**IAFS 4500-001: The Post Cold War World – Global Security**

Spring 2025

Monday, Wednesday: 3:35-4:50

Ketchum 1B84

**Contact Information**

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Ketchum 212

Office Hours: MWF 1:30-2:30

**Class Description**

What will war and armed conflict look like in the remainder of the 21st century? Commentators have presented many arguments. Will we see a return of major power war, or will terrorism and ethnic conflict remain the primary forms of conflict? How will new(ish) technologies such as the internet and uncrewed vehicles affect conflict? We will examine and discuss these debates, among others.

In addition to classroom readings and discussion, students will examine these issues by writing a major research or policy paper on a relevant topic of their choice. Through this paper, students will also learn research and project management skills.

**Texts and Readings**

All required reading will either have website links provided or be placed on Canvas. You are expected to complete all assigned readings before the relevant class

**Course Requirements and grades**

Your grade will be determined by the following assignments:

* Course research/policy paper (30%)
* Paper proposal (5%)
* Outline and paper meeting (5%)
* Paper presentation (10%)
* 4 thought papers (10% each)
* Attendance and participation (10%)

*Research / policy paper (due May 5)*

The core requirement of the course is to write a major research or policy paper (15-20 pages). This is in essence a mini-senior thesis. You may choose the topic to write on, and whether to write a research paper of a policy paper. Whichever route you go, the paper must relate in some way to the future of armed conflict.

If you choose to write a research paper, you must formulate an academic research question related to international affairs. You will develop a theoretical answer to this research question, and examine that theory using available evidence.

If you choose to write a policy paper, you will identify a policy issue or problem to examine. You will identify several policy options to address the issue, and evaluate these options using both specific evidence and theoretical knowledge of international affairs. Finally, you will propose one option as the best to address the issue and defend this choice.

Further details and guidance about both paper options will be provided throughout the course.

*Interim assignments (due February 17 and April 7)*

To help you with the paper, there will be two interim assignments to help you think through elements of the paper. Further details will be provided

*Paper presentation*

During the last two weeks of class, each student will present their paper to the class or about 10 minutes. We will then have five minutes of questions and discussion. This is both an opportunity to share your research with the rest of the class, and get feedback before writing your final paper.

*Discussion papers (due February 3, February 24, March 31, and April 23*

There will be four discussion papers throughout the semester. These are intended to reflect and respond to the readings and class discussions. Each paper will be 3-4 pages long. A separate prompt will be provided for each paper.

*Attendance and participation*

You are required to attend all scheduled classes and relevant small group meetings and participate fully. You are allowed two unexcused absences, and then each further absence will result in losing 1 of your 10 attendance points. I reserve the right to reduce this grade further if you are consistently not participating (i.e. just sitting in the back playing on your computer).

