

INTL 4220: International Conflict

University of Georgia, Department of International Affairs

Course Instructor Information:

Dr. Andrew Owsiak
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Office: 325 Candler Hall
Office Hours: Weds, 1:30-3:30pm & by appt.

Course Meeting Information:

Fall 2016
Tues./Thurs., 8:00-9:15am
MLC 153
<https://uga.view.usg.edu/>

Course Description:

Why do countries go to war with one another? This question has captivated the attention of politicians, philosophers, scholars, and citizens for centuries, and there is therefore no shortage of proposed answers to it. In this course, we examine many of these answers in detail. We begin by grounding ourselves in a research tradition that examines international events through a scientific process – one that builds and evaluates theoretical models and constantly questions and assesses its own purpose. After that, we review conceptual definitions of conflict episodes (e.g., war, militarized conflict, crises, and rivalry), as well as the larger trends in these episodes over time. We next examine the many factors that theoretically might lead to (a lack of) militarized conflict across numerous levels of analysis, including the systemic, dyadic, national, and individual levels. Our primary goal will be to dissect and analyze these various theoretical explanations. In doing so, we will see that the issues under dispute, the strategic complications that arise during negotiations, the relationships states develop with one another, the shortcomings of human cognition, the structure of the international system, and the domestic institutions of states (among other factors) may all contribute to matters of war and peace. Finally, we will participate in a role-playing exercise that extends our knowledge from war between states to war within states, ultimately trying to discern whether the same factors are at work in both contexts. Throughout each phase of the course, we will consider what conflict scholars do (i.e., theory construction), how they do it (i.e., research design and methods), what problems they face, and what they can do better to understand why states employ militarized conflict to achieve political goals.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, a student should be able to:

- Describe the characteristics and trends of different types of international conflict;
- Explain why international conflict occurs – from multiple perspectives and levels of analysis;
- Identify, dissect, and critique theoretical models advanced by scholars;
- Interpret quantitative and qualitative evidence used to evaluate theoretical models;
- Find a puzzle, build a theoretical model to explain it, and marshal evidence to evaluate that model;
- Write a scholarly research paper in political science/international affairs.

Course Reading Material:

In order for the course to function smoothly, you should complete all assigned readings *before* the class meeting for which they are assigned. Completing these readings (and attending class consistently) will best help students be successful in the course. Students are responsible for all assigned readings, even if the material is not explicitly discussed in the classroom.

The required textbooks for the course are:

- Baglione, Lisa A. (2015) *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- Clark, Nancy L., and William H. Worger. (2011) *South Africa: The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, 2nd edn. Harlow, United Kingdom: Longman.

- Mitchell, Sara McLaughlin, and John A. Vasquez. (2014) *Conflict, War, and Peace: An Introduction to Scientific Research*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- Quackenbush, Stephen L. (2015) *International Conflict: Logic and Evidence*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

If the library has a copy of the required texts, I put them on reserve at the UGA library. Any assigned readings beyond the required textbooks will be available electronically from the instructor – via the eLearning Commons (eLC) website (log-in using UGA MyID at: <https://uga.view.usg.edu/>).

Supplemental Website:

Baglione provides a companion website with resources to help students through the research paper writing process. We will use some of these in the classroom, although students may find all the resources of value. The companion website is at: <https://study.sagepub.com/baglione3e>

Course Requirements:

The following are the requirements for this course:

