

# International Conflict

**What?** Independent Study at the University of South Carolina, Summer 2014.

**Who?** Tobias Heinrich, [heinric1@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:heinric1@mailbox.sc.edu), GAMB333. No official office hour.

**When and where?** Weekly via Skype or around USC campus.

## Outline

This graduate level course on International Conflict introduces a specific cutting edge of research on international conflict as well as what lead to this specific cutting edge. "Specific"? The course is very much designed to omit huge parts of existing literature; it focuses what can be loosely clustered as bargaining-centric and political economy approaches to international conflict.

If participants immerse themselves in the study of the materials of the course, they will learn by the end

- what constitutes a specific cutting edge of scholarship on international conflict;
- to read and critique articles of modern IR scholarship, and treat them in the context of previous and parallel debates in IR;
- a deeper understanding of the processes, troubles, intricacies, and opportunities of carrying own research on international conflict.

## Required material

The following books are required:

- Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, 2010. *Causes of war*. John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow, 2003. *The Logic of Political Survival*

## Expectations, Grading, Rules, etc.

There are two contributions to the grade. First, for every session, a 2-3 page memo has to be written. It ought to provide a concise, thematic summary of the readings, and provide thoughts, ideas, and suggestions for further research on the topic. A well-reasoned memo received 100 points, a simplistic memo 75, and the absence of one gets zero.

Second, a mock comprehensive exam will be given toward the end of the course. Under rules that are to be determined, a few broad questions have to be answered in writing.

Third and optionally, a research paper can be written after receiving approval for it from the instructor.

Let the average grade for the memos be  $x$ , the mock comprehensive exam's grade be  $z$ , and the paper's grade be  $y$ , then the final grade is computed as a weighted average of these grades. The weight for the memos is 1, and it is 3 for the mock exam. If a paper is written and handed in, then it also has a weight of 3. The final grade is thus either  $\frac{x+3z}{1+3}$  or  $\frac{x+3z+3*y}{1+3+3}$ .

I will use the following grading scale to map between percentages and letter grades. A 92-100, B+ 87-91, B 80-86, C+ 77-79, C 70-76, D+ 67-69, D 60-66, and F 0-59. The standard rules of rounding are applied. The University of South Carolina Honor Code applies.

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, contact the Office of Student Disability Services: 777-6142, TDD 777-6744, email [sasds@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:sasds@mailbox.sc.edu), or stop by LeConte College Room 112A. All accommodations must be approved through the Office of Student Disability Services.

## Course schedule

This is a rough schedule of the sequence of what will be covered. The instructor will most probably amend things quite a bit. So, always check what will be next.

### WEEK 1: PRELUDE

What are we talking about?

- Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, 2010. *Causes of war*. John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

### WEEK 2: SETTING THE STAGE

- John J. Mearsheimer, *The tragedy of great power politics*, xi–82.
- Donald Wittman, 1979. "How a war ends." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
- David Lalman, 1988. "Conflict resolution and peace." *American Political Science Review*.
- Paul D. Senese and John A. Vasquez, 2005. "Assessing the steps to war." *British Journal of Political Science*.

### WEEK 3: "RATIONAL EXPLANATIONS FOR WAR"

- James D. Fearon, 1995. "Rational explanations for war." *International Organization*.

### WEEK 4: INFORMATIONAL PROBLEMS

- William Reed, 2003. "Information, power, and war." *American Political Science Review*.

- Kenneth A. Schultz, 1998. "Domestic opposition and signaling in international crises." *American Political Science Review*.
- Branislav Slantchev, 2003. "The principle of convergence in wartime negotiations." *American Political Science Review*.
- Robert Powell, 2004. "Bargaining and learning while fighting." *American Journal of Political Science*. *American Journal of Political Science*.

## WEEK 5: COMMITMENT PROBLEMS

- Robert Powell, 2006. "War as a commitment problem." *International Organization*.
- Richard A. Nielsen, Michael G. Findley, Zachary S. Davis, Tara Candland, and Daniel L. Nielson, 2011. "Foreign Aid Shocks as a Cause of Violent Armed Conflict." *American Journal of Political Science*.
- James D. Fearon, 1996. "Bargaining over objects that influence future bargaining power." Working paper (maybe?).
- Alexandre Debs and Nuno P. Monteiro, 2014. "Known unknowns: power shifts, uncertainty, and war." *International Organization*.
- Scott Wolford, 2012. "Incumbents, successors, and crisis bargaining." *Journal of Peace Research*.

