

PSCI 425: International Conflict (Section: 800)
Spring 2020 (Online)
Department of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies
Montana State University Billings

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Office Hours: MW 9:20 a.m. – 10:20 a.m., TTh 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Course Description

What makes the headlines in international news? It is usually conflict. Conflict can be violent, as countries go to war, or conflict can result from non-state actors carrying out activities against a country. Conflict does not have to lead to violence. Countries also engage in trade “wars,” place sanctions on each other, and might try to disrupt economic activity in another state. During this course, you will gain an understanding behind why conflict happens, strategies and tactics involved in conflict, how to deescalate, and the outcomes of conflict.

Course Objectives

This course satisfies three credits of the political science major’s Area 1: International Relations and Comparative Politics requirement.

1. Identify and describe key theories of international relations;
2. Identify and analyze the cause of conflict;
3. Describe and analyze the outcomes of conflict.

Required Text

Quackenbush. Stephen L. 2015. *International Conflict: Logic and Evidence*. CQ Press, ISBN: 978-1-4522-4098-5.

The textbook is available through the online campus bookstore and other online retailers. There are also readings that will be uploaded to D2L. Those are indicated in the course schedule.

Online Course Requirement

It is assumed you have access to a computer with a reliable Internet connection to take this course. Please visit <https://www.msubillings.edu/elearning/students/students.htm> to guidelines for online courses and for info regarding help for technical issues. Make sure you have plans in place in case you run into computer and/or Internet issues.

Tips for this class

Since this is an online class, you are expected to spend 9-12 hours on readings to do well. Start your reading as early in each module as you can and take good notes. D2L tracks how many times you log into the course and if you access the links I posted. Students who tend to do well spend more time logging in than those who do not.

Grading

Final exam: 25%

Research paper: 35%

Literature reviews: 25%

Discussion board responses: 15%

Final grade scale: A = 93% and above, A- = 90%-92%, B+ = 87%-89%, B = 83%-86%, B- = 80%-82%, C+ = 77%-79%, C = 73%-76%, C- = 70%-72%, D+ = 67%-69%, D = 63%-66%, D- = 60%-63%, F = 59% and below (Note: I do not round up final grades if you are just below the cutoff, such as having a 92.8%. I have to define the scale at some point, and some people are always going to fall on the other side of the divide. Do not beg to be bumped up. If you have any concerns about grades for individual assignments, please see me. I do have a 48-hour “cooling off” policy and you have to see me about any grade appeals within a week of me grading an assignment. If you wish to appeal grades on individual assignments, please write a short summary of why you think the grade does not reflect your work based on the rubric for each assignment).

Final exam (25%): There will be an essay-based final exam covering the concepts learned throughout the course.

Research paper (35%): Students will write a 11-13 page research design in this course. You will analyze an international conflict through the lens of the theories you will learn about international conflict and provide a solution to the conflict. Students will develop a research question, write a literature review, and outline a theory in separate assignment. The final paper is everything tied together with an introduction, transitions between sections, and a conclusion. The components of the research design and the final paper will be submitted D2L.

Breakdown of research design paper

Research question – 1-2 paragraphs on what the problem is and why it needs to be analyzed) (Sunday, January 26) – 5%

Annotated bibliography – 6-12 sources (Sunday, February 23) – 5%

Literature review– 3-5 pages (Sunday, March 15) – 15%

Theory and outcomes – 5-6 pages (Sunday, April 12) – 15%

Complete draft – 11-13 pages (Sunday, April 26) – 60%

Discussion forums (15%): During every two-week module you will participate in discussion board based on a question I will post. You will be assigned to be a group leader at least twice during the semester. At the end of the first week of a module, group leaders will write a response (225-250 words) where you will need to use the assigned readings and outside journal articles to answer the question. At the end of the second week of each module, those who are not group leaders need to respond to at least three group leader posts using the assigned readings as a guide

to their opinion. Responses should be 100-125 words each. Responses that mainly state “I agree” or something along those lines are not acceptable responses. Group leaders also need to respond to one response in the thread they created. You can disagree with assumptions the others in the group make, as long as it’s civil, and also add additional facts from your research. As discussion board posts are considered participation activities, no late passes may be used. Group leaders need to reply to at least one response.

Literature reviews (25%): To help you understand the material and practice articulating an academic argument, you will write seven short literature reviews, with the highest six scores counting as part of your grade. Literature reviews will be one-page single spaced with 1-inch margins. I will provide a short prompt and you will need to conduct research on the question. Literature reviews are due at the end of every module. More info available on a separate document in D2L.

