
PO 8051
International Conflict

Michaelmas Term
Thursdays 16–18

Contact Information

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Description

This graduate course is about the causes and consequences of conflicts between and within nations, as well as theories of international security. Existing empirical results will also be emphasized and particular attention will be paid to the relevance of the concepts introduced to contemporary geopolitical issues and conflicts.

Requirements and grading

Each week we will discuss a particular topic using the readings as a basis. We will also debate current international security affairs as they unfold in the world, and as they relate to the theories and concepts in this class. *All* written assignments (and presentation slides) must be submitted via Blackboard ('Assignments').

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

Participation (20%)

Participation and attendance are essential. You should come to class ready to a. summarize each paper's main findings; b. explain the method used in each paper; and c. have thought about possible improvements to the paper or feasible extensions.

Presentation (10%)

Students are required to make one presentation on one of the topics listed at the end of each week's reading list. The allocation of topics will be based on stated preferences (or random draw if more than one student expresses the same preference). The presentations should last no more than 5 minutes and be based on a *single* slide (animated slides are fine, but do not overdo it), ideally a *map*. Grading will be based mainly on *clarity of exposition* and the quality of the content. Less is more, i.e., do not try to cram every detail into the presentation. Presenters are also expected to be able to respond to questions from the audience (incl. myself).

Research Idea Papers (30%)

Students are required to submit three response papers (max 500 words each) throughout the semester (each worth 10% of your final mark). A fourth one may *optionally* be submitted, in which case the best three marks will be counted. At least one of these papers must be submitted before the seminar of week 4. In these papers, students are required to:

1. Identify a research question. This means finding a gap in the literature.
2. Describe how you would answer that question. Note that what you propose can be ambitious but the project should be feasible (ideally by you).

The idea is for you to try out ideas for future research projects, the research paper for this seminar, or even your dissertation. I will try to grade papers submitted by Wed. noon before class the next day. Either way, you must submit the paper before the beginning of class. I may ask you to present your idea if relevant to the class.

Note that the first of these three papers must be submitted before October 31st, 2020.

Research Paper (40%)

The research paper (max 2,200 words, bibliography, abstract and title page matter excluded) will be due at the latest on Dec. 20, 23:59. It should outline a research design for a larger project (possibly a first step towards your dissertation). The paper needs to follow a clear structure:

1. What is your motivating question? Avoid questions that start with 'How'.
2. How does your project relate to existing work?
3. What are your hypotheses?

4. What relevant data are available, or could *feasibly* be collected?
5. What method would you use to test your hypotheses? This may include any combination of comparative case studies, interviews, statistical analysis, computer simulation, mathematical modeling, etc.
6. How do you expect the results would support or falsify the hypotheses?

For both the response and researcher papers I am looking for *creativity*, with feasibility and theoretical or empirical fruitfulness as your only constraints. *Concise and clear* writing is also essential. Papers merely reviewing existing work or listing historical facts will not receive a passing grade.

Turnitin

Please submit *all* your written work, including response papers, through Turnitin via Blackboard (mymodule.tcd.ie).

Plagiarism

Please follow the standard of academic honesty set forth in the College Calendar (<http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/calendar>) and online: <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism>. You should also complete the online tutorial on avoiding plagiarism <http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/ready-steady-write>.

Readings

There is no textbook for this class. Instead, three types of readings are required: (1) scholarly articles and (2) policy-oriented pieces are listed in this syllabus. Students must read *all* readings listed in the 'required' section for each class and be ready to discuss each of them in class. The required readings are either on Blackboard or on reserve in the library. Some weeks (3, 5 & 6) require a large amount of reading, so I advise you to plan ahead (on average 145 pages per week). Finally, students are also expected to have read (3) the news and relevant sources of information such as:

- Council on Foreign Relations (<http://www.cfr.org/>)
- Foreign Affairs (<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/>)
- Foreign Policy (<http://www.foreignpolicy.com/>)
- The Economist (<http://www.economist.com/>)
- The New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/index.html>)
- The Washington Post (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/>)
- The Financial Times (e.g., <http://www.ft.com/intl/comment/columnists/gideonrachman>)

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Schedule

Week 1. Introductory Session: The End of War?

