

The University of Texas at Austin
War and Global Political Change
Government 355M (37980)
T/TH 12.30-1.45
GAR 0.128

Canvas page: <https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/1355512>

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Office hours (in-person and virtual, please specify via signup): T/TH 10-11, TH 2-3

Sign up sheet for office hour [here](#)

Zoom link for office hours: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/92232487890>

TA:

Jeremy Nicot

Office hours:

DESCRIPTION

War is a fundamentally destructive process that has long played a transformative role in the structure of human organization. Periodically, extended wars remake the territorial and demographic composition of states, the domestic institutions that regulate political participation within states, political orders among states, and global market-based relationships while stimulating social revolution and significant technological innovations.

This course examines how war has remade the larger global order since the onset of the twentieth century. It begins with a brief overview of foundational models developed in political science to explain the origins and termination of war. It then uses World I and its extended aftermath as an empirical case to illustrate and evaluate these theoretical foundations. We then build on these theoretical and empirical foundations to examine some of the broader political, social, economic, and ideational consequences of war. Among others, we will look at how war contributes to: imperial collapse and national self-determination movements; democratization; economic recessions and recovery; refugee flows; and humanitarian catastrophes associated with famine, the targeting of civilians, and genocide.

This course meets the university's writing flag requirement. We will spend a considerable amount of time in class discussing effective writing techniques, particularly with respect to the presentation of compelling theoretical and empirical claims in political science. This class time (most Thursdays) will include dedicated writing time in which you will complete a series of specific analytical tasks and provide feedback on the written work of your colleagues.

COURSE COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT:

I will post regular updates about the course via the Announcements function on Canvas. Make sure you check that tab on our Canvas page regularly.

Please reach out to me in office hours or over email with questions about the course.

All office hours will be held over Zoom.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There will be three sets of requirements for this course. First, you will be expected to keep up with the assigned readings and participate in our discussions. I will track this participation through graded online discussions in the classroom. ***Please note that you must be able to access your Canvas account via an electronic device during class to participate in these discussions.*** Second, you will complete a series of short writing assignments (approximately 10-12) on our Thursday writing days. These will be directed assignments, designed to get you to write short, specific responses that will serve as smaller components to longer essays. You will sometimes share these responses with your classmates and provide feedback to each other during class. Third, you will complete two essays out of class in which you aggregate the product from the Thursday sessions into a coherent essay and incorporate the feedback you have received those assignments. These essay assignments (1000 to 1500 words) will be due at **on (Monday, February 27) and at the start of our assigned final exam time (3.30 pm on April 28)**, respectively. These requirements contribute to your final grade as follows:

Participation in graded chat during class	20%
Thursday writing assignments	50%
2 aggregated essays (15.0% each)	30%

READING MATERIALS

We have one required book for this course. It is available through the University Coop. You might also be able to find lower prices for digital versions on Amazon.com. You may use printed or electronic versions for this course. We will also add a few digital article readings that will be made available to you through Canvas.

David Stevenson. 2004. *Cataclysm: The First World War as Political Tragedy*. Basic.

COURSE GOALS

I want to use the subject material of our course to get you thinking (i.e. criticizing, applying, extending) about explanatory “models” of international politics that generate intellectual leverage, or quite simply can explain broad patterns of social behavior with just a few variables or concepts. This might be new for many of you. This is not going to be a class designed to get you to memorize a bunch of facts about international relations. It is not about giving you the answers. Instead, I will raise challenging questions that have been debated (sometimes quite ineffectively) for centuries and then teach one style by which you can generate your *own* answers. You will be asked to evaluate arguments, draw implications from them, and write effective statements of your

ideas. You will be graded on the effectiveness of your arguments—not on whether you can regurgitate what you have read or what I have said.

Build on this broad teaching approach, here is a set of more specific goals for our semester.

1. Enhance your understanding of the big questions in the study of international politics. Why do wars occur? How do wars stop? What political, economic, or social conditions help sustain peace? How have extended, multilateral wars remade the structure of international politics since the start of the twentieth century?
2. Enhance your ability to think in the abstract i.e. theoretically. All of our discussions and your written assignments will be oriented around this.
3. Sharpen your reading skills. The goal of your reading should not be to finish the article or the chapter. Instead, it should be to prepare yourself to think critically and originally about the questions, theoretical claims, evidence, and implications of the material you have read. To this end, I encourage you to take a brief three to five-minute break after you finish a reading to collect your thoughts. Jot down your answers to these questions: How can I summarize the main claims or evidence in my own words? How does this reading illustrate central concepts from class or lead me to reexamine them?
4. Practice generating implications (theoretical, empirical, policy) from theoretical priors/concepts.
5. Develop your writing skills. Our assignments will be designed to foster your ability to organize an essay around a few central ideas, critique alternative arguments, economize your sentence structure, and increase the use of active tense in your writing.

