This is a graduate seminar in international security. As such it builds on and refines broader claims about the working of the global political system and applies those insights to questions of war and peace. The most fundamental question asked by scholars of international security is: ‘Why do wars occur?’, or as one of the readings in this course puts it: “Who Fights Whom, When, Where and Why?” While this may be the core issue that we address in this seminar, it is not the only concern that we have. Many theorists of international security suggest that this formulation of the question is wrong and that we should rather be asking ‘What causes peace?’ These scholars come at the issue from non-realist perspectives and their claims point to one of the core debates within the field today – the historical dominance of realism and challenges to it from both liberalism and critical theories.

This course will focus initially on the first question, but we will not lose sight of the critiques of this approach. Then in the second half of the semester, we will focus on some contemporary challenges to the traditional structure of international security – globalization; terrorism; ethnic conflict; and ethics and warfare. At the end of the semester we will spend some time focusing on efforts to negotiate the end of conflicts and resolve underlying disputes.

Course Requirements:

There are three core requirements for this course:

This is a graduate seminar and students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the relevant readings for the week. You are expected to be an informed and active participant in class discussions. To this end each week a student will be responsible for writing a response to the weekly readings. This response can be either in the form of an essay or as a set of questions and/or talking points raised by the readings. This response is to be completed and emailed to the other students and the instructor no later than 5pm on the Tuesday before the class. The response will provide the beginning for our discussion of the readings.

In addition to being prepared for class and writing responses to the readings there are two other requirements for this class:

A critical book review. In looking at the syllabus you will notice that in addition to the required readings for each week there are several suggested secondary readings for each
topic. You should select one book (or, in exceptional circumstances, a group of articles) from these lists and write a critical evaluation of it. This should be roughly 6-8 pages long and should take the form of a review for a scholarly journal. You should place the book in its theoretical, methodological and substantive tradition and evaluate its contributions to our understanding of international security. We will discuss this assignment in more detail in class. This assignment is due in class on Wednesday, March 4.

A research paper. This should take the form of a paper that could be presented at an academic conference (and potentially be published.) It should be roughly 25 pages long and should address a problem in the field of international security as it is broadly defined. Beyond these requirements you are free to choose what you wish to write – you may undertake a qualitative or quantitative study of a specific question or undertake a theoretical argument. The key criterion underlying your choice of topic should be that you are making a contribution to the body of knowledge within the field. As part of the process of writing this paper students will submit a 1-2 page proposal. This should outline what you want to do in the paper. It should include a statement of the research interest or the puzzle you are seeking to explain. It should note the theoretical explanations for the problem and the weaknesses that you have identified in them and should suggest what theoretical approach you will take and where you expect it to lead. The proposal is due April 8.

The paper is due May 1.

The grades for these assignments will be based on the following framework:
Class participation and written responses – 30%
Book review – 30%
Research paper – 40%

Readings:

The following books have been ordered through the bookstore though there is no requirement that you purchase any of them. Students who are considering a career in academia may want to own these books, but others probably do not have a reason to purchase the books if you can get them through the library.


In assigning the readings I have tried to strike a balance between ‘classics’ in the field and some more recent research that looks at contemporary problems or updates long-running debates. These choices are necessarily selective and (to some extent) subjective. What we will read in this course is a sampling of the research undertaken on international security and is representative of a much larger body of work. There are topics that we will not cover or that we will only touch on briefly. This does not mean that these concerns are less important – the decision was simply a result of time constraints.

**Schedule of Classes:**

January 14: **Introduction to Course**

January 21: **Concepts and Definitions: States, Power and Security**

**Required Reading:**

J. David Singer, “The Etiology of Interstate War: A Natural History Approach” in Vasquez


**Suggested Reading:**


January 28: **Power and Conflict, I**

**Required Reading:**


Douglas M. Gibler, “Alliances: Why Some Cause War and Others Cause Peace” in Vasquez


**Suggested Readings:**


February 4: *Power and Conflict, II*

**Required Reading:**

Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War*, Chapters 1-11, skim 13, 14, 17 and 18

Suggested Reading:

Daniel Geller, “Material Capabilities: Power and International Conflict” in Vasquez


Alexander Wendt. 2003. “Why a World State is Inevitable” European Journal of International Relations, Vol. 9, No. 4


February 11: Behavioral Explanations for War

Required Reading:


**Suggested Reading:**


February 18: **Rationalist Explanations for War**

**Required Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


Russell Leng, “Escalation: Crisis Behavior and War” in Vasquez


February 25: **Liberal Responses to War**

**Required Reading:**


James Lee Ray, “Democracy: On the Level(s), Does Democracy Correlate with Peace?” in Vasquez


Suggested Reading:


Susan Sample, “Military Buildups: Arming and War” in Vasquez


March 4: **Critical Theoretical Responses to War**

**Required Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


March 11: **No class – Spring Break**

March 18: **Strategies and Outcomes of War**

**Required Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**

Gary Goertz and Paul Diehl, “Rivalries: The Conflict Process” in Vasquez


March 25: **Ethics and Warfare**

**Required Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


April 1: **Globalization and Warfare after the Cold War, I**

**Required Reading:**


**Suggested Reading**


International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. 2001. The Responsibility to Protect: Research, Bibliography, Background, Supplementary Volume (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre)

Laura Neack. 2007. Elusive Security: States First, People Last (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield)

April 8: Globalization and Warfare after the Cold War, II

Required Reading:


Suggested Reading:


April 15: **Terrorism**

**Required Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


April 22: **Negotiating the End of Conflicts**

Required Reading:

**Suggested Reading:**

Christoph Bertram. 1995-96. “Multilateral Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution” *Survival*, Vol. 37, No. 4


**April 29: Resolving Conflicts:**

**Required Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


