be distributed on a day in the exam week and will be due on blackboard 24 hours later. It is recommended that you spend at about 2 hours on the exam. For this exam you are expected to answer three essay questions. Two essays will cover ‘narrower’ questions that tend to focus on the readings from one or two classes. The final essay will be a ‘broader’ question that will incorporate readings from three or more classes.

**Communications Policy**
The primary mode of communication between students and instructor is by email and by phone. I will endeavor to respond to email within 48 hours, but usually I will be able to do so within 24 hours. You can also reach me by phone.

**Accommodations Policy**
Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Civil Rights Restoration Act, students at Seton Hall University with disability may be eligible for accommodations in this course. Should a student require such accommodation, he or she must self-identify at the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS), Room 67, Duffy Hall, provide documentation of said disability, and work with DSS to develop a plan for accommodations. The contact person is Ms. Diane Delorenzo at (973) 313-6003.

**Academic Integrity**
Thinking about cheating? Don’t do it. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration, and may result in a lowered or failing grade for the course and up to possible dismissal from the School of Diplomacy. See university and school standards for academic conduct here: http://www.shu.edu/offices/student-life/community-standards/community-standards.cfm http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm.

Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general or as they relate to particular requirements for this course.
Course Schedule

Many readings will be posted electronically. If you are unable to access a reading, please contact me in adequate time before the class session in which the reading is due. This schedule of readings may be changed with appropriate notice.

Week 1. Introduction

Instructor and Student Introduction

Course Introduction

Discussion: Critical Thinking and writing good papers.


Week 2. Causes of War - Anarchy, Power, and Bargaining


Case Study World War I


NOTE: Students are expected to discuss events and facts from the case in class. Students should make a list of interesting / important things that people or states did or said, with the date. Also very useful are things that you do not understand.

Week 3. Causes of War - Domestic and International Institutions


Case Study World War I

Debate: Would the spread of democracy be a good thing for global peace and security? Can it be done?

Response Paper I Due on Blackboard

**Week 4. Causes of War - Ideas and Norms**


*Case Study* The Cold War


Debate: Why haven’t nuclear weapons been used since Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Should they be?

**Week 5. Causes of War: Psychology and Personality**


*Case Study* The Cold War


Debate: Is Barack Obama’s Foreign Policy Different from George Bush’s?
- Peter Feaver and Ionut Popescu, 2012. Is Obama’s Foreign Policy Different From George W. Bush’s?, E-IR <http://www.e-ir.info/2012/08/03/is-obamas-foreign-policy-different-to-bushs/>
Week 6. Fighting and Winning Wars


Debate: COIN (counterinsurgency) is touted as a form of warfare more sensitive to local politics. Is it more successful? More humane and less bloody?


Week 7. Coercion and Deterrence I


Debate: Will violence erupt in the Taiwan strait in the near future? Can the United States deter China from attacking Taiwan?

- Taiwan Relations Act (1979), Sections 2-3.

Response Paper II Due on Blackboard

Week 8. SPRING BREAK March 6-11

Week 9. Coercion and Deterrence II


Debate: Can the West prevent states, like Iran, from acquiring nuclear weapons? Does it matter?


**Week 10. Intervention and Peacekeeping**


**Debate:** When should outsiders intervene?

– Samantha Power, *Bystanders to Genocide*, Atlantic Monthly (September 2001)


**Week 11: Terrorism**


**Debate:** Was the US response after 9/11 appropriate? Wise?


**Response Paper III Due on Blackboard**

**Week 12: American Primacy**


**Debate:** Will the United States's hegemony endure? And is American primacy good for the world?


**Week 13: The Future of Security**


*Suggested Reading:*


