

# PSC 645 Conflict Processes

## Course Syllabus Spring 2017

Classroom: 502 Park Hall  
Class schedule: Wednesday 1-3:40 p.m.  
Office hours: Wednesday 12-1 p.m. & by app.  
Office: 505 Park Hall

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### Course description

This advanced graduate seminar is required for all Ph.D. majors in international relations and it will be assumed that, prior to taking this course, students have successfully completed PSC 504 Core Seminar in International Politics. It provides an in-depth coverage of the evolution of international conflict (causes, escalation, ending & peace-building) from several theoretical angles. We will discuss major theories that link conflict to power distributions, strategic bargaining, domestic regime type (democratic peace and beyond), alliances, and political geography. The readings include a selection of classic seminal writings as well as more recent studies in each area.

### Reading materials

All required readings for the course consist of selected book chapters and journal articles. If not available through the UB electronic journal holdings (<http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/e-resources/ft.html>), they can be accessed on UBLearns for this course (marked with \*UBLearns in the schedule below). You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to download all materials.

### Course Requirements

Final grades will be based on three components: class participation (15%), weekly discussion points (25%), research precis (20%), and a take-home final exam (40%).

- **Class participation (15%):** Students are expected to complete the assigned readings each week according to the topic covered. For this part of the grade, students will be expected to perform consistently well both when participating on a voluntary basis as well as when called upon to discuss and/or present the readings. Class participation will count for 15% of the final grade. This also includes the frequency and quality of reactions to discussion points raised by other students and your reactions, feedback to the presentations by other students at a mini-conference, and the course suitability and discussion quality of a student's article selection (see Week 14 below). It is unprofessional and unacceptable to miss classes in a graduate-level program such as ours without a documented serious reason of which I must be informed in advance.

- **Weekly discussion points (25%):** Each week starting with week 3 (February 15) you should submit three discussion/talking points based on the readings for that week. Each talking point should be approximately a paragraph long, first stating the nature of the puzzle/issue/contradiction & similar, directly drawn from the required readings for that week, and suggest the directions for discussing it. You don't always need to provide your own position, but you should do it in one of these three discussion points. Taken together, your three discussion points must be clearly grounded on each and all of the specific readings assigned for that week. Be specific in referring to the readings, that is, you need to properly cite (not quote!) the readings and the page numbers on which the issue is presented by the author(s) to demonstrate that you correctly interpreted it on your own. Only one discussion point can be based on a single reading (though not desirable, but if you really must), while the remaining two discussion points (or even preferably all three) should compare and contrast at least 2 readings concerning the identified puzzle/issue, i.e., properly identifying their similarities and/or differences, so that in the end all required readings assigned for that week are presented in your discussion points. For a good grade, avoid generic questions such as "What do you think about it?"

The only exception to the nature of talking points is week #3 (February 15), when each student will be responsible to present one of the datasets instead of the discussion points and there will be a separate handout distributed in class about it.

You must bring and give me a hard copy of your discussion points, typed on one single-spaced page, at the beginning of each class. The failure to submit them on time, i.e., at the very start of the class, will automatically result in a grade penalty and no late submissions will be accepted. The grade will be based on the accuracy of your interpretations of all the assigned weekly readings and the quality of your questions/talking points.

- **Research Precis (20%):** In your research precis, you develop the research idea and outline your plan for carrying it out. It should include: (a) identified research puzzle/question you want to investigate, (b) what specific literature and arguments from the required readings for this course motivate it (c) how do these specific readings motivate it (i.e., is it an unaddressed problem? Is it a contradiction in arguments and/or evidence? etc., but be specific about it), (d) briefly present your own argument that addresses this puzzle and explain how it solves it, and (e) briefly identify the appropriate empirical method for quantitatively testing it (i.e., identify independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, required datasets).

The precis length should be 3 to 5 pages maximum, double-spaced, and it will be presented at our class mini-conference on May 3 & 10. I must receive its electronic version in MS Word format by Monday, May 1 and will distribute it to 2 assigned discussants. No late submissions will be accepted. In that case, the research precis grade will automatically default into F and the student would not be able to participate at the mini-conference in any role.

- **Final exam (40%):** The take-home final exam is similar in format to the comprehensive exams in international relations, although it will be shorter and with an extended time of one week. It will be distributed in class on May 10 and will be due by 4 p.m. on May 17. An electronic version of your final exam must reach me by e-mail by the deadline.

### **Excused Absences and Deadline Extensions**

This is a graduate-level seminar, and students are expected to be regularly prepared for and attend all classes. If the student is seeking an excused absence, s/he must notify me at least one day before the absence and provide full documentation no later than by the end of the second working day after the absence. The deadline extensions the weekly discussion points, research precis and final exam will not be granted, except ONLY in documented cases of serious illness. Otherwise, the failures to submit any of these written assignments as instructed by the deadline will be graded F. The same applies for a failure to present a research precis and guide the discussion in class as scheduled. I will not grant an Incomplete grade for the course.

