

Political Science 437: War in World Politics

Fall 2006

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Office Hours: 10 AM – 12 PM Thursday
and by appointment.

Class: Tuesday and Thursday 2:30-3:45 PM, 215 Armsby

Course Goals and Overview

This course will examine a number of issues surrounding international conflict (crises and wars). The course will examine the causes, conduct, and consequences of wars. We will use wars from around the world and drawn from a variety of historical periods as examples, but this course is not primarily a historical assessment or description of wars through history. Rather, we will focus on a number of theoretical and normative issues which have relevance for understanding war as a general political phenomenon. We will tend to focus on a handful of cases as examples and illustrations of these issues, namely WWI, WWII, Vietnam, the 1990-91 Persian Gulf war, the 2003 conventional US-Iraq war, and with frequent references and comparisons to the ongoing conflict in Iraq. We will also discuss insurgency and terrorism, relating them to “classic” conventional warfare fought between large, organized military forces.

We will first discuss various images of war, and discuss how war and attitudes toward war have changed over time. We next turn to broad historical and methodological schools of thought about how war should be analyzed. We will also discuss a few specific theories on the causes of war. We will then discuss a number of specific issues involved with war, including military strategy, ethics and war, propaganda and war, race and war, and how war has changed over time. As a wrap-up, the ideas from the rest of the course are projected forward to the future of war in the international system and to current problems including terrorism.

Throughout the course, we will emphasize several themes:

1. War has changed systematically over time in important ways, raising important new questions at the same time that old issues remain;
2. There are a number of different theories about why wars occur;
3. There are normative, practical, domestic, and strategic issues intertwined in the conduct of war both between and within states;
4. Domestic political constraints, attitudes, goals, and functions play a key role in determining when and how wars are fought; war does not take place in a vacuum or in a purely military setting;
5. We can project into the future and make an assessment of how international conflict is likely to change or remain the same in the future;
6. Politics are an integral part of war; war is not solely a military enterprise.

Because of the multiple goals of this class, readings in the course are of two major types. Some readings will address broad questions such as “what is war” or “what is propaganda.” These readings are often theoretical, and lay out the constraints and issues involved in considering a particular topic. The second type of reading will focus on applying some concept to a particular case or set of cases. This set of readings are known as “empirical,” meaning “using data,” and use history as examples or applications of concepts and theory to the real world. In class we will be relating the general concepts to the specific cases, but you should work to do this on your own.

Assignments

- 2 Short Quizzes: 5% each (around 9/21, 11/7)
- Midterm Exam: 25% (10/19)
- Research Paper: 30% (due 12/7; preliminary sections due 11/7, 11/16, 11/28)
- Final: 30% (Cumulative; during finals week)
- Participation: 5%

The exams will consist of short answer and essay questions. The final exam will be cumulative, and will have both short answer questions and 2 to 3 essay questions.

We will discuss the paper in detail around the time of the midterm. Generally, your assignment is to choose some past war or wars, and apply one or more of the topics from class to that war or wars. Your topic(s) must be related to those we discussed in the class. The objective is to use the ideas from that topic (for example, strategy, ethics, race, or a cause of war) to shed light on the war or wars you have chosen to focus on.

Specifically, you have two options for your research paper. Either you may:

- 1) choose a single war, and apply two of the topics we have discussed in this class to that war; or
- 2) choose a single topic that we have discussed and apply that topic to two wars.

The assignment is then to discuss the topic(s) in the context of the war(s) you choose. For example, under the second option, you might contrast how race affected US strategy in WWI and WWII, or compare how the US and Israel dealt with issues of military ethics in Vietnam and Lebanon, respectively. Under the first option, you might explore the interaction of race and propaganda in the Vietnam war, or explore how strategy and domestic politics affected the way the German Army fought in WWII. **YOU MUST HAVE YOUR TOPIC AND CHOICE OF WARS APPROVED BY ME!**

The final paper will be 10-20 pages in length.

Papers are due at **THE BEGINNING** of the class period when they are due. Papers will be marked down 1/2 of a grade for each day they are late. Turn your paper in on time! Most of your paper grade will be based on content and organization. However, spelling and grammar will count for one letter grade of your paper. Thus, a B paper with many errors will receive a C. Papers must be word-processed, 10 or 12 point type, must have normal margins (1 to 1-1/4 inches), and must have page numbers on them. Your paper must also be submitted to me electronically, and I will use PSU's link to turnitin software, which submits your paper to turnitin.com check for plagiarism of online sources.

