

DIPLOMACY, CRISIS AND WAR IN THE MODERN ERA

TERM: Fall 2020
WEBSITE: [IAPA 1804](#)
TIME: Wednesday 3-5:30pm
CLASSROOM: Barus & Holley 168

PROFESSOR: Tyler Jost
OFFICE: Watson Room 342
EMAIL: tjost@brown.edu
OFFICE HOURS: Thursday 2-4pm

COURSE SUMMARY

This undergraduate seminar 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?

Note: some course details, particularly those regarding the final assignment, are subject to change due to COVID-19.

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 US-China trade war. 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. Rather than covering all theoretical material at the onset, the course introduces some each week. *Please note that there are readings for the first week of class.*

This course is structured to be a *survey class*. Two points are worth noting. First, while the course is oriented toward broader debates and thus cannot cover all possible topics, you should feel free to explore topics of interest in your final papers. Second, there are no prerequisite requirements—we will cover all topics as if students have no background. However, 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. 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).

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 seminar 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. **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

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 seminar 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

30% Participation

35% Response Papers

35% Final Paper

Participation. Active participation is the cornerstone of an academic seminar. Creating a healthy learning environment requires both your attendance and your active contribution to the discussion. Under normal circumstances, I will allow one unexcused absence but any additional absences require permission and/or a Dean's excuse. For each class missed, you will need to complete one additional response paper covering that week's material. 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.

Response Papers. You will write two brief (500 words) response papers over the course of the semester based on the assigned readings for a given week. An exemplary response paper makes an argument that demonstrates mastery of the assigned material, critically engages with the authors' arguments, and advances an original or novel insight into the week's topic. An above average response paper meets at least one of these criteria. An acceptable paper makes a good faith effort. While there is no one-size-fits-all model for a response paper, try to think about how these readings speak to one another. Do the authors disagree about the facts, the explanation, or both? Who do you find more compelling? What historical events or theoretical concepts covered in other weeks of the course might complement or contest the author's argument? Please submit response papers over Canvas by **Tuesday 9pm** on your assigned week. For students submitting a response paper for a missed class, please email the paper directly to me.

On the first day of class, we will have a sign-up sheet for the specific weeks to complete your response papers. To ensure an even distribution across the semester, only three or four students will write response papers in a given week. However, if you have a pressing interest in a topic and are not able to secure a slot, please let me know! I'll do my best to accommodate.

Final Paper. The final paper is designed for you to make a focused, scholarly argument pertaining to some aspect of international conflict. The paper should make a *narrow* argument that speaks to the existing literature. A general rule of thumb is that more Empirical focused questions are almost always better. There are three general format options. The first is to advance a historical argument about what is or has happened. For example, you might argue that the Soviet Union failed to achieve its political objectives during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The second is to advance a theoretical argument about why something happened or is happening. For example, you might argue that US intervention in Vietnam resulted from a US miscalculation of North Vietnam's resolve, rather than the beliefs and characteristics of US leaders. The third is to apply a theoretical concept discussed in the course to a specific policy issue.

Whichever model you choose, you should structure your paper with a brief (generally 5-6 pages double spaced) review of the historiography or theory surrounding your research question, followed by a discussion of empirical evidence (generally 14-15 pages double spaced). The introduction of your paper should clearly state your argument in a few paragraphs. The conclusion should *briefly* summarize the paper's findings and discuss the implications. Please write the final paper in the language of hypothesis testing. Whether or not you choose to adopt the more technical, academic style of some of the political science articles we will read is up to you.

Please submit a short, 200-word abstract of your research topic to me by **Monday October 12 at 11:59 PM**. In addition, students are required to schedule at least one 15 minute office hour session with me. The thirteenth class session will be used as an optional workshop for your final papers. A draft of your final paper is due prior to class that week. The final paper is due on **Wednesday December 16 at 9am**.

COURSE SCHEDULE

1. INTRODUCTION - SEPTEMBER 9

Theoretical concepts: interstate war

- Blainey, Geoffrey. *Causes of War*. New York: The Free Press, 1973. pp. 35-56.
- Mearsheimer, John J. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: WW Norton & Company, 2001. pp. 1-28.
- 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.
- Fazal, Tanisha M. *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011. pp. 13-36.

2. THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR - SEPTEMBER 16

Theoretical concepts: power and institutions

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

- Gaddis, John Lewis. "The Long Peace: Elements of Stability in the Postwar International System." *International Security* 10.4 (1986): pp. 99-142.
- 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.
- (Optional) Leffler, Melvyn. "The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy, 1945-1952." *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. I. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. pp. 67-89.

3. DOMESTIC REVOLUTION AND DECOLONIZATION AFTER WORLD WAR II - SEPTEMBER 23

Theoretical concepts: domestic regimes and individuals

Empirical focus: international camps, 1945-1954

- Lu, Catherine. *Justice and Reconciliation in World Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017, pp. 1-27.
- Westad, Odd Arne. *The Global Cold War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. pp. 73-109.
- Westad, Odd Arne. *The Cold War: A World History*. New York: Basic Books, 2017. pp. 129-158, 261-286.
- Asselin, Pierre. *Hanoi's Road to the Vietnam War, 1954-1965*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013. pp. 11-71.
- (Optional) Colgan, Jeff D., and Jessica L.P. Weeks. "Revolution, Personalist Dictatorships, and International Conflict." *International Organization* (2015): 163-194.

