

PSC 645 Conflict Processes

Course Syllabus Spring 2013

Classroom: 502 Park Hall
Class schedule: Tuesday 1-3:50 p.m.
Office hours: TR 9:30-10:30 a.m.
Office: 505 Park Hall

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Course description

This advanced graduate seminar is required for all Ph.D. majors in international relations and it will be assumed that, prior to taking this course, students have successfully completed PSC 504 Core Seminar in International Politics. It provides an in-depth coverage of the evolution of international conflict (causes, escalation, ending & peace-building) from several theoretical angles. We will discuss major theories that link conflict to power distributions, strategic bargaining, domestic regime type (democratic peace and beyond), alliances, and political geography. The readings include a selection of classic seminal writings as well as more recent studies in each area.

Reading materials

All required readings for the course consist of selected book chapters and journal articles. If not available through the UB electronic journal holdings (<http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/e-resources/ft.html>), they can be accessed on UBLearn for this course (marked with *UBLearn in the schedule below). You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to download all materials.

Course Requirements

Final grades will be based on three components: class participation (20%), two short papers (30%), and a final exam (50%).

- **Class participation:** Students are expected to complete the assigned readings each week according to the topic covered. For this part of the grade, students will be expected to perform consistently well both when participating on a voluntary basis as well as when called upon to discuss the readings. Class participation will count for 20% of the final grade.
- **Two short papers:** Beyond regular attendance and active participation in class discussion, each student is expected to make two brief (10-15 minute) in-class presentations on the weekly topics, followed by a discussion guided by the presenter, which should be based on a short paper to be e-mailed to me by 4 p.m. one day before the scheduled class for that topic.

Any papers attempted to be submitted after 4 pm will automatically default into F grade. These papers and presentations should highlight the principle points of all the week's readings, provide the points of comparisons across the readings (similarities, differences, etc.), and critically evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. They should not be simple summaries of the readings or annotated bibliographies; suggestions on how to analytically and critically evaluate the readings will be detailed in an additional handout. If there is an "overview" article, it provides the context for a better understanding of the required readings to be discussed in your paper (that is, do not cover in any major details the "overview" articles). The papers should be approximately 6 pages double-spaced; the 7th page should list the total of six talking points for discussions that are clearly grounded in the specific readings (that is, they need to refer to specific pages from the readings, but without using up space with quotes). As for their in-class presentations, they are meant to help focus the class discussion on the week's topic readings. Each short paper/presentation will count for 15% of the overall course grade, for a total of 30%.

- **Final exam:** The take-home final exam is similar in format to the comprehensive exams in international relations, although it will be shorter and with an extended time of one week. It will be distributed in class on April 24 and will be due by 4 p.m. on May 1. Although both hard copy and electronic versions are preferable, an electronic version is required and must reach me by e-mail by the deadline. The final exam will count toward 50% of the final grade.

Written assignments (short papers & final exam) should follow the Chicago Style Manual: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

Excused Absences and Deadline Extensions

This is a graduate-level seminar, and students are expected to be regularly prepared for and attend all classes. If the student is seeking an excused absence, s/he must notify me at least one day before the absence and provide full documentation no later than by the end of the second working day after the absence. The deadline extensions for short papers and the exam will not be granted, except ONLY in documented cases of serious illness. Otherwise, the failures to submit short review papers and the exam by the deadline will be graded F. The same applies for a failure to present a short paper and guide the discussion in class as scheduled. I will not grant an Incomplete grade for the course.

Plagiarism Statement

As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another person. In accordance with the definition, a student is committing plagiarism if s/he copies the work of another person and turn it in as his/her own, even if s/he should have the permission of the person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated. I will not tolerate any form of plagiarism and any case of scholastic dishonesty will result in an automatic grade F for the course. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism

and general academic dishonesty issues, please consult the UB pages and policy on these issues as a starting point, such as: <http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml>, http://www.grad.buffalo.edu/policies/academic_integrity.pdf, and <http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/asl/guides/plagiarism.html>.

Students with Disabilities Policy

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please notify me as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester.

Copyright Statement

Unless otherwise noted, the handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By “handouts,” I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, web pages, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission.

