

# DIPLOMACY, CRISIS AND WAR IN THE MODERN ERA

TERM: Spring 2021  
WEBSITE: [IAPA 1804](#)  
TIME: Tues/Thurs 2:30-3:50pm  
CLASSROOM: Watson 114

PROFESSOR: Tyler Jost  
OFFICE: Watson Room 342  
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OFFICE HOURS: Thursday 4-6pm ([Calendly](#))

TEACHING ASSISTANTS: Victoria Reichling and Sarah Whitney

## COURSE SUMMARY

This undergraduate lecture examines war and peace after 1945 through the lens of international relations (IR) theory. It aims to both teach students theoretical perspectives on international relations and to critically evaluate the changing ways in which states have interacted with one another since the end of World War II. What caused the Cold War? Did nuclear weapons change the way that states negotiated with one another? How much did individuals make a difference during interstate crises? Why did states sometimes fail to reach peaceful settlements with one another? What were the experiences of states other than the United States and Soviet Union during the Cold War? How have social and economic institutions changed international politics in the twenty-first century?

## SHOULD I TAKE THIS COURSE? AND WHY?

While each student's experience is likely to differ, I believe there are two broad reasons to take this course. First, the study of IR theory may sometimes seem stylized or implicitly grounded in the experience of the United States and Western Europe. This course incorporates the research of international historians who have explored questions pertinent to IR theory in the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam, Iraq, India, Pakistan, the Korean Peninsula, and elsewhere.

Second, the study of IR theory and history are mutually reinforcing endeavors. Thinking like a social scientist, we can leverage what scholars have learned in economics, sociology, psychology, and political science in order to better explain what happens in the international arena. However, deep engagement with the history of international conflict, for example, draws attention to the limits of these theoretical models – and illuminates ways in which they might be improved.

The course is generally arranged chronologically, beginning with the origins of the Cold War and ending with the contemporary US-China geopolitical competition. Each week will feature one or two readings on IR theory with a particular application to an interstate dispute. The goal is to critically evaluate how well theoretical frameworks illuminate the events under consideration.

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Rather than covering all theoretical material at the onset, the course introduces some each week.

While there are no formal prerequisite requirements, the course includes a large amount of material on international relations theory and history. Students who have not taken an introductory course in international relations – or who are unfamiliar with modern world history – may find the course extremely challenging. If you have not taken a course in IR theory, you may find it helpful to consult an introductory text, such as *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions* (4th edition). If you are less familiar with modern world history, you might consider reviewing *The History of the World* (6th edition), beginning with Book 7, Chapter 6.

## COURSE GOALS

The overall goal of this course is to help you develop informed opinions regarding the causes of war and the conditions of peace in the modern era. You should come away from this class with a better understanding of international history, theories of international politics, and the general value of social science in explaining interstate conflict.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

There are two required texts for the course: *The Cold War: A World History* (\$18); *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (\$33). All other readings are available through the Brown library.

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This course will primarily rely on the Socratic method, meaning that content will be covered through a question-answer dialogue between the instructor and the students. In each class, I will pose questions that will help students think through the assigned readings in a critical fashion. As such, this course is still primarily discussion-based.

The success of a discussion-based model hinges on three things. First, it requires you to invest time in engaging with the material prior to class. I expect everyone to devote sufficient time to complete all readings in advance. I do reserve the right to “cold call” on occasion to ensure that everyone is keeping up with the readings. Second, it requires you to engage with the material with a critical eye and come to class prepared to share your thoughts. On the one hand, assigned readings in this course represent the culmination of years of careful academic research by some of the leading scholars in the field. Try to remain open-minded and take what the author is saying seriously. On the other hand, the fields of political science and history are filled with differing opinions. Class discussion will aim to bring out multiple sides of the debate and encourage you to start developing ideas about where you stand. Third, in-class discussion and debate requires that we be respectful of each other’s opinions. That includes the instructor. If you ever feel that the classroom environment is problematic in any way, please contact me.

