

POLS 220: International Conflict

Department of Politics
Sewanee: The University of the South

Dr. Aaron Gold

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Fall (Advent) 2019

Location: Walsh-Ellett Hall 210
Date and Time: MWF 11-11:50 am

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the scientific study of conflict with a focus on the causes of war between states. By surveying the theoretical foundations, correlates, and findings of why two states choose to engage in conflict over more peaceful means of solving their disputes we will seek to answer the central puzzle of war, that it is costly, but nevertheless recurs.¹ The class is divided into three sections: theoretical explanations, conflict processes, and explaining peace. Students are required to come to class prepared, ready to critically evaluate the material by asking questions, discussing, analyzing, and applying the author's arguments to the real world.

Course objectives

By the end of the course, students will gain basic knowledge and understanding of international conflict. They will learn how to think critically, analyze and then evaluate how theoretical models explain interstate conflicts. Students will learn how to assess the scholarly community's ability to classify, explain, hypothesize, and test questions on multiple dimensions of conflict.

General education objectives

Students will learn how to describe theoretical paradigms, apply theoretical concepts to empirical phenomena, think critically, and analyze competing theories and empirical evidence.

Required Textbook

Mitchell, Sara McLaughlin and John A. Vasquez, eds. (2013) *Conflict, War, and Peace: An Introduction to Scientific Research*. CQ Press.

Classroom Policies and Expectations

No tobacco products, food, beverages (except water in a closed container), or gum are allowed. Profanity or any prejudicial slurs will not be tolerated. Use of cell phones or smart phones or other electronic devices for non-course-related communication during class is prohibited. Students are expected to attend every class period and be on time. Missing **four or more** classes without an excused absence will result in a zero for your participation grade, which is ten percent of your final grade. Students are expected to read the assigned readings before class and be prepared to discuss them.

¹ Fearon, James D. (1995) Rationalist Explanations for War. *International Organization* 49(3): 379.

Statement of Accommodations

The University of the South is committed to fostering respect for the diversity of the University community and the individual rights of each member of that community. In this spirit, and in accordance with the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the University seeks to provide students with disabilities with the reasonable accommodations needed to ensure equal access to the programs and activities of the University. Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak with Student Accessibility Services and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible. If you have already requested accommodations, it is your responsibility to present your instructor with a copy of your academic accommodations letter from Student Accessibility Services, which is located in the Dean of Students Office (931.598.1229). *Accommodations will not be provided without this documentation, and accommodations cannot be applied retroactively.* Additional information about accommodations can be found at <https://new.sewanee.edu/campus-life/playing/wellness-commons/university-wellness-center/student-accessibility-services/>. If you have questions about physical accessibility, please inform your instructor so that we can ensure an accessible, safe, and effective environment.

Honor Code

You agreed to follow the Honor Code when you matriculated. All forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, are violations of the Honor Code and will be treated as such. If you ever have a question about an assignment or need additional help, please ask for assistance rather than jeopardize your academic career.

Student Wellness Center

As a student, you may experience a range of challenges that can interfere with learning, such as stress, strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance misuse, mood changes, difficulty concentrating, and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may diminish your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Free counseling, psychological, and psychiatric services are available at the University Wellness Center, and treatment does work. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on campus at <http://www.sewanee.edu/student-life/university-wellness-center/counseling-and-psychological-service-caps/>.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center, located on the main floor of duPont Library, provides objective peer support to Sewanee students who seek assistance with their writing projects. The student tutors can help at any stage in the writing process, including topic development, rough drafts, final drafts, and revisions. Students should bring a copy of the professor's written instructions to the meeting. The Writing Center will not accept papers that are dropped off.

The Center for Speaking and Listening

The Center for Speaking and Listening, located on the main floor of duPont Library, provides peer support to Sewanee students who seek assistance with their presentations.

Research Help Center

The Research Help Center in duPont Library is available for all of your research paper, project, and presentation needs. Our librarians can help with each stage of the research process, including topic selection and narrowing, outlining, finding resources, interpreting academic resources, avoiding plagiarism, and integrating research into your paper or presentation. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments with a research expert are strongly encouraged. You can find more details and sign up for appointments at library.sewanee.edu/researchhelplibrarians.