Required Readings:

- Steven Pinker. *The better angels of our nature: The decline of violence in history and its causes*. Penguin UK, 2011. Chapter 5: “The Long Peace”. 80 pages
- Joshua S Goldstein. War Really Is Going Out of Style. *The New York Times*. December 17, 2011. 3 pages

Suggested Readings:

- Donald Kagan, Eliot A Cohen, Charles F Doran, and Michael Mandelbaum. Is major war obsolete? An exchange. *Survival*, 41(2):139–152, 1999.
- Bear Braumoeller. Is war disappearing? In *APSA Chicago 2013 Meeting*, 2013. 28 pages
- Walter R Mead. The Return of Geopolitics. *Foreign Affairs*. 17 Apr. 2014. 7 pages
- John G Ikenberry. The Illusion of Geopolitics. *Foreign Affairs*. 17 Apr. 2014. 7 pages

Week 2. Is War in our Genes?

Required Readings:

- Azar Gat. *War in Human Civilization*. Oxford University Press, 2006. ch. 1–3, 6,7 (pp. 3–55, 114–145).
- Robert Axelrod and William D Hamilton. The evolution of cooperation. *Science*, 211(4489):1390–1396, 1981.
- Martin A Nowak. Five rules for the evolution of cooperation. *Science*, 314(5805):1560–1563, 2006.

Suggested Readings:

- Frans De Waal. *Chimpanzee Politics: Power and Sex among Apes*. JHU Press, 2007. Introduction, pp. 3–39.
- Kenneth N Waltz. *Man, the state, and war: a theoretical analysis*. Columbia University Press, 2001. Ch. 2 (‘The First Image’, pp. 16–41).
- Robert Axelrod. The emergence of cooperation among egoists. *The American Political Science Review*, pages 306–318, 1981.

- Robert M Axelrod. *The evolution of cooperation*. Basic books, 2006. ch. 1&2, pp. 3-54
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Donald A Cress. *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. Hackett Publishing, 1992.
- Thomas Hobbes. *Leviathan*. Yale University Press, 1928.

Presentations:

- The Sykes-Picot agreement and its ramifications.
- The Senkaku Islands
- The South China Sea

Week 3. War and Society

Required Readings:

- Hendrik Spruyt. Institutional selection in international relations: state anarchy as order. *International Organization*, 48(04):527–557, 1994
- John A Lynn. The evolution of army style in the modern west, 800–2000. *The International History Review*, 18(3):505–545, 1996.
- Geoffrey Parker. *The military revolution: Military innovation and the rise of the West, 1500-1800*. Cambridge University Press, 1996. pp. 6–44.

Suggested Readings:

- Charles Tilly. *Coercion, capital, and European states, AD 990-1992*. Blackwell Oxford, 1992 pp. 67–95
- Geoffrey Best. *War and society in revolutionary Europe, 1770-1870*. McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP, 1998. Ch. 3, pp. 29–46
- Hendrik Spruyt. *The sovereign state and its competitors: an analysis of systems change*. Princeton University Press, 1996. Ch. 8
- Larry H Addington. *The patterns of war since the eighteenth century*. Indiana University Press, 1994.
- Richard Arthur Preston, Sydney F Wise, Herman O Werner, and Alex Roland. *Men in arms: a history of warfare and its interrelationships with Western society*. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1979.
- Paul Kennedy. *The rise and fall of the great powers*. Random House LLC, 2010.
- Michael Duffy. *The Military Revolution and the State 1500-1800*. Humanities Press, 1980.

- Michael Howard. *War in European history*. Oxford University Press, 2001.
- John Keegan. *A history of warfare*. Random House, 2004.

Presentations:

- South Sudan
- Kashmir

Week 4. Bargaining and Conflict

Required Readings :

- James D Fearon. Rationalist explanations for war. *International Organization*, 49(03):379–414, 1995. (Read carefully)
- Erik Gartzke. War is in the error term. *International Organization*, 53(03):567–587, 1999. (Difficult. Read until you get the gist)
- Robert Powell. War as a commitment problem. *International Organization*, 60(01):169–203, 2006. (Somewhat technical. Read carefully)

Suggested Readings:

- AFK Organski. *World politics*. Knopf New York, 1968, ch. 12 (pp. 299–338).
- Robert Powell. *In the shadow of power: States and strategies in international politics*. Princeton University Press, 1999. Ch. 3, pp. 82–114 (technical reading)
- James D Fearon. Bargaining over objects that influence future bargaining power. In *annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, August*, pages 28–31, 1996.
- Thomas Chadeaux. Bargaining over power: when do shifts in power lead to war? *International Theory*, 3(02):228–253, 2011.
- Dan Reiter. Exploring the bargaining model of war. *Perspective on Politics*, 1(01):27–43, 2003.
- Alastair Smith and Allan C Stam. Bargaining and the nature of war. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 48(6):783–813, 2004.
- Thomas Chadeaux. What the enemy knows: Common knowledge and the rationality of war. *British Journal of Political Science*, pages 1–15, 2015.

