

POLI 6885
SEMINAR IN INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT
FALL 2011

Class Meeting: Tuesdays 6-8:40pm
Classroom: Milneburg 322
Office Hours: Tu/We/Th 3-5pm
and by appointment

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Course Description

This course analyzes theories on causes of international war and conflict at a graduate level. It introduces students to a wide range of research on international conflict including strategic bargaining, power transition theory, hegemony, alliances, democratic peace, the escalation and diffusion of wars, and trade and military conflict.

Class Meetings

This class meets Tuesdays from 6pm to 8:40pm. This class is a seminar and revolves around discussion and class participation. Reading the assigned readings prior to class is essential as is attendance and attentiveness.

Student Learning Objectives

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to 1) define key concepts in international conflict; 2) explain different theories about the causes and duration of conflict; 3) be able to take a position on the major debates in the field; and 4) describe it to others.

Course Requirements

Participation is essential to a successful seminar; as is an engagement with the material. You do not have to agree with the material presented either by me or by the authors we will read. What I do expect you to do is to engage with the material and the class discussion, think about the issues they raise, come to your own conclusions, and be able to convey them to others.

As a result, your course grade will be determined by four components: 1) class participation, 2) short papers responding to the week's reading, 3) a research paper, and 4) a presentation of your research paper. Your grade will be calculated as follows:

20%	Discussion/Participation
40%	Response papers (4)
10%	Presentation
30%	Research paper (20-30 pages)

Discussion/Participation

To do well in this class (like any graduate-level class) it is necessary to actively participate in class discussion. Discussion is the lifeblood of a graduate seminar. This does not mean that dominating the

discussion with nonsensical ramblings will help your grade. Rather, I evaluate participation 1) on the quality of your comments and 2) on whether the seminar was better for you having attended.

It should go without saying that attendance is a necessary condition for participation. Attendance is mandatory.

Response Papers

You will be responsible for writing four short (2-3 page) response papers. Each paper should focus on one particular reading during a week of your choice. Choices will be assigned on a first come, first served basis using a dedicated Moodle discussion thread.

Your response papers should not summarize the readings. Rather, they should make an *argument* about or be a *reaction* to the selected readings. What did you find puzzling or unconvincing about the authors' arguments? How and why would you approach their theoretical questions differently?

These reaction papers are due at the start of class on the day that the readings are due to be discussed. Reaction papers must be submitted digitally to the class's Moodle discussion board Monday night at midnight before the start of class. Therefore, other students will be able to read your work before the start of class. They will be useful for PhD students taking comps. More than one paper cannot be submitted per class. Late papers will be penalized.

These papers are short but they require an intense engagement with the readings and multiple close readings of the works are essential. They will be evaluated based on how effectively they examine the work in question, their thoughtfulness, and how effectively you lead discussion on this work.

Presentation

During class on Weeks 14th and 15th, all students will make presentations summarizing the main parts of their research paper. The rest of the department will be invited to attend. A brief (10-15 minute) oral presentation is one of the primary ways that graduate students begin to present their research at political science conferences. This exercise will enable you to gather experience in presenting your research to other social scientists.

Research Papers

You will be required to write a research paper for this class. The earlier you start to think about possible topics the lower your stress level will be and the more time you can spend finding sources and honing your argument.

The paper has to have something to do with international conflict, but the specific subject matter is up to you. You must choose your topic and turn in a 3-5 page paper proposal due October 11th. This proposal should summarize 1) the motivating question your paper will address, 2) the argument that you think answers this question, and 3) the sources you are planning to use. This paper should be one that you can revise for presentation at a conference in the hopes of eventually revising it for publication. We will discuss in more detail during class my expectations for a graduate-level research paper. The final paper is due by Monday December 5th at 5pm. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade for every 24 hours they are late.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity,

and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Judicial Code for further information.

The Code is available online at:

http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu/Judicial/judicial_pdfs/AcademicDishonestyPolicy.pdf.

You will submit a digital copy of all your written work to Turnitin software on Moodle, which traces whether sentences originate in other works. If there is evidence of plagiarism it will be punished to the fullest extent possible. Neither ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism nor a lack of intent to plagiarize are not acceptable defenses. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me.

Moodle

Moodle is a useful tool that will be used extensively for this course for announcements, and posting grades. During the course I will make some readings available and post interesting articles I encounter (and that I expect you to read) in the documents section. It is advisable to check Moodle and your UNO email account often.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students who qualify for services will receive the academic modifications for which they are legally entitled. It is the responsibility of the student to register with the Office of Disability Services (UC260) each semester and follow their procedures for obtaining assistance.

Assigned Readings

There are seven (7) assigned books available from the UNO bookstore or from online booksellers. Online stores are usually significantly cheaper, but you need to plan ahead so as to receive them in time to write about and discuss them in class.

