



## **PSC 435/555: Theories of International Conflict**

Fall 2011

**Meeting Times:** MW 3:30-4:45pm

**Location:** 208 Washburn

**Instructor:** Dr. Marc Hutchison

**Office:** 223 Washburn Hall

**Office Hours:** MW 10:15-11:45am or by appointment

**Office Phone:** (401) 874-4054

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**Course Description:** This seminar is designed to familiarize students with the causes of international conflict as well as the conditions for peace. The focus of this course is interstate conflict, which can range from a minor border skirmish to a systemic world war. By reviewing the theoretical and empirical literature, this course will also serve to socialize students with the process of contemporary scientific research. We review power-based theories of war, the territorial explanations of war, the democratic peace, and bargaining theories of conflict. We examine the role of power, territory, alliances, arms races, rivalry, and crisis escalation in generating conflict processes, as well as the effects of democracy in building peace between states. While the primary goal of this seminar is to provide a detailed overview of international conflict, it will also focus on developing critical research skills through a semester-long paper project and several statistical assignments.

Graduates students are expected to read the “recommended readings” provided in the course schedule and be prepared to discuss those readings in detail during our weekly meetings. Of course, interested undergraduates are encouraged to review the materials for additional insights into these topics.

### **Required Readings:**

John A. Vasquez. 2009. *The War Puzzle Revisited*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

### **Recommended Books:**

John A. Vasquez. 2000. *What Do We Know about War?* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Manus I. Midlarsky, ed. 2000. *Handbook of War Studies II*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Greg Mahlon Scott and Stephen M. Garrison. *The Political Science Student Writer's Manual*. Princeton, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Senese, Paul D., and John A. Vasquez. 2008. *The Steps to War: An Empirical Study*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bennett, D. Scott, and Allan Stam. 2003. *The Behavioral Origins of War*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow. 2003. *The Logic of Political Survival*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Russett, Bruce, and John R. Oneal. 2001. *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

**Course Requirements:**

Attendance/Participation (20%)

Statistical Assignments (30%)

Research Paper (50%)

*Attendance/Participation.* Daily attendance is expected. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain from another student any information or handouts provided during the class. This course is a seminar so participation is required. Students are encouraged to participate by asking questions and by answering questions addressed to the class by the instructor. The reading assignments should be completed PRIOR to the beginning of class for which they are assigned.

Additionally, each student is expected to help lead discussion of the readings for one weekly topic during the semester. **The week that you choose to lead discussion, you are required turn in a 2 page summary of that week's readings as well as 3-4 discussion questions at the start of class.** The summary and questions will be incorporated into your overall participation grade.

**Attendance/Participation Grading Chart**

Participation	Attendance	Grade
Regular, insightful comments and questions	Daily	A
Comments and questions show general understanding of material	Frequent	B
Sometimes good comments and questions, occasionally tangential or sarcastic	Intermittent	C
Sarcastic or irrelevant comments and questions	Seldom	D
Never spoke	Rare	F

*Statistical Assignments.* All students will complete three assignments using basic statistical techniques to examine the relationship between important concepts and international conflict. Each assignment will be worth 10% of your final grade. More detailed instructions regarding these assignments, including expectations, data sources, and techniques will be provided in class.

**Assignment Due Dates:**

Assignment #1 – Power-based Explanations of Conflict

October 12<sup>th</sup>

Assignment #2 – Steps-to-War Theory

November 16<sup>th</sup>

Assignment #3 – Democratic Peace Theory

December 12<sup>th</sup>

*Research Paper.* All students are required to complete a 25-30 page semester-long research project over the course of the semester. For this project, each student will analyze an interstate war (chosen from a list provided by the instructor) from its inception, through its escalation to war, to its termination. Each student is required to submit a 2-3 page proposal for the research paper. All students are required to meet with the instructor to discuss their research paper proposal and have their project approved. I will provide a sign-up sheet to schedule the meetings. This meeting is a course requirement, no exceptions. More detailed instructions regarding this project, including format and expectations, will be provided in class.