## TIME ALLOTMENT

You should expect to spend approximately: 10 hours per week (on average) reading and reviewing the material (120 hours total) and 10-15 hours preparing for the mid-term and final exams.

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Please note that this course involves an intensive reading load (usually over 200 pages per week).

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND COLLABORATION

Plagiarism violates the academic policies of Brown University and the norms of the scholarly community. Consequences for plagiarism are often severe, and can include suspension or expulsion. Brown's [Academic Code](#) provides specific details regarding how to properly cite material. A general rule of thumb is, if you are in doubt, ask for clarification. If you are still in doubt, *include the citation*. Students may find additional support for the writing requirements in this course at the [Brown Writing Center](#). You are encouraged to discuss course material and assignments with classmates. This is critical to academic work. In the end, however, all assignments must be your own work. You should acknowledge assistance given by other students. For example, if a classmate provided comments on an earlier draft, simply include a footnote acknowledging the assistance (you will see this convention in nearly every assigned reading).

### TECHNOLOGY POLICY (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Students are not permitted to use technology of any kind (laptops, tablets, cell phones) during class. The exception, of course, is for students who are attending class through Zoom. **Students are not permitted to record the class by any means.** More broadly, this course is primarily discussion-based, meaning that we should be actively listening while others are speaking in order to better engage with their argument. In addition, there is a growing body of evidence that students perform better in technology-free learning environments. Students who take handwritten notes show improved ability to understand and remember concepts. Perhaps more important to the community, other studies show that students who multitask on laptops not only tend to score lower on tests but also end up distracting those around them.

### ACCESSIBILITY

Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me if you have a disability or other condition that might require accommodations or modification of any of these course procedures. You may speak with me after class or during office hours. For more information contact [Student and Employee Accessibility Services](#) (401-863-9588; SEAS@brown.edu).

Brown University welcomes students from around the country and the world, and the unique perspectives international and multilingual students bring enrich the campus community. To empower multilingual learners, an array of support is available including language and culture workshops and individual appointments. For more information about [English Language Learning](#) support at Brown, contact the ELL Specialists (ellwriting@brown.edu).

### COURSE STRUCTURE

**10% Participation**

**20% Quizzes**

**35% Mid-Term Exam**

**35% Final Exam**

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*Participation.* This course will primarily rely on the Socratic method, meaning that content will be covered through a question-answer dialogue between the instructor and the students. In each class, I will pose questions that will help us think through the assigned readings in a critical fashion. Active participation is the cornerstone of a discussion-based course. Creating a healthy learning environment requires both your attendance and your active contribution to the discussion. I will allow one unexcused absence but any additional absences require permission and/or a Dean's excuse. Please come to class on time. I reserve the right to treat a late arrival greater than 10 minutes as an absence.

Participation will be evaluated based both on the frequency and thoughtfulness of your contributions. Exemplary participation consistently meets the following criteria: (1) complete comprehension of the week's readings; (2) ability to draw connections across readings; (3) engagement with your classmates' ideas; and (4) novel insight. Above average participation consistently meets some of these criteria. Acceptable participation consistently makes a good faith effort but is inconsistent in execution or engagement. Unacceptable participation is consistently uninvolved or otherwise disrespectful. I will contact you if your participation is unacceptable.

*Quizzes.* About once per week, there will be a short, multiple-choice quiz. You will take the quiz over Canvas on a randomly selected day within the week. That is, some weeks the quiz will be on Tuesday and others on Thursday. Quizzes will begin promptly at 230pm and last five minutes. Each quiz will consist of five multiple-choice or true-false questions, which will be descriptive/fact-based (e.g. which of the following best summarizes the author's theory?). Quizzes will cover material only from that day's assigned readings – so you do not need to review previous readings in order to prepare. Quizzes are open book and open note. There are two reasons for these quizzes. First, for many of you, this will be the first exposure to the history of international conflict. Building a reservoir of knowledge is important to develop informed opinions. Second, quizzes should help you study for the mid-term and final exams, a portion of which will use questions recycled from the quizzes. If you miss class for an excused reason, the quiz will not count toward your grade. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped.