### **Citation Style for Discussion Points, Precis, and Exam**

Students should use in-text citation style for referring to the readings as follows: the author's last name (year of publication, page number). Example: Fearon (1995, 381) or Fearon (1995, 381-383). Given the nature of all three of these assignments, direct quotations should be avoided and the readings/arguments should be presented in your own words. The quotes will be penalized unless you demonstrate that it was absolutely necessary to use it. Recall that the grade evaluations are about the quality and correctness of your own analysis and not that of the quotes.

### **Plagiarism Statement**

As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another person. In accordance with the definition, a student is committing plagiarism if s/he copies the work of another person and turn it in as his/her own, even if s/he should have the permission of the person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated. I will not tolerate any form of plagiarism and any case of scholastic dishonesty will result in an automatic grade F for the course. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism and general academic dishonesty issues, please consult the UB pages and policy on these issues as a starting point, such as <http://academicintegrity.buffalo.edu/policies/index.php> and <http://research.lib.buffalo.edu/avoiding-plagiarism>. This interactive tutorial should also be helpful: <https://library.leeds.ac.uk/tutorials/integrity/generic/>.

### **Accessibility Resources**

If you have any disability which requires reasonable accommodations to enable you to participate in this course, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources, 25 Capen Hall, 645-2608, and also the instructor of this course. The Office of Accessibility Resources will provide you with information and review appropriate arrangements for reasonable accommodations.

### **Intellectual Property**

In accordance with the UB's College of Arts and Science's policy, the course materials prepared by the professor in this course, including the syllabus, all lectures and presentations are the professor's intellectual property. Video, audio, and photographic recording of lectures and lecture slides is prohibited without her explicit written permission. The selling or dissemination of exams, study guides, homework assignments and handouts, and notes is also prohibited without her explicit written permission.

### **Scholarly Journals**

Students should be familiar with the primary journals in international relations:

*International Studies Quarterly*

*Journal of Conflict Resolution*

*International Organization*

specialized in the conflict area, additionally:

*Conflict Management and Peace Science*

*International Interactions*

*International Security*

*Journal of Peace Research*

*Security Studies*

and articles on international politics in more general journals in the discipline:

*American Political Science Review*

*American Journal of Political Science*

*Journal of Politics*

*World Politics*

*British Journal of Political Science*

All these journals should be perused regularly and, if unfamiliar with some of them, a good start would be to read those articles that are relevant for the topics in this course.

## COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

### Week 1: February 1

#### COURSE INTRODUCTION

No readings.

### Week 2: February 8

#### CONCEPTS, CAUSALITY, THEORY

- Diehl, Paul F. 2006. "Just a Phase? Integrating Conflict Dynamics Over Time." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 23 (3): 199-210. \*UBLearns
- Gerring, John. 2005. "Causation: A Unified Framework for the Social Sciences." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 17 (2): 163-198.
- Fischer, David Hackett. 1970. "Fallacies of Causation." In David Hackett Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought*. New York: Harper & Row, Chapter 6 (pp. 163-186). \*UBLearns
- Senese, Paul D., and John A. Vasquez. 2008. "Explaining War, Thinking about Peace." In *The Steps to War: An Empirical Study*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, Ch. 8 (pp. 251-279, esp. 269-279). \*UBLearns

Recommended empirical survey:

- Geller, Daniel S. 2000. "Explaining War: Empirical Patterns and Theoretical Mechanisms." In *Handbook of War Studies II*, ed. Manus I. Midlarsky. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp. 407-49. \*UBLearns

### Week 3: February 15

#### METHODOLOGIES AND DATA RESEARCH

- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sydney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Ch. 1 (pp. 1-33). \*UBLearns
- Hensel, Paul. 2010. "Review of Available Datasets." In *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, ed. Robert A. Denemark, London: Wiley Blackwell. \*UBLearns
- Also skim through some of the datasets and accompanying documentation at:  
<http://www.isadiscussion.com/view/0/datasets.html>

#### DATA SETS

(provided in a separate document)

