

International Conflict
POLS 335, Fall 2020
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 9:20 – 10:10 am (Online)
3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Hwalmin Jin

Office: LASB 125, Liberal Arts Social Sciences Building, located on the West Campus

Office hours: Tuesday 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm and by appointment.

Hwalmin Jin will not be in the office. Please contact me with questions via email and I will attempt to respond within 24 hours on weekdays. The preferred method of contact will be email, but it is possible to request a Zoom meeting during office hours.

Email: jymb33@tamu.edu

Course Description: Conflict, particularly armed conflict and organized violence, has been an endemic part of international relations, nation-states, and interstate dynamics since history began being documented. War, as defined by Carl Von Clausewitz, “is the continuation of policies (politics) by other means.” Moreover, the nature of warfare has changed rapidly in the last century with the use of nuclear weapons, asymmetric warfare, and deterrence.

This course introduces students to the study of international conflict within a political science context. We will seek to understand the causes and consequences of war and their implications for the international system. The class covers a wide array of topics within international conflict, including: the scientific study of militarized conflicts, why wars start, why wars endure, military strategy, why wars end, international rivalry, and civil-military relations to the study of militarized conflicts.

After leaving this course, students will have an in depth understanding of the complexity surrounding international conflict.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students can demonstrate an understanding of the defining concepts, theories, and methods of the study of international conflict.
2. Students will explore the complex interrelationships between political, economic, social, cultural, and historical forces in the study of international conflict.
3. Students will develop a mastery of critical thinking skills by evaluating international conflict from an observational and theoretical standpoint and learn presentation skills by engaging with an instructor and classmates.

The content of this syllabus may be modified by the instructor at any time during the semester if deemed necessary. Any such changes will be announced in class as well as via eCampus class email list; students are responsible for making sure that they check the email account that is on file with eCampus.

Lectures: MW 9:20 – 10:10 am.

Lectures are given by the instructor of record. PowerPoint slides and video recordings of lectures for each topic will be posted on eCampus before the class time.

Note: the files will be accessible on the course eCampus webpage under Course Materials where you will find links to YouTube videos.

Zoom Discussion Sections: Friday 9:20 – 10:10 am

The discussion section will meet remotely as Zoom group meetings. A weekly discussion point will be assigned to students in PowerPoint slides for the course topics listed in the syllabus. Discussion points will be based on lectures and assigned articles. To receive credit, you should upload a brief answer (MS-Word format, 12 points, 100-word, double-spaced) for the discussion topics on eCampus **before Friday Zoom section begins**. Unexcused late submission will be penalized by a half-point deduction. For example, if you upload a brief answer on the same day of Zoom session, but after the Zoom session, your maximum score will be 50%. If you upload your answer more than 24hrs late, no points will be given.

The instructor will randomly select students' answers weekly and will display them on slides. Authors will be required to read their answers/critiques and defend their ideas/arguments. Other students are encouraged to participate in the discussion by raising questions and giving comments to other students.

The point of discussion is to use criticism and contrasting opinions to sharpen each other's arguments and bring out hidden assumptions of the articles, NOT to destroy each other's understanding of the article or make yourself look better than someone else. NO disparaging remarks or personal insults will be tolerated in Zoom sessions. Neither will talking, doing web-surfing, playing games, watching YouTube, or doing other homework.

Note: Please download Zoom from the HOWDY webpage. The Zoom icon is near the top of the HOWDY page that opens up once you log in to HOWDY. TAMU students and employees have to login through "SSO", typing "tamu" and then using your NetID and password. (It does not work if you try to login with your Google account or a Facebook account.) I will send you a "Zoom meeting invitation email" with a password to join the discussion section meeting at least one day before each section.

Course Requirements: The final grade for this course is based on three exams, attendance, and participation (answering for discussion points). I do NOT round final grades. I do NOT provide extra credit. The final grades are calculated as follows:

Exams

Students will be given three online exams with a mixture of multiple-choice and short answer questions. The first and second exam will be worth 90 points, and the final exam will be worth 100 points. The content covered is cumulative based on lectures, PowerPoint slides, and designated articles in the coursework by the instructor.

