

First Short Paper

PSCI 220

September 24, 2014

Instructions

Your task is to write a short paper that addresses one (and only one!) of the following questions. Your paper should not exceed six pages, not including references.¹ This is not a research paper: you should be able to answer any of the following questions satisfactorily using only works from the syllabus. Of course, you are welcome to use other sources if they are relevant to your argument. You must cite all sources (including works from the syllabus) and adhere to the other standards of academic honesty laid out in the syllabus.

The paper is due to me at the beginning of class on **Wednesday, October 1**. Please bring a hard copy to class. If you cannot attend class on October 1, contact me in advance to discuss electronic submission of the assignment. I will accept late assignments until the beginning of class on October 3, with a letter-grade penalty for lateness. If you have not turned in the assignment by then, you will receive a grade of zero.

¹ Page counts are based on a paper written in 12-point font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Six pages is a maximum and should not be interpreted as an expectation. Use as much space as is required to make a sound argument—no more, no less.

Prompts

1. Morgenthau argues that the world would be more peaceful if diplomacy were conducted among professional diplomats behind closed doors, as was common before World War I, rather than through public forums like international organizations. Evaluate his argument from the standpoint of rational deterrence theory. Are deterrent threats more likely to succeed, and thus prevent war, under the “old” diplomacy or the “new” diplomacy (or neither)?
2. Schelling writes, “[I]t does not always help to be, or to be believed to be, fully rational, cool-headed, and in control of oneself or of one’s country” (p. 37). Evaluate how the nature of a threat—specifically, whether it aims to deter or to compel—affects the strategic logic of appearing to be irrational. Does having a reputation for irrationality affect the success of one type of threat more than the other? In which situation is a reputation for irrationality easier to establish?
3. Consider the structure and practices of the diplomatic system in the 17th and 18th centuries, as described by Anderson. Which of

Jervis's two theoretical frameworks, the deterrence model and the spiral model, better describes the diplomacy of this era? Why?