Title IX matters

Sexual misconduct is a violation of federal Title IX law and University policy. Disclosure of sexual misconduct to University faculty, staff, or student leaders (i.e. proctors) is not confidential and these individuals are required to make reports, including names and circumstances, to the University's Title IX Coordinator. To report incidents of sexual misconduct, please file a report at ReportSexualMisconduct.sewanee.edu or contact the Title IX Coordinator (Dr. Sylvia Gray, titleix@sewanee.edu). For more information on mandatory reporting please see the Mandatory Reporter Policy. For resources on support or confidential disclosure, please refer to the Sexual Misconduct Policy.

Extra Credit (+2 points maximum on your final grade)

Extra credit can be turned in anytime, but is due on December 11, 2019, the last day of classes. Extra credit opportunities include going to school-sponsored programs, lectures, and watching videos of important international leaders on current issues. Afterwards, you will write two pages, double-spaced on your critical reaction. Your extra credit assignments will not be graded for grammar and spelling, but as having been done. Follow the same format as your critique papers (see above: "Critique Papers and Extra Credit Formatting Guidelines"). If you write 600 words (two pages double-spaced) you will receive full credit. If you turn in one and a half pages I will not count it as extra credit and I will ask you to re-do it. This is to ensure every student is writing the same amount. Throughout the semester, I will post the extra credit opportunities and I will announce them at the beginning of class. You may also write an extra credit assignment on an international event. Please ask me before doing or going to an event that is not posted. You may not do the same extra credit assignment for more than one of my classes.

Notice on School-Sponsored, Medical, Weather-Related, Family Emergency, or Other Excused Absences

My personal philosophy, one that I believe very strongly in, is that you should be treated like adults. If something happens and you are not able to make it to class I will be more than happy to work with you; however, you need to communicate with me and keep me informed of your situation. Life happens: you get sick, someone you love passes away, a family member is in need, you have an interview. I consider myself to be very understanding so if you are not able to bring me a note right away, it is okay; just please keep me informed the best you can through email and then later when you are able to, please bring or send me an excused note. If it is a medical note, **please cross out your personal information**. If you bring me an excused note you will be allowed to make up the work that you missed. For long-term situations, I am more than happy to work with you. Remember that four unexcused absences results in a zero for your participation grade.

Right to Alter the Syllabus

The instructor reserves the right to revise, alter and/or amend this syllabus, as necessary. Students will be notified by email and/or Blackboard of any such revisions, alterations, and/or amendments.

Grading

The requirements for this course include a participation grade (10%), ten short daily summaries (25%), one group data presentation (15%), and a term paper (50%).

Participation: 10%

Students are expected to attend every class period on time, having read the material and ready to make reasonable contributions to the day's topic. This is not a lecture class. Students are expected to analyze, critique, and discuss the author's work in class with the goal of assessing whether it contributes to our understanding of interstate war. We will also conduct a few simulations that will be a part of your participation grade. Missing **four or more** classes without an excused absence will result in a zero for your participation grade, which is ten percent of your final grade.

Daily Summaries: 25% (due day of assigned reading)

Students will write a 150- to 200-word minimum (approx. 1/2 page double-spaced) summary for ten sets of assigned readings of their choosing. This is solely a descriptive exercise designed to prepare you to take good notes for the term paper and in preparation for participating in class. Follow the other formatting guideline minus the title page: Times New Roman, 12-pt. font, 1-inch margins, in-text citations (no footnotes or endnotes), and a bibliography. Please write the page number on top.

Data Presentations: 15%

Part of understanding why conflict occurs is examining how scholars empirically study it. Students will give one group presentation. Each data source (almost always) comes with two things, a codebook and a corresponding journal article. Students are required to read the codebook and/or journal article, and summarize the data. The presentation should be between five and ten minutes. The medium (powerpoint, etc.) is your choice. Questions to answer:

- Topic the data covers (e.g., interstate war events, militarized interstate disputes)?
- Unit of analysis (e.g., monadic, directed dyad, nondirected dyad, triadic)?
- Time period, spatial/geographic locations covered?
- Names and definitions of key variables?
- Examples of specific data (e.g., a certain war, dispute, attack, a state's power)?
- Hypotheses the data can answer, why it is important, how it differs from other data sources, its limitations?
- New information gathered from this data source. What do we now know about conflict from this data source?