Exam 1: 90 points

Exam 2: 90 points

Final Exam: 100 points

Note: while students are always welcome to request that the instructor review his grading of any particular exam, the instructor will under no circumstances only review one section/question/part of the exam. Once a student requests the instructor to review his grading, the entire exam will be reviewed. This means that the exam grade might ultimately be greater than or less than the original grade. Before requesting that the instructor review his grading, students are accepting the risk of receiving a grade that is lower than their original grade.

Class Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend Zoom meetings regularly and consistently. Attendance will be taken in every Zoom session. If students are called upon in Zoom session and are not present, they will receive a zero point. Late participation will receive a half-point.

Attendance in Zoom discussion session: 10 points for each attendance (Total 110 points)

Upload brief answer for discussion points: 10 points for each answer (Total 110 points)

Total 500 points

The following point break down will be used for assigning final grades:

A	450-500 points
B	400-449 points
C	350-399 points
D	300-349 points
F	299 points and below

Excused Absences

TAMU Student Rule 7 (available at <https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07/>) outlines the attendance policy that will be followed in this course.

Additionally, “the student must provide additional documentation substantiating the reason for the absence, that is satisfactory to the instructor, within one week of the last date of the absence.”

Students with a university excused absence from a scheduled exam may take for a makeup online exam. Students who miss exam 1, 2, and 3 with a university excused absence will take the online make-up exam on a designated day by the instructor.

Students should make every effort to notify me in advance of an expected absence from exams (e.g. missing an exam to observe a religious holiday) and to notify me of reasons for an unexpected absence (e.g. illness, COVID-19) from an exam in a timely fashion. Students with extended absences (more than two Zoom sessions) should contact me to discuss their plans for staying current with the class. As to COVID-19 case, please refer to “Personal Illness and Quarantine” section below.

Personal Illness and Quarantine

Students required to quarantine must participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and **must not attend face-to-face course activities**. Students should notify their instructors of the quarantine requirement. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities.

Students experiencing personal injury or illness that is too severe for the student to attend class qualify for an excused absence (See [Student Rule 7, Section 7.2.2.](#)) To receive an excused absence, students must comply with the documentation and notification guidelines outlined in Student Rule 7. While Student Rule 7, Section 7.3.2.1, indicates a medical confirmation note from the student’s medical provider is preferred, **for Fall 2020 only, students may use the Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class form in lieu of a medical confirmation. Students must submit the Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class within two business days after the last date of absence.**

(<https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/downloads/Explanatory-Statement-for-Absence-from-Class-Self-Reporting.pdf>)

Aggie Honor Code

In this class we will abide by the Aggie Honor Code, which states that “An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.”

In light of the Aggie Honor Code, students should keep in mind that they may only utilize in this course (and on its homeworks, written assignments, exams, and things of the like) materials which were expressly authorized by the instructor. Also keep in mind that handouts, lecture slides, and any other materials shared by the instructor with students may not be posted on the web or shared with students that are not enrolled in this course. Any violation of this policy constitutes a violation of the Aggie Honor Code.

Statement About Classroom Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination 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 an accommodation, please contact the Department of Disability Services at White Creek, located at 701 West Campus Blvd, 1224 TAMU, College Station, TX, or call 979-845-1637. For additional information visit <https://disability.tamu.edu/>

Statement About our Commitment to a Discrimination-Free Environment

We will abide and support Texas A&M's commitment statement to diversity (<https://diversity.tamu.edu>), which states the following:

"Texas A&M is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To full its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, Texas A&M encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality, diversity, pluralism and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit."

Furthermore, in this classroom we will be committed to a discrimination-free environment where students of different backgrounds, opinions, ideologies, and beliefs are treated with equal dignity and respect. While we may disagree in our opinions and we are free to state these disagreements, we should do so respectfully and without the use of any derogatory comments. Individuals of different races, ethnicities, religions, ages, genders, sexual orientations, classes, disabilities, and nationalities should, at all times, feel welcomed and respected in our classroom. Any violation of this policy is a blatant disregard for Texas A&M's remarkable core values and will not go unreported.

Statement on Title IX - Sexual Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, and Violence

The following statement can be found on the webpage of Texas A&M's Office of Risk, Ethics, and Compliance (<https://titleix.tamu.edu/>):

"Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities at institutions that receive federal financial assistance. Sexual harassment, including sexual violence, is a form of sex discrimination and is therefore prohibited under Title IX. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when this conduct is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or educational performance, or creates an intimidating or hostile work or educational environment. Texas A&M University is committed to providing an environment of academic study and employment free from harassment or discrimination to all segments of its community; its faculty, staff, students, guests and vendors; and will promptly address all complaints of discrimination, sexual harassment, and related retaliation in accordance with applicable federal and state laws."