Presentations:

- North Korea’s nuclear programme
- Iran’s nuclear programme

Week 5. Forecasting Conflict

Required Readings:

- Bruce Bueno De Mesquita. *The Predictioneer's Game*. Random House Incorporated, 2010, ch. 4–7 (pp. 47–123)
- Kenneth J Arrow, Robert Forsythe, Michael Gorham, Robert Hahn, Robin Hanson, John O Ledyard, Saul Levmore, Robert Litan, Paul Milgrom, Forrest D Nelson, et al. The promise of prediction markets. *Science*, 320(5878):877, 2008
- Michael D Ward. Can we predict politics? Toward what end? *Journal of Global Security Studies*, 1(1):80–91, 2016
- Philip Tetlock and Dan Gardner. *Superforecasting: The art and science of prediction*. Random House, 2016, ch. 3–4, pp. 46–104

Suggested Readings:

- Sean P O'Brien. Crisis early warning and decision support: Contemporary approaches and thoughts on future research. *International Studies Review*, 12(1):87–104, 2010
- Michael D Ward, Brian D Greenhill, and Kristin M Bakke. The perils of policy by p-value: Predicting civil conflicts. *Journal of Peace Research*, 47(4):363–375, 2010
- Patrick T Brandt, John R Freeman, and Philip A Schrodt. Real time, time series forecasting of inter-and intra-state political conflict. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 28(1):41–64, 2011
- Håvard Hegre, Joakim Karlsen, Håvard Mokleiv Nygård, Håvard Strand, and Henrik Urdal. Predicting armed conflict, 2010–2050. *International Studies Quarterly*, 57(2):250–270, 2013
- Thomas Chadeaux. Early warning signals for war in the news. *Journal of Peace Research*, 51(1):5–18, 2014
- Thomas Chadeaux. Market anticipations of conflict onsets. *Journal of Peace Research*, 54(2):313–327, 2017
- Thomas Chadeaux. Conflict forecasting and its limits. *Data Science*, 1(1-2):7–17, 2017

Presentations:

- Relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran
- Gaza

Week 6. Weapons of mass destructionRequired Readings:

- Schelling, Thomas. 2005. Nobel Prize Lecture (video):
<http://www.nobelprize.org/mediaplayer/index.php?id=626>
- James Conca. A Nuclear Primer – What Is An Atomic Bomb?
<https://goo.gl/h88gJu>
- Sagan, Scott D. 1996/7. *Why do States Build Nuclear Weapons?* International Security, 21/3: 54-86.
- Price, Richard. 1995. A Genealogy of the Chemical Weapons Taboo. International Organization 49/01: 73-103.

Suggested Readings:

- Cirincione, Joseph. Bomb Scare: The History & Future of Nuclear Weapons. Columbia University Press, 2008.
- Gavin, Francis J. Nuclear Statecraft: History and Strategy in America's Atomic Age. Cornell University Press, 2015.
- Sagan, Scott D., and Kenneth N. Waltz. The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: An Enduring Debate. 3rd edition. W.W. Norton & Company, 2012
- Trachtenberg, Marc. History & Strategy. Princeton University Press, 1991.

