INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT AND SECURITY

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Class: Tuesday, 6:20 pm – 8:50 pm,
5 Blegen Hall
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall, many foresaw the birth of a new world order. Military strategy, strategic bombing and coercive diplomacy, deterrence and compellence, signaling and the escalatory ladder—these concepts, staples of Cold War thinking, were believed to be outmoded, having little relevance to the emerging world. The events of the past decade have shown how wrong this conclusion was. Military force is as pertinent to international politics as ever. Unable to reap the peace dividend that was expected to accompany the end of bipolar conflict, the United States has since 1989 repeatedly deployed its military forces across the globe—from Kuwait to Somalia to Bosnia and Kosovo to Afghanistan to Iraq. These operations have sometimes ended in apparent success, other times in failure.

This course explores central issues regarding the use of military force in international politics. Why do states turn to military force and for what purposes? What are the causes of war and peace? What renders the threat to use force credible? Can intervention in civil wars stall bloodshed and bring stability? How effective is military force compared to other tools of statecraft? How can states cope with the threat posed by would-be terrorists? What is the nature of counterinsurgency doctrine, and what are the perils of occupation? What is the future of military force in global politics? Through abstract theoretical readings, concrete historical cases, and contemporary policy debates, this course examines these questions and others.

REQUIREMENTS

Reading. The typical weekly reading load is between 125 and 175 pages. Although this is a relatively large class, we will every week engage in debates on historical cases and contemporary controversies—and seek to link them up with our more theoretical readings. The success of this course depends on your contributions! And you will not be able to participate effectively unless you have done the reading. All assigned readings must be completed before the class meeting.

Lectures and in-class discussions will often allude to and focus on current events and use them to illustrate common dynamics. You are strongly encouraged to read regularly the international section of a major daily newspaper, such as the New York Times or the Washington Post. These are available for free on-line or, at substantially reduced rates for students, by subscription. A weekly magazine with excellent international news coverage is the Economist.
Writing. This course may be taken for either three or four credits. While the quantity and type of writing differ depending on which track you have selected, the expectations regarding quality are the same.

• **Track 1 (3 credits):**
  (a) **two (2) 5 pp. papers**
  - These papers, closely linked to particular lectures, cases, and debates, must be written on a list of approved topics/questions. That list and a description of the requirements and expectations for the papers appear in a separate document, which will be distributed by the second week of the term.
  - The instructor and the teaching assistant will *not* read drafts of these papers.
  - The submitted papers must be typed, double-spaced, and printed in a 12 pt. font and with at least 1 inch margins. Nothing beyond 5 pp. will be read.
  - The papers will be due at the start of the class to which their topic is linked. Late papers will be assessed an immediate deduction of a full letter grade; an additional 1/3 of a letter grade will be deducted for each subsequent day until the paper is submitted.
  **If you have written a paper for a given week, come to class prepared to present and defend your argument publicly.**
  (b) **one (1) 3 pp. paper reacting to The Battle of Algiers**
  - The papers will be due at the start of class on Nov. 30. Late papers will be assessed an immediate deduction of a full letter grade; an additional 1/3 of a letter grade will be deducted for each subsequent day until the paper is submitted.
  - Papers may be written on any aspect of the movie you find interesting/troubling. I will also distribute a list of questions to get your creative juices flowing.
  (c) **final exam:** date and location TBA, set by U of M