### Week 4: February 22

#### STRUCTURAL AND DYADIC POWER BALANCES/SHIFTS

- Waltz, Kenneth N. 1988. "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (4): 615-28.
- Wayman, F.W. 1984. "Bipolarity and War: The Role of Capability Concentration and Alliance Patterns among Major Powers, 1816–1965." *Journal of Peace Research* 21 (1): 61–78.
- Rasler, Karen, and William R. Thompson. 2010. "Systemic Theories of Conflict." In *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, ed. Robert A. Denemark, London: Wiley-Blackwell & Tucson: ISA. \*UBLearns
- Kim, Woosang, and James D. Morrow. 1992. "When Do Power Shifts Lead to War?" *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (4): 896-922.
- Blainey, Geoffrey. 1988. "The Abacus of Power." In Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War*. New York: Free Press, Ch. 8 (pp. 108-24). \*UBLearns

**Week 5: March 1****DOMESTIC POLITICS I (DEMOCRATIC/LIBERAL PEACE)**

- Maoz, Zeev, and Bruce Russett. 1993. "Normative and Structural Causes of the Democratic Peace, 1946-1986." *American Political Science Review* 87 (3): 624-38.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, James D. Morrow, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alastair Smith. 1999. "An Institutional Explanation for the Democratic Peace." *American Political Science Review* 93 (4): 791-808.
- Kertzer, Joshua D., and Ryan Brutger. 2016. "Decomposing Audience Costs: Bringing the Audience Back into Audience Cost Theory." *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (1): 234–249.
- Danilovic, Vesna, and Joe Clare. 2007. "The Kantian Liberal Peace (Revisited)." *American Journal of Political Science* 51 (2): 397-414.

**Week 6: March 8****DOMESTIC POLITICS II**

- Gelpi, Christopher. 1997. "Democratic Diversions: Governmental Structure and the Externalization of Domestic Conflict." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41 (2): 255-282.
- Pickering, Jeffrey, and Emizet F. Kisangani. 2010. "Diversionary Despots? Comparing Autocracies' Propensities to Use and to Benefit from Military Force." *American Journal of Political Science* 54 (2): 477–93.
- Auerswald, David P. 1999. "Inward Bound: Domestic Institutions and Military Conflicts." *International Organization* 53 (3): 469-504.
- Beasley, Ryan, and Juliet Kaarbo. 2014. "Explaining Extremity in the Foreign Policies of Parliamentary Democracies." *International Studies Quarterly* 58 (4): 729–740.
- Herrmann, Richard K, and Jonathan W. Keller. 2004. "Beliefs, Values, and Strategic Choice: U.S. Leaders' Decisions to Engage, Contain, and Use Force in an Era of Globalization." *Journal of Politics* 66 (2): 557-80.

(Week 7: March 15 no class)

**Weeks 8: March 22 - NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)**

**Week 9: March 29****BARGAINING I: BASICS AND FIELD SURVEY**

- Snyder, Glenn H, and Paul Diesing. 1977. *Conflict among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making, and System Structure in International Crises*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 183-198 (from Ch. 3). \*UBLearns
- Danilovic, Vesna, and Joe Clare. (forthcoming, 2017). "Deterrence and Crisis Bargaining." In *International Studies Online*, ed. Renée Marlin-Bennet. (Updated edition of the 2010 article in *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, ed. Robert A. Denemark, London: Wiley-Blackwell & Tucson: ISA.) \*UBLearns
- Morrow, James D. 1999. "The Strategic Setting of Choices: Signaling, Commitment, and Negotiation in International Politics." In *Strategic Choice and International Relations*, ed. David A. Lake and Robert Powell. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 77-114. \*UBLearns
- Trager, Robert F. 2016. "The Diplomacy of War and Peace." *Annual Review of Political Science* Vol. 19, pp. 205-228.
- It is also mandatory to refresh your knowledge of Schelling and Ellsberg's readings in PSC 504. If you chose to take this course before enrolling in PSC 504 (though the advice is generally not to do it), you should read them right away as the semester starts to catch up in a timely manner:
- Schelling, Thomas C. 1966. *Arms and Influence*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Ch. 2 (pp. 35-91). \*UBLearns
- Ellsberg, Daniel. 1968. "The Theory and Practice of Blackmail." RAND transcript P-3883 of 1959 original. \*UBLearns

**Week 10: April 5****BARGAINING II: COERCION**

- Snyder, Glenn H, and Paul Diesing. 1977. *Conflict among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making, and System Structure in International Crises*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 198-243 (from Ch. 3). \*UBLearns
- Fearon, James D. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49 (3): 379-414.
- Guisinger, Alexandra, and Alastair Smith. 2002. "Honest Threats: The Interaction of Reputation and Political Institutions in International Crises." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46 (2): 175-200.
- Clare, Joe, and Vesna Danilovic. 2010. "Multiple Audiences and Reputation Building in International Conflicts." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54 (6): 860-882.
- Weisiger, Alex, and Keren Yarhi-Milo. 2015. "Revisiting Reputation: How Past Actions Matter in International Politics." *International Organization* 69 (2): 473-495.

