

Second Short Paper

PSCI 220

November 12, 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, November 19**. Please bring a hard copy to class. If you cannot attend class on November 19, contact me in advance to discuss electronic submission of the assignment. I will accept late assignments until 9:10 a.m. on November 21, 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. I reserve the right not to read any content beyond six pages and to reduce your grade for exceeding the page limit.

Prompts

Each prompt places you in the shoes of a hypothetical political actor. Your answer should draw from the political science concepts and readings we have discussed in class, not just your gut feelings about the situation.

1. You are the president of the United States. The New York Times has just revealed that Grogistan, a dictatorship with a history of hostility toward the U.S., completed a successful nuclear weapons test last week. You want to compel Grogistan to halt its nuclear program and destroy its arsenal. Meanwhile, your top priority is to win a second term, and Election Day is in one month. Do you issue a threat to Grogistan publicly or try to negotiate in private? Why?
2. You are the president-for-life of Grogistan, a peaceful socialist republic. You have developed a nuclear weapon to act as a deterrent against foreign invasion. In order to know whether the weapon works—and in order for it to have any deterrent value—you must test it. Your biggest enemy, the United States, is holding an election in one month. Do you undertake the nuclear test now, or wait

until after the election? Why?

3. You are the prime minister of the United Kingdom, longtime ally of the United States. You have received a telephone call from the president of the U.S., who claims the U.S. is under threat from Grogistan and the U.K. is obligated (per NATO provisions) to come to its aid. Recent opinion polls show that the British public opposes further entanglement in U.S.-led wars abroad. How do you respond to the president's call? How much aid, if any, do you offer? Why?
4. You are the secretary-general of the United Nations. The United States and Grogistan have been at war for three years, and the fighting seems unlikely to stop soon. You are determined to end the war and build a lasting peace. You may try to recruit another state to serve as a mediator—perhaps a neutral state like Switzerland or a U.S. ally like Canada. You may ask the Security Council to authorize a peacekeeping force of its own to intervene. Or you may do nothing. What do you do, and why?