**Schedule**

* Week 1
  + Jan 13
  + Jan 15 - Intro to course
    - Onambele Mendouga, Guy Herve. 2022. “The Future of War.” Small Wars Journal. <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/future-war>
* Week 2
  + Jan 20 – no class
  + Jan 22 - Overview of conflict trends
    - Pinker, Steven. “Has the Decline of Violence Reversed since The Better Angels of Our Nature was Written?” <https://stevenpinker.com/files/pinker/files/has_the_decline_of_violence_reversed_since_the_better_angels_of_our_nature_was_written.pdf>
    - Braumoeller, Bear F. 2021. “Trends in Interstate Conflict.” In Mitchell, Sara McLaughlin, and John A. Vasquez (eds.), What Do We Know About War? (3rd ed.) New York: Rowman & Littlefield, pp. 272-289.
    - Beard, Steven and Christina Boyes. 2023. “Is War Intensity Declining? Revisiting the decline of war hypothesis.”
* Week 3
  + Jan 27 - What is war?
    - Clausewitz, Carl von. *On War.* Ch. 1. <https://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/BK1ch01.html>
    - Levy, Jack S. and William R. Thompson. 2010. *Causes of War.*  Wiley-Blackwell. Ch. 1
    - Hendrix, Cullen. 2017. “Charismatic Megafauna in Conflict Studies, or Why WWII is the Giant Panda of the Conflict/Security Field.” Political Violence at a Glance. <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2017/11/21/charismatic-megafauna-in-conflict-studies-or-why-wwii-is-the-giant-panda-of-the-conflict-security-field/>
  + Jan 29
    - Fearon, James. 1995. “Rationalist Explanations for War.” *International Organization.* 49(3): 379-414
* Week 4
  + Feb 3
    - Fukuyama, Francis. 1989. “The End of History?” *The National Interest.* 16: 3-18.
    - Huntington, Samuel P. “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs.* 72(3) 22-49
  + Feb 5 – debates of the 1990s
    - **Discussion paper 1 due**
    - 1st paper workshop
    - Readings TBD
* Week 5
  + Feb 10 – changes in the international system
    - Ikenberry, G. John. 2018. “The end of international liberal order?” *International Affairs.* 94(1): 7-23.
    - Lake, David A., Lisa L. Martin, and Thomas Risse. 2021. “Challenges to the Liberal Order: Reflections on International Organization.” *International Organization.* 75(2): 225-257.
    - Adler-Nissen, Rebecca and Ayşe Zarakol. 2021. “Struggles for Recognition: The Liberal International Order and the Merger of Its Discontents.” *International Organization.* 75(2): 611-634. (skim)
    - Weiss, Jessica Chen and Jeremy L. Wallace. 2021. “Domestic Politics, China's Rise, and the Future of the Liberal International Order.” *International Organization.* 75(2): 635-664. (skim)
  + Feb 12 - return to multipolarity
    - Posen, Barry R. 2009. “Emerging Multipolarity: Why Should We Care?” *Current History*. 108(721), 347-352.
    - Mearsheimer, John J. 1990. “Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War.” *International Security*. 15(1): 5–56.
* Week 6
  + Feb 17 - Hegemonic stability theory, Thucydides trap
    - **1st interim assignment due**
    - Allison, Graham. 2015. “The Thucydides Trap: Are the U.S. and China Headed for War?” *The Atlantic*. September 24, 2015. <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/09/united-states-china-war-thucydides-trap/406756/> (on Canvas)
    - Lebow, Richard Ned, & Benjamin Valentino. 2009. “Lost in Transition: A Critical Analysis of Power Transition Theory.” *International Relations*. 23(3): 389–410. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117809340481 (on Canvas)
    - Lemke, Douglas and Suzanne Werner. 1996. “Power Parity, Commitment to Change and War.” *International Studies Quarterly.* 40(2): 235-260. (skim)
  + Feb 19 - Rogue states
    - Caprioli, Mary and Peter F. Trumbore. 2005. “Rhetoric versus Reality: Rogue States in Interstate Conflict.” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution.* 49(5): 770–791.
    - International Crisis Group. 2023. “10 Conflicts to Watch in 2023.” <https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/10-conflicts-watch-2023>
* Week 7
  + Feb 24 - Civil war and ethnic conflict
    - **Discussion paper 2 due**
    - Walter, Barbara. 2017. “The New New Civil Wars.” *Annual Review of Political Science.* 20: 469-46.
    - Kalyvas, Stathis N. and Laia Balcells. 2010. “International System and Technologies of Rebellion: How the End of the Cold War Shaped Internal Conflict.” *The American Political Science Review*. 104(3): 415-429.
    - Ghodes, Anita R. “Studying the Internet and Violent Conflict.” *Conflict Management and Peace Science.* 35(1): 89-106.
  + Feb 26 - Failed states
    - “The Fragile States Index, Annual Report 2022.” Fund for Peace. <https://fragilestatesindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/22-FSI-Report-Final.pdf> (Read 4-11, Skim 40-50, don’t worry about the rest)
    - Goldstone, Jack. A. 2008. “Pathways to State Failure.” *Conflict Management and Peace Science*. 25(4): 285–296.
    - Nay, Oliver. 2013. “Fragile and failed states: Critical perspectives on conceptual hybrids.” *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale de Science Politique*. 34(3): 326–341.
    - Call, Charles T. 2010. “Beyond the ‘failed state’: Toward conceptual alternatives.” *European Journal of International Relations.* 17(2): 303-326
* Week 8
  + March 3 - Changing alliances
    - Kenwick, Michael R. and Roseanne W. McManus. 2021. “Deterrence Theory and Alliance Politics.” In Mitchell, Sara McLaughlin, and John A. Vasquez (eds). *What Do We Know about War?* Blue Ridge Summit: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
    - “Changing Alliance Structures.” 2021. International Institute for Strategic Studies. <https://www.iiss.org/blogs/research-paper/2021/12/changing-alliance-structures> (read full report – click on “download research paper”)
  + March 5 - Transnational influences on civil conflict