You must turn in preliminary parts of the paper at 3 points along the way:

- 1) Paper topic (what topic are you studying, and what wars are you examining?) [due 11/7]
- 2) Preliminary bibliography [due 11/16]
- 3) Detailed paper outline [due 11/28]

Complete paper due 12/7, including electronic version emailed to me.

Each of these preliminary components is worth 1/3 of a letter grade. If you do not turn these in **ON TIME**, or if they are not satisfactory, you will lose 1/3 grade each on the final paper.

Readings

I expect you to read everything listed on the syllabus for a particular date **before** class. The lectures will not duplicate the reading. Instead, the lectures will draw on the readings for background and examples, present other viewpoints, relate ideas to the rest of the course, and relate cases to the general perspectives presented. The reading load is not light, but neither is it too heavy. Some readings take more time than others, and some days have more assigned readings than others. Make sure you leave yourself plenty of time, and look ahead for heavy reading days.

Three books and a set of articles are required for this class:

1. Richard K. Betts, ed. 2005. *Conflict After the Cold War*. New York: Pearson / Longman.
2. Dower, John W. 1986. *War without Mercy*. New York: Pantheon Books.
3. Christopher, Paul. 1999. *The Ethics of War & Peace*. 2nd ed. Prentice Hall.

You will also be required to borrow a set of articles from me and have it photocopied. The Betts book in particular is not cheap, and you might consider sharing it with a classmate if you are strapped for cash.

Grading and Class Policies

I will give extensions on papers and midterms only in very extreme circumstances. You **MUST** have an extension approved by me **WELL BEFORE** the exam or paper deadline. If you miss an exam or a paper, you will receive a 0 on it. If you miss an exam due to an illness or death in the family, I **WILL REQUIRE WRITTEN VERIFICATION OF WHAT HAPPENED**.

I am more than happy to answer questions in office hours, or just chat. Office hours are there for your use -- take advantage of them! If you have another class during my regular office hours, I will schedule a different time with you. I will answer as many questions as possible in class, so please ask! I would rather have class discussion than just lecture. Some of the ideas presented in class are controversial, especially since the international system is going through an upheaval, and so discussion can be very important.

I hope that debate and discussion will be important parts of this class, as they are part of critically evaluating arguments and perspectives in international relations. I expect you to talk to each other, not just to me. Participation by everyone is strongly encouraged, and will make class run much better. **HOWEVER**, the point of discussion is to use criticism and contrasting opinions to sharpen each other's arguments and bring out hidden assumptions, **NOT** to destroy each other's ideas or make yourself look better than someone else. **NO** disparaging remarks or personal insults will be tolerated in class. Neither will talking, doing crossword puzzles, reading newspapers, or doing other homework.

Academic Dishonesty¹

The Department of Political Science, along with the College of the Liberal Arts and the University, takes violations of academic dishonesty seriously. Observing basic honesty in one's work, words, ideas, and actions is a principle to which all members of the community are required to subscribe.

All course work by students is to be done on an individual basis unless an instructor clearly states that an alternative is acceptable. Any reference materials used in the preparation of any assignment must be explicitly cited. In an examination setting, unless the instructor gives explicit prior instructions to the contrary, whether the examination is in-class or take-home, violations of academic integrity shall consist of any attempt to receive assistance from written or printed aids, or from any person or papers or electronic devices, or of any attempt to give assistance, whether the one so doing has completed his or her own work or not.

Other violations include, but are not limited to, any attempt to gain an unfair advantage in regard to an examination, such as tampering with a graded exam or claiming another's work to be one's own. Violations shall also consist of obtaining or attempting to obtain, previous to any examinations, copies of the examination papers or the questions to appear thereon, or to obtain any illegal knowledge of these questions. Lying to the instructor or purposely misleading any Penn State administrator shall also constitute a violation of academic integrity.

¹ Much of the text on academic dishonesty is from the sections of the Princeton University website <http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/rrr/99/pages/OI.htm> concerning academic integrity (Rights, Rules, Responsibilities introductory text as well as pages 55-69) as well as from the website of the Department of Economics at The Pennsylvania State University.

In cases of a violation of academic integrity it is the policy of the Department of Political Science to impose appropriate penalties that are consistent with University guidelines.