Grading notes: Proper spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure will be assessed as part of your exam and paper grades. Developing the ability to write clearly is an important skill for your future careers. You are expected to carefully read, edit, and proofread their written work. If you would like help with your writing skills, there are on-campus resources that are there to help you. The university offers help in various subjects through the Academic Support Center. Assistance is free and is available in the Student Union Building. Drop-in writing help and tutoring for this course is available from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Friday. Appointments are also available for writing help.

Email etiquette

I try to answer emails the same day they are received, but in some cases, you may have to wait 48 hours for a response. For emails, please use an appropriate subject and appropriate salutations (e.g. Dr. Adkins or Prof. Adkins). Professors do not like it when you start with “Hey!” or “Yo!” Keep emails as short as possible and please do not email about the details of an assignment on the day it is due. I hold five office hours per week and am available by appointment outside of those hours and my other classes if needed.

Assignment and late work policy

All papers should use 12-point Times New Roman font, be double-spaced, and use 1-inch margins. You may use APA or Chicago (parenthetical) Style for your citations. All assignments must be turned in on D2L unless noted. No exceptions will be made. All assignments must be in a Word file (.doc or .docx). Any other file format such as .pdf, .rtf, or Apple Pages will not be accepted and returned with a zero. Google Docs and Pages can export to a Word format. Late work will **not** be accepted. However, life happens. I allow **two** no-questions asked late pass good for a 48-hour extension on the paper assignments. You just need to email me if you need to use one. If you run into issues in completing assignments, visit me during office hours, especially 1-2 weeks before papers are due. Be proactive instead of reactive. I cannot do much to help once due dates have come and gone.

Registration Requirement

University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Please confirm enrollment in MyInfo. Registration errors must be corrected prior to university deadlines. After the deadline for withdrawing for the class without instructor permission, I will only give permission to those who experience a documented emergency such as serious illness or death in the family that occurs after the deadline.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

Use of the intellectual property of others without attributing it to them is considered a serious academic offense. I will either give a zero for an assignment or you will fail the course if I detect academic misconduct. It can also lead to a disciplinary hearing where sanctions can suspension or expulsion from the university. I report **all** instances of plagiarism to Student Affairs. The university’s policy on academic misconduct can be found in Section B of the student handbook. I will provide links to how to avoid plagiarism on D2L. I am available to help. However, you are responsible for learning how to properly cite your sources and avoid plagiarism.

Student Accessibility

MSU Billings is committed to providing equal access. If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with me so that we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that disability-related accommodations are necessary, please contact Disability Support Services (657-2283; located in Room 135 in the College of Education). We can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

Class Schedule

This is a simplified schedule listing quizzes, discussion board forums, exams, government meeting paper, and letter to state legislator assignment due dates by week. Detailed schedule including reading, videos, quizzes, exams and assignments is listed in D2L. Items such as the Declaration of Independence and Constitution. I may make changes to the schedule as needed.

Module	Due Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments
1	1/26	Intro/Syllabus Studying war What is war?	Quackenbush ch. 1-2 Bremer, Stuart A. 1993. Advancing the Scientific Study of War. <i>International Interactions</i> , 19 (1-2): 1-26. Jones, Daniel M., Stuart A. Bremer, and J. David Singer. 1996. “Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816–1992: Rationale, Coding Rules, and Empirical Patterns.” <i>Conflict Management and</i>

			<p><i>Peace Science</i>, 15 (2): 163–213.</p> <p>Reiter, Dan, Allan C. Stam, and Michael C. Horowitz. 2016. “A Revised Look at Interstate Wars, 1816–2007.” <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 60 (5): 956–76.</p> <p>Brandon and John A. Vasquez. 2010. “Identifying and Classifying Complex Interstate Wars.” <i>International Studies Quarterly</i>, 54 (2): 561-582.</p>
2	2/9	Rational choice theory Territory	<p>Quackenbush ch. 3-4</p> <p>Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2006. “Game Theory, Political Economy, and the Evolving Study of War and Peace.” <i>American Political Science Review</i>, 100 (4): 637-642.</p> <p>Senese, Paul D. 2005. “Territory, Contiguity, and International Conflict: Assessing a New Joint Explanation.” <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>, 49 (4): 769-779.</p> <p>Vasquez, John A. 1995. “Why Do Neighbors Fight? Proximity, Interaction, or Territoriality.” <i>Journal of Peace Research</i>, 32 (3): 277-293.</p>
3	2/23	Power Alliances	<p>Quackenbush ch. 5-6</p> <p>Beard, Steven, and Joshua A Strayhorn. 2018. “When Will States Strike First? Battlefield Advantages and Rationalist War.” <i>International Studies Quarterly</i> 62 (1): 42–53.</p> <p>Corbetta, Renato and William J. Dixon. 2004. “Multilateralism, Major Powers, and Militarized Disputes.” <i>Political Research Quarterly</i>, 57 (1): 5-14.</p> <p>Geller, Daniel S. 1993. “Power Differentials and War in Rival Dyads.” <i>International Studies Quarterly</i>, 37 (2): 173-193.</p> <p>Kenwick, Michael R., John A. Vasquez, and Mathew A Powers. 2015. “Do Alliances Really Deter?” <i>Journal of Politics</i>, 77 (4): 943-954.</p>