The following data sources in categories are (see schedule below for due dates):

The Big Correlates of Conflict Datasets

1. The Correlates of War (COW) Inter-state War Data
2. Militarized Interstate Disputes v4.3 Data
3. UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, v18.1
4. The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED)

Issues in Interstate Conflict

5. Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) Data
6. Territorial Issues in Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816–2001 (Gibler)
7. Huth and Allee Territory Data
8. Border Wall Data (Carter)

Power, Rivalry, and Alliances

9. National Military Capabilities Dataset v5.0
10. Naval Power Dataset
11. The Allen and Martinez Airpower Data
12. Strategic Rivalry Dataset (Thompson)
13. Dyadic Cyber Incident Dataset (DCID) v1.1
14. The Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions (ATOP) v3.0 Dataset
15. The COW Formal Alliances Dataset v4.1
16. The Nuclear Latency Dataset

External Support, Civil War, and Terrorism

17. UCDP External Support Dataset
18. Nonstate Armed Groups (NSA) Dataset (San-Akca)
19. The Global Terrorism Database (GTD)
20. International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorism Events (ITERATE) Data

Term Paper: 50%

Proposal Topic: 5%

Rough Draft: 15%

Final Paper: 30%

Proposal Topic: Due on **9/13 at 11:59 pm** via Blackboard

Rough Draft: Due on **10/16 at 11:59 pm** via Blackboard

Final Paper: Due on **12/13 at 11:59 pm** via Blackboard

Bottom line what I am looking for: Students will make a theoretical argument as to why their finding or theory from class best fits the cause of their interstate war.

Students will analyze an interstate war from a theoretical perspective from class. Examples can include classical realism, neorealism, bargaining, territory, rivalry, arms races, diversionary conflict or any of the theories, perspectives, or findings on the syllabus. The goal of this assignment is: 1) to develop expertise on an interstate war and, 2) to apply your knowledge of international conflict to critically evaluate the causes of an empirical phenomenon.

Pick an interstate war from the choices below as documented by the Correlates of War. This assignment has three due dates. Students are required to turn in a proposal, rough draft, and final version. Each is part of your overall final grade. The proposal is 5% of your final grade while the rough draft and final are worth 15% and 30% respectively. I will meet with each student to offer suggestions about how to improve their paper after grading the rough drafts.

Structure your paper as follows. In the first part, give a historical introduction and description of the war. Who were the important actors (e.g., executives, generals, cabinet members, legislators, publics)? What were the issues and/or events that lead to the war (e.g., regime change, territorial disputes, self-determination, resources)? Lastly, describe the war and what happened; for example, what was the revisionist state, how many people died, how was it fought, what were the most important events or turning points, what was the outcome, did the sides achieve their goals?

In the second part, pick **one theory/finding from class**, describe it (or the larger debate) and then in simple, clear language, use deductive logic to identify why it best explains the causes of your interstate war. What are its strengths? Does it have assumptions or a level of analysis that provide more accurate explanations (e.g., systemic theories, domestic politics)? Are there instances where it does not fit or can be improved upon? The best papers will explain why your choice is the superior explanation as opposed to other theories or findings from class. You need to make a convincing argument that your theory or findings (e.g., neorealism, territory, bargaining) is the best explanation for why the war you picked occurred. In this section you should also pick at least one opposing theory or finding and explain why it does not measure up. Explain why this opposing view is not the best explanation for the cause of your war.

