

PSCI 3123: War and Peace / Spring 2024

Tu Th 3:30 – 4:45 pm, Humanities 250

Canvas course page: <https://canvas.colorado.edu/courses/98990>

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING GOALS

This course examines the conditions that make for war and peace between countries. Special emphasis is given to the logical and empirical foundations for key hypotheses regarding war and peace. The roles of individual, state, dyadic/relational, and systemic factors are considered among other topics. Upon completion of the course, a student should be familiar with the factors that mitigate or exacerbate military conflict between states and be able to apply them intelligently to real world situations.

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

All students taking this course are to be treated with respect and are encouraged to bring up viewpoints related to the class topics informed by their backgrounds and worldviews. The class tackles issues of diversity, discrimination, and inequality on an international level, by for example addressing topics such as power discrepancies, economic and institutional inequalities and marginalization, and viewpoints relating to both more and less developed parts of the world. The students are strongly encouraged to further contribute to these goals by seeking out authors and topics relating to international-level diversity, discrimination, and inequality in the context of the class-related assignments, such as the research report.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading Materials

1. Betts, Richard K. ed. 2017. *Conflict After the Cold War*. 5th ed. Pearson. (other editions are acceptable)
2. Cashman, Greg. 2014. *What Causes War? An Introduction to Theories of International Conflict*. 2nd ed. Rowman & Littlefield.
3. Supplementary materials, available through Canvas

Student Initiative

Students should be alerted to the obvious fact that it will not be easy to summarize the complexity of war logic in terms of a few concepts and theories. Students should acquire the habit of regularly reading news magazines and national newspapers. It is important that students **read assigned materials thoughtfully and thoroughly** and that they **attend classes regularly**, since class time will be primarily devoted to the exploration and integration of assigned readings.

Examinations

There will be two exams based on lectures, assigned readings, and class discussions. The exams will ask students to demonstrate a detailed grasp of the material covered. The description of the exam format will be given prior to the exam dates.

Research Reports

Guidelines, assignments, deadlines, and criteria of evaluation are outlined at the end of the syllabus.

Participation and Attendance

Regular attendance and participation are expected. The students are expected to offer their own insights based on class materials. To encourage participation, the instructor may use random questioning or unannounced quizzes. Please note that excessive excused or unexcused absences will also hurt your participation grade, because one cannot participate in class discussions if one is not present in class.

COURSE RULES

Grading Policy

Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%
Research Reports (2 x 17.5%)	35%
Participation and Attendance	10%

Class Policies

1. Students are expected to turn in the assignments by the specified deadlines and take the exams on the specified dates and times. Failure to take the exam on time or meet an assignment deadline does not entitle the students to make up the work at a later time.
2. Exceptions to the class requirements and rules are granted at the instructor's discretion, only under circumstances of extreme personal emergency or serious illness. In all instances, appropriate evidentiary documentation will be requested and must be submitted within one week of the original absence.
3. All academic work must meet the University's standards for academic honesty. Each student is responsible to inform themselves of these standards before conducting any academic work. My academic dishonesty policy is very simple: you will receive a failing grade for the class if you are found cheating on examinations, plagiarizing the work of others, attempting to turn in assignments used in previous classes, utilizing AI on the assignments, or signing the attendance sheet for another student, along with all other possible infractions noted in the University's policy on academic dishonesty. Moreover, disciplinary proceedings to dismiss you from the University may be initiated. I **will not** tolerate academic dishonesty and you **will** face the harshest punishment possible if you attempt it.
4. Students may request the TA to re-read exam answers or assignments that they feel have been unfairly evaluated. Requests for re-evaluation must be submitted in **written form**, along with the assignment, within one week after it has been returned to the class or the final grade posted, whichever is earlier. The written statement must explain specifically why the student thinks that the grade should be reconsidered and what grade the assignment deserves. Re-evaluation will be conducted *de novo*, which may result in a lower, higher, or the same grade.
5. Accommodations based on disability and/or religious beliefs will be made whenever possible. But, it is the student's responsibility to let the TA know about **needing such accommodations within the first two weeks of class**. Accommodation requests after this time period may not be granted.
6. See the course Canvas page for additional university-mandated statements on topics such as discrimination, harassment, COVID, etc.
7. The syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary and will be announced.

8. All the lecture materials are considered to be the intellectual property of the instructor and are only to be used by the students enrolled in the class for their own education. Any distribution of the said materials and/or use for commercial purposes **is expressly prohibited.**

9. Additional short readings (e.g. articles, news stories) may be assigned as the semester progresses.

10. All students are expected to complete assigned readings before they are discussed in class and they are expected to discuss and respond to random questioning.

