Contact Information

• Professor: Dr. Pechenkina
  – Class meeting: Wednesdays at 3:00PM-5:30PM via Zoom (see Canvas)
  – Office: 328D Old Main
  – Email: anna.pechenkina@usu.edu
  – Office hours: Mondays at 3:30PM–5PM via Zoom (see Canvas) and by appointment
  – Office phone: 435.797.7318 (please do not leave voice mail, send me an email instead)

• Teaching Assistant (TA): Logan Loftis
  – Email: loganloftis24@gmail.com
  – Office hours: Mondays at 10AM-noon via Zoom (see Canvas) and by appointment

• Writing Fellow (WF): Katherine Van Wagoner
  – Email: kitkatvw@gmail.com

• Political Science Librarian: Ms. Lundstrom
  – Email: kacy.lundstrom@usu.edu

What will you learn in this course?

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Why are governments able to settle their disagreements peacefully the overwhelming majority of the time, yet some disagreements escalate to armed violence? This is puzzling, especially if we consider that every war ends in some sort of settlement. If so, shouldn’t rational opponents reach a settlement without paying the cost of blood and treasure? This is why the content of disagreements may not explain why states sometimes choose war. Understanding the reasons for violence allows us to isolate the conditions for lasting peace.

In addition to studying how states avoid wars (negative peace), we will focus on the determinants of the depth of interstate cooperation (positive peace). Given the U.N.’s lack of enforcement powers, how does it get anything done? Given the undemocratic structure of the U.N. decision-making, why do minor powers participate in it? Why do states sign climate deals if there is no worldwide police to enforce them? We will also survey the means by which states attempt to shape each other’s policy short of military coercion: foreign aid, electoral interventions, and cyberattacks.
1 What does the “web blended broadcast” format mean?

1. No in-person meetings.

2. All readings and lectures will be available on Canvas. All quizzes and exams will be open-book.

3. Required synchronous class meetings will be held once a week on Wednesdays at 3:00-5:30PM via Zoom.

4. Certain assignments will require Zoom-based one-on-one meetings with the professor, TA, WF, or the Librarian.

5. Participation will be evaluated based on your engagement during online meetings and as your contributions to Discussions on Canvas.

2 Course objectives

1. To gain factual knowledge about terminology, classifications, methods, and trends in the field of international security.

2. To learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas and arguments expressed by scholars of international security.

3. To further develop skill in expressing oneself verbally or in writing.

3 Readings

All readings are available through USU Canvas.

4 Course website

Course information, syllabus, assignments, and grades are available at USU Canvas.

5 Earning grades

All deadlines are posted on Canvas; the late assignment policy applies to all assignments and is discussed in section 10.

5.1 Exams (30%)

There will be 2 non-cumulative exams, based on the assigned readings and class material. Both exams are open-book. You will need to answer 3 open-ended questions in 700–1000 words each (excluding references and the question itself), citing a minimum of 5 peer-reviewed articles posted under Files (per answer). Feel free to cite as many additional peer-reviewed academic or news sources as you wish.

Your objective is to signal how well you have mastered the course material by drawing parallels and contrasts between various readings covered in our course. Try your best to incorporate the readings from the entire course. Each answer must have a well-formulated thesis stated in the opening paragraph. Avoid redundant claims, instead provide plenty of evidence to back each unique claim.

If you wish to discuss your exam, please schedule a meeting with me no later than 5 business days after grades have been posted.
5.2 Research paper (all assignments in this category add up to 29%)

A detailed Research Paper Assignment will be posted on Canvas. Here are the highlights.

Your assignment is to choose some past war(s) or event(s), 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 (e.g., uncertainty, commitment problem, deterrence, compellence, etc.) to shed light on the event(s) you have chosen to focus on. Specifically, you have two options for your research paper. Either you may:

1. Choose a single topic that we have discussed and apply that topic to two wars/events; or

2. Choose a single war/event, and apply two of the topics we have discussed in this class to that war/event.

The assignment is then to discuss the topic(s) in the context of the war(s)/events you choose. For example, under the first option, you might explore the role of alliances in WWI and WWII respectively, or counter-insurgency tactics that the US employed in Vietnam and Iraq respectively. Under the second option, you might contrast how commitment problems played out in Israel’s decision to attack Egypt preemptively in 1967 Six Day War and not to attack Syria first in 1973 Yom Kippur War.

The final paper will be 6–10 or 10–15 pages in length and vary in the amount of minimum required citations, depending on whether you take this course as 4464 or 4990.