List of Interstate Wars

Name (Correlates of War)	Side 1 (<i>Initiator in italics</i>)	Side 2
The Soviet Invasion of Hungary (1956)	<i>Soviet Union</i>	Hungary
The Ifni War (1957-1958)	<i>Morocco</i>	Spain, France
Taiwan Straits War (1958)	<i>China</i>	Taiwan
The Football War (1969)	<i>El Salvador</i>	Honduras
The War for Bangladesh (1971)	<i>Pakistan</i>	India
The Yom Kippur War (1973)	<i>Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia</i>	Israel
The Turco-Cypriot War (1974)	<i>Turkey</i>	Cyprus
The Ugandan-Tanzanian War (1978-1979)	<i>Uganda</i>	Tanzania, Libya
The Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988)	<i>Iraq</i>	Iran
The Falkland Islands War (1982)	<i>Argentina</i>	UK
The War over Lebanon (1982)	<i>Israel</i>	Syria
The War over the Aouzou Strip (1986-1987)	<i>Chad</i>	Libya
The Sino-Vietnamese Border War (1987)	<i>China</i>	Vietnam
The Gulf War (1991)	<i>Iraq</i>	Kuwait, US, Canada, UK, Italy, Morocco, Egypt, Oman, UAE, France, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria
The War of Bosnian Independence (1992)	<i>Yugoslavia</i>	Croatia, Bosnia
The Azeri-Armenian War (1993-1994)	<i>Armenia</i>	Azerbaijan
The Cenepa Valley War (1995)	<i>Ecuador</i>	Peru
The Badme Border War (1998)	<i>Eritrea</i>	Ethiopia
The War for Kosovo (1999)	<i>Turkey, Italy, UK, US, Netherlands, France, Germany</i>	Yugoslavia
The Kargil War (1999)	<i>Pakistan</i>	India
The Invasion of Afghanistan (2001-present)*	<i>UK, US, Australia, Canada, France</i>	Afghanistan
The Invasion of Iraq (2003-present)*	<i>UK, US, Australia</i>	Iraq

* COW lists Afghanistan as ending initially in 2001 and Iraq as ending in 2003 because after those dates the level violence does not fulfill the threshold for the definition of an interstate war.

Formatting Guidelines

- 1) Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, and a title page.
- 2) Limit: 3,000 -3,600 words minimum (approx. 10-12 pages double-spaced). Put the word count on your title page.
- 3) References: 10 legitimate sources minimum (no “wiki” sites), in-text citations only (no footnotes or endnotes), include a bibliography.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

I. Theoretical Foundations

8/28: Introduction and review of the syllabus

8/30: Introduction

- Levy and Thompson, Chapter 1 in *Causes of War*

9/2: Theory-building

- Bueno de Mesquita (1985). "Toward a Scientific Understanding of International Conflict: A Personal View." *International Studies Quarterly* 29(2): 121-136.

9/4: Classical Realism

- Morgenthau, Hans J. (1978). *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 5th Edition, New York: A.A. Knopf, p. 4-15.

9/6: Defensive Realism

- Waltz, Kenneth N. (1979) "The Anarchic Structure of World Politics," in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 12th Edition. Art, Robert J. and Robert Jervis. New Jersey, 2015.

9/9: Offensive Realism

- Mearsheimer, John J. (2001) *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Chapter 2.

9/11: Neoclassical Realism

- Rose, Gideon. (1998). "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy." *World Politics* 51(1): 144-172.

9/13 – Proposal Topic Due at 11:59 pm

9/13: Librarian presentation on conducting research and the library's resources

- Meet at duPont Library

9/16: Power Transition

- DiCicco, Jonathan M., and Jack S. Levy (1999). "Power Shifts and Problem Shifts: The Evolution of the Power Transition Research Program." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43(6): 675-704.
- **Data:** National Military Capabilities Dataset v5.0

9/18: Domestic-Level Theories

- Putnam, Robert D. (1988) "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games." *International organization* 42(3): 427-460.
- **Data:** The Correlates of War (COW) Inter-state War Data

9/20: Constructivism

- Wendt, Alexander (1992) Anarchy Is What States Make of It. *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues, 12th Edition*. Art, Robert J. and Robert Jervis. New Jersey, 2015.
- **Data:** Militarized Interstate Disputes v4.3 Data

9/23: Feminism

- Tickner, J. Ann (1992). *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security*. New York: Columbia University Press, Chapter 2.
- **Data:** UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset, v18.1

9/25: Marxism

- Teschke, Benno (2010). "Chapter 9: Marxism," in *Oxford Handbook of International Relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- **Data:** The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED)

9/27: Misperception (Jervis)

- Levy, Jack (1983). "Misperception and the Causes of War: Theoretical Linkages and Analytical Problems." *World Politics* 36(1).
- **Data:** The Allen and Martinez Airpower Data

9/30: Bargaining (Schelling)

- Schelling, Thomas C. (1960). *The Strategy of Conflict*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Chapter 2.
- **Data:** Naval Power Dataset

10/2: Rationalist explanations (Fearon)

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

II. Conflict Processes

10/4: Research Day

10/7: Research Day

10/9: No class

10/11: Introduction to Conflict Processes: Conceptualizing War

- Sarkees, Meredith Reid (2010). Chapter 2: Defining and Categorizing Wars, in *Resort to War: 1816-2007*. Meredith Reid Sarkees and Frank Whelon Wayman. Washington, DC: CQ Press

10/14: Conceptualizing Disputes

- Jones, Daniel M., 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.

