

PSCI 3123: War, Peace, and Strategic Defense

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Overview

In many ways, war is the central problematic of international relations. No one who studies its causes or possible cures believes that war, as a social practice, will end any time soon. After all, conflict behavior is still evident in even the most peaceful, nonviolent societies. However, research on human behavior, specifically, doing intentional harm to others for political purposes, still yields results that provide insight and guidance for projects aimed at reducing violent conflict and ameliorating preventable human suffering.

As a field, war, peace, and conflict/strategic defense studies is concerned with both the causes of war and the causes of peace and is researched by academics trained in varied disciplines, from psychology and sociology (and social psychology) to political science, anthropology, and economics. Even evolutionary biologists, mathematicians, and cultural geographers have studied inter-group conflict and cooperation with an eye to gaining useful insights into the human problem of violent conflict.

The introduction of weapons of mass destruction capable of annihilating not only millions of non-combatants but, literally, all human life on the planet, prompted many scholars to put the problem of interstate war front and center after World War II. More recently, the threat of nuclear use seems less likely from states than from non-state actors, although there are rumblings today about new technological capabilities that some argue ought to be applied to nuclear weapons (like “bunker busters” and submarine drones). This portends a potential revival of the nuclear arms race among major powers.

This course will cover these and other issues and likely challenge at least some assumptions each of us has. No one thinks more wars would be better, but many also believe that there are greater evils that must be defeated by force, and hence the dilemma: one person’s evil is another person’s ideal and vice-versa.

Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes

This course has intellectual, academic, and skill-oriented objectives. In this course students will:

1. master and apply a broad range of theorizing about the causes of war and conflict
2. learn about the kinds of research that arises from theorizing about war and peace and the implications for public (and foreign) policy
3. engage questions of war and peace from multiple and often conflicting academic and philosophical perspectives and in doing so, develop and practice skills of critical thinking
4. further develop critical thinking skills by engaging a variety of often conflicting claims and research

Requirements and Expectations

General: Read assignments before coming to class so you can ask good questions about things you don't quite understand or just want to know more about. The class schedule accommodates the Friday NSC sims so there will be days when we do not finish a chapter lecture. Attendance is important and thus included in your final grade calculation. Neither you nor I will be equally excited about all the topics and issues, but good attendance enables us to create a learning community together.

Attendance: You should only miss a class if circumstances beyond your control necessitate it. That should not happen more than twice during the semester, hence, you receive full credit for attendance if you miss no more than 2 classes. But don't just "take a day off" when you are able to attend because later in the semester you may need to use your "beyond my control" absences. You should always be able to document the reasons you missed a class unless it was due to a short-term illness, although I will only ask to see documentation if you miss more than two. In the case of weather that could make driving hazardous, we will meet virtually via zoom and I will send you an email before noon on the day of class letting you know that.

We will use **iclickers** to enhance participation by conducting some polling during each class and that will also serve to document your attendance. You get full credit for answering a question – whether your answer is correct or not. Some questions have no correct answers and are more like opinion polls.

Unfortunately, the space we are in has insufficient wifi for the entire class to reliably use iClicker mobile polling on your personal devices. Therefore, you will need to obtain an iClicker + remote for use in class. You may be able to check one out from the [Norlin circulation desk](#) for the semester, on a first-come, first-served basis. You can also find very usable used iclickers for sale on the internet. You will also need to have an iClicker student app account, and [register your clicker there](#). You will not be able to use the iClicker student app to vote in class.

Please avoid making appointments outside of class during scheduled class time (doctor, dentists, advisors, etc.) If leaving early is unavoidable, please let me know before class starts and sit in a place that makes it easier to leave without disrupting the class.

Grades: In addition to attendance, final grades are determined by the following:

Attendance	5/5% (0-2 absences) 2/5% (3 absences) 0/5% (4+ absences)
Sim Participation	15%
Book Review	20%
Mid-term	30%
Final	30%

Exams

There will be a mid-term and a final, *each accounting for 30% of your final grade*. Since final exams are scheduled to have twice as much time as a class period, we will have the mid-term over two class periods with multiple choice questions the first day and essay questions the

second. To allow for university-approved accommodations, each half of the exam (MC and essay) is designed to be completed in about 25 minutes, so in both cases you have twice as much time as you need without accommodations. Students with approved accommodations can also take the exam in a different room with fewer distractions.

