

**POLS 341: Theories of International Conflict and Cooperation**  
**Spring 2012**

**Course Meetings:** Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00 to 3:15 PM in Dane Smith Hall (DSH) 234

**Instructor:** Christopher K. Butler, Associate Professor, Political Science

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Office Hours: Tuesdays from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM, Wednesdays from 1:30 to 3:30 PM, and by appointment.

**Course Description:** Surveys the political science literature on theories of conflict and cooperation.

**Course Prerequisites:** POLS 240 or equivalent.

**Learning Objectives:** Students will be able to...

...determine the predicted outcome of the international interaction game given a set of preferences.

...distinguish potential causes of war using the level-of-analysis framework.

...illustrate the bargaining theory of war.

...differentiate between predicted and actual outcomes of political interactions.

...assemble critical background information and construct a timeline of a historical conflict episode.

...apply theoretical models to the case of the Crimean War and another historical conflict episode.

...evaluate theoretical models with respect to their logical consistency and in light of historical evidence.

**Student Responsibilities:**

*Student Technology in the Classroom.* Use of technology in the classroom by students is acceptable IF it is for class reasons. Thus, activities such as taking notes, reviewing at class materials, looking up additional material relevant to class discussion are fine. This means that checking email, phone messages, or social media sites are usually inappropriate.

*Reading.* Each student is expected to complete assigned readings before its corresponding lesson.

*Current Events.* Students are expected to keep up on current events related to international news as such events may be used as examples in class.

*Participation.* Students are strongly encouraged to ask questions and join discussion during class.

*Attendance.* Students are expected to attend all classes.

*Academic Integrity.* Students are expected to comply with University policies regarding academic integrity. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated.

**Accessibility Statement:** Americans with Disabilities Act: Qualified students with disabilities needing appropriate academic adjustments should contact me as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. Handouts are available in alternative accessible formats upon request.

## Readings:

### Books (available at the bookstore):

- Iklé, Fred Charles. 2005 (revised edition). *Every War Must End*. Columbia University Press.
- Lake, David A. 2011. *Hierarchy in International Relations*. Cornell University Press.
- Levy, Jack S. and William R. Thompson. 2010. *Causes of War*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Troubetzkoy, Alexis. 2006. *A Brief History of the Crimean War: History's Most Unnecessary Struggle*. Running Press.
- Wagner, R. Harrison. 2007. *War and the State: The Theory of International Politics*. University of Michigan Press.

### Articles (available at JSTOR):

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 1990. "Pride of Place: The Origins of German Hegemony." *World Politics* 43(1): 28-52.
- Kadera, Kelly M. & Daniel S. Morey. 2008. "The Trade-offs of Fighting and Investing: A Model of the Evolution of War and Peace." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25(2): 152-170.
- Leeds, Brett Ashley. 2003. "Alliance Reliability in Times of War: Explaining State Decisions to Violate Treaties." *International Organization* 57(Autumn): 801-827.
- Mitchell, Sara McLaughlin, Scott Gates, & Håvard Hegre. 1999. "Evolution in Democracy-War Dynamics." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43(6): 771-792.
- Smith, Alastair. 1998. "Fighting Battles, Winning Wars." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42(3): 301-320.
- Weeks, Jessica L. 2008. "Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve." *International Organization* 62(Winter): 35-64.
- Wittman, Donald. 1979. "How a War Ends: A Rational Model Approach" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 23(4): 743-763.

## Assignment and Grading:

Students will be evaluated on their participation, reading and lecture comprehension, and quality of their research papers. Grades of incomplete (I) will only be given in extraordinary circumstances. Grading weight will be given to each of these areas of evaluation as follows:

Participation	10%
Reading and Lecture Comprehension	25%
Short Essays	20%
Research Paper	45%

### *Participation.*

Classes will be a mixture of lecture and seminar discussion. Therefore, attendance and discussion are very important to the learning experience. Obviously, students can only participate if they attend class. Participation will be informally rated by the instructor on the following scale:

Outstanding:	Regular, insightful comments
Exceeds Expectations:	Comments show good understanding
Acceptable:	Comments usually good, but occasionally tangential
Poor:	Mostly tangential, irrelevant comments
Unacceptable:	Never spoke

### *Reading and Lecture Comprehension.*

The seminar discussion portion of the class requires that students do the assigned reading *prior* to each class session. (Please follow the class reading schedule.) Various small assignments will be used to assess reading and lecture comprehension throughout the semester. These will include quizzes, worksheets, and extractions from the readings. (A typical extraction would be “questions and quotes” in which each student submits one question regarding the reading and one quote from the reading that presents a distilled insight of what the author was trying to get across.) Students should be prepared (by having done the reading AND having the assigned reading with them in class) for any kind of “comprehension check” assignment every class session.

### *Short Essays.*

Three short essays will ask the students to apply the theories we are reading about to the Crimean War. More specific instructions for each essay will be given on the days that we formally cover the readings regarding the Crimean War (from Troubetzkoy). Due dates for each essay are on the class reading schedule.

### *Research Paper.*

The major assignment for the class will be a research paper in which each student analyzes an international dispute or “conflict episode” (chosen from a list provided by the instructor) from its inception, through its escalation phase, to its termination. The paper will be written in phases throughout the semester with the final paper being due during finals week. Details regarding each phase are in a separate handout. Due dates for each phase are on the class reading schedule. The phases will be graded coarsely (i.e., using non-fractionalized letter grades) to give the students a sense of how they are doing. Provided that all phases were turned in, it is the quality of the final paper that will determine a student's grade for this component of the course grade.

### **Broad Course Outline:**

1. The International Interaction Game
2. The Study of International Conflict through Levels of Analysis
3. Autocratic Decision-making and International Conflict
4. Alliance Reliability
5. Exploring the Causes of the Crimean War
6. War and the State
7. Bargaining and War
8. Fighting Battles, Winning Wars
9. The Conduct of the Crimean War
10. Enforcing Agreements
11. A World of Commonwealths
12. Evolution in Democracy-War Dynamics
13. The Trade-offs of Fighting and Investing
14. How Wars End
15. Hierarchy in International Relations