

**Syllabus for POLS 4773  
International Conflict  
Fall 2022**

**Course: POLS 4773 International Conflict**

Class: 12:00–12:50, 121 Dillard

**Lecturer: Steve Garrison, Ph.D.**

Contact	Information
Office:	111B Bridwell
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**International Conflict:** This course examines the major theories behind the study of interstate conflicts. The course will examine the evolution of warfare into modern times. Following this examination the course next examines the causes of war. The course will examine the major individual, state, and international level theories of the causes of international war. Lastly, the causes and consequences of war are examined.

**Course Objectives:** This course is intended to further student development in the following departmental learning objectives.

- Display a broad understanding of American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory.
- Demonstrate an ability to apply the major theories and concepts of political science towards contemporary political phenomena.
- Display critical thinking skills concerning theoretical explanations of local, state, national, and global political processes.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of rival political explanations to contemporary political issues. presentations.

- Demonstrate effective writing skills

**Texts:**

*War in European History*, Michael Howard (1976), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

In addition there are a series of readings that will be disseminated on D2L.

**Expectations:** Students are expected to attend class. Lectures will not reproduce the texts. During lectures, students are expected to behave in an adult fashion: i.e. no note passing, punching, kissing, kicking or other juvenile behavior. Disrespectful behavior towards other students or the teacher will not be tolerated and will result in your removal from the class. Also, please turn cellular phones off during class.

**Grading:** There will be three examinations. There will be two in-class examinations and one final examination. The format of each is short answer questions and identification of key terms. The highest grading scale will be 90 (A), 80 (B), 70 (C), and 60 (D). The third exam will occur during the final examination period, but will be in the same format as the first and second exam. the percentage breakdowns is as follows:

Exam 1 20 points  
Exam 2 20 points  
Final Exam 20 points  
War Summary Project 20 Points  
Research Paper 20 points

**War Summary Project:** To familiarize ourselves with examples of international conflict each student is required to complete two, one page, war summaries, and present them to the class. These summaries will then be disseminated to the class and serve as the subject for our war quiz. Following these presentations students will then be quizzed on these conflicts to ensure they have the foundational knowledge required to discuss international conflict.

**Research Assignment:** Students will select a single case of international conflict and examine this conflict in greater detail. The primary focus of this course is on the outbreak of war. This assignment will allow students to apply their newly acquired knowledge of the outbreak of warfare to a conflict of their choice. Students will select a post-1815 war

(excluding WWI and WWII) and apply the explanation they think best accounts for the outbreak of the conflict. In this paper students will summarize the conflict and argue why one or more theories best explains the selected conflict. More detailed instructions will be presented in class.

**Classroom Policies:** If for any reason you should have to miss a test please inform the instructor prior to the time of the test. Make up exams will only be given for valid excuses supported with the proper documentation. Research papers not submitted by the due date will be considered late and one letter grade will be deducted from the paper grade for each day the paper is late. The privilege of additional work will not be granted.

**Disability Policy:** Any student in this course who has a disability that may preclude demonstrating fully his or her abilities should contact me as soon as possible. We will discuss the accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate education.

**Plagiarism:** I take plagiarism very seriously and will check your work. By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a “limited right” in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The “limited right” shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student’s work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and educational purposes. The University’s *minimum penalty* for cheating or plagiarism is *a failure of assignment*. Cheating or plagiarism can lead to expulsion from the university. If you have questions about original work, please consult the Student Handbook Code of Student Conduct section 10.

*Calendar* The following calendar represents the schedule of readings and topics for the course. The reading assignments are located under the date and topic. The instructor reserves the right to change the schedule.

## Course Schedule

### August 22: Introduction

- Syllabus
- Paper Assignment description

## **Section I: Development of Modern Warfare**

### **August 24: International War**

- No Readings

### **August 26: Heroic Model of Warfare**

- Curry, Andrew. "Slaughter at the Bridge: Uncovering a Colossal Bronze Age Battle." *Science*, Mar 24 2016.
- James Gorman. "Prehistoric Massacre Killing in Africa Offers Clues to Origin of War." *New York Times* Jan 21, 2016.

### **August 29: Classic Models of Warfare**

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### **August 31: Feudal Warfare**

- Howard Chapter One

### **September 2: Renaissance Warfare**

- Howard Chapter Two and Three

### **September 5: Labor Day Holiday**

- no class

### **September 7: The Professional Army**

- Howard Chapter Four and Five

### **September 9: War Presentations I**

- Howard Chapter Seven

### **September 12: Wars of Nations**

- Howard Chapter Six

### **September 14: Modern Warfare**

- Howard Chapter Seven

### **September 16: War Presentations II**

- War Summary Assignment I

### **September 19 and 21: World War I**

- Joseph Nye. (2000). "The Balance of Power and WWI." in *Understanding International Conflict*. Longman Publishers.

### **September 23: War Summary Quiz**

- War Summary Presentations

## **September 26, 28, and 30: World War II**

- Joseph Nye. (2000). “The Failure of Collective Security and WWII” in *Understanding International Conflict*. Longman Publishers.

