

War, Peace, and World Order V53.0741 4 Points: Spring 2007

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This course explores the conditions that lead to the initiation, escalation, spread, termination, and consequences of international conflict as well as the circumstances that promote, preserve, or restore peace. The main objective is to identify strategies that promote cooperative solutions to international disputes and to evaluate those strategies in terms of their historical effectiveness. The course emphasizes the application of models of strategic rational action as tools for assessing relations between nations, coupled with statistical and historical analysis of classes of events. No mathematics beyond high school math is needed for this course although comfort with mathematical reasoning is important. Class sessions will build on and expand beyond the readings, reflecting both deeper exploration of the readings and application to current events around the world. Therefore, I anticipate lively discussion and efforts to relate theoretical ideas to current circumstances.

There will be a mid-term and a final examination. The midterm will serve as a means for the student to receive feedback on how s/he is doing in the course. The final exam will count as 60-75 percent of the total grade, the higher value if it exceeds the grade on the mid-term. The midterm, if higher than the final in grade, counts for 40 percent of the total grade in the course. Because the class is expected to be large, it is unfortunately not possible to count class participation toward the grade.

The core readings for the course are: Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman (hereafter BDM&L), *War and Reason* and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow (hereafter BdM2S2), *The Logic of Political Survival*. As should be obvious from the required books, the course will not be a survey course but rather will be a more advanced undergraduate class that emphasizes a particular way to think about war, peace, and world order. I assume that everyone has had the prerequisite core course in international relations and so is familiar with the main contending approaches to the subject. These other approaches will, of course, be utilized from time to time in examining specific issues.

I have intentionally kept the amount of reading each week fairly modest. The two required books and the occasional required articles are what I call desk reading, not couch reading. That is, some pages may require very close reading and are not amenable to skimming or reading while daydreaming (as I often do with novels). Because I have not assigned a great deal of reading, I expect that you will come to class having read and studied the assignments and prepared to discuss the material.

Topics by Week except as noted:

Wednesday January 17: Introduction: Class speculation about war, peace, and world order
No Required Reading

January 22: Commitment, Uncertainty, Lumpiness and War

James D. Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War

January 29: The International Interaction Game

BdM&L, Chapter 2

February 5: Realpolitik, Balance of Power, and War or Peace

BdM&L, pp. 53-71;

February 12: Domestic Politics and War, Peace, and Outcomes In-Between: A Simple Account

BdM&L, pp. 71-92; BdM2S2, pp. 37-76.

February 19: Presidents Day Holiday

Wednesday, February 21: Norms, Beliefs, and Cooperation

BdM&L, pp. 95-144.

February 26: Norms, Beliefs, and Cooperation continued, Midterm Review

Wednesday February 28: Midterm

March 5: Domestic Politics and Policy Choices: A Better Account

BdM2S2, pp. 77-126 (although I include the technical appendix, it is not required reading).

March 12, March 14: No Classes, Spring Break

March 19: Difficulties Resolving Terrorism

Ethan Bueno de Mesquita, "Conciliation, Counter-Terrorism, and Patterns of Terrorist Violence,"

March 26: Revolution, Coups, and Hope

BdM2S2, Chapter 8; Bueno de Mesquita and Smith, "Political Development and the Threat of Revolution."

April 2: The Democratic Peace

BdM2S2, Chapter 6.

April 9: Nation Building, Foreign Aid, and Democratization

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George Downs, "Intervention and Democracy;" Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith "Political Survival and the Logic of Aid."

April 16: The Aftermath of War: Leadership Survival

BdM2S2, Chapters 7 and 9.

April 23: How Might the World Be made a Better Place?

BdM2S2, Chapter 10.

April 30: Discussion and Review