Please use a plagiarism check online, as Canvas (Turnitin assignment format) does this for me automatically and highlights all passages that are quoted from any source. Do not hesitate to ask me about the standards for citations or anything else.

There are 4 separate assignments that constitute the Research Paper:

5.2.1 Synthesis matrix for the background part of your research paper (4%)

- Submit the synthesis matrix for the background section via Canvas (TurnItIn assignment);
- Meeting 1 with the Writing Fellow (WF) or the Teaching Assistant (TA).

5.2.2 Synthesis matrix for the application part of your research paper (6%)

- Submit the synthesis matrix for the application section via Canvas (TurnItIn assignment);
- Meeting 2 with the WF or the TA.

5.2.3 Synthesis matrix for the full research paper (4%)

- Submit the synthesis matrix for the full paper via Canvas (TurnItIn assignment);
- Meeting 3 with the WF or the TA.

5.2.4 Final draft of the research paper (15%)

The final draft is due during the finals week. Note that 15% of your grade will reflect how well you have incorporated the feedback provided during the semester.

- Submit via Canvas by the specified deadline (TurnItIn assignment).
5.2.5 Extra credit (up to additional 4%)

You are also encouraged to take advantage of the extra credit that will help you develop a quality bibliography:

• During week 5, complete the Research Database Tutorial (1%)
• During week 5, schedule a meeting w/Ms. Lundstrom (the Political Science Librarian).
• During week 6, meet w/Ms. Lundstrom via Zoom to discuss your bibliography (3%); completing Tutorial is a prerequisite for a meeting.

5.3 Group presentation (15%)

A detailed Group Presentation Assignment will be posted on Canvas. Here are the highlights.
- Sign up for your group on Canvas (People → Project Groups). First come, first served.
- Each student will contribute to one group presentation during the Case Studies section of the course. Each presentation will cover one case study by providing historical background and applying political science research findings to the case.
- Individual grades will be based on 5 separate assignments: 1) quality of the group presentation outline, 2) individual talk, 3) peer evaluations, 4) questions for other groups, and 5) your teammates’ evaluations.

5.4 Quizzes (16%)

Quizzes are activities based on assigned readings or lecture material; they are designed to help you evaluate how well you have understood the reading and/or the lecture. 16 quizzes total with 1–2 quizzes per week. Each quiz is worth 10 points and has 3 attempts.

5.5 Participation for 4464 students (10%):

The semester participation grade will be the sum of 10 participation grades accumulated over the semester, at 10 points each.
- To earn full credit for the week, you may either:
  • ask/answer 1 question during the Zoom class meeting during that week
  or
  • ask/answer any 2 questions via Discussions for that week.

To prepare for class participation via Zoom, you will need to complete the assigned readings before each class meeting. To comprehend the readings better, come to class prepared to share your answers to these questions regarding each reading:

• What is the research question (RQ)?
• What is the dependent variable (DV)?
• What is the independent variable (IV)?
• What is the causal mechanism (CM)? (CM = the explanation for why a relationship between the IV and DV is expected)
• What is the evidence?
• What are the findings?
5.6 Participation for 4990 students (10%)

A detailed Discussion Leader Assignment will be posted on Canvas. Here are the highlights.

In addition to the expectations outlined above, you will co-lead class discussion once during the semester. The purpose of this exercise is to learn how to critically and constructively analyze work in political science. Leading a discussion will also help you gain more confidence as a public speaker. You will need to come up with five discussion questions, post them on Discussions, and upload an individual report on Canvas.

5.7 Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Assignments</th>
<th>Points per assignment</th>
<th>Max Points</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
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<td>Range: 40 to 150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Range: 15 to 90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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Grades

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<td>B−</td>
<td>80 - 83.99%</td>
<td>D−</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 - 79.99%</td>
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6 Suggested questions for critical evaluation of readings

Doing readings prior to coming to class is essential in this course. Use the following questions as your reading guide:

1. Summary of the theoretical points:
   - What is the main question that this paper is trying to answer?
   - What are the dependent and the independent variables, and what is the causal mechanism that allegedly links them?
   - What are the assumptions that this paper is making (explicit or implicit)? Why are they necessary? Are any of them unrealistic?
   - Who are the relevant actors?
   - What are their preferences and interests and where do they come from?
• At what level of analysis is the argument?
• Where does the argument fit into the theoretical landscape of IR and who would disagree?
• What is the relative importance of agency versus structure?

2. Summary of the evidence presented (if any):
• What empirical evidence does the paper provide? Is the evidence systematic or anecdotal?
• What are the empirical findings of this paper?
• At what level of analysis is the evidence?
• What is the sample of cases that is being analyzed? Do you think this is the appropriate sample to test the question, or maybe there is a selection bias?
• Do you think the empirical evidence supports the argument? Are there any alternative explanations to the empirical evidence?
• What empirical evidence would falsify the argument of the paper?

