Overview

This course introduces students to the literature and research agendas related to security, peace and conflict (SPC) studies. We will cover a wide array of approaches that relate to both interstate and intrastate conflict and cooperation. While we will not have time to comprehensively cover all the important relevant work, we will sample a spectrum of the work from the foundational studies to the state-of-the-art approaches.

Goals

Through the readings and discussion, students will get a sense for where the literature has been and where it is going. As students move forward with their studies, this course will help students develop a fuller sense of the context in which other work they read is situated. Students will also be able to better understand the contribution of new work, including their own.

Students will also develop important skills necessary for the completion of their own original scholarship. Specifically, they will hone their ability to quickly analyze the research in the field and be able to identify the contributions and potential flaws. Students will also be exposed to a variety of research designs and cultivate a sense for some best practices in the field.

The final paper in the course is intended to help students move from a role of being a consumer and critic of research to a producer of the research. The students will construct falsifiable hypotheses that will help advance our understanding of international security, peace and conflict and then design a rigorous research design to test those hypotheses.

Requirements

There are four graded components of this course. Students are expected to strictly adhere to the Duke Community Standard in all of their work and participation, and violations will be enforced. All sources must be correctly cited, and all work must be each student’s own. All late assignments and papers will lose one letter grade of credit for each day late.

Class Participation (10%)
The course will rely heavily on class discussion, so each student is expected to come to class with all the required reading completed. Students are also expected to contribute to the discussion.

*Annotated Bibliographies (6 x 5% = 30% total)*

On alternating weeks (starting with the 2nd week), students will identify 7 pieces of scholarship that are highly relevant to the topic of the week. Students will prepare an annotated bibliography in which the pieces of the bibliography are placed into the proper relationship with the assigned readings. Students are only expected to read abstracts and summaries of the included pieces of scholarship and to otherwise assess the citation counts and quality of the publication outlet in choosing the 7 pieces of scholarship. The purpose of this exercise is to gain experience in doing literature reviews and to introduce the class to major pieces of the literature that we do not have time to discuss in depth. The annotated bibliographies are due by the start of the respective class periods. The annotations should be 2-4 sentences and focus on the following questions:

1. How do the assigned readings relate to each piece of scholarship in terms of the progression of the accumulation of knowledge?
   a. Which assigned readings build on each piece of scholarship?
   b. Which assigned readings are foundational to each piece of scholarship?
   c. Which assigned readings are contemporary with each piece of scholarship?

2. How do the assigned readings relate to each piece of scholarship in terms of consistency/inconsistency in the conclusions drawn?
   a. Which assigned readings appear to be consistent with each piece of scholarship?
   b. Which assigned readings appear to be inconsistent with each piece of scholarship?

*Short Summary Papers (6 x 5% = 30% total)*

On alternating weeks (starting with the 2nd week, and opposite the annotated bibliographies), students will briefly summarize the assigned readings. The summary papers are due by the start of the respective class periods. There should be two components of the summaries.

1. The summaries should relate the week’s readings to each other.
   a. How do they agree?
   b. How do they differ?
   c. How do they build on each other?
   d. Do some of the readings touch on completely different topics?

2. The summaries should provide a quick snapshot of the articles.
   a. For each article, state the research question in one sentence
   b. For each article, state the puzzle being addressed
   c. For each article, state the central argument in one sentence
d. For each article, summarize what comparisons were made (if any) to test the argument in one sentence.

Research Paper (30%)
At the end of the semester, students will turn in a research paper between 25 and 40 pages in length (double spaced, including the bibliography). The paper must address a theoretical question, make a contribution to the literature, provide a coherent argument, evaluate in depth an illustrative historical case and provide the protocol for a rigorous research design. On January 30, students will turn in an abstract of their paper topic and research question, including an overview of the research contribution and the selection of an illustrative case. The final paper is due on April 27, by 5:00pm. Late papers will lose one letter grade for each day late. The citations and bibliography should consistently be in the style of one of the major political science journals.

Schedule

(The readings are in no particular order. In selecting the readings, I have tried to avoid substantial overlap with other graduate courses offered in the department, especially the Civil Wars course.)

16-Jan  Peace through Strength: Deterrence and Signaling

23-Jan  Maintaining Order: Power, State Capacity and Hierarchy

**30-Jan**

**Interdependence as Conflict and Peace Enhancing**


**6-Feb**

**Information and Armed Conflict**


**13-Feb**

**Credibility and Mistrust**


20-Feb  Domestic Incentives for Bearing the Costs of War

27-Feb  Domestic Incentives for Military Restraint

6-March  Repression and Protests


### 20-March

**Terrorism and One-Sided Violence**


### 27-March

**Ethnic Fragmentation**


### 2-Apr (Monday morning)

**Agreements & Formal Institutions**


**10-Apr Third-Party Involvement**

**17-Apr Aid as an Instrument of Peace**

**Grading Scale**

The assignments will be graded on a 16-point scale that is basically a 4-point scale stretched out to 16 points. These grades will not be assigned based on the docking of points, but on the comprehensive assessment of the strength of the material. Grading standards used in the assignment of these values are provided below.

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<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>[15-16)</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>[14-15)</td>
<td>A-</td>
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**Grading Standards**

The following standards will be applied to the evaluation of assignments in the class.

**A** Exceptional Performance.

Consistently outstanding work on all course-related tasks at a level that distinguishes the student from other members of the class. A comprehensive and incisive command of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A frequently demonstrated exceptional capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. The ability to master and integrate large amounts of factual material and abstract theories. An outstanding ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

**A-** Excellent Performance.

Consistently strong work on all course-related tasks. A comprehensive command of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A clearly demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. Understands well and can integrate the relevant factual and theoretical material central to the course. A strong ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

**B+** Very Good Performance.
Consistently above average work on all course-related tasks. A very good grasp of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A generally demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical, and logical thinking. A very good command of factual and theoretical material, and some capacity to integrate the two. A solid ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

B  Good Performance.

Good and generally consistent work on all course-related tasks. A general understanding of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. Modest evidence of the capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. A good understanding of factual and theoretical material, but limited evidence of the capacity to integrate the two. A basic ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

B-  Satisfactory Performance

Satisfactory work on course-related tasks. A reasonable understanding of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. An infrequently demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. Understands at a basic level the facts and theories related to the course, but demonstrates weak integration skills. A limited or inconsistent ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

C+/C/C-  Adequate Performance

Adequate performance on course-related tasks. An understanding of the basic elements of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A rarely demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. An inability to go beyond a recitation of basic factual material related to the class. Demonstrated weaknesses in the ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

D/D+  Minimal Passing Performance.

Barely acceptable work on course-related tasks. A generally superficial and often inconsistent familiarity with the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A failure to demonstrate the capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking related to course content. An uneven understanding of basic factual material related to the course; no evidence of fact/theory integration. Demonstrates significant gaps in the ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

F  Unacceptable Performance
Fails to meet minimum course expectations. Unable to understand even the most basic elements of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. Demonstrates an inability to engage in coherent written or oral discussion of course material. Does not satisfy specific course expectations with respect to attendance, deadlines, participation, etc.