

# CAUSES OF WAR

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Rutgers University

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Poli Sci 324H1

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Scott Hall, Rm. 215

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After a significant decline in the incidence of wars between states since World War II, could the world be moving back towards more frequent interstate crises and wars? Russia's seizure of Crimea, its support of aggression in Ukraine, its threats against NATO members, its "buzzing" of US and NATO aircraft in the Baltic, and its military operations in Syria in close proximity to US forces have generated concerns that the United States might be drawn into a dangerous crisis with Russia. India-China border tensions have increased, as have tensions between Israel and Iran over Iran's activities in Syria and Lebanon. The rise of China and the possibility – many say likelihood – that it will surpass the US in economic strength in the next two decades, in conjunction with the fact that most "power transitions" between the two leading states in the international system have historically ended up in war, raises concerns about the possibility of a Sino-American conflict. Those concerns are exacerbated by increasingly aggressive Chinese behavior in the South China Sea, Chinese perceptions of challenges to its sovereignty by the US, and by longstanding conflicts of interest over the status of Taiwan. Another possible path to war centers on North Korea, which already has the capability of launching a nuclear strike against U.S. allies in east and southeast Asia and against US naval bases the western Pacific, which is expected to have a nuclear strike capability against the US homeland within a few years, and which has a highly erratic leader.

A war between nuclear powers is high unlikely but not impossible. President Kennedy had estimated a one-third chance that the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis might escalate to war between the US and USSR. The potential consequences of such a war make it imperative that we think about how it might arise. Could adversaries' misperceptions about American willingness to come to the aid of an ally lead to a fatal miscalculation? Could there be a gradually escalating action-reaction cycle, accelerated by fears by one or both sides that the failure to take a firm stand might lead to the loss of credibility, the loss of allies, and the loss of domestic support from a nationalistic public that believes that

their country has not been given the respect it deserves? Could an irrational North Korean leader start a war? Might the US decide to launch a preventive strike against North Korean nuclear facilities? Is there a danger that the retreat of the United States from its leadership role in the world could lead to a system like that of the 1920s and 1930s, in which the isolation of the US is generally regarded as an important underlying cause of World War II?

This seminar is designed to help you think about such questions – not by directly examining sources of instability in the contemporary world, but instead by familiarizing you with theories about how wars start and with the historical experience of interstate wars. Although the contexts of possible future crises and wars will differ from those of past wars, the knowledge generated in this class will give you the conceptual tools and historical perspective to make sense of future conflicts and crises. This is not just abstract theory; a major international crisis is quite likely to occur in your lifetime.

In the first half of the semester we survey the leading theories of the causes of war, using the “levels-of-analysis” framework to categorize these theories and organize our survey. We begin with the “system” level and focus on realist theories of conflict, which emphasize the anarchic structure of the international system, the security dilemmas that arise between states, and state preoccupations with power and interest. We focus in more detail on balance of power theory and power transition theory. Shifting to the “dyadic” level, we examine the “Prisoner’s dilemma” model, deterrence and spiral models, and the “bargaining model of war.” Each of these theories assumes that the foreign policies of states are basically rational responses to the constraints and opportunities existing in their external environments, designed to maximize the national interest.

Other theories question this assumption, and suggest that the causes of war can be traced to factors internal to the state, including its institutional structure or political culture, the domestic political interests of decision-makers or the economic interests of private groups, public opinion, or bureaucratic rivalries. We examine these “societal” and “governmental” level theories, along with “individual” level theories that emphasize the role of the belief systems and personalities of political leaders. We illustrate each of the main theoretical arguments and each of the levels of analysis with examples from a wide range of historical cases. Our survey of theories of war, guided by the levels-of-analysis framework, leads us to ask whether the outbreak of wars is due more to states’ external competition for power and security or to their internal political dynamics or the psychological make-up of leaders.

Understanding theories of war is only part of our task. We also want to understand why particular wars occur, and sometimes our general theories do not fit particular historical cases very well. Some wars have changed the course of history – for the states involved and sometimes for the entire international system – and for this reason alone it is important to understand why they occurred. In addition, with so many theories, we need to have a way of deciding which theories are better than others. History provides an answer, a way of “testing” our theories of war and determining which theories are most consistent with historical reality. The process of testing our theories against the historical reality of war will also suggest how we might modify our theories to make them better.