• **Track 2 (4 credits):**
  (a) **one (1) 5 pp. paper**
  - Instructions identical to (a), under Track 1.
  (b) **one (1) 3 pp. paper reacting to The Battle of Algiers**
  - Instructions identical to (b), under Track 1.
  (c) **final exam:** date and location TBA, set by U of M
  (d) **12-15 pp. research paper**
  - The research paper may be written on a topic of your choosing, subject to the approval of either the instructor or the teaching assistant.
  - Those who opt to write the research paper should submit a 1 p. prospectus—laying out the question you are interested in, what case or cases you intend to explore, and what sources you will draw upon to complete the research in a timely fashion. Along with the prospectus, students should submit a preliminary bibliography. The prospectus and bibliography should be submitted no later than, and preferably earlier than, October 19.
  - The prospectus will be graded. We expect that your ideas will be preliminary, but it should not be taken lightly. Do some reading in preparation for it, so that you have begun to narrow your question and make it manageable. And put a lot of time into thinking about it!
  - A failure to submit the prospectus by the start of class on October 19 will result in the automatic deduction of 1/3 of a letter grade from your research paper’s final grade. Every day after that that the prospectus has not been submitted will result in an additional deduction of 1/3 of a letter grade from the research paper’s final grade.
- Include your email address on the prospectus. Either the teaching assistant or the instructor will write you by email to schedule an appointment to discuss your paper further or, if it is determined that no meeting is necessary, with comments and suggestions.
- The instructor and the teaching assistant will not read drafts of the research paper.
- The submitted research paper must be typed, double-spaced, and printed in a 12 pt. font and with at least 1 inch margins. Nothing beyond 15 pp. will be read.
- The research paper is due in the Political Science Department office (1414 Social Sciences) no later than 12 p.m. on Fri., Dec. 17. A failure to submit the research paper by the due date will result in the deduction of 1/3 of a letter grade per day.

• ***Graduate Students***—Requirements for POL 5885
  (a) two (2) 5 pp. papers
     - Instructions identical to (a), under Track 1.
  (b) one (1) 3 pp. paper reacting to The Battle of Algiers
     - Instructions identical to (b), under Track 1.
  (c) 20-25 pp. research paper
     - Except for length, instructions identical to (d), under Track 2.

  **N.B.: Graduate student writing will be held to a standard higher than that expected of the undergraduates.**

**GRADING**

- **Track 1 (3 credits)**
  - Short Paper 1: 20%
  - Short Paper 2: 20%
  - Reaction Piece: 10%
  - Final Exam: 50%

- **Track 2 (4 credits)**
  - Short Paper: 20%
  - Reaction Piece: 10%
  - Final Exam: 30%
  - Research Paper: 40%

  \(\{\text{Prospectus: 20\% of final research paper grade}\}\)

- **POL 5885**
  - Short Paper 1: 15%
  - Short Paper 2: 15%
  - Reaction Piece: 10%
  - Research Paper: 60%

  \(\{\text{Prospectus: 20\% of final research paper grade}\}\)

**NB:** In all tracks, the instructor reserves the right to reward students whose class participation is extraordinary and to punish students whose class participation is below the bar (e.g. those who, when called upon to present the argument in one of their short papers, demonstrate that they have not prepared adequately). Class participation will matter, however, only when students are at the margins, hovering between two letter grades.
READINGS
The following books are required. They have been ordered for purchase at the University bookstore in the Coffman Memorial Union and have all been placed on reserve at Wilson Library.


All other readings can be found on-line, through the course web-site. The course web-site has been created using the WebCT Vista system and can be accessed by logging in at vista.umn.edu.

OTHER
Students are expected to be familiar with the University of Minnesota’s codes of student conduct and scholastic misconduct.

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of office hours. Office hours are an excellent opportunity to discuss issues and questions not addressed in sufficient detail in class.

Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their work with others, form study-groups, and read and edit each other’s papers. However, the end product must be one’s own! Violations of this rule will result in a failing grade.

If you have special learning needs or require accommodation for family commitments, medical emergencies, etc., please let the instructor know as soon as possible.
CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Sept. 7  Lecture: Introduction
• the organization of the course
• mundane details (assignments, readings)

Lecture: What is security? What is strategy? How (and why) do states use force?

I. The Causes of War and Peace

Sept. 14, 21  Lecture:

N.B.: These topics are so interconnected that I have listed the two weeks of reading and lecture together.
9/14: • read theory (I and II)
9/21: • review theory; come to class with questions of clarification, critique, etc.
• read about WW I: what insights do the theoretical approaches yield for understanding the origins of the Great War?