    - Robinson, Kali and Will Merrow. 2021. “Iran’s Regional Armed Network.” Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/article/irans-regional-armed-network>
    - Forsberg, Erika. 2014. “Diffusion in the Study of Civil Wars: A Cautionary Tale.” *International Studies Review*, 16(2), 188–198.
    - Anderson, Noel. 2019. “Competitive Intervention, Protracted Conflict, and the Global Prevalence of Civil War.” *International Studies Quarterly.* 63: 692-706.
* Week 9
  + March 10 - Future of deterrence and arms control
    - Peters, Robert, Justin Anderson, and Harrison Menke. 2018. “Deterrence in the 21st Century: Integrating Nuclear and Conventional Force.” *Strategic Studies Quarterly.*
    - Lissner, Rebecca. 2021. “The Future of Strategic Arms Control.” Discussion Paper Series on Managing Global Disorder No. 4. Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/report/future-strategic-arms-control> (Read full report - click “Download PDF” button)
    - Williams, Heather and Nicholas Adamopoulos. 2022. “Arms Control after Ukraine: Integrated Arms Control and Deterring Two Peer Competitors.” Center for Strategic & International Studies. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/arms-control-after-ukraine-integrated-arms-control-and-deterring-two-peer-competitors> (recommended)
  + March 12 – Career services presentation (subject to change)
* Week 10
  + March 17 – 2nd paper workshop
    - Readings TBD
  + March 19 - WMD proliferation
    - Monteiro, Nuno P. and Alexandre Debs. 2014. “The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation.” *International Security*. 39 (2): 7–51.
    - Robinson, Kali. 2022. “What is the Iran Nuclear Deal?” Backgrounder. Council on Foreign Relations. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-iran-nuclear-deal
    - Akerman, Gary and Michelle Jacome. 2018. “WMD Terrorism: The Once and Future Threat.” *Prism : a Journal of the Center for Complex Operations.* 7(3): 22-36. (Skim)
* March 24-28 – Spring Break
* Week 11
  + March 31 - Military transformation
    - **Discussion paper 3 due**
    - Adamsky, Dima. 2008. “Through the Looking Glass: The Soviet Military-Technical Revolution and the American Revolution in Military Affairs.” *The Journal of Strategic Studies.* 31(2): 257-294.
    - Biddle, Stephen. 2022. “Ukraine and the Future of Offensive Maneuver.” War on the Rocks. <https://warontherocks.com/2022/11/ukraine-and-the-future-of-offensive-maneuver/>
    - O’Hanlon, Michael E. 2018. “A retrospective on the so-called revolution in military affairs, 2000-2020.” Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/a-retrospective-on-the-so-called-revolution-in-military-affairs-2000-2020/> (Read at least executive summary; whole report if time)
    - Davis, Paul K. 2010. “Military Transformation? Which Transformation, and What Lies Ahead?” RAND. <https://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/RP1413.html> (optional)
  + April 2 - Air power
    - Lake, Daniel. 2009. “The Limits of Coercive Airpower: NATO’s ‘Victory’ in Kosovo Revisited.” *International Security*. 34(1): 83-112.
    - Biddle, Stephen. 2005. “Allies, Airpower and Modern Warfare: The Afghan Model in Afghanistan and Iraq.” *International Security.* 30(3): 161-176.
* Week 12
  + April 7 - Private military contractors
    - **2nd interim assignment**
    - Leander, Anna. 2005. “The Market for Force and Public Security: The Destabilizing Consequences of Private Military Companies.” *Journal of Peace Research*. 42(5), 605–622.
    - Marten, Kimberly. 2019. “Russia’s use of semi-state security forces: the case of the Wagner Group.” *Post-Soviet Affairs*. 35(3): 181-204. (Skim at least, read if time)
    - Carey, Sabine C. and Niel J. Mitchell. 2017. “Progovernment Militias.” *Annual Review of Political Science.* 20: 127-147.
  + April 9 - Counter-insurgency and Counter-terrorism
    - Marlowe, Ann. 2009. “The Picture Awaits: The Birth of Modern Counterinsurgency.” *World Affairs.* 172(1): 64-73.
    - <https://mwi.usma.edu/not-your-grandfathers-counterinsurgency-the-united-states-must-prepare-for-radically-new-forms-of-nonstate-violence/>
* Week 13
  + April 14 – human rights and conflict
    - <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-xinjiang-uyghurs-muslims-repression-genocide-human-rights>
    - Nordas, Ragnhild and Dara Kay Cohen. 2021. “Conflict-Related Sexual Violence.” *Annual Review of Political Science.* 24: (193-211)
    - How will international humanitarian law develop in the future? ??
    - Barter, Shane Joshua. 2012. “Unarmed Forces: Civilian Strategy in Violent Conflict.” *Peace and Change.* 37(4): 544-571.
  + April 16 - Future of peacekeeping
    - Sassoli, Marco. 2022. “How will international humanitarian law develop in the future?” International Committee of the Red Cross. <https://international-review.icrc.org/articles/how-will-international-humanitarian-law-develop-in-the-future-920>
    - Day, Adam. 2020. “The Future of UN Peace Operations in a Changing Conflict Environment.” <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/future_of_peacekeeping_operations_in_a_changing_conflict_environment.pdf>
    - Ilhan Dahir, Agathe Sarfati, and Jake Sherman. 2020. “The Future of UN Peacekeeping and Parallel Operations.” <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/the_future_of_peacekeeping_and_parallel_operations.pdf>
    - Gary Milante, Hannes Mueller and Robert Muggah. 2020. “Estimating future conflict risks and conflict prevention implications by 2030.” <https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/estimating_future_conflict_risks_and_conflict_prevention_implications_by_2030.pdf>
* Week 14
  + April 21 – Topic TBD
    - Readings TBD
  + April 23
    - **Discussion paper 4 due**
    - Presentations
* Week 15
  + April 28
    - Presentations
  + April 30
    - Presentations
* Final time (May 5)
  + **Final paper due**
  + Make up presentations