Scholarly Journals

Students should be familiar with the primary journals in international relations:

International Studies Quarterly
Journal of Conflict Resolution
International Organization

specialized in the conflict area, additionally:

Conflict Management and Peace Science
International Interactions
International Security
Journal of Peace Research
Security Studies

and articles on international politics in more general journals in the discipline:

American Political Science Review
American Journal of Political Science
Journal of Politics
World Politics
British Journal of Political Science

All these journals should be perused regularly and, if unfamiliar with some of them, a good start would be to read those articles that are relevant for the topics in this course.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

Week 1: January 15

COURSE INTRODUCTION

No readings.

Week 2: January 22

GENERAL OVERVIEW

General Theoretical Issues

Hill, Kim Quaile. 2012. "In Search of a General Theory." *Journal of Politics* 74 (4): 917-31.

Dessler, David. 1991. "Beyond Correlations: Toward a Causal Theory of War." *International Studies Quarterly* 35 (3): 337-55.

Research survey: Geller, Daniel S. 2000. "Explaining War: Empirical Patterns and Theoretical Mechanisms." In *Handbook of War Studies II*, ed. Manus I. Midlarsky. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp. 407-49. *UBLearns

Conceptualizing Conflict Processes

Diehl, Paul F. 2006. "Just a Phase? Integrating Conflict Dynamics Over Time." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 23 (3): 199-210.

Vasquez, John A., and Brandon Valeriano. 2010. "Classification of Interstate Wars." *Journal of Politics* 72 (2): 292-309.

Historical Patterns

Sarkees, Meredith, Frank Wayman, and J. David Singer. 2003. "Inter-State, Intra-State, and Extra-State Wars: A Comprehensive Look at Their Distribution Over Time, 1816-1997." *International Studies Quarterly* 47 (1): 49-70.

Week 3: January 29

STRUCTURAL AND DYADIC POWER BALANCES/SHIFTS

Waltz, Kenneth N. 1988. "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (4): 615-28.

Wayman, F.W. 1984. "Bipolarity and War: The Role of Capability Concentration and Alliance Patterns among Major Powers, 1816-1965." *Journal of Peace Research* 21 (1): 61-78.

Rasler, Karen, and William R. Thompson. 2010. "Systemic Theories of Conflict." In *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, ed. Robert A. Denemark, London: Wiley-Blackwell & Tucson: ISA. *UBLearns

Kim, Woosang, and James D. Morrow. 1992. "When Do Power Shifts Lead to War?" *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (4): 896-922.

Blainey, Geoffrey. 1988. "The Abacus of Power." In Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War*. New

York: Free Press, Ch. 8 (pp. 108-24). *UBLeads
 (Recommended overview: Kugler, Jacek, and Douglas Lemke. 2000. "The Power Transition Research Program: Assessing Theoretical and Empirical Advances." In *Handbook of War Studies II*, ed. Manus I. Midlarsky. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp. 129-63. *UBLeads)

Week 4: February 5 **STRATEGIC BARGAINING AND DETERRENCE I**

Overview: Danilovic, Vesna, and Joe Clare. 2010. "Deterrence and Crisis Bargaining." In *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, ed. Robert A. Denemark, London: Wiley-Blackwell & Tucson: ISA. *UBLeads
 Schelling, Thomas C. 1966. *Arms and Influence*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Ch. 2 (pp. 35-91). *UBLeads
 Zagare, Frank C. 2004. "Reconciling Rationality with Deterrence: A Re-examination of the Logical Foundations of Deterrence Theory." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 16 (2): 107-41.
 Huth, Paul. 1988. "Extended Deterrence and the Outbreak of War." *American Political Science Review* 82 (2): 423-43.
 Clare, Joe, and Vesna Danilovic. 2010. "Multiple Audiences and Reputation Building in International Conflicts." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54 (6): 860-82.
 Sechser, Todd. 2010. "Goliath's Curse: Coercive Threats and Asymmetric Power." *International Organization* 64 (4): 627-60.

