

**Georgetown University
Department of Government**

**Prof. Holger Schmidt
GOVT 370.01 – International Security
Spring 2012**

Class Hours: M & W, 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
Classroom: ICC 115
Office Hours: Mon 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.; Wed 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Instructor Contact Information:
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Course Description:

Overview of international security issues. Questions addressed include: What is security? What are the causes of civil and interstate wars? What strategies can third-party actors use to stop or prevent violent conflicts? Just how dangerous is the spread of nuclear weapons? What causes terrorism and what can be done to combat it? Is there a link between environmental degradation and armed conflict? What role do private security companies play in international security? What is the most suitable grand strategy for the United States in a time of economic crisis and receding global dominance? Insights from a variety of analytical approaches inform the analysis of each question, with an emphasis on problem-driven, empirically oriented research rather than paradigmatic debates. Historical examples and illustrations will primarily be drawn from the post-World War II era.

Class Format:

Although the class is primarily a lecture class, student participation in the form of questions or comments is highly encouraged. To make this format work, it is essential that students complete the assigned readings in advance of the class meeting during which the readings in question are due for discussion.

Learning Goals & Outcomes:

As a result of completing this course, students will have:

- A sound understanding of some of the key arguments and findings generated by the political science literature on the topics covered in this class (see last page of syllabus for a complete list).
- Familiarity with some of the most important sources of data used in the empirically oriented political science literature, particularly the literature on armed internal and interstate conflict.
- Experience conducting independent original research related to international security issues.

Readings:

There is no textbook assigned for this course. All required readings will be made available electronically through Blackboard, and the list of readings posted on Blackboard takes the place of a conventional 'list of readings' that is directly integrated into the syllabus.

The average reading load per week is about 100 pages, i.e., the rough equivalent of three full-length journal articles. Students are expected to read each and every page of the assigned readings and to complete all assigned readings before they are due for discussion in lecture. If you cannot commit to meeting this expectation, do not take this class.

To make the most of the course it is important that students be well informed of recent events and current policies. In addition to the required class readings, students should therefore make sure to read at least one major newspaper with an extensive international news section (e.g., *The New York Times* or *The Financial Times*) on a daily basis. Students should also strive to follow at least one major foreign newspaper or other foreign news outlet, to get a sense of how major international security issues are viewed in other parts of the world. Finally, students are strongly encouraged to follow the political science blog *The Monkey Cage* (<http://themonkeycage.org/>), which brings political science research to bear on current political issues and events.

Graded Assignments:

Course Grades will be based on the following requirements.

1.) A short (12-page, double-spaced) research paper on a topic of students' own choosing, worth a maximum of 40 points = 40% of the final grade.

Papers must include (i) a brief literature review, (ii) a clearly defined research question and hypothesis and (iii) empirical evidence (historical, case study, quantitative or a combination thereof) that sheds light on the accuracy of the stated hypothesis.

Additional details, including tips regarding source materials, guidelines for style and structure of the paper, as well as a list of the criteria on which grades for this assignment will be based will be distributed approximately two weeks after the first class meeting. The submission deadline for the research paper is Wednesday April 18, in class.

2.) Contribution to a class research project in the form of a research memo of about 5-8 pages in length, worth a maximum of 40 points = 40% of the final grade.

The class project aims to expose students to the process of primary research and data collection through a class-wide joint research effort related to one of the major themes of the class, armed internal conflict. Specifically, the goal of this group effort is to produce insights related to (but not already contained in) the class readings on the escalation of ethnic conflicts into large-scale violence.

Further details – including what data students are expected to collect and an overview of the main sources from which relevant information can be obtained – will be outlined in a dedicated class session on Wednesday, February 22 as well as an accompanying handout.

The submission deadline for the research memo is Wednesday, March 28.

Students aiming to perform well on both the final paper and the group research assignment are strongly encouraged to get an early start on their final papers, so that they can suspend work on the final paper during the period in which they have to produce their contributions to the class project (i.e., Feb. 22 – March 28). I expect both the research memo and the final paper to be the product of significant effort and to be thoroughly researched, properly thought-through and – in the case of the final paper – well written. I also expect all materials you submit to be free of spelling and grammatical errors. Last minute work rarely meets these standards, so please plan ahead and make sure to set aside a certain amount of time every week (or at least every other week) for research and writing.

3.) Three short (about 15 minutes) in-class quizzes that test students' understanding of the readings and lectures for the preceding week, as well as the readings assigned for the day on which the quiz is given.

Quiz dates will not be announced in advance, but quizzes will only be administered on Mondays, to ensure students have sufficient time to prepare and catch up on any missed readings. In addition, only students' best two quiz performances will count toward the final grade.

Each quiz will consist of a combination of short answers, IDs, and multiple choice questions and earn students a maximum of ten points. Since only the two highest scores count toward the final grade, the maximum number of grade-relevant points that students can earn for this portion of the course requirements is 20 points.

Note that quiz questions may at least partially draw on subject matter contained in the readings but not discussed in lecture or, conversely, material discussed in lecture but not contained in the readings. Students who aspire to perform well in this course are therefore expected to do all required readings, attend class regularly, and obtain class notes for any sessions they are unable to attend.