1. Participation (20%): This course will follow a seminar, rather than lecture-based format (although lecture will be used when appropriate). I therefore expect that students will: a) attend course meetings, b) contribute meaningfully to class discussions (quality and quantity), and c) participate actively during in-class activities. Students should prepare for each class meeting by completing assigned readings, generating questions they have from those readings, and reviewing notes from previous meetings.
2. Midterm exams (25%): There will be two (2) midterm exams, which will be administered on September 27 and November 15. Questions for these exams will be a combination of multiple choice, identification, and/or essays. I will drop your lowest midterm score, and the higher score will count toward your final grade.
3. Reacting game (20%; see below for weighting): We will hold a role-playing exercise in the second half of the course. Students will be expected to:
 - a. Contribute actively to the exercise (part of participation). Evaluations will be based on instructor observation, supplemented by solicited feedback from simulation participants (to address contributions outside the classroom and/or within teams).
 - b. Complete a short (1-3) page position paper (10%). Students will submit this to the instructor during the course of the game.
 - c. Complete a reflection paper (10%): After the game ends, students will reflect upon their experience, guided by questions distributed by the instructor. This reflection involves the submission of a paper (3-4 page) on November 13 (at class beginning) that a) addresses the reflection question(s) given, and b) integrates the student's experience with the course readings.
4. Research Paper (35%; 10% for incremental process/progress, 25% on final product): Students will complete a 12-15 page independent, political science research paper during the course of the semester. Political science research papers adhere to a certain format and set of standards. I anticipate that students will be unfamiliar with these, so we will: a) read Baglione's guide, which contains the expected format and standards, as well as how to fulfill them; b) go step-by-step through the writing process together in various class meetings; c) regularly review draft sections of one another's work. Deadlines for this project include:
 - a. Selection of topic: Students will propose a research question by August 23. This can evolve after the deadline, but we need a direction in which to head.
 - b. Annotated bibliography: This consists of a list of works (books and journal articles, not websites) that the student has found, read, and determined should be included in the paper, along with a few sentences for each source on why it is relevant and how it might be used. This is due on September 13.

- c. Outline: Students should construct a short (1-2 page) outline in which they sketch the structure of their theoretical argument only (i.e., the “model”). The literature review need not appear in this outline. The outline is due on October 4.
- d. Research design: Students will complete a draft research design by October 20.
- e. Presentation: Students will present their findings to the class on November 29/December 1.
- f. Final paper: The final draft of the research paper is due by December 5 at 5:00pm in hard-copy form to my office: 325 Candler Hall. Students are encouraged to consult the instructor on their research project throughout the semester.

[Note: Students who miss the above deadlines and/or invest minimal effort on the early deadlines will not earn full credit for the process component of the assignment.]

Course Guidelines (the fine print):

The following guidelines govern the requirements for this course:

- 1. Students are expected to read the assigned course material, attend all class meetings, and participate actively within in-class activities and discussions. There is no “extra credit” to make up for low participation. Students that do not attend during the add/drop period and fail to contact the instructor may be removed from the class to make room for others wishing to take the course.
- 2. The class will follow a seminar (i.e., discussion), rather than lecture-based format (although lecture will be used when appropriate). Each class will involve a discussion of the readings assigned for that day (or activities derived from them). Students can gain or lose points during these discussions. To gain points, you must make a positive contribution to the class – such as comments that meaningfully criticize or challenge, request clarification of, extend, or react to assigned readings. To lose points, you need only fail to be prepared to contribute when called upon. At the end of the semester, your participation grade will be calculated based on the total number of points you have earned; these convert to grades according to the following scheme – 14+ (A), 10-13 (B), 6-9 (C), 4-5 (D), and less than 4 (F).

I will always allow volunteers to contribute to discussion first, and I prefer to rely upon a voluntary system. If no volunteers are available, however, I will randomly call upon people. Each person will be assigned a number during the first week of the course, and this number corresponds to a poker chip in a bowl. If your chip is drawn, you must answer the question raised. You may pass once (in total) in the event you are unprepared or absent for that specific question. After this free pass, I will deduct one point from your total participation score if you are unprepared or absent to answer a question for which your chip is drawn. [Note: chips always return to the bowl after being drawn, so you may be called upon more than once within a class period.]

Students may earn a total of one point per class meeting (though they might lose up to one point as well). The instructor’s recorded point total will be final at semester’s end; it is not subject to negotiation at grading time. In other words, plan to participate early and often.

I use this system to incentivize you to complete the readings. Our discussions will rely upon them, as will the exams and paper assignments. It is therefore to your benefit to complete the readings.

- 3. You can use Twitter to communicate relevant news and other information with the class. Please use #intl4220 so that we can find it. I am on Twitter at @ProfOwskiak.
- 4. Students who are unable to attend a class meeting are responsible for obtaining any announcements (e.g., changes to the course schedule/outline) and notes for that meeting from another student. The instructor will not provide lecture slides or notes for class meetings.