**Policies**

*Late policy*

Assignments may be turned in late, provided you let me know. If you need to turn these in late, you MUST e-mail that is will be late (you do not need to provide a reason) AND provide a date by which you will have it completed. While they will be granted, extensions on the final paper must be limited in order to allow me to finish grading everything on time.

*Communication*

I will use both e-mail and Canvas to communicate important announcements. You are expected to check both regularly. The best way to contact me is through e-mail. I will do my best to respond reasonably promptly, but please be patient. For more complex issues or substantive questions I will probably suggest setting up an appointment to meet.

You may also come in to scheduled office hours at any time without an appointment. Office hours are times we have set aside to be available to meet with students. You are welcome to come in and discuss anything relevant to the course.

*Grading Grievances*

Objectively assigning grades is a tough business, and mistakes do happen. We are happy to go over the assignment and explain why we assigned the given grade during office hours. In general, you should first contact your TA for an explanation. If you wish to appeal a grade, you must submit *in writing* an explanation detailing where (i.e. what question) and why you think that you received insufficient credit for your answer. You should submit your appeal to both me and your TA. Be forewarned: I will not accept explanations arguing that because you worked really hard on a paper, your overall grade was just not high enough. You need to be able to show specific grading errors on my part.

*Classroom Behavior*

Students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote, or online. Failure to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, marital status, political affiliation, or political philosophy.  
  
For more information, see the [classroom behavior policy](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/student-classroom-and-course-related-behavior), the[Student Code of Conduct](https://www.colorado.edu/sccr/media/230), and the [Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](https://www.colorado.edu/oiec/).

*Requirements for Covid-19*

Members of the CU Boulder community and visitors to campus must follow university, department, and building health and safety requirements and all public health orders to reduce the risk of spreading infectious diseases.

The CU Boulder campus is currently mask optional. However, if masks are again required in classrooms, students who fail to adhere to masking requirements will be asked to leave class. Students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution. Students who require accommodation because a disability prevents them from fulfilling safety measures related to infectious disease will be asked to follow the steps in the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

For those who feel ill and think you might have COVID-19 or if you have tested positive for COVID-19, please stay home and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office. For those who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms and have not tested positive for COVID-19, you do not need to stay home. See <https://www.colorado.edu/healthcenter/coronavirus-updates/symptoms-and-what-do-if-you-feel-sick> for further information about what to do.

*Accommodation for Disabilities*

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed.  Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment.  Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](https://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [DSinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:DSinfo@colorado.edu)  for further assistance.

If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](https://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students/temporary-medical-conditions) on the Disability Services website.