4.) Class attendance and participation. No formal grade will be assigned for this element, but attendance and participation will factor into the final grade in cases where students are 'in between' grades after the points earned on requirements 1.) – 3.) have been added up.

Grading Policy:

1.) General Points:

- Students must complete all class requirements in order to receive a passing grade.
- Late papers will be penalized with a 5-point deduction (i.e., about a third of a letter grade) for each day that the paper is late, except in cases of certified medical or other emergencies.
- All students must submit their papers in both electronic and hard copy format, and are responsible for retaining separate electronic and hard copies of their own until the submitted copy has been graded and returned by the instructor.
- In assessing your verbal contributions to class, both the regularity and the quality of your contributions will be taken into account.
- Grades will solely be based on students' performance on the graded assignments described in the preceding section of this syllabus. Extra credit assignments are not available for this class.

2.) Grading Scale:

I take the official Georgetown University grading scale and grade definitions very seriously. The grade-points and descriptors are:

A	4.0 Superior
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00 Good
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00 Average
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.00 Minimum passing
F	Failure

This scale means that a grade of A constitutes the highest possible indication of a student's excellence in scholarship and writing. An A therefore means that the student has reached a *genuinely superior level of understanding of the subject*, and has consistently demonstrated that superior knowledge and insight on examinations and other assignments.

All assignments are graded on a point scale (i.e., x out of y possible points). The following scale is used to convert percentage or point scores to letter grades:

A	100-96 percent
A-	95-91
B+	90-86
B	85-81
B-	80-76
C+	75-71
C	70-66
C-	65-61
D+	60-56
D	55-51
F	50 and below

Note that final grades will be based on *the total number of points earned throughout the semester*, not on a weighted average of the letter grade translation of scores obtained for individual tests and assignments.

Other Class Policies:

1.) *Attendance*: I will not formally track attendance, but regular class attendance is expected and repeated unexcused absences will have a negative impact on the final grade. No notification or certification of reason for absence is required if the total number of absences for the semester does not exceed two (2).

2.) *Make-up exams & assignments*: No make-up exams or assignments will be given except in cases of certified medical or other emergencies.

3.) *Students with Disabilities*: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me as early in the semester as possible to discuss specific needs.

4.) *Plagiarism, Cheating & Other Academic Integrity Issues*

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with (and follow!) Georgetown's honor code (see <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53516.html>).

Please study the guidelines provided there carefully and pay particular attention to the definition of what constitutes plagiarism (<http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53377.html>).

Violations of the honor code will be pursued to the fullest possible extent.

5.) *Security*

Please familiarize yourself thoroughly with the university safety guidelines available at <http://safety.georgetown.edu/121108.html>.

Schedule of Topics

Part I - Introduction

- W, Jan 11: Introduction & Overview
M, Jan 16: MLK Day – No Class
W, Jan 18: Definitional Issues & Trends in Armed Conflict

Part II: Interstate Conflict

- M, Jan 23: Theories of Interstate War (1)
W, Jan 25: Theories of Interstate War (2)
M, Jan 30: Empirical Findings & Implications for US-China Relations

Part III: Internal Conflict

- W, Feb 1: First-Wave Theories & Findings
M, Feb 6: Second-Wave Theories & Findings
W, Feb 8: Current State of the Art & New Challenges (e.g. the Arab Spring)
M, Feb 13: Beyond Onset: Explaining Conflict Severity & Duration

Part IV: Conflict Prevention & Management

- W, Feb 15: Conflict Prevention & Early Warning
M, Feb 20: President's Day – No Class
W, Feb 22: Discussion of Class Research Project on Early Warning
M, Feb 27: Humanitarian Intervention
W, Feb 29: Post-Conflict Stabilization: Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding, and the Role of the UN

M, Mar 5 & W, Mar 7: Spring Break – No Class

Part V: Counterinsurgency

- M, Mar 12: Theory
W, Mar 14: Case Studies / Empirical Findings

Part VI: Nuclear Deterrence & Proliferation

- M, Mar 19: Traditional (=Interstate) Dynamics
W, Mar 21: Nuclear Deterrence and Proliferation in a Post-9/11 World
M, Mar 26: Case Study: Iran

Part VII: Terrorism

W, Mar 28:	Definition, Trends, and Distinctions
M, Apr 2:	Transnational Terrorism (1): Causes & Correlates
W, Apr 4:	Transnational Terrorism (2): Suicide Terrorism
M, Apr 9:	Easter Monday – No Class
W, Apr 11:	Domestic / Homegrown Terrorism
M, Apr 16:	Counterterrorism

Part VIII: Selected Non-Traditional Security Issues

W, Apr 18:	Links Between Environmental Degradation & Armed Conflict
M, Apr 23:	The Role of Private Security Companies in National & International Security

Part IX: Conclusion

W, Apr 25:	US Grand Strategy in an Era of Eroding Dominance
M, Apr 30:	Concluding Remarks & Presentation of Findings from Class Research Project (attendance mandatory)

Key Dates:

W, Feb 22:	Last Day to Submit Research Paper Proposals
W, Mar 28:	Last Day to Submit Class Project Memo & Enter Information into Online Worksheet
W, Apr 18:	Due Date for Research Paper