Campus Safety Measures

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, Texas A&M University has adopted policies and practices for the Fall 2020 academic term to limit virus transmission. Students must observe the following practices while participating in face-to-face courses and course-related activities (office hours, help sessions, transitioning to and between classes, study spaces, academic services, etc.):

- Self-monitoring—Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. **Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction.**
- Face Coverings—[Face coverings](#) (cloth face covering, surgical mask, etc.) must be properly worn in all non-private spaces including classrooms, teaching laboratories, common spaces such as lobbies and hallways, public study spaces, libraries, academic resource and support offices, and outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain. Description of face coverings and additional guidance are provided in the [Face Covering policy](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) available on the [Provost website](#).
- Physical Distancing—Physical distancing must be maintained between students, instructors, and others in course and course-related activities.
- Classroom Ingress/Egress—Students must follow marked pathways for entering and exiting classrooms and other teaching spaces. Leave classrooms promptly after course activities have concluded. Do not congregate in hallways and maintain 6-foot

physical distancing when waiting to enter classrooms and other instructional spaces.

- To attend a face-to-face class, students must wear a face covering (or a face shield if they have an exemption letter). If a student refuses to wear a face covering, the instructor should ask the student to leave and join the class remotely. If the student does not leave the class, the faculty member should report that student to the [Student Conduct office](#) for sanctions. Additionally, the faculty member may choose to teach that day's class remotely for all students.

Required articles

You will be required to read contemporary journal articles from the study of international conflict each week. Students are required to read articles that may be downloaded from eCampus webpage under [Course Materials](#). You can also download articles from [JSTOR](#) or [Google Scholar](#). It is the student's responsibility to obtain and read these articles, based on the information that is provided. If you have trouble locating one of these articles, please contact me.

Course Schedule

The following list outlines the applicable course schedule and required readings. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this schedule should the need arise.

Week 1 - No readings / No assignments

Wednesday, August 19th: Zoom session (Class Introductions and Syllabus)

Friday, August 21th: Zoom discussion session (How to read a research article)

Week 2 - Scientific Study of War and Peace

- Levy, Jack S. "The causes of war and the conditions of peace." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1, no. 1 (1998): 139-165.
- Bremer, Stuart A. "Dangerous dyads: Conditions affecting the likelihood of interstate war, 1816-1965." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36, no. 2 (1992): 309-341.

Monday and Wednesday, August 24th and 26th: Online lectures

Friday, August 28th: Zoom discussion session

Week 3 – Power

- Lemke, Douglas, and Suzanne Werner. "Power parity, commitment to change, and war." *International Studies Quarterly* 40, no. 2 (1996): 235-260.
- Lim, Yves-Heng. "How (dis) satisfied is China? A power transition theory perspective." *Journal of Contemporary China* 24, no. 92 (2015): 280-297.

Monday and Wednesday, August 31th and September 2th: Online lectures

Friday, September 4th: Zoom discussion session

Week 4 – International / Dyadic-Level Causes of War and Militarized Conflicts

- Rasler, Karen A., and William R. Thompson. "Contested territory, strategic rivalries, and conflict escalation." *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (2006): 145-167.
- Senese, Paul D. "Territory, contiguity, and international conflict: Assessing a new joint explanation." *American Journal of Political Science* 49, no. 4 (2005): 769-779.

Monday and Wednesday, September 7th and 9th: Online lectures

Friday, September 11th: Zoom discussion session

Week 5 – No readings / No assignments

Monday, September 14 th: Zoom session (Catch-up and Q&A session)

Wednesday, September 16th: Exam I-Part I (9:20 – 10:10 am)

Friday, September 18th: Exam I-Part II (9:20 – 10:10 am)
Week 6 – Alliance

- Leeds, Brett Ashley. "Do alliances deter aggression? The influence of military alliances on the initiation of militarized interstate disputes." *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 3 (2003): 427-439.
- Kenwick, Michael R., John A. Vasquez, and Matthew A. Powers. "Do alliances really deter?." *The Journal of Politics* 77, no. 4 (2015): 943-954.