COVID-19 POLICIES AND ADJUSTMENTS

I am going to make every effort to preserve a safe, in-person learning environment for us this spring. If you get sick during the semester with COVID-19, I will do my best to work with you to ensure that you can complete this course. Please reach out to me as soon as possible so I can facilitate any necessary scheduling adjustments.

To help keep everyone at UT and in our community safe, it is critical that students report COVID-19 symptoms and testing, regardless of test results, to [University Health Services](#), and faculty and staff report to the [HealthPoint Occupational Health Program](#) (OHP) as soon as possible. Please see this [link](#) to understand what needs to be reported. In addition, to help understand what to do if a fellow student in the class (or the instructor or TA) tests positive for COVID, see this [University Health Services link](#).

COURSE POLICIES

Our class format necessarily creates mutual obligations among students to come prepared to discuss both the readings and the lecture materials. If only a few people in a group or the class are regularly doing the reading, our discussions will stumble as the bulk of students rely on a minority to carry them. Such a situation penalizes those students doing the readings as they are then pushed to shoulder more responsibility in class. To avoid this situation while fostering a stimulating and productive intellectual environment in class, I have established the following rules to ensure that all students meet these obligations to each other.

*Classroom civility...*As the instructor of record for this course, it is my responsibility to enforce this. Quite simply, I take this to mean that you will respect the right of your colleagues to ask questions and discuss their opinions about the subject matter of our course in class and that you will respect their right to listen undisturbed to the discussion in class. In short, expect to be asked to leave the classroom if you are bothering others by doing such things as: posting trolling messages to our virtual chats, watching videos on your computer, or talking to the person sitting next to you outside of our discussion groups.

*Attendance and participation...*will be tracked and graded daily throughout our online discussion tool accessible through Canvas. You will need to bring a device capable of posting commentary on our Canvas page while you are in class.

Your contributions to our online, synchronous chats will be graded in increments of 25% (i.e. 100, 75, 50, 25, and 0). To earn full credit, you will be expected to *participate* in class discussions *and* demonstrate that you have done the readings by performing such tasks as summarizing the main arguments, posting responses to pre-class assignments, critiquing an author's claims, drawing out policy implications, suggesting how an author's argument may apply to another issue area, or highlighting similarities and differences with other readings.

As a general policy, attendance and participation points cannot be made up. Some exceptions may apply. However, I will drop your four lowest daily participation grades for the semester (no questions asked) to account for excused and unexcused absences.

*Thursday writing sessions...*You will complete a series of in-class writing assignments on most Thursday class sessions during the semester. These assignments (generally 200 to 300 words) will respond to specific prompts and be designed generally so that their product can cumulate into a larger paper. You should treat these writing sessions as modified, open-note written quizzes. You should prepare for them by completing the assigned readings for that week before class and reviewing your notes from our prior two class meetings. You will be expected to work on your own during this writing time. You may not communicate with fellow students through social media, text, or any shared online document during this designated period. You will have access to your class notes and any assigned readings. Additionally, you may NOT use ChatGPT (or any other writing aids) for any in-class writing assignment.

We will have 11 to 13 of these writing sessions during the semester. Because they will effectively operate as exams, you should plan on being in class for these sessions. If you miss class, you will be able to complete the assignment and receive feedback on it. However, you will not be able to make up the missed points. Instead, all students will be able to drop the two lowest grades from these writing sessions to account for any missed sessions as I understand that unexpected absences will occur throughout the semester.

If some personal situation arises during the semester that will necessitate you missing more than two of our Thursday sessions, contact me immediately. We will try to work something out. I will probably ask you to work through Student Emergency Services in the Office of the Dean of Students. Please don't wait until the end of the semester to present such extenuating circumstances.

The determination of grades and grade appeals... This process must be initiated by your written explanation of why the decisions behind the assignment of your grade should be revisited. You will have one week after an assignment has been handed back to submit this written explanation. After that period, all grades will be considered final and any discussion that we might have will be restricted to how you can do better on the next assignment. Once you have submitted your written request, I will decide whether to regrade your entire assignment.