- Axelrod, Robert. 2006. *The Evolution of Cooperation*. Revised Edition. Basic Books.
- Bennett, D. Scott and Allan C. Stam. 2004. *The Behavioral Origins of War*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, Alastair Smith, Randolph Siverson, James Morrow. 2003. *The Logic of Political Survival*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Lemke, Douglas. 2002. *Regions of War and Peace*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mansfield, Edward. 1994. *Power, Trade, and War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Reiter, Dan and Allan C. Stam. 2002. *Democracies at War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Russett, Bruce, and John Oneal. 2001. *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Shelling, Thomas C. 1960. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Harvard University Press.

In addition to the above books, I have assigned a number of scholarly journal articles. All articles are available through Moodle, the library's website, or through Google Scholar. If you have any questions about accessing e-journals using the UNO Library's website, please let me know.

Furthermore, it is useful to keep up to date about current events relevant to this course. On my website (<http://richardwfrank.com>) there are links to sources that might be useful in your response papers and

researching your paper project. I also post links on my website to a number of blogs that are relevant to this course.

READING SCHEDULE

This reading list is subject to change. Updates to this syllabus will be posted on Moodle.

PART I: The Study of International Conflict

WEEK 1: Aug. 23—Introduction

- Most, Benjamin A. and Harvey Starr. 1984. "International Relations Theory, Foreign Policy Substitutability, and "Nice" Laws." *World Politics* 36(3): 383-406.
- Zinnes, Dina A. 1980. "Three Puzzles in Search of a Researcher." *International Studies Quarterly* 24: 315-342.

WEEK 2: Aug. 30.—The Field of International Conflict

Required Readings

- Diehl, Paul F. 2006. "Just a Phase?: Integrating Conflict Dynamics Over Time." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 23(3): 199-210.
- Fearon, James D. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization*, 49:379-414.
- Singer J. David. 1970. "The Incomplete Theorist: Insight without Evidence." In Klaus Knorr and James N. Rosenau (eds.), *Contending Approaches to International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Muthoo, Abhinay. 2000. "A Non-technical Introduction to Bargaining Theory." *World Economics* 1(2): 145-166.

Further Readings:

- Bull, Hedley. 1966, "International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach." *World Politics* 18(3): 361-377.
- Kaplan, Morton A. 1966. "The New Great Debate: Traditionalism vs. Science in International Relations." *World Politics* 19(1): 1-20.
- Paul R. Hensel. 2002. "The More Things Change....: Recognizing and Responding to Trends in Armed Conflict." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 19(1): 27-52.
- Bremer, Stuart A. 1993. "Advancing the Scientific Study of War." *International Interactions* 19(1-2): 1-26.
- Nils Petter Gleditsch, Peter Wallensteen, Mikael Eriksson, Margareta Sollenberg, and Havard Strand. 2002. "Armed Conflict 1946-2001: A New Data Set" *Journal of Peace Research* 39(5): 615-637.
- Daniel M. Jones, Stuart A. Bremer, and J. David Singer. 1996. "Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816-1992: Rationale, Coding Rules, and Empirical Patterns." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 15(2): 163-213.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, et al. 1985. "Symposium: Methodological Foundations of the Study of International Conflict." *International Studies Quarterly* 29:119-153.

PART II: Initiation

WEEK 3: Sept. 6—Strategy

Required Readings

- Shelling, Thomas C. 1960. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Harvard University Press.

Further Readings

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow 2003. *The Logic of Political Survival*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 1981. *The War Trap*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 1985. "The War Trap Revisited." *American Political Science Review* 79(1): 156-173.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2006. "Game Theory, Political Economy, and the Evolving Study of War and Peace." *American Political Science Review* 100(4): 637-642.
- Fearon, James. 1998. "Bargaining, Enforcement, and International Cooperation." *International Organization* 52(2): 269-306.
- Smith, Alastair. 1999. "Testing Theories of Strategic Choice: The Example of Crisis Escalation." *American Journal of Political Science* 43(4): 1254-1283.

WEEK 4: Sept. 13—Bargaining

Required Readings:

- Axelrod, Robert. 2006. *The Evolution of Cooperation*. Revised Edition. Basic Books.

Further Readings:

- Jack S. Levy. 1983. "Misperception and the Causes of War: Theoretical Linkages and Analytical Problems." *World Politics* 36: 76-99.
- Douglas M. Gibler, Toby J. Rider, and Marc L. Hutchison. 2005. "Taking Arms Against a Sea of Troubles: Conventional Arms Races During Periods of Rivalry." *Journal of Peace Research* 42(2): 131-147.
- Reed, William. 2003. "Information, Power, and War." *American Political Science Review* 97(4): 633-641.
- Wagner, R. Harrison. 2000. "Bargaining and War." *American Journal of Political Science* 44(3): 469-484.

