

## International Conflict B | POP88091

Year	1
ECTS Credits	5
Contact Hours	TBC
Pre-requisite	Nil
Semester	1
Module Leader & Lecturer	Professor Jesse Dillon Savage
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### Module Outline

The objective of this postgraduate module is to help students critically evaluate current world affairs using concepts and theories from contemporary international relations research. The international system is a complex environment. Multiple actors, interests, and institutions interact to produce outcomes that we read and hear about in the media every day. Students will acquire the necessary theoretical tools which will allow for a clearer understanding of the international system and will facilitate critical and informed evaluation of global events.

The causes and consequences of conflicts between nations and within nations, as well as theories of international security. Existing empirical results will also be emphasised, and particular attention will be paid to the relevance of the concepts introduced to contemporary geopolitical issues and conflicts.

#### Academic & Professional Ethics:

Please do not plagiarise. Academic dishonesty is a serious matter, with serious consequences that can result in receiving no credit for an assignment, a failing grade for the module, and even expulsion from the programme. It is never permissible to turn in any work that contains others' ideas without proper acknowledgement. It is your responsibility to make sure that your work meets the standard of academic honesty, set forth in the [College Calendar](#). Useful information is available [here](#). If you are paraphrasing, cite the source. If you are quoting, use quotation marks and appropriate citation. Remember that academic integrity is a reflection of one's character. In addition, we strongly recommend that you visit <http://www/plagiarism.org/> for more information on what *is* and *is not* plagiarism. Lastly, students are required to only submit "new work" in each module, which means work that has not been submitted previously in any other university module. Students who wish to use previously submitted work as part of a new project will need the approval of the lecturer.

We reserve the right to reasonably alter the elements of the syllabus at any time. More often than not this will mean adjusting the reading list to keep pace with the course schedule, although we may add reading assignments as well.

## Assessment

### 1. Class discussion (20%):

Student participation in class discussion and debate on the readings is a central element of the seminar. Students are expected to have read all required readings and to have acquired detailed knowledge and developed informed critiques of the readings prior to the class meeting. The objective of class discussion will be to critically assess the readings and offer insights on what direction new research could and should proceed in the field. Students will be evaluated on the quality of their input in class discussion and debate. Those who deemed to be falling behind in class participation may be asked to submit additional response papers.

Some questions to keep in mind while reading:

- What are the central theories discussed in the study?
- Are the assumptions of the theory consistent or do they contradict each other?
- If the study seeks to test a theory with evidence, what are the findings?
- How would you rate the quality of the test, e.g., do the data adequately measure the theoretical concepts?
- Is the design strong enough to adequately test the theory?
- Are there cases that the author has overlooked?
- How would you go about re-designing the test to overcome any limitations?
- Can the study be extended to cover other issue areas; if so, which ones?

More simply ask yourself?

1. What's good about the article?
2. What's bad about the article?
3. How could we fix it?

### 2. Oral Presentation (10%)

Each student will be required to provide a 5 minute presentation on one of the readings. These presentations are intended to stimulate discussion. To this end, the presentation should provide a brief overview of the reading, highlighting the main points. Students should emphasise potential questions for discussion and, critically, why these questions are of interest. There should be no or minimal summary of the readings. Grading will be based on the quality of content and presentation of the argument and the discussion questions. A sign up list for the presentations will be distributed in the first week of term.

### 3. Research Idea Papers, 500 words each. 30%

Students are required to submit three response papers (max 500 words each) throughout the semester, (each worth 10% of your final mark). At least one of these papers must be submitted before the seminar of week 4. response papers must engage with the required readings from the week but may also include the suggested readings as well.

In these papers, students are required to:

1. Identify a research question, this means finding a gap in the literature.
2. Describe how you would answer that question. Detail the methods, data and approach you would use.