Please keep in mind that your past performance in other classes taken here at the University is not germane to any grading decisions made in my class. Consequently, if receiving a D in my class places you on academic probation, this does not constitute a viable justification for requesting the regrading of any assignment.

Grade appeals also cannot be made on the basis of being “close” to a letter grade. Cutoffs between letter grades will be strictly observed according to guidelines listed below. Note: these already include appropriate rounding:

92.5-100 A; 89.5-92.5 A-; 86.5-89.5 B+; 82.5-86.5 B; 79.5-82.5 B-; 76.5-79.5 C+; 72.5-76.5 C; 69.5-72.5 C-; 66.5-69.5 D+; 62.5-66.5 D; 59.5-62.5 D-; 0-59.5 F

Academic integrity... By taking this class, you agree to abide by the University of Texas regulations concerning cheating.

Each student is expected to maintain absolute integrity and a high standard of individual honor in scholastic work undertaken at the University. At a minimum, you should complete any assignments, exams, and other scholastic endeavors with the utmost honesty, which requires you to:

- acknowledge the contributions of other sources (**INCLUDING ChatGPT**) to your scholastic efforts;
- complete your assignments independently unless expressly authorized to seek or obtain assistance in preparing them;
- follow instructions for assignments and exams, and observe the standards of your academic discipline; and
- avoid engaging in any form of academic dishonesty on behalf of yourself or another student.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

You are expected to submit your own work on all assignments. This means that you cannot use ChatGPT or other AI-based writing aids unless they are specifically allowed for an individual assignment. Additionally, collaboration with other students in the preparation or completion of writing assignments is prohibited unless otherwise allowed in the prompt. You should expect to

fail this course if you violate these policies. At the very least, violations will result in a grade of 0 (zero) on the affected assignment.

Using someone else's work in your own writing without giving proper credit is considered plagiarism, a serious form of academic dishonesty that can result in severe penalties. Copying someone else's work, buying a paper and submitting it as your own, copying and pasting text (even with changes), or borrowing images from an online source, are some examples of plagiarism. Even if you plagiarize accidentally, you can be held responsible and penalized.

Learning to cite sources appropriately is an important part of becoming a professional. When you are unsure about citation, you are encouraged to **ask your instructor** (who is already an expert in the discipline) what is appropriate in the context of your assignment. Consultants at The [University Writing Center](#) can also help you determine whether you are citing sources correctly—and they have helpful guides online for using [direct quotations](#) and [paraphrasing](#). Reviewing those skills will help you feel confident that you are handling sources professionally in your writing.

You can read the University's definition of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty in Sec. 11–402 of the [Student Conduct Code](#). For more information, visit the [Dean of Students' site](#).

Disabilities: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students (<https://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/contact-us/>) at (512) 471-6259, (512) 410-6644 (video phone). If you have approved accommodations, please contact us through via email or office hours to arrange them.

Religious holidays: A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the [Office for Inclusion and Equity](#). The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

Emergency evacuation: In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as they way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Faculty members must then provide this information to the Fire Prevention Services office by fax (512-232-2759), with "Attn. Mr. Roosevelt Easley" written in the subject line.

Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency>.

Changes to the syllabus... I may make minor changes to the syllabus. These will be announced at least a week in advance.

TITLE IX REPORTING

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's [relevant policies](#).

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered “Responsible Employees” or “Mandatory Reporters,” which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit titleix.utexas.edu or contact the Title IX Office at titleix@austin.utexas.edu.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 10

Course Overview; Thinking Theoretically

Readings: none

Thursday, January 12

Modern Warfare

Readings: David Ignatius. 2022. How the Algorithm Tipped the Balance in Ukraine. *Washington Post*, December 20, A17.

David Ignatius. 2022. Fighting by Algorithm Boosts Ukraine's 'Good' War, but Risks Lurk. *Washington Post*, December 21, A19.

Tuesday, January 17

The Consequences of War; Introduce Bargaining Model of War

Readings: Margaret MacMillan. 2020. *War: How Conflict Shaped Us*. Random House. Introduction and Chapter 1.

Thursday, January 19

Origins of War (I)

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

Tuesday, January 24

The Origins of War (II)

Readings: Robert Powell. 2006. War as a Commitment Problem. *International Organization* 60 (1): 169-203.