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** Cheating and plagiarism are very serious crimes and will be handled in accord with university policy. Specific information regarding definitions of cheating and plagiarism can be found at <http://www.uri.edu/facsen/8.20-8.27.html>. For details concerning the actions taken against those who commit these infractions students should again consult the above web site.

**Classroom Decorum:** I require all students to treat everyone in the classroom with respect. At times, we may engage in discussion of topics for which students may possess strong opinions. While disagreement is crucial to healthy discourse, I will not tolerate behavior that either impinges learning or results in personal attacks on others. At no time may any student insult or single out any other person on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, age, ethnicity, or nationality, etc. I will ask any student who commits such an offense to leave class and will dock their attendance grade accordingly.

**Personal Electronic Devices:** Students must turn off, not simply silence, their personal electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, PDAs, Ipods, MP3 players, etc.) prior to the start of class. Answering a cell phone, checking messages, or text messaging is strictly prohibited. Furthermore, no personal electronic devices are allowed during an exam under ANY circumstances. *Students caught texting, answering calls, or surfing the internet during class will be issued a warning. Repeated violations will result in the student being given an unexcused absence for that day.*

**Students with Disabilities:** Academic requirements will be modified, on a case by case basis, to afford qualified disabled students and applicants an equal opportunity. Course examinations or other procedures for evaluating a student's academic achievement will ensure to the extent reasonable possible that the results of the evaluation represent the student's ability without regard to his/her disability.

## Course Schedule

(This schedule is tentative. I reserve the right to change the schedule with timely notification.)

### Week 1 (9/7) – *Course Introduction*

#### TOPIC: CONCEPTUALIZING WAR

### Week 2 (9/12 & 9/14) – *Scientific Approach to the Study of Conflict*

#### **Required readings:**

Vasquez, John. 2009. *The War Puzzle Revisited*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, Introduction.

Bremer, Stuart A. "Who Fights Whom, When, Where, and Why?" In *What Do We Know About War?*, edited by John A. Vasquez, 23-36. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000. [Sakai]

#### **Recommended Readings:**

Bremer, Stuart A. 1992. "Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate War, 1816-1965." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36(2):309-341.

Croco, Sarah, and Tze Kwang Teo. 2005. "Assessing the Dyadic Approach to Interstate Conflict Processes." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 22(1): 5-18.

Maoz, Zeev. 2009. "Primed to Fight: The Can/Must Syndrome and the Conflict Proneness of Nations." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 26(5): 411-436.

### **Week 3 (9/19 & 9/21) – Conceptualizing Conflict**

#### **Required readings:**

Vasquez, *The War Puzzle Revisited*, Chapters 1-2

Vasquez, John and Brandon Valeriano. 2010. "Classification of Interstate War." *Journal of Politics*, 72(2): 292-309.

<http://correlatesofwar.org>

#### **Recommended readings:**

Valeriano, Brandon and John Vasquez. 2010. "Identifying and Classifying Complex Interstate Wars." *International Studies Quarterly*, 54(3): 561-582.

Ghosn, Faten, Glenn Palmer, and Stuart Bremer. 2004. "The MID3 Data Set, 1993-2001: Procedures, Coding Rules, and Description." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 21(2): 133-154.

Cioffi-Revilla, Claudio. "Ancient Warfare: Origins and Systems." In *Handbook of War Studies II*, edited by Manus I. Midlarsky, 59-92. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2000. [Sakai]

## **TOPIC: POWER-BASED EXPLANATIONS OF WAR**

### **Week 4 (9/26 & 9/28) – Realism and War**

#### **Required readings:**

Vasquez, *The War Puzzle Revisited*, Chapter 3

James, Patrick. 1995. "Structural Realism and the Causes of War." *Mershon International Studies Review* 39(2):181-208.

#### **Recommended Readings:**

Waltz, Kenneth. 1988. "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18(4):615-628.

Braumoeller, Bear. 2008. "Systemic Politics and the Origins of Great Power Conflict." *American Political Science Review* 102(1): 77-93.

Wohlforth, William. 2009. "Unipolarity, Status Competition, and Great Power War." *World Politics* 61: 28-57.