#### 4. Research Proposal, 2000 words. (40%)

Students will be required to submit a long paper at the end of the term. The objective of the paper is to layout a research design for a larger empirical project which seeks to explain variation in any outcome related to world politics. The paper must formulate a clear research question, connect a theory or theories covered in class to the outcome to be studied, derive a set of hypotheses, which will be tested empirically, discuss how the test will be conducted (as well as how concepts will be measured and how the relevant data will be collected), and offer an informed discussion on the expected results of the test. The ultimate goal of the paper is to provide a solid foundation for the development of your dissertation.

The length of the paper should be 2000 words (including reference list, footnotes and title page), double-sided pages. The deadline for submission on turnitin is **6pm on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>**.

Submission:

Please submit all your written work through Blackboard in the assessments folder.

## Recommended Reading List

Weekly readings are also required and listed below.

Week 1 – introductory Session

Required Readings:

- Bear F Braumoeller. *Only the dead: the persistence of war in the modern age*. Oxford University Press, 2019, pp 3-72
- Nils Petter Gleditsch, Steven Pinker, Bradley A Thayer, Jack S Levy, and William R Thompson. The forum: The decline of war. *International Studies Review*, 15 (3): 396-419, 2013.

Week 2 – Bargaining, Signalling, and Interstate conflict

Required Reading:

- Dan Reiter. Exploring the bargaining model of war. *Perspective on Politics*, 1 (01): 27-43, 2003.
- James D Fearon. Rationalist explanations for war. *International Organization*, 49 (03): 379-414, 1995.

- Jessica Chen Weiss. Authoritarian signalling, mass audiences, and nationalist protest in China. *International Organization*, 67 (1): 1-35, 2013.

#### Suggested Readings:

- Erik Gartzke. War is in the error term. *International Organization*, 53 (03): 567-587, 1999.
- Robert Powell. War as a commitment problem. *International Organization*, 60 (01): 169-203, 2006. (a bit technical)
- Robert Powell. *In the shadow of power: States and strategies in international politics*. Princeton University Press, 1999. Ch. 3, pp. 82-114 (technical reading)
- James D Fearon. Bargaining over objects that influence future bargaining power. In *annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington DC, August*, pages 28-31, 1996.
- Daryl G Press. The credibility of power: Assessing threats during the “appeasement” crisis of the 1930s. *International Security*, 29 (3): 136-169, 2005.
- Dan Reiter. Exploring the bargaining model of war. *Perspective on Politics*, 1 (01): 27-43, 2003.
- Alastair Smith and Allan C Stam. Bargaining and the nature of war. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 48 (6): 783-813, 2004.

#### Week 3 – Causes of Civil War

##### Required Reading:

- Barbara F Walter. The critical barrier to civil war settlement. *International Organization*, 51 (03): 335-364, 1997
- Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham. Actor fragmentation and civil war bargaining: How internal divisions generate civil conflict. *American Journal of Political Science*, 57 (3): 659-672, 2013
- Janet I Lewis. How does ethnic rebellion start? *Comparative Political Studies*, 50 (10): 1420-1450, 2017

##### Suggested Reading:

- Barbara F Walter. Bargaining failures and civil war. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12:243-261, 2009.
- Christopher Blattman and Edward Miguel. Civil war. *Journal of Economic literature*, 48 (1): 3-57, 2010.
- Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler. Greed and grievance in civil war. *Oxford economic papers*, 56 (4): 563-595, 2004

#### Week 4 – Civil War Processes: Violence and Governance

##### Required Readings:

- Stathis N Kalyvas. *The logic of violence in civil war*. Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp 1-51, 173-209
- Rachel Sweet. Concealing conflict markets: How rebels and firms use state institutions to launder wartime trade. *International Organization*, 75 (4): 1109-1132, 2021.
- Megan A Stewart. Civil war as state-making: Strategic governance in civil war. *International Organization*, 72 (1): 205-226, 2018.

