

The University of Texas at Austin  
International Security  
Government 360D (39005)  
T/TH 11-12.30  
WAG 214

Canvas page: <https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/1317721>

Zoom link for synchronous class sessions: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/96575541076>

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Zoom link for office hours: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/92754259727>

## **DESCRIPTION**

This course provides a broad introduction to the conditions and motivations behind the use of military force in the contemporary political world. Traditionally, this subfield in international relations has focused on how states use or threaten to use violence to preserve their sovereignty and resolve political conflicts with other states. The increasing salience of terrorism and state failure over the past two decades helped to reorient the subfield, increasing its attention to acts of political violence by non-state actors. We will explore such topics questions as: why do wars occur? How do interstate and intrastate wars differ? What conditions facilitate the termination of wars? How do alliance structures, international organizations, global economic integration, and the domestic institutions associated with democracy limit military conflict? How have nuclear weapons altered interstate relations? What are the political causes and consequences of terrorism? How is climate change creating new security challenges for states?

## **COURSE COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT:**

We 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 us 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. We 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 one take home essay assignment on either World War I or the Syrian War. Third, you will complete two examinations: a midterm and a final. These requirements contribute to your final grade as follows:

Participation in graded chat during class	25%
Essay	25%
Midterm	25%
Final	25%

## READING MATERIALS

We have three required books for this course. The first is a digital textbook. The remaining two examine World War I and the Syrian War, respectively. We will also add a few digital article readings that will be made available to you through Canvas.

Rania Abouzeid. 2018. *No Turning Back: Life, Loss, and Hope in Wartime Syria*. Norton.

David Fromkin. 2004. *Europe's Last Summer: Who Started the Great War in 1914?* New York: Knopf.

McDonald, Patrick J., Terrence L. Chapman, and Robert Moser. 2020. *An Introduction to International Relations: Opening the Global System*. Pearson. (**Hereafter: OGS**)

Note: This is a digital, interactive textbook that integrates traditional text-based presentations with (among others) explanatory videos, current events, interactive maps, interactive data visualizations, other interactive widgets, flash cards, writing assignments, and quizzes. You can listen to a narrated, audio version of the text and can access it on your mobile devices. We will also embed our own reading notes and additional content (videos and weblinks) directly into the text for you to see.

You will be able to access the textbook through the Longhorn Textbook Access (LTA) program, a new initiative between UT Austin, The University Co-op, and textbook publishers to help reduce the cost of digital course materials for students. You can access your required materials through the “My Textbooks” tab in Canvas. You are automatically opted into the program but can easily opt-out (and back in) via Canvas through the 12<sup>th</sup> class day. If you remain opted-in at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> class day you will receive a bill through your “[What I Owe](#)” page and have until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> class day to pay and retain access. If you do not pay by the 18<sup>th</sup> class day, you will lose access to the materials after the 20<sup>th</sup> class day and your charge will be removed. More information about the LTA program is available at [universitycoop.com/longhorn-textbook-access](http://universitycoop.com/longhorn-textbook-access).

## 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. I 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 does the acquisition of nuclear weapons shape global politics? What caused World War I? How does global climate change threaten the security of states and people?
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.

## COVID-19 POLICIES AND ADJUSTMENTS

I am going to make every effort to preserve a safe, in-person learning environment for us this fall. I plan on lecturing or leading a discussion (while masked) in our assigned classroom during our assigned class times on Tuesdays and Thursdays this fall.

I will need your help, though, in maintaining a safe classroom environment. **I strongly encourage everyone to wear a mask while you are in our classroom.** This recommendation follows guidelines from [UT-Austin](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control](#), among others; and reflects robust scientific [evidence](#) concerning the effectiveness of masks in preventing the communal spread of the virus causing COVID-19 and all its related diseases.

Given the recent local spike in infections, I understand some of you may be uncomfortable attending in-person sessions of our course. I have taken the following steps to ensure that those who feel unsafe in our classroom can still participate actively in a virtual, synchronous classroom without negative effects on their grade. Except for any technical challenges out of my control, I plan on using lecture capture so that audio of my lecture will automatically be recorded and

posted to Canvas. Additionally, I will open a Zoom window (<https://utexas.zoom.us/j/96575541076>) and share a screen of my lecture slides during our classes. Listening to this synchronous feed will enable you to participate in our virtual, online chats through Canvas when prompted during our sessions. Please note that you are expected to participate in the chats for every session irrespective of whether you attend class in-person or via Zoom and Canvas.

I am going to wait to specify the nature of our exams (i.e. in person, online; take-home essay, short answer, multiple choice, etc.) until we have a better sense of how the local state of the pandemic is influencing our ability (and willingness) to provide a fair and accurate assessment to a full room of students for a 75 minute period. I will plan on making that decision at least two weeks before our midterm (by September 28). I appreciate your patience on this issue.