*Mid-Term Exam.* The a take-home mid-term exam will cover content from lessons 1-14. The exam will be released on March 15th and be due on March 22nd. Once students begin the exam, they will have 72 hours to complete it. The exam will be 30% multiple choice and identification, 30% short answer, and 40% essay. A set of potential essay questions will be circulated the week before the exam. The exam is open book and open note, but students must have produced referenced notes themselves. While group study is encouraged, you want to ensure that your short answers and essays are original. **No group study or collaboration is permitted once the exam has been posted.** The exam will be posted to Canvas on March 15 at 4pm and is due on March 20 at 9pm. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, exams uploaded after the deadline will not be accepted. There will be no class session on March 17.

*Final Exam.* The final exam will cover content from lessons 15-24. It does *not* include content from the first half of the course, although students are free to draw on it in their responses. The exam will be 30% multiple choice and identification, 30% short answer, and 40% essay. A set of potential essay questions will be circulated the week before the exam. The exam is open book and open note. Rules and guidance for the final exam are the same as the mid-term exam. The exam will be posted to Canvas on May 10 at 4pm and is due on May 15 at 9pm.

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## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week I

#### LESSON 1: COURSE OVERVIEW - JANUARY 27

#### LESSON 2: THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT AND COOPERATION I - FEBRUARY 1

- Blainey, Geoffrey. *Causes of War*. New York: The Free Press, 1973. pp. 35-56.
- Goddard, Stacie E. *Indivisible Territory and the Politics of Legitimacy: Jerusalem and Northern Ireland*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 1-17.
- Horowitz, Michael C., Allan C. Stam, and Cali M. Ellis. *Why Leaders Fight*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. pp. 1-24.
- (Optional) Fearon, James D. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49.3 (1995): 379-414.

#### LESSON 3: THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT AND COOPERATION II - FEBRUARY 3

- Saunders, Elizabeth N. *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions*. Cornell University Press, 2011. pp. 1-19.
- Braumoeller, Bear F. *Only the Dead: The Persistence of War in the Modern Age*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. Introduction.

### Week II

*Theoretical concepts: power and institutions*

*Empirical focus: United States and the Soviet Union, 1945-1950*

#### LESSON 4: THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR I - FEBRUARY 8

- Kydd, Andrew H. *Trust and Mistrust in International Relations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007. pp. 3-27 and 79-118.
- Gaddis, John Lewis. "The Long Peace: Elements of Stability in the Postwar International System." *International Security* 10.4 (1986): pp. 99-142.

#### LESSON 5: THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR II - FEBRUARY 10

- Westad, Odd Arne. *The Cold War: A World History*. New York: Basic Books, 2017. pp. 19-69.
- Craig, Campbell, and Fredrik Logevall. *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity*. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2020. pp. 60-103.
- Pechatnov, Vladimir. "The Soviet Union and the World, 1944-1953." *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. pp. 90-111.

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### Week III

*Theoretical concepts: domestic regimes and individuals*

*Empirical focus: international camps, 1945-1954*

#### LESSON 6: DOMESTIC REVOLUTION AND DECOLONIZATION I - FEBRUARY 17

- Miller, Manjari Chatterjee. *Wronged by Empire: Post-Imperial Ideology and Foreign Policy in India and China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013. pp. 7-34.
- Westad, Odd Arne. *The Global Cold War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. pp. 73-109.

#### LESSON 7: DOMESTIC REVOLUTION AND DECOLONIZATION II - FEBRUARY 15

- Westad, Odd Arne. *The Cold War: A World History*. New York: Basic Books, 2017. pp. 129-158.
- Nguyen, Lien-Hang T. *Hanoi's War: An International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. pp. 17-47.
- (Optional) Gleijeses, Piero. "Cuba and the Cold War, 1959-1980." *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II. New York: Cambridge University Press. pp. 327-348.