I. Anarchy and the Distribution of Power (Polarity)
1. Structural Realist Approaches
2. Questioning Anarchy and Polarity

II. Strategy, the Security Dilemma, and the Offense-Defense Balance

Case: World War I
• Joll, Origins of the First World War, chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-108).

Recommended
Sept. 28  
**Lecture: Domestic Politics and Culture**  

**Case: World War I**  

Oct. 5  
**Lecture and Discussion: The Liberal-Democratic Peace (and War)**  
- Brown et al., eds., *Debating the Democratic Peace*:  

**Lecture: War and the Individual**  

**Case: World War I (28 pp.)**  

**Discussion: Was World War I inevitable?**

Oct. 12  
**Lecture: Handling American Hegemony**  

**Unipolarity: A Passing Moment or an Enduring Era?**  

**Unilateralism, Multilateralism, and the Debate over Empire**  
The End of the West? Clash of Civilizations, Clash Within Civilizations

- Parag Khanna, “The Metrosexual Superpower,” Foreign Policy (July/August 2004).

Debate—Three Central Questions

1. Will others balance against the United States? Will American hegemony endure?
2. Has Sept. 11 proved the clash of civilizations thesis? What remains of “the West”?
3. Should the United States work through multilateral institutions (such as the United Nations) at all costs? Should it pursue a unilateral foreign policy when its interests so demand?

II. Limited Uses of Force

Oct. 19 Lecture: The Theory and Practice of Coercion

**DUE IN CLASS: RESEARCH PAPER PROSPECTUS**

- Schelling, Arms and Influence, pp. 1-125.

Recommended:
If you have difficulty comprehending or extracting the main points from the Schelling reading, consult Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might (Cambridge UP, 2002) pp. 1-47, for a clear exposition of many central concepts.

Debate: Can the United States deter China from attacking Taiwan?

- Taiwan Relations Act (1979), Sections 2-3.
Debate: Could/should the United States (and its allies) have relied on deterrence to avoid Gulf War II?

Oct. 26

Lecture: Nuclear Deterrence

Discussion: Explaining the “Long Peace” of the Cold War

Recommended

Debate: Nuclear Proliferation

Recommended

Nov. 2

Lecture: The Limits of Coercion: Critiques and Alternatives
Debate: Airpower and Kosovo, 1999

Nov. 9
Lecture: Communal Conflict and Military Intervention

Debate: When and How to Intervene

Nov. 16
Lecture: Occupation and Counterinsurgency
- Yes, academics do lack imagination. You would think that two articles published a year apart would have different titles.

Discussion: Iraq 2003-2004
• Reuel Marc Gerecht, “What is to be Done in Iraq?” Weekly Standard, 3 May 2004.

Nov. 23

Movie and Discussion: The Battle of Algiers (1967)
A classic movie about the Algerian revolt against their French colonial masters and the brutal French counterinsurgency campaign. How to win the battles but lose the war.


Nov. 30

Lecture: Terrorism—What, Who, Why

**DUE IN CLASS: 5 PP. REACTION PIECE ON THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS**

• Brian M. Jenkins, “International Terrorism,” in Art and Waltz, eds., Use of Force, pp. 77-84.

Debate: How to Respond…


Dec. 7

Lecture: Alternatives to Force—Economic Statecraft


Lecture: Intelligence

Case: 9/11
  - “From Threat to Threat,” chap. 6.
  - “Foresight – and Hindsight,” chap. 11.

III. Looking Ahead

Dec. 14  
Lecture: The Future—Sources of Stability and Instability: Five Key Debates

Debate 1: Conflict in the Developed World
- review debate on transatlantic relations (in session on US hegemony)

Debate 2: Conflict in the Developing World

Debate 3: End of History or Clash of Civilizations? (earlier in syllabus)

Debate 4: The Implications of China’s Rise (earlier in syllabus)

Debate 5: Future War: Antiseptic Fighting?