All exams are taken in-class using scantron answer sheets and blue/essay exam books. I suggest using your teams as a study group. Research shows that any mode of study beyond passively reading, rereading, and reviewing texts or notes improves your learning and retention. I will not prepare a study guide. The mid-term and final each cover 7 weeks of reading and lecture material.

NSC Simulation Participation

The class will be divided into 16 groups made up of about 5 students each for the purpose of simulating meetings of The National Security Council. The NSC is in the Executive Office of the President (EXOP). The simulations take place on ten consecutive Fridays, skipping the week of the mid-term exam. Each student will give an oral report for the group at least twice. The combination of the content of your report and your effectiveness presenting the report orally to the class constitute 15% of your final grade.

Book Reviews

Each NSC team will be assigned a book to read and review. Reading the same book will enable you to discuss your reading experience other team members – a kind of “mini book club.” *The reviews are done individually by each student for individual grades.* This is not a “team” assignment although five people reading the same book should enhance your reading experience. These are some of the best books on topics of war, peace, and security studies, written by practitioner experts or scholars writing for a general audience. Many take a point of view so feel free to challenge it, agree with it, or partly both. Book reviews should be around 750 words and include the following:

- What do you think was the author’s purpose in writing the book? What was the thesis Who was s/he writing it for?
- Summarize the book without giving away too much
- What are its strengths? Weaknesses? (These need not be equally balanced)
- Who do you think would be interested in reading it and why?

University and Instructor Policies

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, political affiliation, or political philosophy.

For more information, see the [classroom behavior policy](#), the [Student Code of Conduct](#), and the [Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#).

Requirements for Infectious Diseases

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.

Accommodation for Disabilities, Temporary Medical Conditions, and Medical Isolation

[Disability Services](#) determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so your needs can be addressed. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance.

If you have a temporary medical condition or required medical isolation for which you require accommodation, let me know and we will make arrangements for you to make up missed work. Also see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.

Preferred Student 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.

Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the [Honor Code](#). 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.

All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution: honor@colorado.edu, 303-492-5550. Students found responsible for violating the [Honor Code](#) 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](#) for more information on the academic integrity policy.

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](#) discrimination and harassment, sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, and related retaliation by or against members of our community on- and off-campus. These behaviors harm individuals and our community. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) addresses these concerns, and individuals who believe they have been subjected to misconduct can contact OIEC at 303-492-2127 or email cureport@colorado.edu. Information about university policies, [reporting options](#), and support resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#).

Please know that faculty and graduate instructors have a responsibility to 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 an outreach from OIEC about their options for addressing a concern and the support resources available. To learn more about reporting and support resources

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism, and AI

Paraphrasing or quoting another's work without citing the source is a form of academic misconduct. Even inadvertent or unintentional misuse or appropriation of another's work (such as relying heavily on source material that is not expressly acknowledged) is considered plagiarism. If you have any questions about using and citing sources, you are expected to ask for clarification.

Students are by now aware of the availability of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as Chat GPT. It is fine to use AI for research to augment assignments such as keeping up with the specific issues and developments occurring relevant to the issues or in regions you are assigned to for the National Security Council meetings. If you do, please keep up with the fast-changing research on the pros and *cons* of AI use. Be forewarned, however, that turning in assignments as your own work written in part or in whole by AI is a form of plagiarism and will be treated as such. All written assignments will be scanned for plagiarism. For the purposes of this class, this means no AI for your book reviews or essay exam answers. AI material reported and notes turned in as part of the simulation are fine.

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, please let me know if you foresee any conflicts and we can work out an accommodation such as a substitute or make-up assignment. In the case of attendance, religious holidays are excused absences, so again, let me know if you foresee a conflict after reviewing the syllabus.