### **Week 5 (10/3\* & 10/5) – Power Transition Theory**

*\*Class will be held in 240 Ballentine Hall on 10/3*

#### **Required readings:**

Kugler, Jacek, and Douglas Lemke. "The Power Transition Research Program: Assessing Theoretical and Empirical Advances." In *Handbook of War Studies II*, edited by Manus I. Midlarsky, 129-63. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2000. [Sakai]

Ronald Tammen et al. 2000. *Power Transitions: Strategies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. New York: Chatham House, Chapter 1. [Sakai]

**Recommended Readings:**

Organski, A.F.K., and Jacek Kugler. 1980. *The War Ledger*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapter 1. [Sakai]

Kim, Woosang, and James D. Morrow. 1992. "When Do Power Shifts Lead To War?" *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (4):896-922.

## **TOPIC: THE STEPS-TO-WAR**

**Week 6 (10/10\* & 10/12) – Steps-to-War Theory**

\*No class on 10/10 – Columbus Day

**Required readings:**

Vasquez, *The War Puzzle Revisited*, Chapter 5.

Senese, Paul D., and John Vasquez. 2005. "Assessing the Steps to War-Proneess." *British Journal of Political Science* 35(4):607–633.

**Recommended readings:**

Vasquez, John. 2004. "The Probability of War, 1816-1992." *International Studies Quarterly* 48(1): 1-28.

Colaresi, Michael, and William Thompson. 2005. "Alliances, Arms Buildups, and Recurrent Conflict: Testing a Steps-to-War Model." *Journal of Politics* 67: 345-364.

**Week 7 (10/24 & 10/26) –Alliances****Required readings:**

Levy, Jack. 1981. "Alliances Formation and War Behavior: An Analysis of the Great Powers, 1495-1975." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 25(4):581-613.

Gibler, Douglas M. "Alliances: Why Some Cause War and Why Others Cause Peace." In *What Do We Know About War?*, edited by John A. Vasquez, 145-64. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000. [Sakai]

Vasquez, *The War Puzzle Revisited*, pp. 377-383.

**Recommended Readings:**

Smith, Alastair. 1995. "Alliance Formation and War." *International Studies Quarterly* 39(4):405-425.

Leeds, Brett Ashley, Andrew G. Long, and Sara Mitchell. 2000. "Reevaluating Alliance Reliability: Specific Threats, Specific Promises." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44:686-699.

Leeds, Brett Ashley. 2003. "Do Alliances Deter Aggression? The Influence of Military Alliances on the Initiation of Militarized Interstate Disputes." *American Journal of Political Science* 47:427-439.

## **Week 8 (10/31 & 11/2) –Arms Races**

### **Required readings:**

Glaser, Charles L. 2000. "The Causes and Consequences of Arms Races." *Annual Review of Political Science* 3:251-76.

Sample, Susan G. "Military Buildups: Arming and War." In *What Do We Know About War?*, edited by John A. Vasquez, 165-96. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000. [Sakai]

Vasquez, *The War Puzzle Revisited*, pp. 390-393.

### **Recommended Readings:**

Sample, Susan G. 1997. "Arms Races and Dispute Escalation: Resolving the Debate." *Journal of Peace Research* 34(1): 7-22.

Gibler, Douglas M., Toby J. Rider, and Marc L. Hutchison. 2005. "Taking Arms Against a Sea of Troubles: Interdependent Racing and the Likelihood of Conflict in Rival States." *Journal of Peace Research* 42(2):131-147.

Rider, Toby J., Michael G. Findley, and Paul F. Diehl. 2011. "Just Part of the Game? Arms Races, Rivalry and Competition." *Journal of Peace Research* 48(1): 85-100.

## **Week 9 (11/2 & 11/4) –Rivalry**

### **Required readings:**

Goertz, Gary, and Paul F. Diehl. "Rivalries: The Conflict Process." In *What Do We Know About War?*, edited by John A. Vasquez, 197-218. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000. [Sakai]

Thompson, William R., 2001. "Identifying Rivalries in World Politics." *International Studies Quarterly* 45(4): 557-586.

Vasquez, *The War Puzzle Revisited*, pp. 383-390.

### **Recommended Readings:**

Goertz, Gary, and Paul Diehl. 1993. "Enduring Rivalries: Theoretical Constructs and Empirical Patterns." *International Studies Quarterly* 37 (2):147-171.