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](#).

If you get sick during the semester with COVID-19, we will do our best to work with you to ensure that you can complete this course. Please just be sure to reach out to us as soon as possible so we can facilitate any necessary scheduling adjustments.

## 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, 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.

Attendance and participation points cannot be made up under any circumstances, including excused absences. However, we will drop your four lowest daily participation grades for the semester (no questions asked) to account for excused and unexcused absences.

*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 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 and you cannot collaborate with other students during exams. 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 to arrange them.

***Religious holidays:*** By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

***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. **We are Responsible Employees and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with us, 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](mailto:advocate@austin.utexas.edu). For more information about reporting options and resources, visit [titleix.utexas.edu](http://titleix.utexas.edu) or contact the Title IX Office at [titleix@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:titleix@austin.utexas.edu).

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

**Thursday, August 26: Introduction to International Security**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 1

**Tuesday, August 31: The International System and the Iran Nuclear Accord**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 2

**Thursday, September 2: Thinking Theoretically About International Security**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 3

**Tuesday, September 7: War in International Relations**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 7 and Sections 16.3, 16.4

**Thursday, September 9: The Origins of War, Part I**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 8

**Tuesday, September 14: The Origins of War, Part II**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 9; Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, pp. 1-48

**Thursday, September 16: The Origins of WWI, 1904-1913**

Readings: Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, pp. 49-112

**Tuesday, September 21: The Origins of WWI, Balkan Wars and the Blank Check**

Readings: Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, pp. 113-200

**Thursday, September 23: The Origins of WWI, The July Crisis**

Readings: Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, pp. 201-305

**Tuesday, September 28: Alliances, the Security Dilemma, and the Origins of WWI**

Readings: *OGS*, Sections 11.1-11.3

**Thursday, September 30: Domestic Sources of War and WWI**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 18, Sections 19.1-19.4

**Tuesday, October 5: War Termination**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 10

**Thursday, October 7: The Treaty of Versailles and the Political Consequences of War**

Readings: *OGS*, Section 16.5 (and review Sections 16.3, 16.4)

**Tuesday, October 12: Midterm**

**Thursday, October 14: Civil War**

Readings: *OGS*, Sections 12.1-12.4

**Tuesday, October 19: Identity Conflicts and Civil War in Syria**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 24; Abouzeid, *No Turning Back*, pp. 1-94

**Thursday, October 21: International Intervention in Civil War and Syria**

Readings: *OGS*, Sections 12.5-12.6, Abouzeid, *No Turning Back*, pp. 95-240

**Tuesday, October 26: Terrorism and Counterterrorism**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 15

**Thursday, October 28: Wars in Iraq and Syria and the Rise of ISIS**

Readings: *OGS*, Section 35.4, Abouzeid, *No Turning Back*, pp. 241-320

**Tuesday, November 2: Essay due at 11.00 am (no class)**

**Thursday, November 4: Nuclear Weapons, Part 1**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 13

**Tuesday, November 9: Nuclear Weapons, Part 2**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 14

Sue Mi Terry. 2021. North Korea's Nuclear Family: How the Kims Got the Bomb and Why They Won't Give It Up. *Foreign Affairs* 100(5): 115-125.

**Thursday, November 11: Great Power Politics and US-China Relations**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 20

Oriana Skylar Mastro. 2021. The Taiwan Temptation. *Foreign Affairs* 100(4): 58-67.

**Tuesday, November 16: Great Power Politics: US-Russian Relations and Ukraine**

Readings: *OGS*, Section 11.4

Serhii Plokhy and M.E. Sarotte. 2020. The Shoals of Ukraine: Where American Illusions and Great Power Politics Collide. *Foreign Affairs* 99(1): 81-95.

**Thursday, November 18: Economic Causes of War and Peace, Part 1**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 26; McDonald, *The Invisible Hand of Peace*, ch. 3

**Tuesday, November 23: Economic Causes of War and Peace, Part 2**

Readings: *OGS*, Sections 27.1-27.2

Audrye Wong. 2021. How Not to Win Allies and Influence Geopolitics. *Foreign Affairs* 100(3): 44-53.

**(Note: No in-person class meeting today. This will be a virtual discussion session.)**

**Thursday, November 25: No class for Thanksgiving break****Tuesday, November 30: Environmental Scarcity and Conflict, Part 1**

Readings: *OGS*, Module 33

**Thursday, December 2: Environmental Scarcity and Conflict, Part 2**

Readings: Andrew S. Erickson and Gabriel Collins. 2021. Competition with China Can Save the Planet. *Foreign Affairs* 100(3): 136-149.

Josh Busby. 2018. Warming World: Why Climate Change Matters More Than Anything Else. *Foreign Affairs* 97(4): 49-55.

**Friday, December 10: Final Exam from 9 am to 12 pm**