3. Critical evaluation:
• Do you think that the direction of the causal relationship is correct? Can the causality work in the opposite direction as well?
• How narrow are the assumptions stated? Do the assumptions limit the findings? (e.g., if one assumes that leaders are not motivated by reelection, what happens to the findings?)
• How generalizable is the evidence presented to other:
  – regions/countries? (E.g., if the data come from one country’s historical record, does this country’s political regime or other characteristics make it difficult to apply it to other states?)
  – time periods in human history? why?
• Can you think of any new hypotheses that come out of the theoretical explanations or your criticism, and that you can test empirically?
• Can you think of an alternative way to test the argument empirically?
• Can you think of any policy-relevant implications? Should governments change some of their current policies in light of the theory or the evidence presented in the paper?
• What did you like about the piece? in what directions could this line of research be continued?

7 Academic conduct

An academic integrity violation (e.g., cheating, falsification, or plagiarism) will result in a failing grade for the assignment. If another instance of violation occurs, it will result in a failing grade for the course. Below is an excerpt from the USU Student Code of Conduct with definitions of related terms, consult the full text for additional information.

Cheating:

1. using or attempting to use or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity, including working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done individually;
2. depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;

3. substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;

4. acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;

5. continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;

6. submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or

7. engaging in any form of research fraud.

Falsification: altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.

Plagiarism: representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

8 COVID-related resources at USU

Please visit this website for USU resources and information that may help you cope with this difficult time.

9 Disability

If you wish to request an accommodation due to a documented disability, please visit the USU Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. The center is also offering COVID-related accommodations.

10 Late assignments

All written assignments will be marked down 1% for each hour that they are late. The exceptions are Quizzes (see section 5.4) and Discussions (see section 5.5) — they will lock 1 hour after the deadline.

11 Syllabus change policy

The syllabus is subject to change with notice.

12 Course schedule

The schedule below should give you a general framework for what topics we will cover during the semester. A continually updated version of this schedule will be available on Canvas. When in doubt, resort to the website version of the schedule.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings &amp; Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weeks 1–3: Sign up for your group presentation. Pick a conflict about which you will write your research paper. To make things easier for yourself, try to coordinate your final paper topic with your group presentation topic.</strong></td>
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**Part I: Introduction to the Course**

**Week 1: Sep 2**
- Introduction to the course
  - Quiz 1

**Week 2: Sep 9**
- Explanations & evidence
  - Arena (2009)
- Graphical literacy
  - Quizzes 2, 3
  - Participation 1

**Part II: Introduction to Bargaining**

**Week 3: Sep 16**
- The inefficiency of war, bargaining
  - Fearon (1995)
- Reasons for war
  - Lake (2010/11)
  - Quizzes 4, 5
  - Participation 2

**Week 4: Sep 23**
- War process and outcomes
  - Werner (1999)
- War process and peace duration
  - Werner and Yuen (2005)
  - Quizzes 6, 7
  - Participation 3
  - Synthesis matrix for the background part of the research paper

**Part III: International Security**

**Week 5: Sep 30**
- Deterrence and compellence
  - Slantchev (2014)
- Extended deterrence
  - Quizzes 8, 9
  - Participation 4
  - 4990: Meeting 1 w/WF; 4464: Meeting 1 w/TA
  - Extra credit 1: Complete the Research Database Tutorial

**Week 6: Oct 7**
- Nuclear deterrence
  - Beardsley and Asal (2009)
- Review for the exam
  - Quiz 10

*Continued on next page*
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<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation 5</td>
<td>Extra credit 2: Meet w/Librarian to discuss bibliography (Tutorial is a prerequisite)</td>
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**Week 7: Oct 14**

Exam I

**Week 8: Oct 21**

Nuclear proliferation

Week 7: Oct 14

Week 8: Oct 21

Week 9: Oct 28

Week 10: Nov 4

Week 11: Nov 11

Week 12: Nov 18

Exam II

**Part IV - Case Studies**

**Week 13: Nov 25 – Thanksgiving**

TUESDAY: Synthesis matrix for the full research paper

**Week 14: Dec 2**

4990: Meeting 3 w/WF; 4464: Meeting 3 w/TA

Group presentation

Continued on next page
13  Required readings

These and all other papers cited in the lectures are posted under Files. You will need to rely on additional readings in your research paper and group presentation assignments.