Week 5: February 12 **STRATEGIC BARGAINING AND DETERRENCE II**

Overview: Danilovic, Vesna, and Joe Clare. 2010. [see the previous week]

Fearon, James D. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49 (3): 379-414.
 Fearon, James D. 1997. "Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41 (1): 68-90.
 Morrow, James D. 1999. "The Strategic Setting of Choices: Signaling, Commitment, and Negotiation in International Politics." In *Strategic Choice and International Relations*, ed. David A. Lake and Robert Powell. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 77-114. *UBLeads
 Wagner, R. Harrison. 2000. "Bargaining and War." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (3): 469-84.
 Slantchev, Branislav L. 2003. "The Power to Hurt: Costly Conflict with Completely Informed States." *American Political Science Review* 97 (1): 123-33.

Week 6: February 19**ALLIANCE FORMATION**

- Walt, Stephen M. 1985. "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power." *International Security* 9 (4): 3-43.
- Morrow, James D. 1991. "Alliances and Asymmetry: An Alternative to the Capability Aggregation Model of Alliances." *American Journal of Political Science* 35 (4): 904-33.
- Siverson, Randolph M., and Juliann Emmons. 1991. "Birds of Feather: Democratic Political Systems and Alliance Choices in the 20th Century." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35 (2): 285-306.
- Kimball, Anessa L. 2010. "Political Survival, Policy Distribution, and Alliance Formation." *Journal of Peace Research* 47 (4): 407-19.
- Crawford, Timothy F. 2011. "Preventing Enemy Coalitions: How Wedge Strategies Shape Power Politics." *International Security* 35 (4): 155-89.

Week 7: February 26**ALLIANCE RELIABILITY AND CONFLICT**

- Leeds, Brett Ashley, Andrew G. Long, and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell. 2000. "Reevaluating Alliance Reliability: Specific Threats, Specific Promises." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44 (5): 686-99.
- Crescenzi, Mark J.C. 2012. "Reliability, Reputation, and Alliance Formation." *International Studies Quarterly* 56: 259-75.
- Gartzke, Erik, and Kristian S. Gleditsch. 2004. "Why Democracies May Actually Be Less Reliable Allies." *American Journal of Political Science* 48 (4): 775-95.
- Leeds, Brett Ashley, Michaela Mattes, and Jeremy S. Vogel. 2009. "Interests, Institutions, and the Reliability of International Commitments." *American Journal of Political Science* 53 (2): 461-76.
- Clare, Joe. n.d. "The Deterrent Value of Democratic Allies." *International Studies Quarterly* (forthcoming): 1-11.

Week 8: March 5**TERRITORIAL ISSUES AND THE 'STEPS TO WAR'**

- Overview: Tir, Jaroslav, and John A. Vasquez. 2010. "Geography and Territory." In *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, ed. Robert A. Denemark, London: Wiley-Blackwell & Tucson: ISA. *UBLeans
- Vasquez, John A. 1995. "Why Do Neighbors Fight?: Proximity, Interaction, and Territoriality." *Journal of Peace Research* 32 (3): 277-93
- Hensel, Paul R. 2001. "Contentious Issues and World Politics: The Management of Territorial Claims in the Americas, 1816-1992." *International Studies Quarterly* 45 (1): 81-109.

- Starr, Harvey, and G. Dale Thomas. 2005. "The Nature of Borders and International Conflict: Revisiting Hypotheses on Territory." *International Studies Quarterly* 49 (1): 123-39.
- Senese, Paul D., and John A. Vasquez. 2008. *The Steps to War: An Empirical Study*. Chs. 2 and 8. *UBLeans

Week 9: March 12
NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK

Week 10: March 19
DOMESTIC REGIME TYPE I

- Overview: Chan, Steve. 2010. "Progress in the Democratic Peace Research Agenda." In *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, ed. Robert A. Denemark, London: Wiley-Blackwell & Tucson: ISA. *UBLeans
- Doyle, Michael W. 1986. "Liberalism and World Politics." *American Political Science Review* 80 (4): 1151-69.
- Maoz, Zeev, and Bruce Russett. 1993. "Normative and Structural Causes of the Democratic Peace, 1946-1986." *American Political Science Review* 87 (3): 624-38.
- Rousseau, David L., Christopher Gelpi, Dan Reiter, and Paul K. Huth. 1996. "Assessing the Dyadic Nature of the Democratic Peace, 1918-88." *American Political Science Review* 90 (3): 512-33.
- Farber, Henry S., and Joanne Gowa. 1997. "Politics and Peace." *International Security* 20 (2): 123-46.
- Gelpi, Christopher. 1997. "Democratic Diversions." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41 (2): 255-82.

