
INTL 4220 – INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

Park 116 MWF 10:10 – 11:00
Spring 2017 - Syllabus

Instructor
William Dory

Contact
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Office Location & Hours
M & W 11:00-12:00
Candler B 02 a.k.a. The Bat Cave

Course Description & Materials

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.

Required Texts:

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. 2
- 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.

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>

News:

It is highly recommended that you keep up with current events. Good resources include: *BBC News, The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Guardian, The Economist, Time, CNN, Reuters*, and others.

Course Policies

	Grade Scale:
Grades:	A = 93 – 100
Attendance and participation 20%	A- = 90 – 92
Game Reflection 20%	B+ = 87 – 89
Midterm Exam 25%	B = 83 – 86
Final Research Paper 35%	B- = 80 – 82
	C+ = 77 – 79
Grades are not rounded and there is not extra credit. Late work is not accepted.	C = 73 – 76
	C- = 70 = 72
	D = 60 – 69
	F = 0 – 59

Attendance & Participation:

1. Excused Absences: I am aware that events beyond our control conspire to keep us from meeting our normal obligations; in these cases, I grant excused absences. An excused absence is one where you have an officially documented college-sanctioned event, a documented

medical excuse, or proof of a deceased direct relative. I will accept documentation to receive an excused absence for up to a week after the missed day. Contacting me ahead of time is, of course, preferable.

2. Unexcused Absences: You may also use up to THREE (3) unexcused absences without penalty. You do not need to contact me if you are using one of these. I care for you all, but flooding my inbox with unimportant emails about you oversleeping or how the-struggle-is-real just annoy me, and may incur my wrath upon your poor classmates should this happen too often.
3. Participation: I will regularly take attendance in class. I will also take note of both the quantity and the quality of your contributions to class discussions. Finally, I should note that points for attendance and participation are not simply given out; they are earned. Grades in my classes are often raised by attendance and participation. However, others have found their grade lowered when they paid little attention to attendance and participation. As such, it is in your best interest to attend class and participate in discussion where appropriate.

Readings:

Those readings not in the assigned books, are available electronically via ELC, the UGA library electronic database, and/or Google Scholar.

I am here for guidance and to share knowledge with you, which I will do extensively most days in class. However, the best way for you to learn in this course is to engage with the material and to debate and discuss it at length with your peers in class. Thus, excellence in participation means more than just talking a lot in class; rather, it requires that your participation be high in both quality *and* quantity. In order to pull this off, you should do your best to be a *critical reader*. Critical readers are (Schumm, J.S., and Post, S. A. 1997. *Executive Learning*, 282; Richards 2006).

- Willing to spend time reflecting on the ideas present in their reading assignments.
- Able to evaluate and solve problems while reading rather than merely compile a set of facts to be memorized.
- Eager to express their thoughts on a topic, and seekers of alternative views.
- Open to new ideas that may or may not necessarily agree with their previous thought on a topic.
- Able to base their judgements on ideas and evidence, and take a critical stance.
- Able to recognize errors in thought and persuasion as well as to recognize good arguments.
- Able to ask penetrating and thought-provoking questions to evaluate ideas.
- In touch with their personal thoughts and ideas about a topic.
- Willing to reassess their views when new or discordant evidence is introduced and evaluated.
- Able to see connections between topics and use knowledge from other disciplines to enhance their reading and learning experiences.

Course Requirements:

Participation (20%): This class is set up to be more of a seminar than a lecture. That means that there will be student leaders for each discussion session, and the remaining class members will need to provide questions and previously prepared discussion material. This will require you to complete all readings ahead of the date listed on the syllabus and have questions/notes prepared for that day's class.

Midterm Exams (25%): There will be two midterms. They will consist of multiple choice, short answer/essays. Potential essay questions will not be distributed ahead of time. The lower of the two scores will be dropped when determining final grades.

Game Reflection (20%): We will be conducting a simulation to apply our interstate conflict knowledge to an intrastate conflict. Your total evaluation will be based on your contribution to your group, a 1-3 page position paper due before the game begins, and a 3-4 page reflection paper on how you, individually, applied topics from the course to the simulation.

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.

3

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: B02 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.]

Grade Appeals:

If you believe your exams or assignments have been graded unfairly, you can appeal your grade in written form. You must hand in your appeal on the day after the assignment or exam was returned. Comparisons to other students' graded assignments will not be accepted for a complaint. Hand in the original copy of the graded assignment/exam together with the written appeal. I will reevaluate your grade in light of the argument that you made. However, the new grade may be the same, higher, or lower than the original grade. It will be final.

Disabilities:

Students with disabilities of any kind are strongly encouraged to tell me at the beginning of the semester, so appropriate accommodations can be made. Students with disabilities that have been certified by the UGA Disabilities Services Office will be accommodated according to university policy. Contact Disabilities Services for more information.