### Week IV

*Theoretical concepts: coercive diplomacy and nuclear weapons*

*Empirical focus: 1954 Taiwan Strait Crisis, Berlin Crisis, and Cuban Missile Crisis*

#### LESSON 8: INTERSTATE CRISIS I - FEBRUARY 22

- Sechser, Todd S., and Matthew Fuhrmann. *Nuclear Weapons and Coercive Diplomacy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017. pp. 3-19.
- Chang, Gordon H. "To the Nuclear Brink: Eisenhower, Dulles, and the Quemoy-Matsu Crisis." *International Security* 12.4 (1988): 96-123.

#### LESSON 9: INTERSTATE CRISIS II - FEBRUARY 24

- Holloway, David. "Nuclear Weapons and the Escalation of the Cold War, 1945-1962," *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. pp. 376-397.
- Harrison, Hope M. *Driving the Soviets Up the Wall: Soviet-East German Relations, 1953-1961*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011. pp. 96-138.

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## Week V

*Theoretical concepts: international status and nationalism*

*Empirical focus: 1956 Suez Crisis, 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis*

### LESSON 10: INTERSTATE CRISIS III - MARCH 1

- Colgan, Jeff D., and Jessica L.P. Weeks. "Revolution, Personalist Dictatorships, and International Conflict." *International Organization* (2015): 163-194.
- Westad, Odd Arne. *The Cold War: A World History*. New York: Basic Books, 2017. pp. 129-158.
- (Optional) Powers, Kathleen E. *Nationalisms in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022. Chapter 1.

### LESSON 11: INTERSTATE CRISIS IV - MARCH 3

- Zelikow, Philip, and Ernest May. *Suez Deconstructed: An Interactive Study in Crisis, War, and Peacemaking*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2018. pp. 107-123, 153-163.
- Chen Jian. *Mao's China and the Cold War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. pp. 163-204.

## Week VI

*Theoretical concepts: regime change*

*Empirical focus: Latin America and Africa during the Cold War*

### LESSON 12: COVERT WARFARE I - MARCH 8

- O'Rourke, Lindsey A. *Covert Regime Change: America's Secret Cold War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018. pp. 1-21, 97-124 (skim).
- Westad, Odd Arne. *The Cold War: A World History*. New York: Basic Books, 2017. pp. 339-364.

### LESSON 13: COVERT WARFARE II - MARCH 10

- Saunders, Chris and Sue Onslow. "The Cold War and Southern Africa, 1976-1990," *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. III. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. pp. 222-243.
- Borstelmann, Thomas. *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009. pp. 135-171.
- (Optional) Carson, Austin. *Secret Wars: Covert Conflict in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018. pp. 238-282.

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## Week VII

*Theoretical concepts: information and perception*

*Empirical focus: US escalation in Vietnam*

### LESSON 14: INTERSTATE WAR I - MARCH 15

- Jervis, Robert. *Perception and Misperception in International Relations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976. Chapter 11.
- Logevall, Fredrik. *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

### Mid-Term Exam: March 15-20

## Week VIII

*Theoretical concepts: leaders and reputation*

*Empirical focus: USSR invasion of Afghanistan and PRC invasion of Vietnam*

### LESSON 15: INTERSTATE WAR III - MARCH 22

- Yarhi-Milo, Keren. *Who Fights for Reputation: The Psychology of Leaders in International Conflict*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018. pp. 1-18.
- *Afghanistan 1979: The War that Changed the World* (2014 documentary)
- (Optional) Zubok, Vladislav M. *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. pp. 227-264.

### LESSON 16: INTERSTATE WAR IV - MARCH 24

- Rubin, Barnett R. *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002. pp. 81-121.
- Zhang, Xiaoming. *Deng Xiaoping's Long War: The Military Conflict Between China and Vietnam, 1979-1991*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. pp. 13-66.
- (Optional) Morgan, Michael Cotey. *The Final Act: The Helsinki Accords and the Transformation of the Cold War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018. Introduction.