Week 11: March 26
DOMESTIC REGIME TYPE II

Overview: Chan, Steve. 2010. [see the previous week]

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, James D. Morrow, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alastair Smith. 1999. "An Institutional Explanation for the Democratic Peace." *American Political Science Review* 93 (4): 791-808.
- Schultz, Kenneth A. 1999. "Do Domestic Institutions Constrain or Inform?: Contrasting Two Institutional Perspectives on Democracy and War." *International Organization* 53 (2): 233-66.
- Snyder, Jack, and Eric D. Borghard. 2011. "The Cost of Empty Threats: A Penny, Not a Pound." *American Political Science Review* 105 (3): 437-56.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce and Randolph M. Siverson. 1995. "War and the Survival of Political Leaders: A Comparative Study of Regime Types and Political Accountability."

American Political Science Review 89 (4): 841-53.

Arena, Philip. 2008. "Success Breeds Success?: War Outcomes, Domestic Opposition, and Elections." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25 (2): 136-51.

Week 12: April 2

NO CLASS – THE INSTRUCTOR IS AT THE ISA CONFERENCE

Week 13: April 9

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND MEDIATION

Overview: McLaughlin Mitchell, Sara, and Patrick M. Regan. 2010. "Conflict Management." In *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, ed. Robert A. Denemark, London: Wiley-Blackwell & Tucson: ISA. *UBLeans

Dixon, William J. 1996. "Third-Party Techniques for Preventing Conflict Escalation and Promoting Peaceful Settlement." *International Organization* 50 (4): 653-81.

Rauchhaus, Robert. 2006. "Asymmetric Information, Mediation and Conflict Management." *World Politics* 58 (2): 207-41.

Favretto, Katja. 2009. "Should Peacemakers Take Sides? Major Power Mediation, Coercion, and Bias." *American Political Science Review* 103, (2): 248-63.

Beber, Bernd. 2012. "International Mediation, Selection Effects, and the Question of Bias." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 29 (4): 397-424.

Beardsley, Kyle, and Nigel Lo. n.d. "Third-Party Conflict Management and the Willingness to Make Concessions." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (forthcoming): 1-31.

Week 14: April 16

MAKING AND KEEPING PEACE

Overview: Fortna, Virginia Page, and Lise Morje Howard. 2008. "Pitfalls and Prospects in the Peacekeeping Literature." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11: 283-301.

Doyle, Michael W., and Nicholas Sambanis. 2000. "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 94 (4): 779-801.

Fortna, Virginia Page. 2004. "Interstate Peacekeeping: Causal Mechanisms and Empirical Effects." *World Politics* 56 (4): 481-519.

Greig, J. Michael, and Paul F. Diehl. 2005. "The Peacekeeping-Peacemaking Dilemma." *International Studies Quarterly* 49 (4): 621-45.

Werner, Suzanne, and Amy Yuen. 2005. "Making and Keeping Peace." *International Organization* 59 (2): 261-92.

Hartzell, Caroline, and Matthew Hoddie. 2003. "Institutionalizing Peace: Power Sharing and Post-Civil War Conflict Management." *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (2): 318-32.

Week 15: April 23

STUDENT READING SELECTIONS

Each student will select and present in class one article published in the past 4-5 years (ca. 2008-2013) in the listed journals on p. 3 of this syllabus. The article needs to be related *directly* to one or more topics in this course and its selection justified on the grounds of its theoretical relevance and research contribution to the select body of literature covered in this course. I have to be notified about the article selection by April 9 at the latest. An article proposal has to be accompanied by a *brief paragraph* justifying the selection (*your* view – not the author’s abstract - on what kind of contribution it makes to which specific topic(s) in this course, and how).

Take-home exam will be given in class on April 23 --- it is due by 4 p.m. on April 30

~Have a Good Summer~