4. INTERSTATE CRISIS I - SEPTEMBER 30

Theoretical concepts: coercive diplomacy and nuclear weapons

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

- Sechser, Todd S., and Matthew Fuhrmann. *Nuclear Weapons and Coercive Diplomacy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017. pp. 3-19.
- 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.
- Craig, Campbell, and Fredrik Logevall. *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity*. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2020. pp. 176-214.

5. INTERSTATE CRISIS II - OCTOBER 7

Theoretical concepts: international status and nationalism

Empirical focus: 1956 Suez Crisis, 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis

- Miller, Manjari Chatterjee. *Wronged by Empire: Post-Imperial Ideology and Foreign Policy in India and China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013. pp. 7-34.
- Little, Douglas. "The Cold War in the Middle East: Suez Crisis to Camp David Accords." *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Vol. II. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. pp. 65-87.
- Friedman, Jeremy. *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. pp. 25-59.

-
- Chen Jian. *Mao's China and the Cold War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. pp. 163-204.
 - (Optional) Lawrence, Mark Atwood. *Assuming the Burden: Europe and the American Commitment to War in Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. pp. 17-58.

6. INTERSTATE WAR I - OCTOBER 14

Theoretical concepts: information and perception

Empirical focus: US escalation in Vietnam

- Jervis, Robert. *The Logic of Images in International Relations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970. pp. 18-40.
- Logevall, Fredrik. *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- 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) Gelb, Leslie H., and Richard K. Betts. *The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2016. Chapter 4.

7. COVERT WARFARE - OCTOBER 21

Theoretical concepts: regime change

Empirical focus: Latin America and Africa during the Cold War

- O'Rourke, Lindsey A. *Covert Regime Change: America's Secret Cold War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018. pp. 22-47, 97-124.
- Westad, Odd Arne. *The Cold War: A World History*. New York: Basic Books, 2017. pp. 339-364.
- Saunders, Chris. "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.

8. INTERSTATE WAR II - OCTOBER 28

Theoretical concepts: reputation

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

- Yarhi-Milo, Keren. *Who Fights for Reputation: The Psychology of Leaders in International Conflict*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018. pp. 1-18.

-
- 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.
 - Rubin, Barnett R. *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002. pp. 107-145.
 - Lyakhovskiy, Aleksandr Antonovich. *Inside the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the Seizure of Kabul, December 1979*. Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2007.
 - 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.

9. THE END OF THE COLD WAR - NOVEMBER 4

Theoretical concepts: leaders and globalization

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

- Hyde, Susan D. and Elizabeth N. Saunders. "Recapturing Regime Type in International Relations: Leaders, Institutions, and Agency Space." *International Organization* 74.2 (2020): 363-395.
- Brands, Hal. *Making the Unipolar Moment: US Foreign Policy and the Rise of the Post-Cold War Order*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016. pp. 14-67.
- Brown, Archie. *The Human Factor: Gorbachev, Reagan, and Thatcher, and the End of the Cold War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. pp. 1-132 and 218-312.
- (Optional) Vogel, Ezra F. *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*. Cambridge: Belknap Press Press, 2011. pp. 311-376.

10. THE UNIPOLAR WORLD I - NOVEMBER 11

Theoretical concepts: polarity

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

- Monteiro, Nuno P. *Theory of Unipolar Politics*. New York Cambridge University Press, 2014. pp. 1-27.
- 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. 376-439.
- 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.
- Wright, Lawrence. *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*. New York: Random House, 2006. pp. 254-268.

11. THE UNIPOLAR WORLD II - NOVEMBER 18

Theoretical concepts: domestic costs

Empirical focus: the War on Terror and the US invasion of Iraq

- 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.
- Zaeef, Abdul Salam. *My Life with the Taliban*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. pp. 107-170.
- Lake, David A. "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War." *International Security* 35.3 (2010): 7-52.
- Greenhill, Kelly M. "Perceiving Wolves in Sheeps' Clothing? Unintended Consequences of Coercive Humanitarian Interventions." Working paper.
- (Optional) Braut-Hegghammer, Målfrid. "Cheater's Dilemma: Iraq, Deception, and the Path to War, 1991–2003," *International Security*, forthcoming.

12. THE END OF THE UNIPOLAR WORLD - DECEMBER 2

Theoretical concepts: power transition, economic interdependence, populism

Empirical focus: the 2007 global financial crisis and the 2018 US-China trade war

- 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. TBD
- Weiss, Jessica Chen. "China and the Future of World Politics." *Perspectives on Politics* 15.2 (2017): 486.
- Economy, Elizabeth C. "China's New Revolution: The Reign of Xi Jinping." *Foreign Affairs*. 97 (2018): 60.
- Tooze, Adam. "Whose Century?" *London Review of Books*. July 2020.
- (Optional) Doshi, Rush. "Hu's to Blame for China's Foreign Assertiveness?" *Brookings* January 2019.
- (Optional) Ye, Min. *The Belt Road and Beyond: State-Mobilized Globalization in China: 1998–2018*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020. pp. 3-25.
- (Optional) Woodward, Bob. *Fear: Trump in the White House*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2018. TBD