Presentations:

- The role of Jordan in the Middle East
- The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

Week 7. Reading Week: no seminar**Week 8. Terrorism**Required Readings:

- Robert A Pape. The strategic logic of suicide terrorism. *American Political Science Review*, 97(03):343–361, 2003

- Max Abrahms. Why terrorism does not work. *International Security*, 31(2):42–78, 2006
- Andrew Kydd and Barbara F Walter. Sabotaging the peace: The politics of extremist violence. *International Organization*, 56(02):263–296, 2002
- Peter R Neumann. Negotiating with terrorists. *Foreign Affairs*, pages 128–138, 2007
- Scott Atran. Genesis of suicide terrorism. *Science*, 299(5612):1534–1539, 2003

Presentations:

- ISIS: origins
- ISIS: current geopolitical state
- ISIS: current funding and finances

Week 9. Civil Wars I

Required Readings:

- Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler. Greed and grievance in civil war. *Oxford economic papers*, 56(4):563–595, 2004
- James D Fearon and David D Laitin. Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war. *American political science review*, 97(01):75–90, 2003
- Daniel N Posner. The political salience of cultural difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are allies in Zambia and adversaries in Malawi. *American Political Science Review*, 98(04):529–545, 2004

Suggested Readings:

- Charles Tilly. *The politics of collective violence*. Cambridge University Press, 2003, Ch. 1 and 2, pp. 1–54

Presentations:

- The Boko Haram Insurgency
- The Kurds
- Ethnic relations in Iraq today

Week 10. Civil Wars IIRequired Readings:

- Barbara F Walter. The critical barrier to civil war settlement. *International organization*, 51(03):335–364, 1997
- Barbara F Walter. Bargaining failures and civil war. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12:243–261, 2009
- Stephen John Stedman. Spoiler problems in peace processes. *International Security*, 22(2):5–53, 1997

Suggested Readings:

- Barbara F Walter. *Committing to peace: The successful settlement of civil wars*. Princeton University Press, 2002
- David E Cunningham. Veto players and civil war duration. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(4):875–892, 2006

Presentations:

- The Columbian peace process
- The Somalian civil war

Week 11. Economic Interdependence and International ConflictRequired Readings:

- Edward Deering Mansfield and Brian M Pollins. *Economic interdependence and international conflict: New perspectives on an enduring debate*. University of Michigan Press, 2003. Part I (pp. 31–59, 89–147).
- Marina Ottaway, David Ottaway. How the Kurds Got Their Way. *Foreign Affairs*. 17 Apr. 2014. (Skim)
- Erik Gartzke and Yonatan Lupu. Trading on preconceptions: Why World War I was not a failure of economic interdependence. *International Security*, 36(4):115–150, 2012.

Suggested Readings:

- Mark JC Crescenzi. Economic exit, interdependence, and conflict. *Journal of Politics*, 65(3):809–832, 2003.

- Bruce M Russett and John R Oneal. *Triangulating peace: Democracy, interdependence, and international organizations*, volume 9. Norton, 1909.
- Zeev Maoz. The effects of strategic and economic interdependence on international conflict across levels of analysis. *American Journal of Political Science*, 53(1):223–240, 2009.
- Erik Gartzke, Quan Li, and Charles Boehmer. Investing in the peace: Economic interdependence and international conflict. *International Organization*, 55(02):391–438, 2001.

Presentations:

- The geopolitical impact of Russian Gas
- Ethnic violence in South Sudan
- The War in Donbass (Ukraine)

Week 12. Conflict Outcomes

Required Readings:

A. Combat Outcomes

- Stephen Biddle. *Military power: Explaining victory and defeat in modern battle*. Princeton University Press, 2010. pp. 28–77.
- Ivan Arreguin-Toft. How the weak win wars: A theory of asymmetric conflict. *International Security*, 26(1):93–128, 2001.
- Stephen Biddle. Ending the War in Afghanistan. *Foreign Affairs*. 12 Aug. 2013.

B. The Duration of Peace

- Suzanne Werner and Amy Yuen. Making and keeping peace. *International Organization*, 59(02):261–292, 2005.

Suggested Readings:

- Virginia Page Fortna. Scraps of paper? Agreements and the durability of peace. *International Organization*, 57(02):337–372, 2003.
- Nigel Lo, Barry Hashimoto, and Dan Reiter. Ensuring peace: Foreign-imposed regime change and postwar peace duration, 1914–2001. *International Organization*, 62(04):717–736, 2008.
- Dan Reiter and Allan C Stam. *Democracies at war*. Princeton University Press, 2002. pp. 10–38.

- US Army Counter-insurgency handbook, chapter 2.
<http://usacac.army.mil/cac/repository/materials/coin-fm3-24.pdf>
- Branislav L Slantchev. How initiators end their wars: The duration of warfare and the terms of peace. *American Journal of Political Science*, 48(4):813–829, 2004

Presentations:

- The Libyan Crisis
- The Yemeni crisis