## **October 3: Future of Warfare**

- Howard Chapter Eight

## **October 5: Catch up and Review**

- Study Guide One

## **October 7: Exam I**

- Study Guide One

## **Section II: Causes of War**

### **October 10, 12, & 14: Human Nature & Biological Explanations**

- Thomas Hobbes (1651). “Of the Natural Condition of Mankind as Concerning their Felicity and Mystery. Chapter 13, Book 1 of *The Leviathan*.”
- Sigmund Freud. (1932). Why War. Letter to Albert Einstein.
- Johnson, Dominic and Bradley Thayer. “What our Primate Relatives Say About War.” *National Interest*. Jan 29, 2013.

### **October 17, 19, & 21: Misperception & Beliefs in War**

- Richard Fontain and Vance Serchuk, “Pick your Prism: How Foreign Policy Makers View Pivotal Years Says a Great Deal about How they act in 2014.” *Politico Magazine*

Excerpt. (Nov 28, 2014).

- Steven Lee Meyers, “In Putin’s Syria Intervention, Fear of a Weak Government Hand.” *New York Times* (Oct 4, 2015).
- Margaret Mead. (1940). “Warfare is only an Invention –Not a Biological Necessity.” ASIA.

### **October 24: Polarity**

- Margaret MacMillan. “Which Past is Prolouge? Heeding the Right Warnings From History.” *Foreign Affairs* (Sept/Oct 2020), Vol. 99, Issue 5.
- Waltz, Kenneth. (1988). “The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory.” *Journal of Interdisciplinary history*. Vol 18:4.

### **October 26: Power Transition**

- David Sanger, “Beating the to the Prewar: The anticipatory Self-Defense talk” *New York Times* (Sept 28, 2002).
- Lawrence Wilkerson, “I Helped Sell the False choice of War once. Its Happening Again.” *New York Times* (Feb 5, 2018).
- Michael Beckley. “Rogue Superpower: Why This Could Be an Illiberal American Century.” *Foreign Affairs*. Vol 99:6.
- The White House. “US National Security Strategy: prevent Our Enemies From Threatening Us, Our Allies, and our friends with Weapons of Mass Destruction.” Section V of the National Security Strategy of the USA (Sept 2002).

### **October 28: Security Dilemma**

- David Cloud and Jay Solomon, “How US, North Korea turned Broken Deals into a Standoff.” *Wall Street Journal* (March 4, 2003)
- Steven Lee Myers, “Bush backs Ukraine’s bid to Join NATO, despite Putin’s Objections” *New York Times* (April 2, 2008).
- John J Mearshimer, “Getting Ukraine Wrong, ” *New York Times* (March 13, 2014).

### **October 31: Catch up and Review**

- Study Guide II

### **November 2: Exam II**

- Study Guide II

### **November 4: No class**

- No class

### **November 7: Groups in Government**

- Rodin, Vilde. “Unknown Knowns: A Groupthink Model on the US Decision to go to War in Iraq.” E- international Relations.
- Irving Janis. “Groupthink” in *Readings in Managerial Psychology*. University of Chicago Press: Chicago.

### **November 9: Nationalism**

- Levy, Jack. (1988). “Domestic Politics and War.” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*. Vol 18:4.
- Paul Miller. “how World War III Could Begin in Latvia. *Foreign Policy* (Nov 2016).
- James Stavridis and Elliot Ackerman. “How the US could Sleepwalk into a War with China.” *Time* March 9, 2021.

### **November 11: Diversionary Theory of War**

- Thomas Erdbrink, “Longdivided, Iran Unites Against Trump and the Saudis in a Nationalist Fervor,” *New York Times* (Nov 26, 2017).



- Aron Leon “Could Putin Launch Another Invasion?” *Politico* (Opinion), March 15, 2021.

#### **November 14: The Democratic Peace**

- Christopher Layne,. (1994). “Kant or Can’t: The Myth of the Democratic Peace,” *International Security*, Vol 19:2.
- David Plotz. “Green’s Peace”. *New York Times Magazine* (June 4, 2000).

#### **November 16: Democracies and War**

- Dan Reiter and Allan Stam. “Democracies have an Edge in Fighting Wars.” *Foreign Affairs*, May 7, 2020.
- Mitchell Klingenberg. “The Soul if Battle: Democracies at War.” War Room-US Army War College.

#### **November 18: Resources and Conflict**

- Homer-Dixon, Thomas. (1991). “On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as causes of Acute Conflict.” *International Security*. Vol 16:2.

#### **November 21: Catch up**

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#### **November 23 & 25: Thanksgiving Holiday**

- no class

### **November 28: Costs of War**

- Thomas James Brennan. “Ending a Life, and a Part of Yourself for the First Time. New York Times, Dec 14, 2012.
- Elisabeth Bumiller. “For 2 Nominees, Vietnam Breed Doubts on War.” New York Times. January 8, 2013.
- Michael Gordon. “Powell Delivers a Resounding No on Using Limited force in Bosnia.” New York Times. Sept 28, 1992.

### **November 30: Consequences of War**

- AFK Organski and Jacek Kugler. 1977. “The Costs of Major Wars: The Phoenix Factor.’ *American Political Science Review*. 71, 4.

### **December 2: Catch up and Review**

- Study Guide III

### **December 7: Final Exam: 3:30-5:30 p.m.**

- Study Guide III