## Week IX

*Theoretical concepts: diplomacy and globalization*

*Empirical focus: the United States, United Kingdom, Soviet Union, and China, 1980-1989*

### LESSON 17: THE END OF THE COLD WAR I - APRIL 5

- Hall, Todd, and Keren Yarhi-Milo. "The Personal Touch: Leaders' Impressions, Costly Signaling, and Assessments of Sincerity in International Affairs." *International Studies Quarterly* 56.3 (2012): 560-564 and 567-571 only (skip section on Munich).
- Brown, Archie. *The Human Factor: Gorbachev, Reagan, and Thatcher, and the End of the Cold War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. pp. 31-58, 90-130, 289-312, 343-377 (available on Brown Library site - skim).



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LESSON 18: THE END OF THE COLD WAR II - APRIL 7

- Frieden, Jeffrey A., and David A. Lake. and Kenneth A. Schultz. *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. WW Norton & Company, 2015. pp. 294-345.
- Vogel, Ezra F. *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*. Cambridge: Belknap Press Press, 2011. Introduction and Chapter 7.
- Westad, Odd Arne. *The Cold War: A World History*. New York: Basic Books, 2017. pp. 553-578.

**Week X**

*Theoretical concepts: international order*

*Empirical focus: post-Soviet NATO and the 1991 Persian Gulf War*

LESSON 19: THE UNIPOLAR WORLD I - APRIL 12

- Ikenberry, G. John. *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001. pp. 3-20 and 215-256 (skim).
- Spohr, Kristina. *Post Wall, Post Square: How Bush, Gorbachev, Kohl, and Deng Shaped the World After 1989*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020. pp. 11-67.

LESSON 20: THE UNIPOLAR WORLD II - APRIL 14

- Sarotte, Mary Elise. "Perpetuating US Preeminence: The 1990 Deals to 'Bribe the Soviets Out' and Move NATO In." *International Security* 35.1 (2010): 110-137.
- Engel, Jeffrey A. *When the World Seemed New: George H.W. Bush and the End of the Cold War*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017. pp. 376-394 and 415-439.
- Wright, Lawrence. *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*. New York: Random House, 2006. pp. 9-96 and 254-268.

**Week XI**

*Theoretical concepts: polarity, costs of war*

*Empirical focus: the US War on Terror, nuclear proliferation, and the Kargil War*

LESSON 21: THE UNIPOLAR WORLD III - APRIL 19

- Monteiro, Nuno P. *Theory of Unipolar Politics*. New York Cambridge University Press, 2014. pp. 1-27.
- Kreps, Sarah. *Taxing Wars: The American Way of War Finance and the Decline of Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. pp. 1-14, 141-178 (skim).

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LESSON 22: THE UNIPOLAR WORLD IV - APRIL 21

- Braut-Hegghammer, Målfrid. "Cheater's Dilemma: Iraq, Weapons of Mass Destruction, and the Path to War." *International Security* 45.1 (2020): 51-89.
- Panda, Ankit. *Kim Jong Un and the Bomb: Survival and Deterrence in North Korea*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. pp. 33-70.
- Khan, Feroz. *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012. pp. 287-320.

**Week XII**

*Theoretical concepts: commitment problems, populism*

*Empirical focus: contemporary relations between the United States, China, and Russia*

LESSON 23: THE END OF THE UNIPOLAR WORLD I - APRIL 26

- Powell, Robert. *In the Shadow of Power: States and Strategies in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999. pp. 3-22.
- Frieden, Jeffrey A. *Global Capitalism: Its Fall and Rise in the Twentieth Century, and Its Stumbles in the Twenty-First*. 2nd edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2020. pp. 473-505.

LESSON 24: THE END OF THE UNIPOLAR WORLD II - APRIL 28

- Tooze, Adam. "Whose Century?" *London Review of Books*. July 2020.
- Goldstein, Avery. "China's Grand Strategy under Xi Jinping: Reassurance, Reform, and Resistance." *International Security* 45.1 (2020): 164-201.
- Westad, Odd Arne. "The Sources of Chinese Conduct: Are Washington and Beijing Fighting a New Cold War?" *Foreign Affairs* 98 (2019): 86.
- (Optional) Stent, Angela. *Putin's World: Russia Against the West and with the Rest*. New York: Hachette, 2020. pp. 293-343.

**Final Exam: May 10-15**