Thursday, January 26

The July Crisis and the Origins of World War I

Readings: Stevenson, *Cataclysm*, chapter 1

Tuesday, January 31

Overview of WWI: August 1914-November 1918

Readings: Stevenson, *Cataclysm*, chs. 2-3

Thursday, February 2

Bargaining and Fighting

Readings: Stevenson, *Cataclysm*, chs. 4-5

Tuesday, February 7

The Domestic Politics of War (I)

Readings: Stevenson, *Cataclysm*, chs. 6-9

Thursday, February 9

Domestic Politics of War (II): The Russian Revolution

Readings: Stevenson, *Cataclysm*, chs. 10-12

Tuesday, February 14

US Intervention and Peace in the East

Readings: Stevenson, chs. 13-14

Thursday, February 16

War Termination (I): Domestic Politics in Germany

Readings: Stevenson, *Cataclysm*, chs. 15-16

Tuesday, February 21

War Termination (II): Coalitional Politics and the Armistice of 11/11/18

Readings: Stevenson, *Cataclysm*, ch. 17

Thursday, February 23

Peacemaking and the Structure of International Politics

Readings: Giovanni Capoccia. 2016. Critical Junctures. In Orfeo Fioretos et al, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Institutionalism*, 89-106. Oxford University Press.

****Monday, February 27****

Essay #1 due at 9 am...be sure to post to Canvas

Tuesday, February 28

The Treaty of Versailles (I): Territorial Foundations of Global Politics

Readings: Stevenson, *Cataclysm*, ch. 18

Thursday, March 2

The Treaty of Versailles (II): League of Nations and International Institutions

Readings: G. John Ikenberry. 1998. Constitutional Politics in International Relations. *European Journal of International Relations* 4(2): 147-177.

Tuesday, March 7

Treaty of Versailles (III): Self-Determination and Imperial Dissolution

Readings: Erez Manela. 2006. Imagining Woodrow Wilson in Asia: dreams of East-West harmony and the revolt against empire in 1919. *The American Historical Review* 111(5): 1327-1351.

Thursday, March 9

War and the State

Readings: Arjun Chowdhury. 2018. *The Myth of International Order: Why Weak States Persist and Alternatives to the State Fade Away*. Oxford University Press, chs 1-2.

Tuesday, March 21

War and Collective Identity: Nationalism

Readings: Nicholas Sambanis, Stergios Skaperdas, and William C. Wohlforth. 2015. Nation-Building Through War. *American Political Science Review* 109(2): 279-296.

Thursday, March 23

War and Democratization (I), The Weimar Republic

Readings: Gunitsky, S. 2014. From shocks to waves: Hegemonic transitions and democratization in the twentieth century. *International Organization* 68(3): 561-597.

Tuesday, March 28

The Fiscal Politics of War (I)

Readings: Scheve, K., and Stasavage, D. 2012. Democracy, War, and Wealth: Lessons from Two Centuries of Inheritance Taxation. *American Political Science Review* 106(1): 81-102.

Thursday, March 30

The Fiscal Politics of War (ctd), postwar reparations

Readings: chapter 2 (pp. 14-46) in Stephen S. Schuker. 1988. *American 'Reparations' to Germany, 1919-33*. Princeton Studies in International Finance, No. 61. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2551336>

Tuesday, April 4

Global Economic Consequences of War (I)

Readings: Barry Eichengreen. 2019. Versailles: The Economic Legacy. *International Affairs* 95(1): 7-24.

Thursday, April 6

Global Economic Consequences of War (II), The Great Depression

Readings: Wolf, N. (2010). Europe's great depression: coordination failure after the first world war. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy* 26(3): 339-369.

Tuesday, April 11

War and Democratization (II), the Weimar Collapse

Readings: King, G., Rosen, O., Tanner, M., & Wagner, A. F. (2008). Ordinary economic voting behavior in the extraordinary election of Adolf Hitler. *The Journal of Economic History*, 68(4), 951-996.

Thursday, April 13

Refugees

Readings: Lichtenheld, A. G. (2020). Explaining population displacement strategies in civil wars: a cross-national analysis. *International Organization* 74(2): 253-294.

Tuesday, April 18

Conclusions: The Russia-Ukraine War

Readings: TBD

Thursday, April 20

Conclusions: The Russia-Ukraine War

Readings: TBD

Friday, April 28

Final Essay due at 3.30 pm