These considerations shape the design of this seminar. After surveying the most important theories of interstate war in the first half of the course, we turn in the second half of the course to more detailed studies of particular wars. Each student will undertake a major research project on a war of their choice. S/he will write a preliminary paper on the different ways historians have interpreted the causes of “their” war, give an oral presentation to the class on the causes of the war and respond to questions from the class, and complete a final research paper by the end of the term. Students can select from a wide variety of interstate wars – American and non-American, past and present, Western and non-Western, great power and small power. Later in this syllabus I provide a list of wars, but students are not restricted to this list. The reason why we restrict our projects to interstate wars, in case you were wondering, is to maintain the close connection between theory and history. Theories of interstate war differ in many respects from theories of civil war, and one semester does not provide enough time for an intensive focus on both.

### **Pedagogical Objectives**

The seminar has several pedagogical aims or learning objectives. Students should come out of this course with an understanding of the leading theories of causes of interstate war, some familiarity with the causes of the 10-15 wars serving as the focus of student research projects, and a much deeper understanding of the causes of “their” war, the focus of their research project. Students will gain experience in thinking in causal terms, in making causal arguments, and in understanding what kinds of historical evidence appropriate for confirming or disconfirming different theoretical or interpretative arguments. All of this is part of critical thinking. Students develop substantial research skills: in planning and organizing a research paper, compiling and integrating evidence, presenting and defending an argument before a critical audience, incorporating feedback into a final research paper, and writing a polished paper. These are valuable skills in many professions.

## READINGS

There are four sets of required reading for the seminar:

- 1) Theoretical reading for part I of the course.
- 2) A few sample papers from previous classes, to see what good papers look like.
- 3) Background reading for each of the student presentations in part II of the course.
- 4) Reading for your specific research project.

**Required Book** (available at Rutgers Barnes & Noble Bookstore, 732 246-8448, 100 Somerset St, New Brunswick), on the internet, and on reserve at Alexander Library):

Jack S. Levy & William R. Thompson, *Causes of War*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

**Articles and Book Chapters** (available in folder #1 on my Sakai site, [www.sakai.rutgers.edu](http://www.sakai.rutgers.edu))

Graham T. Allison and Morton H. Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications." *World Politics* 24 (Spring 1972): 40-79.

Robert J. Art, "The Four Functions of Force." In Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, eds., *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2007. Pp. 141-48.

Geoffrey Blainey, "The Abacus of Power." In Blainey, *The Causes of War*. New York: Free Press, 1988. Pp. 108-124.

Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976. Book I, chap. 1.

Edward Vose Gulick, "The Aims of Europe's Classical Balance of Power." In Gulick, *Europe's Classical Balance of Power*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1955. Pp. 390-97.

Joe D. Hagan, "Does Decision Making Matter? Systematic Assumptions vs. Historical Reality in International Relations Theory." *International Studies Review*, 3, 2 (Summer 2001), 5-46.

Ole R. Holsti, "Crisis Decision-Making." In Philip E. Tetlock, et al., *Behavior, Society, and Nuclear War*, vol. 1. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989. Chap. 1.

Robert Jervis, "Deterrence, the Spiral Model, and the Intentions of the Adversary." In Ralph K. White, *Psychology and the Prevention of Nuclear War*. New York: New York University Press, 1986. Pp. 107-30.

Robert Jervis, "War and Misperception." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 18, 4 (Spring, 1988): 675-700.

Jack S. Levy, "Misperception and the Causes of War: Theoretical Linkages and Analytical Problems." *World Politics*, 36, 1 (October 1983): 76-99.

- Jack S. Levy, "Preventive War: Concept and Propositions." *International Interactions* 37, 1 (March 2011): 87-96.
- Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, "Balancing on Land and at Sea: Do States Ally against the Leading Global Power?" In *Realism Reader*, ed. by Colin Elman and Michael A. Jensen. London: Routledge, 2014. Pp. 93-100.
- John J. Mearsheimer, "Anarchy and the Struggle for Power." In Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, eds., *International Politics*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2005. Pp. 50-60.
- Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Revised by Kenneth W. Thompson. New York: Knopf, 1985. Chap. 1.
- John M. Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace." *International Security* 19, 2 (Fall 1994): 87-125.
- Steven Pinker, "A History of Violence." Edge Master Class, 2001. Excerpt from <http://edge.org/conversation/mc2011-history-violence-pinker>
- Bruce Russett, *The Prisoners of Insecurity*. San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1983. Chap. 5-6.
- Ronald L. Tammen, et al. *Power Transitions: Strategies for the 21st Century*. New York: Chatham House Publishers, 2000. Chap. 1.
- James C. Thomson, "How Vietnam Happened? An Autopsy." *Atlantic Monthly* (April 1973): 47-53.
- Stephen M. Walt, "Alliances: Balancing and Bandwagoning." In Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, eds., *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*. Tenth ed. Boston: Longman, 2011. Pp. 127-134.
- Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959. Chap. 1.