5. Assignments and papers are due on the dates given at the *beginning* of the regular class period; this means that all written work must be submitted before class starts (at 8am). Late work – even if turned in during the class period in which it is due – will be penalized one full letter grade (10 percentage points) for the first 24 hours it is late, as well as an additional letter grade (10 percentage points) for each additional 24 hours it is late. After 5 days (120 hours), late work can be turned in for half-credit until the final class meeting (December 1).
6. Failure to complete any course requirements (e.g., assignments, quizzes, or exams) will result in a grade of 0 for the incomplete requirement(s). Make-up exams *may* be offered, but only with the prior approval of the instructor (generally for documented, emergency situations *only*).
7. Everyone should have a favorite muppet. This has nothing to do with international conflict; it is just something that makes life more enjoyable. If you can work your muppet into exam answers, that is even better. (Muppets often don't like appearing in research papers, except in footnotes.)
8. Students should keep class notes, graded work, and copies of all submitted work until final grades are distributed. Every effort will be made to ensure that the instructor grades work timely, fairly, and objectively. If you believe that you received an inaccurate grade during the semester, you may submit a written memo to the instructor, along with the graded paper in question. This memo must be submitted within two weeks of receiving the graded assignment. The instructor will then read the memo, re-read the work in question, and assign a new grade. The new grade may be lower, the same as, or higher than the original grade and will not be subject to additional appeal under this policy.
9. In order to foster a respectful learning environment, students are expected:
 - a. to use language that does not insult others or their point of view;
 - b. to keep cell phones silenced and put away during class, even if Pokemon appear; and
 - c. *not* to use laptops during the class, unless the instructor informs you that they are needed for a classroom exercise. (If, however, you require special accommodations, please see the instructor at the outset of the course.)

Any student that does not follow these parameters may be asked to leave the class meeting so as not to affect other students' learning. Those that violate the provision more than once may be removed from the course.
10. It is the policy and practice of the University of Georgia to create an inclusive learning environment. Students requiring accommodations should discuss such matters with the instructor at the outset of the course. Students requesting accommodations must register with the Disability Resource Center on campus (706-542-8719, <http://www.drc.uga.edu>).
11. Any exceptions or modifications to the above rules (or syllabus) are given at the instructor's discretion, only with prior approval and only under instances of extreme emergency or serious illness. Appropriate documentation must be supplied by the student in any event of exception.

Grade Distribution

A	93.00-100.00	C	73.00-76.99
A-	90.00-92.99	C-	70.00-72.99
B+	87.00-89.99	D+	67.00-69.99
B	83.00-86.99	D	63.00-66.99
B-	80.00-82.99	D-	60.00-62.99
C+	77.00-79.99	F	Below 60.00

Academic Dishonesty:

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to follow the University's academic honesty policy ("A Culture of Honesty") and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty" (including policies that cover plagiarism; for more information, see <http://www.uga.edu/honesty>). Students are responsible for informing themselves about these standards before performing any academic work and may direct specific questions they have regarding the policy (or its application to course assignments) to the instructor. Please note that: (a) your not knowing about or not *intending* to violate the policy is not sufficient to protect you from consequences of violating it (see policy), and (b) all suspected violations of this policy will be handled according to the guidelines set forth within the policy.

Schedule/Topics:

The following pages contain a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary (in order to best meet the needs of the students and course). All readings are required unless otherwise noted. Students should read/know required material by the date listed, at which time we will discuss the scheduled topic in class.

Note: If the schedule changes, the instructor will announce (in class) the dates on which topics will be covered as the course progresses. The exact schedule depends upon the speed with which the course moves.