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 \(CAPS\)](#) located in C4C or call (303) 492-2277, 24/7.

Free and unlimited telehealth is also available through [Academic Live Care](#). The [Academic Live Care](#) site also provides information about additional wellness services on campus that are available to students.

Accommodations and Accessibility for Diverse Learners:

As described above, any student with university-approved accommodations will have additional time as approved by the university to complete each part of the exam (multiple choice and essay) than the exam is designed to take (unless the specific accommodation calls for more time than that). That is, the MC can be completed by a prepared student without accommodation in 25 minutes, and same for the essay portion of the exam. Each class period has 50 minutes. I will work out any additional accommodations provisions with students individually.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

The CU-Boulder campus is located on the traditional lands of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute, and other Indigenous peoples. Reconciliation for the injuries and injustices inflicted on Indigenous peoples is an ongoing, incomplete, and only recently acknowledged principle essential to the development of a diverse, pluralistic, just, and civil democratic society.

Every one of us has travelled a different socio-historical and experiential path into the present. People whose ethnic, religious, cultural, and gender identities are non-hegemonic have travelled paths into the present that, as with Indigenous peoples, invariably included experiences of historical injustice and injury, and virtually all of which have consequences for all of us in the present. Reconciliation in these cases is also in varying stages of recognition and engagement. It is my intent to create a learning community in which everyone feels safe and respected being who they are, saying what they think, that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and that honors everyone's identity. Considering this:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official records, please let me know.
- I support undocumented students, faculty, and staff.
- If you feel that your performance in class is impacted by experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to talk with me. You can also submit anonymous feedback, and you can ask me to make general comments to the class if necessary to address your concerns. If you prefer to talk with someone outside of class, let me know and I will identify alternatives.
- Like many of us, I am in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something is said in class that makes you feel uncomfortable, please talk to be about it, again, with anonymous feedback as an option.

A Note About Sept 1- 15

Prior to having the opportunity to teach this course, I had booked a research trip (to Israel and Palestine) for September 1-15. I will meet with you the first day/class, Aug 28, and our Graduate Teaching Assistant for this class, Tania Massicotte, will meet with you on Sept 8, 11, and 13. Aug

30/Sept 1 and Sept 15 I have prepared two pre-recorded lectures, and Sept 6 I've scheduled an online documentary to watch on your own schedule.

On September 11 you will have a REMOTE Q&A zoom session with Ambassador Brooke D. Anderson, the former UN Deputy Ambassador to the UN. Ambassador Anderson was also Chief of Staff for the National Security Council during the Obama administration. You'll also spend the class period prior to her zoom (Sept 8) organizing into the NSC simulation teams and preparing questions for Ambassador Anderson, and another meeting after your zoom (Sept 13) with her to meet again your team and exchange contact and scheduling information s well as to debrief from the zoom session.

Ambassador Anderson agreed to do the zoom on the condition that she would not prepare a lecture but would rely on questions from you to drive the conversation following a brief introduction. Since she was COS for the NSC, anything you want to ask about that could be useful as we participate in the NSC simulation throughout the semester. You will have read the JCPOA (aka "the Iran deal") and she was also a chief advisor to Secretary John Kerry and the US delegation that negotiated the agreement. She also spent several decades in DC working both on the congressional and executive sides as well as with bipartisan NGOs addressing the problem of nuclear proliferation. Check out "The Nuclear Threat Initiative" (NTI) online to learn more about the work she did during that period. Former Secretaries of State and Defense from both the Republican and Democrat sides of the aisle worked on the NTI. So lots of stuff to talk about with her.