Plagiarism

A more specific issue of academic dishonesty is that of plagiarism. If you don't know what plagiarism is, check with your advisor. Basically, though, plagiarism is taking written credit for someone else's work. Examples of plagiarism include turning in a paper written by someone else, presenting someone else's ideas as if they were your own, or using parts of a book, article, or web site directly without quoting, or even paraphrased without acknowledging the source. I join the University in taking plagiarism very seriously. If I catch someone plagiarizing, I will give that person a 0 on the assignment, and will consider giving you an automatic F for the course, as well as bringing you up on academic charges. It is not hard to avoid plagiarizing -- if you use a quote from someone, acknowledge it in a footnote; if you paraphrase or summarize an argument, cite the source where you got the idea; if you use facts and figures from some source, note the source of your information. If you are still using the ideas and main text from some source without proper attribution, changing a few words does not mean you have not plagiarized.

Disabilities and Other Special Circumstances

The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible. Reasonable accommodations will be made for all students with disabilities, but it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor early in the term. Do not wait until just before an exam to decide you want to inform the instructor of a learning disability; any accommodations for disabilities must be arranged well in advance.

I will do my best to make special arrangements for students with any special needs or conflicts as far as course lectures or test-taking circumstances are required. Again, if you anticipate a particular requirement, let me know **as soon as possible**. I will always accommodate legitimate needs, but I am unlikely to accommodate last minute requests. Special circumstances include disabilities and any scheduled activities that you have that conflict with this class, **including academic or athletic competitions**. If you do not notify me of special circumstances early on, I am under no obligation to give you a make-up exam or assignment extension.

Visit our web site

The Political Science Department is in the process of upgrading its web site and will continue to do so during this and future academic years. In the undergraduate section you will find a wealth of information including course schedules, faculty office hours, faculty home pages describing their areas of teaching and research activities, answers to questions about advising, internship opportunities, announcements, and much, much, more. Check back often: we will continuously update our information about internships and career opportunities:

<http://polisci.la.psu.edu/>

Course outline (note: all dates are approximate and are subject to change):

**I. Images, Trends in Warfare, and Approaches to Understanding War
Weeks 1-2**

Introduction and Policies (September 5)

Understanding war: Images, definitions, and issues (September 7)

Images of war:

Excerpts 3, 6, 11, 12, 17, 22, 24 from *War*, Lawrence Freedman, ed. (Handout).

Basic problems, Issues, and Factors (Norms, Anarchy, Security Dilemma):

Hobbes in Betts, pp. 65-69.

Machiavelli in Betts, pp. 60-65.

Keohane and Nye in Betts, pp. 139-145.

Finnemore in Betts, 202-222.

Trends in war and the evolution of technology (September 12, 14)

Centre Daily Times article: "Scholars Debate: Is War Part of our Evolutionary History?" (CP)

Levy, "Continuity and Change in the Evolution of Warfare." (CP)

Van Crevald, Chapter 1, 11, 18 (CP)

**II. Why Wars Start: The Causes of War
Weeks 3-4**

Broad Approaches to Understanding War: Justifications, Rationality, Biology (September 19, 21)

Brown "Why Nations Fight: Their Standard Justifications" (CP).

Aron, "Biological and Psychological Roots" (CP).

Freud, "Why War?" in Betts, pp. 163-170.

Mead, "Warfare is Only an Invention – Not a Biological Necessity" in Betts, pp. 176-181.

***** Quiz 1: Around September 21*****

Realism vs. Liberalism; balance of power; domestic politics and the democratic peace (September 21, 26)

Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogue," Betts. pp. 55-60.

Kant, "Perpetual Peace" in Betts pp. 121-127.

Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," in Betts pp. 291-306.

Blainey, Geoffrey, "Power, Culprits, and Arms," in Betts pp. 105-116.

Applications: WWI, WWII. (Sept 26)

Sagan, Scott D. "1914 Revisited" in Betts, pp. 398-410."

***** NOTE: Study day (no classes) Friday October 6. *****

***** NOTE: Final exam day and time will be announced by registrar's office October 9 *****

***** NOTE: Final exam conflict filing period is October 9 to 22 *****

III. The Conduct of War I: Strategy and the relationship between Strategy and Politics Weeks 4-7

Basic Strategic Thinking: Types, Effects, and Determinants of Military Strategy (Sept 26, 28, October 3)

Clausewitz, Karl von. *On War*. Chapter 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 (CP)

(chapter 1 and 2 go together; chapters 4, 5, and 6 lead up to the argument in chapter 7)

Reiter and Meek, "Determinants of Military Strategy, 1903-1994" (CP)

(Read to understand different types of strategy, and summary of factors that influence choice)

Cohen in Betts, 585-596.

Strategy and Insurgency (October 5, October 10)

Metz, Steven, and Raymond Millen. 2004. *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century*.
Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College. (CP)

Lawrence in Betts, pp. 449-456.