TOPICAL OUTLINE

I. Introduction

- A. The Relevance of Studying War
 - Betts: Fukayama (pp. 4-15), Mearsheimer (pp. 16-32)
- B. Studying the Causes of War
 - Cashman: Chapter 1

II. Sources of War

- A. The Quest for Power
 - Betts: Hobbes (pp. 80-84), Thucydides (pp. 70-75), Carr (pp. 84-101, esp. the “Military Power” section), Blainey (pp. 121-133)
- B. International System
 - Cashman: Chapters 10-11
 - Betts: Waltz (pp. 101-108), Gilpin (pp. 108-121)
- C. Leadership/Individual Decision-Making/Human Nature/Psychology
 - Cashman: Chapters 2-4 and pp. 319-330
 - Betts: Mead (pp. 230-235)
 - Fornari (TBD)
- D. Domestic Politics
 - Cashman: Chapters 4 and 6 and pp. 180-185
 - Betts: Mansfield and Snyder (pp. 331-344)
- E. Economics
 - Cashman: Chapter 5 (esp. pp. 186-194)
 - Betts: Lenin (pp. 264-271), Waltz (pp. 294-304)

III. Approaches to Peace

- A. Liberal Approaches: Democracy, Economic and Institutional Interdependence
 - Cashman: pp. 257-275
 - Betts: Doyle (pp. 151-167), Kant (138-145), Keohane and Nye (pp. 167-174)
- B. Realist Approaches: Deterrence and Arms Control
 - Cashman: Chapter 9
 - Betts: Waltz (pp. 418-431)

Midterm Exam: Tuesday, March 12 at 3:30 pm via Canvas

Final Exam: Monday, May 6 at 1:30 pm via Canvas

RESEARCH REPORTS

This assignment asks you to summarize and evaluate **TWO** articles from top peer-reviewed scholarly journals on the topic of international militarized conflict (i.e. NOT on civil war).

ARTICLE APPROVAL ASSIGNMENT

Due by **February 6 for Article #1** and **March 21 for Article #2**, 2.5% of the course grade each.

To assure that your chosen article meets the below criteria, submit the pdf of the article via Canvas. **All the below requirements MUST be met** (i.e. not meeting any one of these will result in a grade of **zero** on the entire Research Report assignment).

1. The article must be from the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *International Studies Quarterly*, or *Conflict Management and Peace Science*; journals such as *International Organization*, *Journal of Politics*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *British Journal of Political Science*, and *American Political Science Review* also qualify, though these journals have fewer articles on the topic of militarized international conflict.
2. Only actual articles on the topic of militarized international conflict from one of the above journals will count; research notes, data features, book reviews, etc. or articles focusing on other topics do not count. To access the journal articles via the CU library (<https://www.colorado.edu/libraries>), you will need to be either on campus or use the VPN connection: <https://oit.colorado.edu/services/network-internet-services/vpn>

RESEARCH REPORT ASSIGNMENT

Due by **February 29 for Article #1** and **April 30 for Article #2**, 15% of the course grade each.

Note: the assignment will receive **the grade of zero** if the article has not been previously approved.

Assignment format and content: the report is to be 1,500-1,800 words in length, broken down into the below-identified sections. Use headings and sub-headings but avoid direct quotes. Suggested format: single-spaced, 11 pt. Times New Roman font, 1" margins. Turn in via Canvas.

1. Citation: provide the full citation for your approved article in MLA or similar format.
2. Research question: in your own words, explain what the authors are investigating (e.g. why do some countries come to their allies' aid while others do not). 1-2 paragraphs
3. Theory: in your own words, explain what the authors' argument is (e.g. democracies are more likely to be reliable alliance partners than autocracies). 2 paragraphs minimum
4. Evidence: in your own words, explain what kind of evidence the authors use to evaluate/support their argument (e.g. statistical analysis of all the world's countries, 1816-2020). 2 paragraphs minimum
5. Evaluation: in your own words, explain whether there some parts of the argument that are not supported by the evidence? What are some of the other strengths and weaknesses? What do the authors do well and what can be improved? What other critiques can you offer? 2-3 paragraphs min

Failure to meet the above-specified deadlines will result in a **10% a day penalty**. Please note that the due dates are known well in advance, so you need to plan accordingly.

Grading criteria for the assignments:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. objectivity | 4. organization |
| 2. quality of research | 5. writing style, clarity |
| 3. quality of analysis | 6. mechanics and grammar |

Students who have difficulty with rhetoric are encouraged to use the University's resources to help them write better and purchase a writer's manual such as Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*.