

PSCI 4359
International Conflict
SPRING 2020

Instructor: Vito D'Orazio

Time and Location: T, Th 2:30-3:45pm, ECSW 1.365

Contact: dorazio@utdallas.edu 972-883-6212

Office Hours: Thursday, 10am-12pm, GR 3.108D

Teaching Assistant: Wen Si

Contact: wxs190004@utdallas.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday, 10am-12pm, GR 3.314

Course Goals and Overview

This course examines the scholarly research on international conflict with a particular emphasis on the causes of conflict and conditions for peace. Studying interstate conflict entails a deep understanding of the complexities of the international system, relations between particular sets of states, domestic politics including sub-state actors and institutions, and decision-making processes. It also entails a knowledge of appropriate research methodologies for assessing theory and for contributing to the progress of the field. As such, readings will be diverse, both theoretically and methodologically.

This course has three major goals: (1) to understand, analyze, and develop the ability to critique the major theories of international conflict; (2) to learn about recent or ongoing conflicts, including the factors and conditions that enabled and ultimately led to those conflicts; (3) to familiarize students with the types of research methodologies that are used in the study of international conflict.

These three learning objectives will be assessed throughout the course's homework assignments and quizzes.

Course Requirements

You are required to complete a reading assignment before every class, with exceptions noted below. There will be eleven graded homework assignments and three quizzes.

Final Grade Composition

Eleven Homeworks	30% (3% each, 1 bonus)
Three Quizzes	60%
Attendance & Participation	10%

Quizzes (20% each)

A total of four essay quizzes will be offered, of which students are required to take 3. **The final quiz on April 30 is required for all students to take.** So, each student must take two of the first three quizzes.

A rubric for the quiz grading has been posted to eLearning. You should familiarize yourself with this rubric.

Essay Quiz: Each quiz is an open book exam. You will be provided with two essay questions, will pick one, and write a *one page* essay on it. Essays should include in-text citations from course readings. If you cite readings that are not required, include their citation in a reference list at the end of your essay. The reference list will not count towards your one page limit. A perfect essay has a clearly stated thesis that is supported with facts and examples using the vocabulary of the class. It demonstrates both analysis and synthesis of course materials. The structure and organization make sense, and include an introduction, conclusion (which may be very short), a thesis, and topic sentences. The writing is clear, precise, and deliberate—grammar and spelling do not need to be perfect, but the writing must be get the point across in an understandable way. The vocabulary that we use in class is incorporated into the arguments. All parts of the question are answered. Finally, to get above a 90, the answer must be creative. Hypotheticals, counterfactuals, and new applications are some ways to be creative in a response.

Attendance and participation (10%)

These are the easiest points you can get. Show up, be attentive, and participate to get full credit.

Short homework assignments (30%)

There will be eleven short homework assignments to be submitted through eLearning. For each assignment (unless otherwise noted):

1. Summarize the reading (1 paragraph)
 - Keep this concise, but be sure to summarize the entire reading and not just part of it. For example, what is the key point that the author is trying to make? What is the method used to make that point? What evidence is presented in support of that point?
2. Raise two thoughtful questions
 - These should not be straightforward “yes or no” type questions. Instead, try to raise “why” and “how” questions. The difference is often subtle, but can encourage you to think about the underlying processes. For example, instead of asking *whether* the 2020 US military strike that killed Iranian General Qassem Soleimani will escalate tensions between Iran and Iraq, ask *how* the strike could increase tensions between Iran and Iraq.

3. Discuss your reaction to the reading (1-2 paragraphs)

- The reaction (or response) should demonstrate elements of comparison, evaluation, synthesis, or creativity. You should feel free to write about anything related to the reading, and not limit yourself to only the reading itself. For example, incorporate current events, other readings from this class or other classes, or things that you've discussed in this class or elsewhere. You might consider how the author's argument compares with that of others. Or, whether you agree with the author's argument and why? Can you provide cases that the theory does not support? For example, if the author is arguing that uncertainty is a cause of conflict escalation, can you think of cases where there was very little uncertainty among actors and yet the conflict escalated anyway? If so, then perhaps there's more to escalation than just uncertainty. Feel free to get creative with your reaction.

Each assignment is due midnight **the day before class**. For example, by midnight of January 22, complete the assignment for the Waltz chapters, and submit through eLearning. The assignment and instructions for completion will be posted to eLearning one week in advance.

Note that there are eleven homework assignments, but that you cannot receive more than 30 points toward your final grade. Thus, if you complete all eleven assignments and your scores sum to 31, 32, or 33, you still only receive 30 points toward your final grade.

Grade Scale

A+	≥ 97%	B	= 83-86%	C-	70-72%
A	= 93-96%	B-	= 80-82%	D	65-69%
A-	= 90-92%	C+	= 77-79%	F	≤ 64%
B+	= 87-89%	C	= 73-76%		

See <http://catalog.utdallas.edu/now/undergraduate/policies/academic> for additional information about university grading policies.

