GVPT 409P: Seminar in International Relations and World Politics: Conflict in the International System

Spring 2017

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Office Hours: Wednesday 1:30-3:00 and by appointment

Course Description:
This course is designed to provide an overview on conflict in the international system. Students will examine different types of conflict—including state-to-state war, civil war, terrorism, and non-violent conflict. The course will describe trends in the incidence of conflict, as well as theories about the causes of conflict and conflict resolution. In addition, we will examine three conflicts—the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syria, and Sudan—in some detail.

Course Requirements:
As a seminar course, student participation is crucial to this class. Students are expected to have done all of the reading before class, to attend, and to participate actively in class. There are three main assignments in this course—one midterm exam, a final exam and a research paper. The final exam will be cumulative, although weighted more heavily toward the latter portion of the course. The research paper will be a 10-12 page paper. The paper will be due May 9, and all students will be required to submit a written topic proposal to me by March 30. Additionally, students will have an opportunity to submit a rough draft of the paper on April 18 and get comments on it.

Grading:
Midterm  25%
Final Exam  30%
Research Paper  35%
Participation  10%

Course Readings:
There is one required book for this class: Winning the War on War by Joshua Goldstein which is available in the bookstore. In addition to this required text, there are a number of required readings that are articles or selections from books. These readings will be posted on the course page on elms.

Religious Observance
By the end of February students must provide in writing a request for a make up of exams and other required assignments if the syllabus indicates a date when you are unable to attend due to a specific religious observance.
Absence due to illness.
Campus Senate policy requires students who are absent due to illness/injury to furnish documentary support to the instructor. Students are required to contact me by email prior to class time to indicate that they have an illness or an injury and will be missing class. Students must then, on the day that they return to class, provide written documentation verifying the illness/injury. Students will not be allowed to turn in missed assignments or make up quizzes, tests, papers, etc. if they have not provided this documentation.

Academic Integrity
The University of Maryland has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards applicable to all undergraduate students, and you are responsible for upholding these standards as you complete assignments and take exams in this course. Please make yourself aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information see www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu. If any student is believed to be in violation of the Code of Academic Integrity, they will be referred to the Student Honor Council.

Students with disabilities.
I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office. I am not able to accommodate students who are not registered with DSS or who do not provide us with documentation or have not had that documentation reviewed by DSS before March 1.

Copyright Notice
The course lectures and other materials are copyrighted. They may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission from me.

Other Policies
The Dean for Undergraduate Studies has a website with other policies that are general to all UMD courses, the link for which is here: http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html.

Course Schedule

Part I: Types of Conflict

Week 1: Introduction

January 26: Introduction
Week 2: Types of Conflict I: Interstate War

January 31: Interstate War I

Reading:

February 2: Interstate War II

Reading:

Week 3: Types of Conflict II: Civil War

February 7: Civil War

Reading:

February 9: Civil War and Ethnic Conflict

Reading:
- Connor, Walker. "A nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group is a...." Ethnic and racial studies 1.4 (1978): 377-400.

Week 4: Types of Conflict III

February 14: Terrorism

Reading:
February 16: Genocide and Mass Killing

Reading:

Week 5: Types of Conflict IV

February 21: Protest and Non-Violence

Reading:

NO CLASS FEBRUARY 23

Week 6: Cases of Conflict: DRC

February 28: Background to the Conflict

Reading:

March 2: Africa’s First World War

Reading:

Week 7: Cases of Conflict: Syria

March 7: The Arab Uprisings

Reading:

March 9: Civil war in Syria

Reading:
Week 8: Midterm Exam

March 14: Preparation for midterm

March 16: Midterm

Part II: Causes of Conflict

Week 9: Structural Causes

March 28: Democracy

Reading:

March 30: The Liberal Peace

Reading:

Paper proposal due Thursday, March 30

Week 10: Individual Motivations

April 4: Economics

Reading:
April 6: Discrimination

Reading:

**Week 11: Repression and External Intervention**

April 11: Repression and Dissent

Reading:

April 13: The External Dimension

Reading:

**Part III: Conflict termination and resolution**

**Week 12: Mediation**

April 18: Barriers to Negotiation

Reading:

**Rough Draft of paper due Tuesday, April 18 (optional)**

April 20: Mediation

Reading:
**Week 13: Peacekeeping**

April 25: Foundations of peacekeeping

Reading:
- Goldstein, *Winning the War on War*, Chapters 1-5

April 27: Does peacekeeping work?

Reading:
- Goldstein, *Winning the War on War*, Chapters 6-8

**Week 14: Cases of Conflict: South Sudan**

May 2: Two civil wars in Sudan

Reading:

May 4: Independence and continued conflict

Reading:

**Week 15: Winning the War on War?**

May 9: Trends in Conflict

**Paper due Tuesday, May 9**

Reading:
- Goldstein, *Winning the War on War*, Chapters 9-12

May 11: Toward the future?

**Final Exam: Saturday, May 13: 8:00-10:00**