OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION

This course examines issues connected with the threat or use of force in international relations. The objectives are to introduce and critique the main theories of international conflict, and to discuss specific threats. This course does not focus on in-depth historical study of discrete events or U.S. national security policies, *per se*. Rather, primary emphasis is placed on analyzing these issues systematically to uncover the implicit assumptions and logic behind decisions to threaten or to use force, and to tie these assessments to real-world concerns and contemporary policy debates.

To explore international security, we analyze key theories of international conflict, as well as discuss contemporary threats to international security and policy options to redress these threats. The first part of the course introduces and examines traditional theories of war, strategy, and conflict. Special attention is devoted to analyzing specific theoretical debates over the causes of war located at each level of analysis in the study of international relations. The second part of the course examines burning functional security issues of the day from these divergent scholarly perspectives. The third part assesses these alternative theoretical explanations for conflict as they relate to contemporary policy problems. This part of the course includes several policy simulations that are run along the lines of the U.S. National Security Council, with students assuming the role of key bureaucratic players and interest groups and actively engaging in critical policy deliberations on designated issues. The course concludes with discussion of general approaches to promoting international security and preventing disruption to the system.

LEARNING OUTCOME

By the end of the semester students will be able to review and critique alternative explanations (theoretical and analytical) for conflict/war and the respective policies adopted to address foreign threats by different actors in the international system. Students will be able to use such critical analysis to generate concrete policy recommendations and draft cogent policy briefs (individually and collectively) on related issues.
REQUIRED READING

Michael Brown, Owen Cote Jr., Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven Miller, eds. *Offense, Defense, and War* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004);

Michael Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven Miller, eds. *Debating the Democratic Peace* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999);


Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, *The Political Economy of Terrorism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005);


*Recommended for Purchase

Photocopied Readings. Copies will be made available to you either in hardcopy or in electronic form via the dedicated course T-SQUARE page, as well as via JSTOR or EBSCOHOST. The latter databases can be accessed via the Georgia Tech Library web page under e-journals.

FORMAT

This course is a graduate seminar. My role is confined to providing an overview of the literature and debates for each week’s reading, and to facilitating group deliberation of respective theoretical and policy debates. The success of the course, therefore, depends on the level of preparedness and engagement by each student. Consequently, each student is expected to attend every class and to participate actively in all in-class discussions and role-playing exercises. Students must complete all required reading before the start of each class; come prepared for each session by posing questions, offering insights, critically engaging each other, and reading and reviewing each other’s work; and consult with me outside of class as necessary.

REQUIREMENTS

First, as mentioned above, it is mandatory that each student attends and participates actively in each class. Silence is not an option, as students are expected to engage each other in analyzing the reading and arguments presented in class. In order to stimulate discussion, each student is required to submit a one-page brief that reflects critical
thinking about a reading for a respective week (excluding policy deliberations). This brief must succinctly summarize the main issues of a single debate captured by that week’s reading, and raise both an analytical and empirical question for further discussion. Each student is responsible for acquiring empirical knowledge of relevant historical or contemporary cases of her/his choosing to inform the points raised for discussion. The brief is due no later than noon on the Thursday that we will discuss the topic. The purpose of this assignment is for students to become immersed in the subject matter, actively engaged by the reading, and prepared to contribute constructively to class discussion. Although each student is free to select the week to write this brief, the assignment must be completed by April 3rd.

**Second**, each student is required to deliver one presentation with an accompanying write-up during one of the substantive classes through April 3rd. Each student must sign up for a week in which she/he is particularly interested in the topic, complete the reading for the week, and present a critical synthesis to draw analytical links and fill gaps in a specific debate in the literature. Each student must draft a 5-page paper that: concisely summarizes the arguments presented by the different authors engaged in a debate; discusses the logical (in)consistencies of these arguments; presents empirical evidence to contradict a theory or set of arguments; and uncovers the practical implications of this analysis. These write-ups must be turned into me no later than noon on the day that the class will discuss the topic. That evening in class, the author of the write-up will succinctly present her/his findings: introducing the debate, elaborating on several analytical points, discussing specific cases, teasing out policy implications, and raising questions to extend the debate. Each formal presentation should take no more than 20 minutes and must be accompanied by a visual aid (PowerPoint). Write-ups and presentations are to serve as the springboard for further discussion and analysis by the rest of the class. Therefore, these assignments should be well conceived and should contain relevant information that is well organized and articulated. Please note, the topics/week’s readings for this assignment cannot be the same as those selected for the Brief.

**Third**, each student is required to write one 5-7 page review essay that assesses and critiques a set of readings reviewed (excluding weeks of policy deliberations). The essays have to be handed in at the beginning of the class period during which the respective readings are to be discussed. Please note that your task is not to write a book review. Rather, the objectives are: (1) to analyze critically the assumptions (implicit and/or explicit), logical consistency, methodology, and use of empirical evidence in at least two readings of a debate; and (2) to critique the policy relevance of the core hypotheses/arguments. Students should not select the same topic covered in their briefs or presentations unless cleared by me.