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus: <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>.

Readings

- Students are not required to purchase or print reading materials.
- All readings are available through the library and will be made available on eLearning.
- We will be reading chapters from *Man, the state, and War* by Kenneth Waltz, but students are not required to purchase this book. If you'd like to purchase it, it's available on Amazon.

Course Outline

Part I: Man, the State and War

Day 1: Introductions and Syllabus **January 14**

- No reading

Day 2: Waltz Introduction **January 16**

- Waltz: Ch 1

Day 3: Waltz's First Image **January 21**

- Waltz: Ch 2,3

Day 4: Waltz's Second Image **January 23**

- Waltz: Ch 4,5
- Homework 1

Day 5: Waltz's Third Image **January 28**

- Waltz: Ch 6,7

Day 6: Waltz Conclusion **January 30**

- Waltz: Ch 8
- Homework 2

Day 7: Quiz I **February 4**

- Quiz I

Part II: Security Dilemma, Misperceptions, and Bargaining

Day 8: Security Dilemma **February 6**

- Jervis, R. (1978). Cooperation under the security dilemma. *World Politics*, 30(2):167–214

Day 9: Offensive Advantages **February 11**

- Van Evera, S. (1984). The cult of the offensive and the origins of the first world war. *International Security*, 9(1):58–107
- Homework 3

Day 10: Misperception**February 13**

- Jervis, R. (1988). War and misperception. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 18(4):675–700

Day 11: Bargaining Model**February 18**

- Fearon, J. (1995). Rationalist explanations for war. *International Organization*, 49:379–414
- Homework 4

Day 12: Bargaining Model and Iraq**February 20**

- Lake, D. A. (2011). Two cheers for bargaining theory: Assessing rationalist explanations of the Iraq war. *International Security*, 35(3):7–52

Day 13: Blind Into Baghdad**February 25**

- Fallows, J. (2004). Blind into Baghdad. *The Atlantic Monthly*, 293(1):60
- Homework 5

Day 14: Bargaining Model and War Aims**February 27**

- Sullivan, P. L. (2007). War aims and war outcomes: Why powerful states lose limited wars. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 51(3):496–524

Day 15: Quiz II**March 3**

- Quiz II

Part III: The “Peaces”**Day 16: Democratic Peace****March 5**

- Hegre, H., Bernhard, M., and Teorell, J. (2019). Civil society and the democratic peace. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, page 0022002719850620

Day 17: Selectorate Theory**March 10**

- Bueno de Mesquita, B., Morrow, J. D., Siverson, R. M., and Smith, A. (1999). An institutional explanation of the democratic peace. *American Political Science Review*, 93(4):791–807
- Homework 6

Day 18: Democracies and War**March 12**

- Stein, R. M. (2015). War and revenge: Explaining conflict initiation by democracies. *American Political Science Review*, 109(3):556–573

Day 19: Kantian Peace**March 24**

- Oneal, J. R. and Russett, B. M. (1999). The kantian peace: The pacific benefits of democracy, interdependence, and international organizations, 1885-1992. *World Politics*, 52(1):1–37
- Homework 7

Day 20: Capitalist Peace**March 26**

- Gartzke, E. (2007). The capitalist peace. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(1):166–191

Day 21: Territory & Peace**March 31**

- Gibler, D. M. (2007). Bordering on peace: Democracy, territorial issues, and conflict. *International Studies Quarterly*, 51(3):509–532

Day 22: Territory and Borders**April 2**

- Simmons, B. A. (2005). Rules over real estate trade, territorial conflict, and international borders as institution. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 49(6):823–848
- Homework 8

Day 23: Quiz III**April 7**

- Quiz III

Part IV: Audience Costs, Revolutions, and Leaders**Day 24: Audience Costs I****April 9**

- Fearon, J. D. (1994). Domestic political audiences and the escalation of international disputes. *American Political Science Review*, 88(3):577–592

Day 25: Audience Costs II**April 14**

- Weeks, J. (2008). Autocratic audience costs: Regime type and signaling resolve. *International Organization*, 62(1):35–64
- Homework 9

Day 26: Revolutions I**April 16**

- Colgan, J. D. (2013). Domestic revolutionary leaders and international conflict. *World Politics*, 65(4):656–690

Day 27: Revolutions II**April 21**

- Colgan, J. D. and Weeks, J. L. (2015). Revolution, personalist dictatorships, and international conflict. *International Organization*, 69(01):163–194
- Homework 10

Day 28: Leaders I**April 23**

- Saunders, E. N. (2017). No substitute for experience: Presidents, advisers, and information in group decision making. *International Organization*, 71(S1):S219–S247

Day 29: Leaders II**April 28**

- Henke, M. E. (2017). Why did France intervene in Mali in 2013? Examining the role of intervention entrepreneurs. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 23(3):307–323
- Homework 11

Day 30: Quiz IV**April 30**

- **Quiz IV**. Required for all students.