			<p>Vasquez, John A. and Ashlea Rundlett. 2015. "Alliances as a Necessary Condition of Multiparty Wars." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i>. Annotated bibliography due</p>
Spring break from 3/2 – 3/6			
4	3/15	Democratic Peace Deterrence	<p>Quackenbush ch. 7-8 Barbieri, Katherine. 1996. "Economic Interdependence: A Path to Peace or a Source of Interstate Conflict?" <i>Journal of Peace Research</i>, 33 (1): 29-49. Carter. David B. and Paul Poast. Forthcoming. "Barriers to Trade: How Border Walls Affect Trade Relations." <i>International Organization</i>, 1-21. Lektzin, David and Mark Souva. 2009. "A Comparative Theory Test of Democratic Peace Arguments, 1946-2000." <i>Journal of Peace Research</i>, 46 (1): 17-37. Maoz, Zeev and Bruce Russett. 1993. "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986." <i>American Political Science Review</i>, 87 (3): 624-638. Achen, Christopher H. and Duncan Snidal. 1989. "Rational Deterrence Theory and Comparative Case Studies." <i>World Politics</i>, 41 (2): 143-169. Huth, Paul and Bruce Russett. 1984. "What Makes Deterrence Work? Cases from 1900 to 1980." <i>World Politics</i>, 36 (4): 496-526. Literature review due</p>
5	3/29	Escalation Doctrine and Strategy	<p>Quackenbush ch. 9-10 McCormack, Daniel, and Henry Pascoe. 2017. "Sanctions and Preventive War." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 61, 8: 1711–39. Reed, William. 2000. "A Unified Model of Conflict Onset and Escalation." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>, 44 (1): 84-93.</p>

			<p>Senese, Paul D. and John A. Vasquez. 2005. "Assessing the Steps to War." <i>British Journal of Political Science</i>, 35 (4): 607-633.</p> <p>Reiter, Dan and Curtis Meek. 1999. "Determinants of Military Strategy, 1903-1994: A Quantitative Empirical Test." <i>International Studies Quarterly</i>, 43 (2): 363-387.</p> <p>McAllister, James. 2010/11. "Who Lost Vietnam? Soldiers, Civilians, and U.S. Military Strategy." <i>International Security</i>. 35 (3): 95-123.</p>
6	4/12	Evolution of War Ending a War	<p>Quackenbush ch. 11-12</p> <p>Bennett, D. Scott. 2006. "Predicting the Length of the 2003 U.S.-Iraq War." <i>Foreign Policy Analysis</i>, 2: 101-116.</p> <p>de Mesquita, Bruce Bueno, and Randolph M. Siverson. 1995. "War and the Survival of Political Leaders: A Comparative Study of Regime Types and Political Accountability." <i>American Political Science Review</i>, 89 (4): 841-855.</p> <p>Nilsson, Marco. 2012. "Offense-Defense Balance, War Duration, and the Security Dilemma." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i>, 56 (3): 467-489.</p> <p>Reiter, Dan and Allan Stam III. 1998. "Democracy, War Initiation, and Victory." <i>American Political Science Review</i>, 92 (2): 377-389.</p> <p>Ramsey, Kristopher W. 2008. "Settling it on the Field: Battlefield Events and War Termination." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i>, 52 (6): 850-879.</p> <p>Theory and outcomes due</p>
7	4/26	Recurring Conflicts Learning About War	<p>Quackenbush ch. 13-14</p> <p>Bas, Muhammet A. and Robert J. Schub. 2016. "How Uncertainty about War Outcomes Affects War Onset." <i>Journal of Conflict</i></p>

			<p><i>Resolution</i>, 60 (6): 1099–1128.</p> <p>Narang, Neil, and Rupal N. Mehta. 2019. “The Unforeseen Consequences of Extended Deterrence: Moral Hazard in a Nuclear Client State.” <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 63 (1): 218–50.</p> <p>Thompson, William R. 2001. “Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics.” <i>International Studies Quarterly</i>, 45: 557-586.</p> <p>Fortna, Virginia Page. 2003. “Scraps of Paper? Agreements and the Durability of Peace.” <i>International Organization</i>, 57 (2): 337-372.</p> <p>Final paper due</p>
Finals	4/30	Finals week	Final exam due 4/30