**Fourth**, each student is required to participate as a group member during three policy deliberations. These sessions will be run like a meeting of the U.S. National Security Council, with student groups representing different government players in the policymaking process. For each session, a scenario will be presented with specific issues to be addressed by the class. Each group will draft a 5-7 page policy brief that outlines
the key issues of debate, analytical considerations, options, and policy recommendations. This analysis will reflect the group’s strategic and organizational interests in the policymaking process. In class, each group will present its findings and explain the analytical and empirical bases for its recommendations; critique/challenge the findings presented by other groups; and work with other groups to fashion a coherent/unified strategy. Group positions will rotate for each session. Each student also will submit a one-page peer review of her/his group at the end of the third exercise. Logistical and substantive issues/scenarios TBA.

Finally, each student is required to write a policy memo (10-12 pages) to address a contemporary international security issue of her/his choosing. Each memo will assess two or more theories and attendant policy prescriptions that bear on a specific debate. Students are expected to analyze critically the theoretical and practical merits of each theory and policy option, develop their own original thesis in reaction to the arguments under review, and derive logically consistent and empirically grounded policy recommendations. The objective of this assignment is to get students to appreciate the importance of both critical assessment and policy analysis for systematically understanding and coping with contemporary international security issues. Policy memos cannot be on issues covered by a student’s oral presentation and write-up. Policy memos are due by 6pm on May 1st.

**GRADING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation and Write-up</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Review Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Policy Position Papers</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Policy Memo</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COURSE SCHEDULE

PART I: THEORIES OF WAR AND CONFLICT

Jan. 9:  Introduction


Michael Brown et. al., Offense, Defense, and War, PART I (Entire), PART II (Van Evera, Snyder, Shimshoni); PART III (Van Evera, Correspondence, Betts).


*Brown et. al., Offense, Defense, and War (Lieber, Adams).

*Recommended

Cases: Crimean War, World Wars I & II.

Jan. 23:  No Class

Jan. 30: The Absolute Weapon and Deterrence


T.V. Paul, et. al. Complex Deterrence, Chps. 2, 4, 6, 7, 9 11, 12.

http://cisac.stanford.edu/publications/the_case_for_no_first_use_an_exchange/


Cases: Korean War, Cuban Missile Crisis, Kashmir Conflicts, Yom Kippur War, Persian Gulf Wars, Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, SDI/TMD, START; Virtual Nuclear Arsenals.


**Feb. 6:** **Coercion and the RMA**


Stephen Biddle, “Speed Kills: Reassessing the Role of Speed, Precision, and Situation Awareness in the Fall of Saddam,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30:1 (Feb. 2007), pp. 3-46. (Library: e-journals);


*Hugh Gusterson, Drone, Chp. 2.

Cases: Israel-Syria Air War, Persian Gulf Wars, Kosovo, Libya

**Feb. 13:** Democratic Peace and Diversionary Theory of War

Michael Brown, Sean Lynn-Jones, and Steven Miller, eds. *Debating the Democratic Peace*, peruse entire book (read esp. Doyle; Layne, Farber & Gowa, Mansfield & Snyder, and PART 3).


*Hugh Gusterson, *Drone*, Chp. 5.


Cases: Fashoda Crisis, Pre-WWI, Grenada, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya, Iraq, Lebanon, PLA, Arab Spring, Libya

**Feb. 20:**  **Is Rational Self-Interest Enough?**


T.V. Paul, et. al., *Complex Deterrence*, Chps. 3 & 10 (peruse).


http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/869/in_the_crossfire_or_the_crosshairs.html


*Hugh Gusterson, *Drone*, Chp. 3.


Cases: World Wars I & II, Cold War, Afghanistan, Middle East, Vietnam, Iraq.

**Feb. 27:** Nuclear Proliferation: Why Should We Care and What Can We Do?


*Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 53:2 (April 2009), peruse all articles. (Library e-journals).

Chaim Braun and Christopher Chyba, “Proliferation Rings: New Challenges to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime,” *International Security* 29:2 (Fall 2004), pp. 5-49. (Library e-journals);


Cases: Iraq, Iran, North Korea, NIS, India, Pakistan, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, Japan, Germany, Sweden

**March 6:** Policy Deliberation #1: Nuclear Crisis Management Beyond the JPCOA


Victor Cha and David Kang, *Nuclear North Korea*, Chps. 5-6.


Gary Samore, *The Iran Nuclear Deal: A Definitive Guide* (Harvard/Belfer Center, August 2015),

TBA

**March 13: Ethnic/Civil Conflict and Migration**


Cases: Syria, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya, NIS, Rwanda, Lebanon, Iraq, Libya, Arab Spring, North Korea

**March 20: SPRING BREAK/NO CLASS**
March 27: **Globalization, Commerce, and Security**


April 3: International Terrorism: Theory, Definitions, and Practice

Andreas Wenger and Alex Wilner, *Deterring Terrorism: Theory and Practice*, Peruse Part 1;


*Robert A. Pape, Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005), Part I (especially Chp. 3), Chp. 10.


April 10: **Policy Deliberation #2: WMD and International Terrorism**


Hoffman-Sageman Debate


T.V. Paul, *Complex Deterrence*, TBA.


TBA
April 17:  **Policy Deliberation #3: International Intervention and Peacekeeping (Syria, Iraq, or TBA)**


TBA

April 24:  **Final: Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution**


I. William Zartman, *Peacemaking in International Conflict*, Chp. 7. (T-square)


**May 1:** FINAL POLICY MEMOS DUE AT 6PM