**Week 11: April 12****BARGAINING III: ACCOMODATION**

- Snyder, Glenn H, and Paul Diesing. 1977. *Conflict among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making, and System Structure in International Crises*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 243-263, 275-281 (from Ch. 3). \*UBLearns

- Baldwin, David A. 1971. "The Power of Positive Sanctions". *World Politics* 24 (1):19–38.
- Clare, Joe. 2014. "Hawks, Doves, and International Cooperation." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58 (7): 1311-1337.
- Favretto, Katja. 2009. "Should Peacemakers Take Sides? Major Power Mediation, Coercion, and Bias." *American Political Science Review* 103 (2): 248-63.
- Nincic, Miroslav. 2010. "Getting What You Want: Positive Inducements in International Relations." *International Security* 35 (1): 138-183.

**Week 12: April 19****MAKING AND KEEPING PEACE**

- Doyle, Michael W., and Nicholas Sambanis. 2000. "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 94 (4): 779-801.
- Fortna, Virginia Page. 2004. "Interstate Peacekeeping: Causal Mechanisms and Empirical Effects." *World Politics* 56 (4): 481-519.
- Benson, Michelle A., and Jacob Kathman. 2014. "UN Bias and Force Commitments in Civil Conflicts." *Journal of Politics* 76 (2):350–63.
- Werner, Suzanne, and Amy Yuen. 2005. "Making and Keeping Peace." *International Organization* 59 (2): 261-92.
- Hartzell, Caroline, and Matthew Hoddie. 2003. "Institutionalizing Peace: Power Sharing and Post-Civil War Conflict Management." *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (2): 318-332.

**Week 13: April 26****SUB- AND TRANSNATIONAL VIOLENCE**

Select one of these two topics, but also must read an asterisked article from the unselected topic.

**Session 1: TERRORISM**

- \*Crenshaw, Martha. 1981. The Causes of Terrorism. *Comparative Politics* 13 (4): 379-399.
- Pape, Robert. 2003. "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *American Political Science Review* 97 (3): 343-362.
- Ethan Bueno de Mesquita. 2005. "The Quality of Terror." *American Journal of Political Science* 49 (3): 515–530.
- Kydd, Andrew H., and Barbara F. Walter. 2006. "The Strategies of Terrorism." *International Security* 31 (1): 49-80.
- Abrahms, Max. 2008. "What Terrorists Really Want." *International Security* 32 (4): 78-105.

**Session 2: ETHNOPOLITICAL CONFLICTS**

- \*Cederman Lars-Erik, Nils B. Weidmann, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch. 2011. "Horizontal Inequalities and Ethno-nationalist Civil War: A Global Comparison." *American Political Science Review* 105 (3): 478–495.
- Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97 (1): 75-90.
- Toft, Monica Duffy. 2006. "Issue Indivisibility and Time Horizons as Rationalist Explanations for War." *Security Studies* 15 (1): 34-69.

- Walter, Barbara S. 2006. "Information, Uncertainty, and the Decision to Secede." *International Organization* 60 (1): 105-35.
- Bara, Corinne. 2014. "Incentives and Opportunities: A Complexity-Oriented Explanation of Violent Ethnic Conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 51 (6): 696-710.

**Week 14: May 3****Session 1: STUDENT READING SELECTIONS**

Each student will select and present in class one article published in the past 2-3 years in the listed journals on p. 3 of this syllabus. The article needs to be related *directly* to one or more topics in this course and its selection justified on the grounds of its theoretical relevance and research contribution to the select body of literature covered in this course. I have to be notified about the article selection by April 19 at the latest. An article proposal has to be accompanied by a *brief paragraph* justifying the selection (*your* view – not the author's abstract - on what kind of contribution it makes to which specific topic(s) in this course, and how).

**Session 2: MINI-CONFERENCE – 4 student presenters**

Each student will prepare and give a 5 minute presentation of their research precis. Two discussants (assigned by me) will then have roughly 2-3 minutes each to give constructive feedback on all aspects of the research precis (relevant literature coverage, theoretical argument, research design outline), and the presenter can respond to these in the remaining 2-3 minutes. Total time for each precis presentation and discussion is 15 minutes.

**Week 15: May 10****MINI-CONFERENCE – 8 student presenters**

Each student will prepare and give a 5 minute presentation of their research precis. Two discussants (assigned by me) will then have roughly 2-3 minutes each to give constructive feedback on all aspects of the research precis (relevant literature coverage, theoretical argument, research design outline), and the presenter can respond to these in the remaining 2-3 minutes. Total time for each precis presentation and discussion is 15 minutes.

**Take-home exam will be given in class on May 10 — it is due by 4 p.m. on May 17.**

~Have a Good Summer Break~