Cheating & Plagiarism:

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. See the Academic Honesty Policy for details on what is expected of you (<http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>)

Classroom Behavior:

Classroom Behavior: Students should behave professionally throughout the course. Due to the large size of the class, disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Turn off your cell phone while in class (some exceptions may apply - e.g. you a transplant surgeon anxiously awaiting the arrival of a donor heart). Laptops may be used to take notes in class, but not in a way that is disruptive to other students. Texting is never appropriate in class, unless it is to let your friends know that a case concerning the Third Amendment has never been litigated before the Supreme Court, or some similar tidbit of mesmerizing political trivia.

Instructor Availability:

My office hours are by appointment. You may discuss when you would like to meet with me immediately following class or send an email to dorywa@uga.edu. If you set up a meeting with me, do not miss the meeting.

This course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

I. Introduction

- a. What is war/conflict? A first cut (Jan 6)
 - i. Clausewitz, *On War* (excerpts on eLC)
 - ii. Baglione, Chap 1
- b. Scientific Study of International Processes (Jan 9)
 - i. Quackenbush, Ch. 1
 - ii. King, Keohane, and Verba, Chap. 3
 - iii. *Optional*: Mitchell/Vasquez, Introduction
- c. Theoretical Models (Jan 11-13)
 - i. Tilly, Ch. 3
 - ii. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 12

JANUARY 16 – NO CLASS

- d. *Writing*: Finding puzzles and completing annotated bibliographies (Jan 18)
 - 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 (Jan 20)
 - 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 (Jan 23 & 25)

- i. Quackenbush, Ch. 3
- ii. Fearon, A Rationalist Explanation of War
- iii. *Optional*: Paraguay War

b. Research Day (Jan 27)

- i. Use this time towards your research project.

c. Correlational Analyses (Jan 30)

- i. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 2
- ii. Feng, *Sources of Political Capacity*

d. Systemic

i. Defensive Realism & Balance of Power (Feb 1 & 3)

1. Quackenbush, Ch. 5
2. Schroeder, Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realism

ii. *Writing*: How to write literature reviews and theoretical models (Feb 6)

1. Baglione, Ch. 4-5
2. **Bring annotated bibliography to class (3 copies).**

iii. Offensive Considerations (Feb 8)

1. Snyder – *Mearsheimer's World*

e. Dyadic

i. Issue-Based Approach (Feb 10)

1. Quackenbush, Ch. 4
2. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 3 (Feb 13)

ii. Rivalry (Feb 15 & 17)

1. Quackenbush, Ch. 13
2. Rider/Owsiak, Border Settlement, Commitment Problems, and the Causes of

Contiguous Rivalry

iii. **MIDTERM #1: February 20**
(PLEASE BRING BLUE BOOK.)

iv. Alliances (Feb 22 & 24)

1. Quackenbush, Ch. 6
2. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 4

v. *Writing*: Revisions and Research Design (Feb 27)

1. Baglione, Ch. 6-7
2. **Bring draft of theoretical argument to class (3 copies).**

vi. Escalation to War

1. Quackenbush, Ch. 9 (Mar 1)
2. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 11 (Mar 3)
3. *Optional*: Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 6

MARCH 6-10 SPRING BREAK

vii. Steps to War Theory (Mar 13)

1. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 7

viii. Liberal Institutions (Mar 15)

1. Political/Democratic Peace

- a. Quackenbush, Ch. 7
- b. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 15 (Mar 17)
- c. *Optional*: Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 9
- 2. Economic
 - a. Mitchell/Vasquez, Ch. 10 (Mar 20)
 - b. Gartzke, A Capitalist Peace Mar (22)
- ix. *Writing*: Analysis, Introductions, and Conclusions (Mar 24)
 - 1. Baglione, Ch. 8-9
 - 2. **Bring draft of research design to class (3 copies).**
- f. Simulation: South Africa
- i. Preparation/Background (Mar 27)
 - 1. Read gamebook, pp. 8-50
- ii. Session #1: All Party Talks (Mar 29 & 31)
 - 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 (April 3)
- iv. Session #3: Draft Constitution in Committees (April 7 & 10)
- v. Session #4: Debate Committee A/B Drafts (April 12)
- vi. Session #5: Debate Committee B/C Drafts (April 14)
- vii. Debrief (April 17)
- g. **Midterm Exam #2: April 21**
(PLEASE BRING BLUE BOOK.)
- h. Short Presentations (Apr 24 & 26)
- i. Research question (1 sentence)
- ii. Theoretical model (concise)
- iii. Main finding
- i. **Final Papers Due: Monday, May 1 at 11:00am to B02 Candler (hard-copy)**