Suggested Readings:

- Abbey Steele. Seeking safety: Avoiding displacement and choosing destinations in civil wars. *Journal of Peace Research*, 46 (3): 419-429, 2009.
- Ken Menkhaus. Governance without government in Somalia: Spoilers, state building, and the politics of coping. *International Security*, 31 (3): 74-106, 2007.
- Reyko Huang. Rebel diplomacy in civil war. *International Security*, 40 (4): 89-126, 2016.
- Eli Berman and Aila M Matanock. The empiricist's insurgency. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 18: 443-464, 2015.
- Ana Arjona. Wartime institutions: a research agenda. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 58 (8): 1360-1389, 2014.
- Megan A Stewart and Yu-Ming Liou. Do good borders make good rebels? Territorial control and civilian casualties. *The Journal of Politics*, 79 (1): 284-301, 2017.
- Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy M Weinstein. Handling and manhandling civilians in civil war. *American Political Science Review*, 100 (3): 429-447, 2006.

Week 5 – Domestic Politics and Conflict

Required Readings:

- Joslyn N Barnhart, Robert F Trager, Elizabeth N Saunders, and Allan Dafoe. The suffragist peace. *International Organization*, 74 (4): 633-760, 2020.
- Jessica L Weeks. Strongmen and straw men: Authoritarian regimes and the initiation of international conflict. *American Political Science Review*, 106 (2): 326-347, 2012.
- Rachel Myrick. Do external threats unite or divide? Security crises, rivalries, and polarization in American foreign policy. *International Organization*, 75 (4): 921-958, 2021.

Suggested Readings:

- James Lee Ray. Does democracy cause peace? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1 (1): 27-46, 1998.
- Thomas C Schelling. *Arms and Influence: With a New Preface and Afterword*. Yale University Press, 2008. Ch. 2 (pp 35-91)
- Sebastian Rosato. The flawed logic of democratic peace theory. *American Political Science Review*, 97(04): 585-602, 2003.
- Bruce Bueno De Mesquita. *Principles of international politics*. CQ Press, 2013. Chapter 6, pp 206-238.

## Week 6 – Conflict Outcomes

### Required Readings:

- Ivan Arreguin-Toft. How the weak win wars: A theory of asymmetric conflict. *International Security*, 26 (1): 93-128, 2001.
- Jonathan D Caverley. The myth of military myopia: democracy, small wars, and Vietnam. *International Security*, 34 (3): 119-157, 2010.
- Eric Min. Talking while fighting: understanding the role for wartime negotiation. *International Organization*, 74 (3): 610-632, 2020.

### Suggested Readings:

- Nigel Lo, Barry Hashimoto, and Dan Reiter. Ensuring peace: Foreign-imposed regime change and postwar peace duration, 1914-2001. *International Organization*, 62 (04): 717-736, 2008.
- Dan Reiter and Allan C Stam. *Democracies at war*. Princeton University Press, 2002. Pp. 10-38.
- US Army Counter-Insurgency handbook, chapter 2:  
<http://usacac.army.mil/cac/repository/materials/coin-fm3-24.pdf>
- Branislav L Slantchev. How initiators end their wars: The duration of warfare and the terms of peace. *American Journal of Political Science*, 48 (4): 813-829, 2004

## Week 7 – Reading Week

## Week 8 – Laws Of War

### Required Readings:

- James D Morrow. When do states follow the laws of war? *American Political Science Review*, 101 (3): 559-572, 2007.
- Tanisha M Fazal. The demise of peace treaties in interstate war. *International Organization*, 67 (4): 695-724, 2013.
- Jessica A Stanton. Rebel groups, international humanitarian law, and civil war outcomes in the post-cold war era. *International Organization*, 74 (3): 523-550, 2020