WEEK 5: Sept. 20—Bargaining and Conflict

Required Readings

- Fearon, James D. 1994. "Signaling Versus the Balance of Power and Interests: An Empirical Test of a Crisis Bargaining Model." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 38(2): 236-269.
- Fearon, James D. 1997. "Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41(1): 68-90.
- Reiter, Dan. 2003. "Exploring the Bargaining Model of War." *Perspectives on Politics* 1(1): 27-43.
- Walt, Stephen. 1999. "Rigor or Rigor Mortis? Rational Choice and Security Studies." *International Security* 23(4): 5-48.

Further Readings

- Organski, A.F.K. and Jacek Kugler. 1980. *The War Ledger*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Powell, Robert. 2004. "Bargaining and Learning While Fighting." *American Journal of Political Science* 48(2): 344-361.
- Powell, Robert. 1999. *In the Shadow of Power: States and Strategies in International Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

WEEK 6: Sept. 27—Power Transition

Required Readings

- Erich Weede. 1976. "Overwhelming Preponderance as a Pacifying Condition Among Contiguous Asian Dyads, 1950-1969." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 20(3): 395-412.
- Douglas Lemke and Suzanne Werner. 1996. "Power Parity, Commitment to Change, and War." *International Studies Quarterly* 40(2): 235-260.
- Robert Powell. 1996. "Uncertainty, Shifting Power, and Appeasement." *American Political Science Review* 90(4): 749-764.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, James D. Morrow, and Ethan R. Zorick. 1997. "Capabilities, Perception, and Escalation." *American Political Science Review* 91(1): 15-27.

Further Readings

- De Soysa, Indra, John R. Oneal and Yong-Hee Park. 1997. "Testing Power-Transition Theory: Using Alternative Measures of National Capabilities." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41(4): 509-528.
- Lemke, Doug, and William Reed. 1996. "Regime Types and Status Quo Evaluations: Power Transition Theory and the Democratic Peace." *International Interactions* 22: 143-164.
- Kim, Woosang, and James D. Morrow. 1992. "When Do Power Shifts Lead to War?" *American Journal of Political Science* 36(4): 896-922.

WEEK 7: Oct. 4—Hegemony and Power Transition

Required Readings

- Lemke, Douglas. 2002. *Regions of War and Peace*. Cambridge University Press.

Further Readings

- Lemke, Douglas and William Reed. 2001. "The Relevance of Politically Relevant Dyads." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45(1): 126-144.
- Keohane, Robert O. 1984. *After Hegemony*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Krasner, Stephen D. 1976. "State Power and the Structure of International Trade." *World Politics* 28(3): 317-347.
- Gowa, Joanne. 1989. "Rational Hegemons, Excludable Goods, and Small Groups: An Epitaph for Hegemonic Stability Theory?" *World Politics* 41(3): 307-324.

PART III: Escalation

WEEK 8: Oct. 11—Assessing the Causes of War

Required Readings:

- Bennett, D. Scott and Allan C. Stam. 2004. *The Behavioral Origins of War*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Further Readings:

- Singer, J. David, Stuart A. Bremer, and John Stuckey. 1972. "Capability Distribution, Uncertainty, and Major Power War, 1820-1965." In *Peace, War, and Numbers*, ed. Bruce M. Russett. Beverly Hills: Sage: 19-48.
- Levy, Jack. "The Causes of War: A Review of Theories and Evidence." In Philip Tetlock, ed. *Behavior, Society, and Nuclear War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Vasquez, John. 1993. *The War Puzzle*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

WEEK 9: Oct. 18—Alliances

Required Readings:

- Morrow, James D. 1993. "Arms Versus Allies: Trade-offs in the Search for Security." *International Organization* 47(2): 207-233.
- Morrow, James D. 1994. "Alliances, Credibility, and Peacetime Costs." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 38(2): 270-297.
- Werner, Suzanne and Douglas Lemke. 1997. "Opposites Do Not Attract: The Impact of Domestic Institutions, Power, and Prior Commitments on Alignment Choices." *International Studies Quarterly* 41(3): 529-546.
- 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(3): 427-439.

Further Readings

- Kimball, Anessa L. 2006. "Alliance Formation and Conflict Initiation: The Missing Link." *Journal of Peace Research* 43(4): 371-389.
- Leeds, Brett Ashley, Andrew G. Long, and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell. 2000. "Reevaluating Alliance Reliability: Specific Threats, Specific Promises." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44(5): 686-699.
- Brett Ashley Leeds and Michaela Mattes. 2007. "Alliance Politics during the Cold War: Aberration, New World Order, or Continuation of History?" *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 24(3): 183-199.