## WEEK 6: RATIONALIST EXPLANATIONS + ENDING WARS

- Matthew O. Jackson and Massimo Morelli, 2011. "The reasons for wars - an updated survey." Book chapter.
- Michaela Mattes and Burcu Savun, 2010. "Information, agreement design, and the durability of civil war settlements."
- Scott Wolford, Dani Reiter, and Cliff Carrubba, 2011. "Information, commitment, and war." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
- William Reed, David H. Clark, Timothy Nordstrom, and Wonjae Hwang, 2008. "War, power, and bargaining." *The Journal of Politics*.

## WEEK 7: AGENCY AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

- Matthew O. Jackson and Massimo Morelli, 2007. "Political bias and war." *American Economic Review*.
- James D. Fearon, 2011. "A simple political economy of relations among democracies and autocracies." Working paper.
- Branislav Slantchev, 2012. "Borrowed power: debt finance and the resort to arms." *American Political Science Review*.

- Giacomo Chiozza and Hein E. Goemans, 2004. "International conflict and the tenure of leaders." *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Alexandre Debs and Hein E. Goemans, 2010. "Regime type, the fate of leaders, and war." *American Political Science Review*.

## WEEK 8: STAYIN' ALIVE

- Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Alastair Smith, Randolph M. Siverson, and James D. Morrow, 2003. *The Logic of Political Survival*, Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 6.

## WEEK 9: INTERVENTIONS

- Daniel Berger, William Easterly, Nathan Nunn, and Shanker Satyanath, 2012. "Commercial imperialism?" *American Economic Review*.
- Arindrajit Dube, Ethan Kaplan, and Suresh Naidu, 2011. "Coups, corporations, and classified information." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*.
- Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George Downs, 2006. "Intervention and democracy." *International Organization*.
- Toke S. Aidt and Facundo Albornoz, 2011. "Political regimes and foreign intervention." *Journal of Development Economics*.
- Patrick M. Regan and Aysegul Aydin, 2006. "Diplomacy and other forms of intervention in civil wars." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

## WEEK 10: CIVIL WARS

- Christopher Blattman and Edward Miguel, 2010. "Civil war." *Journal of Economic Literature*.
- Daron Acemoglu, Davide Ticchi, and Andrea Vindigni, 2010. "Persistence of civil wars." *Journal of the European Economic Association*.
- James D. Fearon and David D. Latin, 2003. "Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war." *American Political Science Review*.
- Ernesto Dal Bó and Pedro Dal Bó, 2011. "Workers, warriors, and criminals." *Journal of the European Economic Association*.
- Oeindrila Dube and Juan F. Vargas, 2013. "Commodity price shocks and civil conflict." *The Review of Economic Studies*.

## WEEK 11: TERRORISM

- Ethan Bueno de Mesquita, 2005. "The quality of terror." *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Matthew C. Wilson and James A. Piazza, 2013. "Autocracies and terrorism." *American Journal of Political Science*.

- David B. Carter, 2012. "A blessing or a curse?" *International Organization*.
- Ernesto Dal Bó, Pedro Dal Bó, and Rafael Di Tella, 2006. "Plata o plomo?: bribe and punishment in a theory of political influence." *American Political Science Review*.

## WEEK 12: EFFECTS OF CONFLICT

- Tiberiu Dragu, 2011. "Is there a trade-off between security and liberty?" *American Political Science Review*.
- Thomas König and Daniel Finke, 2013. "Legislative governance in times of international terrorism." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
- William G. Howell, Saul P. Jackman, and Jon C. Rogowski, 2012. "The wartime president." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*.
- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, 2006. "Economic backwardness in political perspective." *American Political Science Review*.
- Philippe Aghion, Torsten Persson, and Dorothee Rouzet, 2012. "Education and military rivalry." NBER Working Paper No. 18049.

## WEEK 13: WHAT'S NEW AND NEXT?

- Håvard Hegre, Joakim Karlsen, Håvard Mokliev Nygård, Håvard Strand, and Henrik Urdal, 2013. "Predicting armed conflict, 2010–2050." *International Studies Quarterly*.
- Peter K. Hatemi and Rose McDermott, "A neurobiological approach to foreign policy analysis: identifying individual differences in political violence." *Foreign Policy Analysis*.
- Thomas Chadeaux, 2014. "Early warning signals for war in the news." *Journal of Peace Research*.
- David B. Carter, 2010. "The strategy of territorial conflict." *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Daina Chiba, Carla Martinez Machain, and William Reed, 2013. "Major powers and militarized conflict." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
- Kristian S. Gleditsch and Nils B. Weidman, 2012. "Richardson in the information age." *Annual Review of Political Science*.
- Bear Braumoeller, 2013. "Is War Disappearing?"