### Suggested Readings:

- Tanisha M Fazal. Why states no longer declare war. *Security Studies*, 21 (4): 557-593, 2012.
- Eric A Posner. A theory of the laws of war. *The University of Chicago Law Review*, 70 (1): 297-317, 2003. Pp 10-38.
- Giovanni Mantilla. Forum isolation: Social opprobrium and the origins of the international law of internal conflict. *International Organization*, 72 (2): 317-349, 2018

## Week 9 – Nuclear Weapons and Coercion

### Required Readings:

- Neil Narang and Rupal N Mehta. The unforeseen consequences of extended deterrence: Moral hazard in a nuclear client state. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 63(1):218–250, 2019
- Matthew Kroenig. Nuclear superiority and the balance of resolve: Explaining nuclear crisis outcomes. *International Organization*, 67(1):141–171, 2013.
- Todd S Sechser and Matthew Fuhrmann. Crisis bargaining and nuclear blackmail. *International organization*, 67(1):173–195, 2013.

#### Suggested Readings:

- Andrew H Kydd. The sturdy child vs. the sword of damocles: Nuclear weapons and the expected cost of war. *Security Studies*, 28(4):645–676, 2019.
- Mark S Bell and Nicholas L Miller. Questioning the effect of nuclear weapons on conflict. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 59(1):74–92, 2015
- Erik Gartzke and Matthew Kroenig. Social scientific analysis of nuclear weapons: Past scholarly successes, contemporary challenges, and future research opportunities. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 61(9):1853–1874, 2017

#### Week 10 – Terrorism

##### Required Readings:

- Tamar Mitts. From isolation to radicalization: Anti-Muslim hostility and support for ISIS in the west. *American Political Science Review*, 113(1):173–194, 2019
- Andrea Michelle Morris. Who wants to be a suicide bomber? evidence from Islamic state recruits. *International studies quarterly*, 64(2):306–315, 2020
- Max Abrahms. What terrorists really want: Terrorist motives and counterterrorism strategy. *International Security*, 32(4):78–105, 2008
- Erica Chenoweth. Terrorism and democracy. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 16:355–378, 2013

##### Suggested Readings:

- Andrew Kydd and Barbara F Walter. Sabotaging the peace: The politics of extremist violence. *International Organization*, 56(02):263–296, 2002
- Max Abrahms. Why terrorism does not work. *International Security*, 31(2):4278, 2006
- Assaf Moghadam. Motives for martyrdom: Al-qaida, salafi jihad, and the spread of suicide attacks. *International Security*, 33(3):46–78, 2009.
- Scott Atran. Genesis of suicide terrorism. *Science*, 299(5612):1534–1539, 2003

#### Week 11 – Alliances

##### Required Readings:

- Keren Yarhi-Milo, Alexander Lanoszka, and Zack Cooper. To arm or to ally? the patron's dilemma and the strategic logic of arms transfers and alliances. *International Security*, 41(2):90–139, 2016



- James D Morrow. Arms versus allies: trade-offs in the search for security. *International Organization*, 47(02):207–233, 1993.
- Fotini Christia. Alliance formation in civil wars. Cambridge University Press, 2012, chapters 2-3

Suggested Readings:

- Thomas J Christensen and Jack Snyder. Chain gangs and passed bucks: Predicting alliance patterns in multipolarity. *International Organization*, 44(02):137168, 1990.
- Brett Ashley Leeds. Alliance reliability in times of war: Explaining state decisions to violate treaties. *International Organization*, 57(04):801–827, 2003.
- James D Morrow. Alliances: Why write them down? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 3(1):63–83, 2000.

Week 12- Covert Intervention

- Melissa M Lee. The international politics of incomplete sovereignty: How hostile neighbors weaken the state. *International Organization*, 72 (2): 283-315, 2018
- Austin Carson. Facing off and saving face: covert intervention and escalation management in the Korean war. *International Organization*, 70 (1): 103-131, 2016.
- Allison Carneige, Joshua D Kertzer, and Keren Yarhi-Milo. Democratic peace and covert military force: An experimental test. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2022.