Lemke, Douglas, and William Reed. 2001. "War and Rivalry among Great Powers." *American Journal of Political Science* 45: 457-469.

Colaresi, Michael, and W. R. Thompson. 2002. "Hot Spots or Hot Hands? Serial Crisis Behavior, Escalating Risks, and Rivalry." *Journal of Politics* 64 (4):1175-1198.

## **Week 10 (11/7 & 11/9) – Territorial Issues and War**

### **Required readings:**

Vasquez, *The War Puzzle Revisited*, Chapters 4 & 10.

### **Recommended Readings:**

Huth, Paul K. "Territory: Why Are Territorial Disputes between States a Central Cause of International Conflict?" In *What Do We Know About War?*, edited by John A. Vasquez, 85-110. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000. [Sakai]

Senese, Paul D. 2005. "Territory, Contiguity, and International Conflict: Assessing a New Joint Explanation." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(4):769-79.

Kocs, Stephen. 1995. "Territorial Disputes and Interstate War, 1945-1987." *Journal of Politics* 57(1): 159-175.

## **TOPIC: THE DEMOCRATIC PEACE**

### **Week 11 (11/14 & 11/16) – *Democratic Peace Theory***

#### **Required readings:**

Doyle, Michael. 2005. "Three Pillars of the Liberal Peace." *American Political Science Review* 99(3): 463-466.

Maoz, Zeev, and Bruce Russett. 1993. "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986." *American Political Science Review* 87(3):624-38.

Bueno de Mesquita, Buce, James D. Morrow, Randolph Siverson, and Alastair Smith. 1999. "An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace." *American Political Science Review* 93 (4):791-807.

#### **Recommended Readings:**

Doyle, Michael. 1986. "Liberalism and World Politics." *American Political Science Review* 80(4): 1151-1169.

Gartzke, Erik. 2007. "The Capitalist Peace." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(1): 166-191.

### **Week 12 (11/21\* & 11/23\*) – *None***

\*Class will be held in 240 Ballentine Hall on 11/21

\*No class on 11/23

#### **Required readings:**

None

#### **Recommended Readings:**

None

### **Week 13 (11/28 & 11/30) – *Consequences and Critiques of the Democratic Peace***

#### **Required readings:**

Mansfield, Edward D., and Jack Snyder. 2002. "Democratization and the Danger of War." *International Security* 20(1): 5-38.

Desch, Michael C. 1996. "War and Strong States, Peace and Weak States?" *International Organization* 50 (2):237-268.

Gibler, Douglas M. 2007. "Bordering on Peace: Democracy, Territorial Issues, and Conflict." *International Studies Quarterly* 51(3):509-32.

#### **Recommended Readings:**

Layne, Christopher. 1994. "Kant or Cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace." *International Security* 19:5-49.

Rosato, Sebastian. 2003. "The Flawed Logic of the Democratic Peace Theory." *American Political Science Review* 99(3): 585-602.

## **TOPIC: BARGAINING THEORIES OF WAR**

### **Weeks 14 (12/5 & 12/7) – *Bargaining and Strategic Theories of War***

#### **Required readings:**

Fearon, James. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49(3): 379-414.

Reiter, Dan. 2003. "Exploring the Bargaining Model of War." *Perspectives on Politics* 1(1):27-43.

#### **Recommended Readings:**

Filson, Darren, and Suzanne Werner. 2002. "A Bargaining Model of War and Peace." *American Journal of Political Science* 46:819-838.

Wagner, Harrison R. 2000. "Bargaining and War." *American Journal of Political Science* 44(3):469-484.

Signorino, Curtis. 1999. "Strategic Interaction and the Statistical Analysis of International Conflict." *American Political Science Review* 93 (2):279-297.

## **TOPIC: CONCLUSIONS**

### **Week 14 – *Reflections on Theories of Conflict***

#### **Required readings:**

Vasquez, *The War Puzzle Revisited*, Chapter 9, pp. 393-405

Jervis, Robert. 2002. "Theories of War in an Era of Leading Power Peace." *American Political Science Review* 96(1): 1-14.

#### **Recommended Readings:**

None