If you have a temporary illness, injury or required medical isolation for which you require adjustment, please contact me and your TA when you are able so we can work out appropriate accommodations.

*Preferred Names and Pronouns*

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

If you would like me to use a name or pronoun other than that listed, please let me know and I will happily do so.

*Honor Code*

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the[Honor Code](https://www.colorado.edu/sccr/media/229). Violations of the Honor Code may include but are not limited to: plagiarism (including use of paper writing services or technology [such as essay bots]), cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. Understanding the course's syllabus is a vital part in adhering to the Honor Code.

All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution: [StudentConduct@colorado.edu](mailto:StudentConduct@colorado.edu). Students found responsible for violating the[Honor Code](https://www.colorado.edu/sccr/media/229) will be assigned resolution outcomes from the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution as well as be subject to academic sanctions from the faculty member. Visit [Honor Code](https://www.colorado.edu/sccr/media/229) for more information on the academic integrity policy.

My policy is that I will report all suspected violations to the honor code office. If the honor code office finds that you did violate the honor code, you will receive a zero on the affected assignment. Subsequent violations will result in automatically failing the course.

*Use of AI or similar tools*

Students are **not** allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2) on any assignment for this course. Each student is expected to complete each assignment without assistance from “AI” (spellcheck and grammar check is fine, but use with caution). Use of “AI” will be treated as a form of academic dishonesty akin to plagiarism or cheating.

Current “AI” tools violates several critical academic norms. The way “AI” works is it predicts the next word in a sentence, etc. based on its training data. In other words, “AI” is trying to imitate the text in the training data, with some randomness. Essentially, “AI” is inherently committing plagiarism. It is not creating any new ideas, bus simply imitating the text in the training data.

Second, because “AI” is simply imitating the text in the training data, it does not care if what it is saying is true. “AI” simply produces text that sounds good. Accordingly, some have called “AI” a “bullshit generator” (e.g. <https://www.transformingsociety.co.uk/2023/02/10/chatgpt-the-worlds-largest-bullshit-machine/>, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/chatgpt-isnt-hallucinating-its-bullshitting/>). Since in academia we are concerned with what is true, using a tool that is fundamentally not concerned about truth is fundamentally at odds with are trying to do.

Current AI detectors are not particularly reliable. Therefore, I will be very cautious before accusing anyone of using AI. However, because of the fundamental limitations of AI, I do not believe you will get a good grade even if you use it.

*Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment, and/or Related Retaliation*

CU Boulder is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. University policy prohibits [protected-class](https://www.colorado.edu/oiec/policies/discrimination-harassment-policy/protected-class-definitions) discrimination and harassment, sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking, and related retaliation by or against members of our community on- and off-campus. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) addresses these concerns, and individuals who have been subjected to misconduct can contact OIEC at 303-492-2127 or email [CUreport@colorado.edu](mailto:CUreport@colorado.edu). Information about university policies, [reporting options](https://www.colorado.edu/oiec/reporting-resolutions/making-report), and [support resources](https://www.colorado.edu/oiec/support-resources) including confidential services can be found on the [OIEC website](http://www.colorado.edu/institutionalequity/).

Please know that faculty and graduate instructors must inform OIEC when they are made aware of incidents related to these policies regardless of when or where something occurred. This is to ensure that individuals impacted receive outreach from OIEC about resolution options and support resources. To learn more about reporting and support for a variety of concerns, visit the [Don’t Ignore It](https://www.colorado.edu/dontignoreit/) page.

*Religious Holidays*

Campus policy requires faculty to provide reasonable accommodations for students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please communicate the need for a religious accommodation in a timely manner. In this class, if religious observances affect any graded assignment, let us know and we will work out alternate arrangements.

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/observance-religious-holidays-and-absences-classes-andor-exams) for full details.

*Mental Health and Wellness*

The University of Colorado Boulder is committed to the well-being of all students. If you are struggling with personal stressors, mental health or substance use concerns that are impacting academic or daily life, please contact [Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS)](https://www.colorado.edu/counseling/) located in C4C or call (303) 492-2277, 24/7.   
  
Free and unlimited telehealth is also available through [Academic Live Care](https://www.colorado.edu/health/academiclivecare). The [Academic Live Care](https://www.colorado.edu/health/academiclivecare) site also provides information about additional wellness services on campus that are available to students.