Mao Tse Tung in Betts, pp. 457-466.

Applications: Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Iraq (October 10, 12)

Bergerud, "Lessons of an Intractable Conflict" in Robert J. McMahon, ed. 1995. *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War* 2nd ed. Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath and Company. (CP)

Hess, "Were There Viable Alternative Strategies" in McMahon, *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War*. (CP)

*** Discuss Research Paper: October 17 ***

*** Midterm Review: October 17 ***

*** Midterm: October 19 ***

IV. Psychological Aspects of Killing and War; Images, Media, Propaganda, and Training Weeks 8-9

The influence and use of cartoons, posters, editorials, and movies (October 24, 26)

2 Videos in class (October 24):

Video, excerpt of "Why Soldiers Fought," examining Frank Capra's movie "Prelude to War"

Video, "The Combat Film" traces the evolution of war movies. 60 minutes.

Psychology / images and war (October 26)

Discussion of films

Stein, "Image, Identity, and Conflict Resolution" (CP)

Propaganda and war; Internal and External, Subtle and Overt Persuasion (October 26, October 31)

Alleyne "The Death of Propaganda" (CP).

An exhibit of US WWII propaganda posters is on the web at

http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/powers_of_persuasion/powers_of_persuasion_home.html

If you have "RealPlayer" installed on your web browser (Netscape or Internet Explorer), you can find websites with clips of various propaganda films over the past 75 years, such as

<http://tlc.discovery.com/convergence/pacific/video/video.html>

(clips on this site relates to the material discussed in the Dower book below)

A listing of war movies by period is at <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/MRC/Warfilm.html>

The Psychology of War and Combat (October 31, November 2)
New York Times “Treatment Can Ease Lingering Trauma of September 11” (CP)

***** Research Paper Topic due: Tuesday November 7 *****

**V. The Conduct of War II: Ethics, International Law, Race, and War
Weeks 10-12**

***** Quiz 2: Around November 7 *****

The Laws and Ethics of War (November 7, 9)
The development of the “Just War” Tradition and International Law
Christopher Chapters 1-5 (skim)

Current International Law and War
Christopher Chapters 6-11
New York Times, “Parsing Degrees of Atrocity within the Logic of Law” (CP).
New York Times, “3 Serbs Convicted in Wartime Rapes” (CP).

Applications: WWI, WWII, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Iraq, Terrorism (November 14, 16)
Levy, “The Contentions: How Americans Disagreed about the War and Destroyed the
Consensus” (CP)

Speaker on International Law in Military

***** Research Paper Preliminary Bibliography due: Thursday November 16 *****

***** Tuesday November 21: No class [Tuesday Nov. 21 follows a FRIDAY class schedule] *****

***** Thursday November 23: Thanksgiving *****

***** Research Paper Outline due: Tuesday November 28 *****

Race and War (November 28, 30)
Race, Images, and Propaganda
The effect of racial issues on military strategy

Dower, *War without Mercy*.
Part 1: General Discussion (November 28)
Part 2: Western views (November 30)
Part 3: Japanese views (November 30)

***** Final research paper due December 7 *****

**VI: Recent Changes in Warfare; The Future of War
Weeks 13-14**

Terrorism (December 5, 7)

Crenshaw, "The Strategic Logic of Terrorism," in Betts, pp. 491-504.

Gupta, Dipak. 2005. "Exploring roots of terrorism," in Tore Bjorgo, ed., *Root Causes of Terrorism*, New York: Routledge.

Borum, Randy. "Understanding the Terrorist Mindset." Excerpt from *Annual Editions: Violence and Terrorism 05/06* pp. 18-20.

Juergensmeyer, "Religious Radicalism and Political Violence," In Betts pp. 505-519.

Betts, "The Soft Underbelly of Primacy," in Betts, pp. 520-536.

There are many interesting source of terrorism information. One is the U.S. Department of State report, "Patterns of Global Terrorism," see <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/>

Another data-heavy and seemingly not too biased source is the "Terrorism Knowledge Base" at www.tkb.org

Could War Become Obsolete? The Future of War (December 12)

Fukayama, "The End of History." In Betts., pp. 5-16

Barber, "Jihad vs. McWorld." In Betts, pp. 618-627.

Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," in Betts, pp. 33-50.

Mueller, "The Obsolescence of Major War." in Betts, pp. 146-157.

Review (December 14)

**** Final Exam (cumulative!) during finals week. Schedule will be announced on elion on October 9, 2006 ****