I. Introduction

- a. What is war/conflict? A first cut (August 11)
 - i. Clausewitz, *On War* (excerpts on eLC)
 - ii. Baglione, Chap 1
- b. Scientific Study of International Processes (August 16)
 - i. Quackenbush, Ch. 1
 - ii. King, Keohane, and Verba, Chap. 3
 - iii. *Optional*: Mitchell/Vasquez, Introduction
- c. Theoretical Models (August 18)
 - i. Tilly, Ch. 3
 - ii. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 12
- d. *Writing*: Finding puzzles and completing annotated bibliographies (August 23)
 - i. Baglione, Ch. 2-3
 - ii. Baglione, Ch. 1 (same as first class)
 - iii. **Bring first attempt at drafting a research question to class (2 copies).**
- e. Conflict definitions and trends: A second cut (August 25)
 - i. Quackenbush, Ch. 2
 - ii. Clausewitz, *On War* (same as first class)
 - iii. **Find one source of data related to international conflict. Share the link on eLC. Can you identify trends in the data? If so, what do you find?**

II. Explanations for conflict

- a. Foundations: Rational choice theory and its limits (August 30)
 - i. Quackenbush, Ch. 3
 - ii. Fearon, A Rationalist Explanation of War
 - iii. *Optional*: Paraguay War
- b. Research Day (September 1)
 - i. Use this time towards your research project.

- c. Correlational Analyses (September 6)
 - i. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 2
 - ii. Geller/Singer, Ch. 7, On Iran/Iraq War

- d. Systemic
 - i. Defensive Realism & Balance of Power (September 8)
 - 1. Quackenbush, Ch. 5
 - 2. Schroeder, Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realism

 - ii. *Writing*: How to write literature reviews and theoretical models (September 13)
 - 1. Baglione, Ch. 4-5
 - 2. **Bring annotated bibliography to class (3 copies).**

 - iii. Offensive Considerations (September 15)
 - 1. Mearsheimer, Ch. 5
 - 2. Van Evera, *Causes of War*, Ch. 6

- e. Dyadic
 - i. Issue-Based Approach (September 20)
 - 1. Quackenbush, Ch. 4
 - 2. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 3

 - ii. Rivalry (September 22)
 - 1. Quackenbush, Ch. 13
 - 2. Rider/Owsiak, Border Settlement, Commitment Problems, and the Causes of Contiguous Rivalry

 - iii. **MIDTERM #1: September 27, 8-9:15am
(PLEASE BRING BLUE BOOK.)**

 - iv. Alliances (September 29)
 - 1. Quackenbush, Ch. 6
 - 2. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 4

 - v. *Writing*: Revisions and Research Design (October 4)
 - 1. Baglione, Ch. 6-7
 - 2. **Bring draft of theoretical argument to class (3 copies).**

 - vi. Escalation to War (October 6)
 - 1. Quackenbush, Ch. 9
 - 2. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 11
 - 3. *Optional*: Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 6

 - vii. Steps to War Theory (October 11)
 - 1. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 7

 - viii. Liberal Institutions (October 13)
 - 1. Political/Democratic Peace
 - a. Quackenbush, Ch. 7
 - b. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 15
 - c. *Optional*: Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 9

- 2. Economic (October 18)
 - a. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 10
 - b. Gartzke, A Capitalist Peace
 - ix. *Writing*: Analysis, Introductions, and Conclusions (October 20)
 - 1. Baglione, Ch. 8-9
 - 2. **Bring draft of research design to class (3 copies).**
- f. Simulation: South Africa
 - i. Preparation/Background (October 25)
 - 1. Read gamebook, pp. 8-50
 - ii. Session #1: All Party Talks (October 27)
 - 1. For all sessions, recommended readings include:
 - a. Background: Clark & Worger (all)
 - b. Gamebook: roles, documents, and supplementary reading
 - iii. Session #2: Determine Working Groups/Draft (November 1)
 - iv. Session #3: Draft Constitution in Committees (November 3)
 - v. Session #4: Debate Committee A/B Drafts (November 8)
 - vi. Session #5: Debate Committee B/C Drafts (November 10)
 - vii. Debrief (November 15)
- g. **Midterm Exam #2: November 17, 8:00-9:15am
(PLEASE BRING BLUE BOOK.)**
- h. Short Presentations (November 29 & December 1)
 - i. Research question (1 sentence)
 - ii. Theoretical model (concise)
 - iii. Main finding
- i. **Final Papers Due: Monday, December 5 at 5:00pm to 325 Candler (hard-copy)**