Summary of Weeks 1-3

Week 1	Meets in class Aug 28, out-of-class assignments for Aug 30 and Sept 1
Week 2	No classes at CU for Labor Day Sept 4 Out-of-class assignment Sept 6 Meet in class Sept 8
Week 3	Meet remote on ZOOM Sept 11 Meet in class Sept 13 (NSC team meetings) Out-of-class assignment Sept 15

Be Respectful of our Teaching Assistant

Remember that you need to be professional and respectful with your TAs. This means that your standard of behavior should be the same with your TA as with me as the lead faculty member in the class. This includes, but is not limited to, things like not being rude or interrupting in class. Remember, too, that this means you should not be sending your TAs friend requests on any social media platform. Give your TAs a reasonable amount of time (24 hours) to answer emails. Don't try to get your TA's personal phone number or call them at their personal phone number. As per University policy, you should not be engaging in, or trying to engage in, romantic relationships with your TA.

Class Schedule, Reading Assignments, and Due Dates

Week 1

Aug 28 **In class meeting:** Intro and Overview, syllabus review

Aug 30/Sept 1 **No class meeting**

Recorded lecture (about 70 minutes) “Everything you always wanted to know about nukes but were always afraid to ask”

NOTE: There is no corresponding reading assignment for this recorded lecture, if you have questions, do some online research and I will take questions on Sept 18 when I return. The recording is about 70 minutes.

Reading and research assignment for weeks 1 and 2: Internet Assignment: Go to whitehouse.gov/nsc and from dropdown on right choose “Briefing room” on right. *KEEP UP WITH THESE THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER.*

Read Ambassador Anderson’s bio online prior to her zoom meeting with the class on September 11. Also read the JCPOA in preparation for this meeting and look up the “Nuclear Threat Initiative.” (Links on canvas Week 1 module)

Read: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/05/07/iran-nuclear-deal-jcpoa-us-trump-biden-nonproliferation-diplomacy/>

Week 2

Sept 4

Labor Day No classes

Sept 6

No class meeting

Watch online: Joe Cirincione: History of nuclear weapons (Link in Canvas on Week 2 module)

Watch here: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?189789-1/nuclear-nonproliferation&event=189789&playEvent>

NOTE: There is also no corresponding reading assignment for this documentary, so take good notes!

Sept 8

In-class meeting: Organize NSC Teams and develop questions for Ambassador Anderson (Ms. Massicotte will meet with class to organize this and prompt students in team groups to write questions for Ambassador Anderson.

NSC Teams

16 teams will have about 5 members. If there are drops, reassignments will be made if needed.

1. Defense and Non-proliferation – Paige Latto
2. Intelligence programs –
3. Development, Global Health, and Humanitarian Response
4. Partnerships, Alliances, and Global Engagement
5. Democracy and Human Rights – Noah Hubbard
6. Energy and Climate Change – Christian Leman
7. International/transnational economics – Liam Walter
8. Western Hemisphere -Nicholas Stefu
9. China –
10. South Asia* -
11. Sub-Saharan Africa – Tommy Dreyer

12. Russia and Central Asia – Nicole Armengol Oma
13. Europe (west, central, east) – Jake Kish
14. Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Indo-Pacific Stella, Alex, Alex, Antonio, Julia, Tanner
15. Terrorism and Cyber Security –

*South and East Asia and Oceania includes Japan, Mongolia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

**Indo-Pacific includes Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, North Korea, South Korea, and Taiwan and the Pacific Island Countries

Read: “CRS Report on the National Security Council: Background and Issues for Congress.” (Available on canvas as PDF)

Assignment before the next class Sept 11: each group will meet during class time today, Sept 8, and formulate 1-3 questions per team to be used during the Q&A session with Ambassador Anderson.

Week 3

Sept 11

No class meeting

Zoom Q&A with Ambassador Brooke D. Anderson
(Ms. Massicotte is zoom meeting host)

Sept 13

In class meeting: NSC Team meetings – exchange contact info, class schedules, and best out of class time and days to meet, debrief on zoom with Ambassador Anderson (Ms Massicotte will meet with you in-class)

Sept 15

No class meeting

Recorded lecture: Chapter 1, Cashman (watch on your own time/schedule)

Week 4

Sept 18

Q&A on nuclear weapons recorded lectures and anything else from previous two weeks

Cashman, Chapter 2: The Individual Level of Analysis Part I: Human Aggression

Book review assignments made today

Rob Leary from OIT will brief us on using iclicker

Sept 20

Cashman Chapter 3: The Individual Level of Analysis Part II: Psychological explanations of war

Sept 22

NSC Sim 1

Week 5

Sept 25

NO in-class meeting

Pre-recorded lecture to be viewed on your own time.

