

International Conflict (Political Science 370)

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Objectives

In this class, we review the international conflict literature in political science. These include Realism (i.e. balance of power theory, power transition theory), Rational Choice Theory (i.e. expected utility theory of war), terrorism, the political economy of defense spending, deterrence, democratic peace, the trade-conflict nexus, and civil wars.

Requirements

2 Exams (20 percent each): You will be tested on the assigned readings. Exams will have multiple choice questions and a short essay. The essay question will be graded separately after the exam period is over.

10 Discussions (3 percent each)

A Research Paper (25 percent): Students are free to choose the topic of the paper as long as it is related to the course material. Turn in the paper to the dropbox on D2L.

Term Paper Guidelines: The length requirement is 12-15 pages (regular font of Times New Roman with 12 point font size and 1 inch margin). You **MUST** have at least FIVE references.

1. You **MUST** have a clearly and narrowly defined question. I suggest you develop a research question in a literally question form. For instance, what led North Korea to develop nuclear weapons? Do arms races lead to conflicts?

2. In the introduction, you introduce the research question and describe why the question is meaningful/interesting.

At the beginning of the body, you provide background information. If it is a case study or analytical paper, you provide historical information so that the reader can understand the background. If it is a theoretical paper, you provide a literature review on the subject.

3. In the main body of the paper, you provide your answer to the research question. You **MUST** provide evidence to back up your argument/answer to the research question.

4. In the conclusion, you summarize what you did in the paper and discuss your findings in the context of the literature in the field and implications of your study.

Presentation of Research Paper (5%): Students are required to present his/her paper to the class. We will set up a date (or dates) so that everyone can present his/her paper to the class.

Required Readings

Quackenbush, Stephen. 2015. *International Conflict: Logic and Evidence*. Sage/ CQ Press. ISBN 978-1-4522-4098-5

All other readings will be available at the course site under CONTENT.

Grades

Exams will have multiple choice questions and a short essay question taken through the D2L site. You can take exams at any time during the week it is available, but

you will only have one opportunity to take it. **Once you begin the exam, you MUST finish it.** You **cannot** start an exam, then enter again at a later time to finish it. Also, exams will be timed (50 minutes), so you will have a set amount of time to take the exam once you begin. You should make sure that you have set aside the whole time allotted to take the exam just in case you need it. You should also make sure that you have a secure connection before you begin. **Internet connection problem cannot be an excuse for not finishing it in time.** You should study and prepare for these exams in the same way you would any closed-book exam and be prepared to complete the exam on your own.

You will get full credit for your discussion response as long as it is 200 words long and you comment on another student's response. Again, your response **MUST be at least 200 words** in length. If your response is shorter than 200 words or if your response is posted late or if you fail to comment on another student's response, you will get partial credit for your discussion response. There will be no credit for late comment on another student's post. You are required to post your response to the discussion question(s) in the "Discussion Questions Forum" on the D2L site by Sunday at midnight. **Keep in mind that all responses and posting on the Discussion Questions forum must follow the rules of behavior we would observe in the face to face classroom. Your responses to the discussion questions should address the question itself and demonstrate that you understand the topic under discussion. When you respond to someone else's post, do so with respect and thought. Personal attacks or excessive opinion-spouting will not be tolerated.** You should engage each other's ideas and respond in a thoughtful, constructive, informed manner.

There is no other extra credit or curve. Any student who cheats on an exam or commits any other act of academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism) will receive an F for the course and will be referred to the appropriate University authorities. Copying someone else's work without proper quote or citation is plagiarism. You **MUST** avoid plagiarism when you post your response to discussion questions and research paper.

A = 90-100	A- = 85-89.9		
B+ = 80-84.9	B = 75-79.9	B- = 70-74.9	
C+ = 65-69.9	C = 60-64.9	C- = 55-59.9	
D+ = 50-54.9	D = 45-49.9	D- = 40-44.9	F = Below 40

Flow of the Class: For this course, a week will start on Monday at 12:01 AM and end on Sunday 11:59PM. I post a few key questions under Lecture Notes to help you what to focus in your reading. Posted my lecture notes combined with the readings from the textbook, will constitute the materials for the week. You are expected to do the reading, access the lecture notes, and answer the discussion question and comment on another student's post (**This is your responsibility**).

Please remember that I will be sending everything to your UWM e-mail accounts. If you don't regularly use that account, make sure you check it or forward it to an account you do use regularly (**This is your responsibility**). When you need to e-mail me something for the class, send it to me at heouk@uwm.edu.

Schedule

Week 1 (1/25-31) Introduction

Please post a brief introduction of yourself in the discussion forum. This is NOT a

discussion, so the discussion response requirement does not apply here.

Week 2 (2/1-7) Scientific Study of War & Identifying Wars and militarized Disputes

Reading: Quackenbush Ch. 1&2

Discussion 1: Describe the scientific study of war. Why do we need to study war in a scientific manner?

Week 3 (2/8-14) War and Rationality (Expected Utility Theory of War)

Reading: Quackenbush Ch. 3

Discussion 2: Evaluate the expected utility theory of war. Do you agree or disagree with the assumptions and decision process of the theory and why?

Week 4 (2/15-21) National Power

Reading Quackenbush Ch. 5

Discussion 3: Which do you think is a better measure of national power between GNP and CINC measure of national capability and why?

Week 5 (2/22-28) Alliance

Reading: Quackenbush Ch. 6

Discussion 4: Why do states form alliances? Do you think alliances matter? If yes, explain why. If no, explain why not?

Week 6 (2/29-3/6) Democratic Peace

Reading: Quackenbush Ch. 7

Discussion 5: Does democracy really not fight each other? Is democracy more pacific?

Week 7 (3/7-13) **Mid-term Exam** (Due at midnight on March 13th)

Week 8 (3/14-20) Spring Recess

Week 9 (3/21-27) International Trade and Conflict

Mansfield, Edward and Brian Pollins (2001) "The Study of Interdependence and Conflict: Recent Advances, Open Questions, and Directions for Future Research" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45(6): 834-859.

Discussion 6: Does economic interdependence lead to peace?

Week 10 (3/28-4/3) Deterrence

Reading: Quackenbush Ch. 8

Discussion 7: Based on all the deterrence theories, what do you think makes deterrence work?

Week 11 (4/4-10) The Political Economy of Defense

Reading: Heo, Uk and John Bohte. 2012. "Who Pays for National Defense: Financing Defense Programs in the United States, 1947-2007." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56(3): 406-431.

Discussion 8: What are the economic effects of defense spending on growth?

Week 12 (4/11-17) Escalation of Disputes to War

Reading: Quackenbush Ch. 9

Discussion 9: What makes disputes escalate to war?

Week 13 (4/18-24) Terrorism

Reading: Readings on Terrorism, available on D2L

Discussion 10: Why do you think terrorism occur?

Week 14 (4/25-5/1) Recurrent Conflict and Rivalry

Reading: Quackenbush Ch. 13

Extra 2 points Discussion: What factors lead states that have fought in the past to fight again?

Week 15 (5/2-8)

No Discussion: **Research Paper Due on May 8th**

Week 16 (5/9-15): **Final Exam (Due at midnight on May 15th)**