10/16: Dangerous Dyads

- Mitchell and Vasquez (eds.), Chapter 2, "Dangerous Dyads" (Bremer), p. 5-33.

10/16 – Rough Draft Due at 11:59 pm

10/21: Territory I

- Mitchell and Vasquez (eds.), Chapter 3, "Territorial Conflict" (Hensel et al.), p. 35-62.
- **Data:** Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) Data
- **Data:** Territorial Issues in Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816–2001 (Gibler)

10/18 – No class because of Spring Break

10/23: Territory II

- Carter, David B. and Hein E. Goemans (2011) "The Making of the Territorial Order: New Borders and the Emergence of Interstate Conflict." *International Organization* 65(2): 275-309.
- **Data:** Border Wall Data (Carter)
- **Data:** Huth and Allee Territory Data

10/25: Alliances I

- Walt, Stephen M. (1987). "Alliances: Balancing and Bandwagoning," in *The Origins of Alliances*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, p. 17-32.
- **Data:** The COW Formal Alliances Dataset v4.1

10/28: Alliances II

- Mitchell and Vasquez (eds.), Chapter 4, "Alliances" (Leeds), p. 63-81.
- **Data:** The Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions (ATOP) v3.0 Dataset

10/30: Rivalry I

- Mitchell and Vasquez (eds.), Chapter 5, "Rivalry" (Klein et al.), p. 83-103.
- **Data:** Strategic Rivalry Dataset (Thompson)

11/1: Rivalry II

- Valeriano, Brandon, Benjamin Jensen, and Ryan C. Maness (2018). Chapter 2: How Rival States Employ Cyber Strategy, in *Cyber Strategy: The Evolving Character of Power and Coercion*. Oxford University Press.
- **Data:** Dyadic Cyber Incident Dataset (DCID) v1.1

11/4: Rivalry III

- Salehyan, Idean, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and David E. Cunningham (2011). “Explaining External Support for Insurgent Groups.” *International Organization* 65(4): 709-744.
- **Data:** UCDP External Support Dataset
- **Data:** Nonstate Armed Groups (NSA) Dataset (San-Akca)

11/6: Steps to War

- Mitchell and Vasquez (eds.), Chapter 7, “The Steps to War” (Senese and Vasquez), p. 133-167.
- **Data:** The Global Terrorism Database (GTD)

11/8: Diversionary War

- Mitchell and Vasquez (eds.), Chapter 8, “Diversionary Theory” (Mitchell and Prins), p. 169-194.
- **Data:** International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorism Events (ITERATE) Data

11/11: The Individual

- Byman, Daniel L. and Kenneth M. Pollack (2001). “Let us Now Praise Great Men: Bringing the Statesman Back In.” *International Security* 25(4): 107-146.
- **Data:** The Nuclear Latency Dataset

11/13: Democratic Peace I

- Mitchell and Vasquez (eds.), Chapter 9, “Democratic Peace” (Oneal and Russett), p. 195-229.

11/15: Democratic Peace II

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

11/18: The Liberal Peace I

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

11/20: The Liberal Peace II

- Mousseau, Michael (2019). “The End of War: How a Robust Marketplace and Liberal Hegemony Are Leading to Perpetual World Peace.” *International Security* 44(1): 160-196.

11/22: Research Day

11/25: Research Day

11/27, 11/29, and 12/2 – No class because of Thanksgiving Break

12/4: Territorial Peace I

- Mitchell and Vasquez (eds.), Chapter 12, "Territorial Peace" (Gibler), p. 277-302.

12/6: Territorial Peace II

- Owsiak, Andrew P. (2012). "Signing up for peace: International boundary agreements, democracy, and militarized interstate conflict." *International Studies Quarterly* 56(1): 51-66.

12/9: Dictatorial Peace I

- Peceny, Mark, Caroline C. Beer, and Shannon Sanchez-Terry (2002). "Dictatorial Peace?" *American Political Science Review* 96(1): 15-26.

12/11: Dictatorial Peace II

- Weeks, Jessica L. (2008). "Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve." *International Organization* 62(1): 35-64.

12/13 – Final Paper Due at 11:59 pm