Monday and Wednesday, September 21th and 23th: Online lectures

Friday, September 25th: Zoom discussion session

Week 7 – Individual-Level Causes of War and Militarized Conflicts

- Chiozza, Giacomo, and Hein E. Goemans. "Peace through insecurity: Tenure and international conflict." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 47, no. 4 (2003): 443-467.
- Mattes, Michaela, and Jessica LP Weeks. "Hawks, doves, and peace: an experimental approach." *American Journal of Political Science* 63, no. 1 (2019): 53-66.

Monday and Wednesday, September 28th and 30th: Online lectures

Friday, October 2th: Zoom discussion session

Week 8- Regime Types and Democratic Peace

- Maoz, Zeev, and Bruce Russett. "Normative and structural causes of democratic peace, 1946-1986." *American Political Science Review* (1993): 624-638.
- Weeks, Jessica L. "Strongmen and straw men: Authoritarian regimes and the initiation of international conflict." *American Political Science Review* (2012): 326-347.

Monday and Wednesday, October 5th and 7th: Online lectures

Friday, October 9th: Zoom discussion session

Week 9 – International Political Economy and Liberal Peace

- Oneal, John R., Frances H. Oneal, Zeev Maoz, and Bruce Russett. "The liberal peace: Interdependence, democracy, and international conflict, 1950-85." *Journal of Peace Research* 33, no. 1 (1996): 11-28.
- Simmons, Beth A. "Rules over real estate: trade, territorial conflict, and international borders as institution." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 6 (2005): 823-848.

Monday and Wednesday, October 12th and 14th: Online lectures

Friday, October 16th: Zoom discussion session

Week 10 – No readings / No assignments

Monday, October 19th: Zoom session (Catch-up and Q&A session)

Wednesday, October 21th: Exam II-Part I (9:20 – 10:10 am)

Friday, October 23th: Exam II-Part II (9:20 – 10:10 am)

Week 11 – Deterrence and Nuclear Weapons

- Huth, Paul K. "Deterrence and international conflict: Empirical findings and theoretical debates." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (1999): 25-48.
- Fuhrmann, Matthew, and Todd S. Sechser. "Signaling Alliance Commitments: Hand-Tying and Sunk Costs in Extended Nuclear Deterrence." *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 4 (2014): 919-935.

Monday and Wednesday, October 26th and 28th: Online lectures

Friday, October 30th: Zoom discussion session

Week 12 – War Costs and War Consequences

- Organski, Abramo FK, and Jacek Kugler. "The costs of major wars: the phoenix factor." *The American Political Science Review* (1977): 1347-1366.
- Karol, David, and Edward Miguel. "The electoral cost of war: Iraq casualties and the 2004 US presidential election." *The Journal of Politics* 69, no. 3 (2007): 633-648.

Monday and Wednesday, November 2th and 4th: Online lectures

Friday, November 6th: Zoom discussion session

Week 13 –Civil-Military Relations and Militarized Conflicts

- Belkin, Aaron, and Evan Schofer. "Coup risk, counterbalancing, and international conflict." *Security Studies* 14, no. 1 (2005): 140-177.
- Choi, Seung-Whan, and Patrick James. "Civil-military relations in a neo-Kantian world, 1886-1992." *Armed Forces & Society* 30, no. 2 (2004): 227-254.

Monday and Wednesday, November 9th and 11th : Online lectures

Friday, November 13th: Zoom discussion session

Week 14 – Conflict Termination and Peaceful Settlement

- Mattes, Michaela, and Mariana Rodríguez. "Autocracies and international cooperation." *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 3 (2014): 527-538.
- Beardsley, Kyle, and Nigel Lo. "Third-party conflict management and the willingness to make concessions." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58, no. 2 (2014): 363-392.

Monday and Wednesday, November 16th and 18th : Online lectures

Friday, November 20th: Zoom discussion session

Week 15

Monday, November 23th: Zoom session (Catch-up and Q&A session)

Wednesday, November 25th: Reading Day (No Class)

Friday, November 27th: Thanksgiving Holiday (No Class)

Week 16

Monday, November 30th: Reading Day (No Class)

Wednesday, December 2th: Final Exam (8:00 - 10:30 am)