WEEK 10: Oct. 25—Trade

Required Readings

- Mansfield, Edward. 1994. *Power, Trade, and War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Further Readings

- Rogowski, Ronald. 1989. *Commerce and Coalitions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Hirschman, Albert O. 1945. *National Power and the Structure of Foreign Trade*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Barbieri, Katherine. 1996. "Economic Interdependence: A Path to Peace or a Source of Interstate Conflict?" *Journal of Peace Research* 33: 29-49.
- Gartzke, Erik, Quan Li, and Charles Boehmer. 2001. "Economic Interdependence and International Conflict." *International Organization* 55(2): 391-437.
- *Journal of Peace Research* special issue on trade and conflict: July 1999, 36(4).
- Barbieri, Katherine & Jack S. Levy, 1999. 'Sleeping with the Enemy: The Impact of War on Trade', *Journal of Peace Research* 36(4): 463-479.
- Barbieri, Katherine, and Jack S. Levy. 2001. "Does War Impede Trade? A Response to Anderton and Carter." *Journal of Peace Research* 38(5): 619-624.

PART IV: War Dynamics

WEEK 11: Nov. 1—Democracy and War

Required Readings

- Reiter, Dan and Allan C. Stam. 2002. *Democracies at War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Further Readings

- Gartzke, Eric. 1998. "Kant We All Just Get Along? Opportunity, Willingness, and the Origins of the Democratic Peace." *American Journal of Political Science* 42(1): 1-27.
- Kant, Immanuel. 1957 [1795]. *Perpetual Peace*. New York: MacMillan Press.
- Lake, David A. 1992. "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War." *American Political Science Review* 86(1): 24-37.
- Maoz, Zeev, and Bruce M. Russett. 1993. "Normative and Structural Causes of the Democratic Peace, 1946-1996." *American Political Science Review* 87(3): 624-638.
- Simowitz, Roslyn. 1998. "Evaluating Conflict Research on the Diffusion of War." *Journal of Peace Research* 35(2): 211-230.

WEEK 12: Nov. 8—Diffusion

Required Readings

- Levy, Jack S. 1982. "The Contagion of Great Power War Behavior, 1495-1975." *American Journal of Political Science* 26: 562-584.
- Altfeld, Michael and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. "Choosing Sides in War." *International Studies Quarterly* 23(1): 87-112.
- Kadera, Kelly M. 1998. "Transmission, Barriers, and Constraints: A Dynamic Model of the Spread of War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42(3): 367-387.
- Siverson, Randolph and Harvey Starr. 1990. "Opportunity, Willingness, and the Diffusion of War, 1815-1965." *American Political Science Review* 84(1): 47-67.

Further Readings

- Cederman, Lars Erik. 2003. "Modeling the Size of Wars: From Billiard Balls to Sandpiles." *American Political Science Review* 97(1): 123-133.

- Most, Benjamin, and Harvey Starr. 1980. "Diffusion, Reinforcement, Geopolitics, and the Spread of War." *American Political Science Review* 74(4): 932-946.

WEEK 13: Nov. 15— Consequences

Required Readings

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

Further Readings

- Gleditsch, Kristian S. 2002. *All International Politics is Local: The Diffusion of Conflict, Integration, and Democratization*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, Randolph M. Siverson, and Gary Woller. 1992. "War and the Fate of Regimes: A Comparative Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 86: 638-646.
- Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Randolph M. Siverson. 1995. "War and the Survival of Political Leaders: A Comparative Study of Regime Types and Political Accountability." *American Political Science Review* 89: 841-853.
- Goemans, H.E. 2000. "Fighting for Survival: The Fate of Leaders and the Duration of War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44(5):555-579.

PART V: Post-War

WEEK 14: Nov. 22— Cooperation/Future Directions/Student Presentations I

Required Readings

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

Further Readings

- Special Issue of *Journal of Conflict Resolution* on new methodologies in the study of conflict. February 2003.
- Special Issue of *Conflict Management and Peace Science* on model specification and control variables, Winter 2005.
- Beck, Nathaniel, Gary King, and Langche Zeng. "Improving Quantitative Studies of International Conflict: A Conjecture." *American Political Science Review* 94(1): 21-35.
- Bennett, D. Scott and Allan Stam. 2000. "Research Design and Estimator Choices in the Analysis of Interstate Dyads: When Decisions Matter." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 44(5): 653-685.
- Clark, David H., and Timothy Nordstrom. 2003. "Risky Influence: Unobserved Treatment Effects in Conflict Studies." *International Studies Quarterly* 47(3): 417-429.

WEEK 15: Nov. 29—Conclusions/Student Presentations II

RESEARCH PAPER DUE MONDAY DEC. 5TH AT 5PM