Cashman Chapter 4: The Substate Level of Analysis: Group Decision Making

Sept 27	Cashman Chapter 5: The State Level of Analysis Part I: Economic and Demographic Factors and Liberalism
Sept 29	NSC Sim 2
<u>Week 6</u>	
Oct 2	NO in-class meeting (Pre-recorded lecture) Cashman Chapter 6: The State Level of Analysis Part II: Internal Conflicts, Nationalism, and War Weariness
Oct 4	Cashman Chapter 7: The Dyadic Level of Analysis Part I: The Nature of Dyads—Really Bad Dyads and Pretty Good Dyads
Oct 6	NSC Sim 3
<u>Week 7</u>	
Oct 9	Cashman Chapter 8: The Dyadic Level of Analysis Part II: International Interactions
Oct 11	Cashman Chapter 9: The Dyadic Level of Analysis Part III: Game Theory, Bargaining, and Deterrence Theory
Oct 13	NSC Sim 4
<u>Week 8</u>	
Oct 16	Catch-up, review and Q&A before mid-term exam Maybe “Faces of the Enemy”
Oct 18	Mid-term exam MC Chapters 1-9 Cashman and nukes from Weeks 1 and 2
Oct 20	Mid-term exam essay
<u>Week 9</u>	
Oct 23	Cashman Chapter 10: The International System Level of Analysis Part I: Realism, Anarchy, and the Balance of Power
October 25	Cashman Chapter 11: The International System Level of Analysis Part II: Power Dynamics, Cyclical Theories, and Historical-Structure Theories of War
Oct 27	NSC Sim 5
<u>Week 10</u>	
Oct 30	Cashman Chapter 12: Constructivism: A Digression
Nov 1	Critical Security Studies Chapter 1: Constructivist theories Critical Security Studies Chapter 2: Critical Theory

Nov 3 NSC Sim 6

Week 11

Nov 6 Critical Security Studies Chapter 3: Feminist and Gender Perspectives
Critical Security Studies Chapter 4: Ontological security

Nov 8 Critical Security Studies Chapter 5: Postcolonial Perspectives

Nov 10 NSC Sim 7

Week 12

Nov 13 Critical Security Studies Chapter 6: Poststructuralism and International Political
Sociology

Nov 15 Critical Security Studies Chapter 7: Securitization Theory

Nov 17 NSC Sim 8

Nov 20-24 No Classes Thanksgiving Nov 23

Week 13

Nov 27 Critical Security Studies Chapter 8: Environmental and planetary security

Nov 29 Critical Security Studies Chapter 9: Health
Critical Security Studies Chapter 10: Human security and development

Dec 1 NSC Sim 9

Week 14

Dec 4 Critical Security Studies Chapter 11: Information, technology, and warfare

Dec 6 Critical Security Studies Chapter 12: Migration and Border Security
Critical Security Studies Chapter 13: (In)Security and the everyday

Dec 8 NSC Sim 10

Week 15

Dec 11 Critical Security Studies Chapter 14: Terror, Risk, and Resilience

Dec 13 Inniss, Korde, Erika Manouselis, and Tiaji Sio. 2023. *Racial Injustice is a National Security Priority*. Harvard Kennedy School Belfer Center. Available on Canvas or online at: <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/racial-justice-national-security-priority-perspectives-next-generation>

Dec 15 Jon Simkins and Claire Barrett. 2019. "A Warrior Tradition: Why Native Americans Continue Fighting for the Same Government That Tried to Wipe Them Out." *Military Times*. Read online: <https://www.militarytimes.com/off-duty/military-culture/2019/11/15/a->

[warrior-tradition-why-native-americans-continue-fighting-for-the-same-government-that-tried-to-wipe-them-out/](#)

Week 16

Dec 18

Final Exam 1:30-4