All theoretical readings except the required book are available in folder #1 on my Sakai site. (Go to <https://sakai.rutgers.edu>, log in, go to Causes of War at the top, then to Resources in the left column). Once students have selected historical cases for their research projects, I will put the background historical reading for part II of the course in folder #2 on Sakai. This will usually consist of one article per war. The aim here is to provide enough historical background so that students in the class can better understand each oral presentation and ask informed questions about the presentation. This reading will also allow the presenter to shorten their discussion of the historical chronology and focus on their arguments about the causes of the war.

The theoretical reading will familiarize you with the leading theories of the causes of war. That is important as an end in itself. It is also essential for your two papers and oral presentation for the class. An understanding of the leading theories will help you identify and summarize the alternative interpretations of the historical case you are studying,

which is the focus of your first paper for the course. A theoretical understanding also helps you to organize your research paper on the causes of your war and to interpret the massive amount of historical information on your case. If you are familiar with theories of balance of power, conflict spirals, diversionary behavior, decision-making, etc., you will be quicker to identify those patterns from your historical readings and to interpret the connections among historical events. For this reason, I have set aside a day (October 17) for a summary of theories of the causes of war and discussion of how they might be applied to your research papers. There is no midterm exam, and you will not be tested directly on your understanding of theories of war, but a weak grasp of the theory is likely to lead to weaker papers, with consequences for your grade.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

There is one interrelated set of formal requirements for the course, centered around your research project on the causes of a particular war and involving three specific tasks:

- 1) a 2-3 page paper (single space) that summarizes alternative interpretations of your historical case and that includes a preliminary bibliography of sources you plan to consult.
- 2) an oral presentation to the class, summarizing your provisional interpretation of the causes of your war, followed by responses to questions from the class.
- 3) a 12-16 page (single space) research paper on your war.

The papers should be single space with an extra space between paragraphs. Any citation style is acceptable as long as you are consistent, but include a list of references of sources used at the end of your paper, regardless of citation style. Please use footnotes rather than endnotes. Please include your name, title, and page numbers on your papers.

There is no mid-term or final examination.

Your final grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

first paper	20%
oral presentation and discussion	20%
research paper	50%
general contributions to class discussion	10%

Note the last item: my judgment of your contribution (quantity and quality) to class discussion, during both our survey of theoretical approaches and in the discussions of presentations by other members of the seminar, will be important in the evaluation of all borderline cases. The more informed your questions are by the required readings, the better. This gives you a strong incentive to complete all required readings prior to class

meetings. Also, I expect you to attend every meeting of the seminar. Grades in borderline cases can be affected by poor attendance. It is particularly inexcusable for students to be absent during other students' presentations.

Please submit your papers as attachments under the "Assignments" tab on Sakai. Papers should be in an MS Word or pdf format. For those who prefer other processing programs, please convert your papers to a Word (.doc or .docx) or PDF format before submitting. Please do not submit your papers in an .odt or other format. Your paper will be automatically run through the "Turnitin" program, which detects any substantial passages in a paper that match passages in the "Turnitin" data base, which includes the entire internet.

**Paper #1: Alternative historical interpretations** of your historical case.

2-3 pages, single space, with extra space between paragraphs, including a preliminary bibliography of sources consulted.

Due Thursday, October 19, 11:59pm, at the "Assignments" tab on the course's Sakai site.

Historians often vary in their interpretations of particular historical events or episodes. Wars are no exception. One thing that motivates professional historians and political scientists is the aim of demonstrating that an existing interpretation is wrong, suggesting a new interpretation, and supporting that interpretation with evidence from documents or other sources. If one were to accept the conventional wisdom about what happened and why in a particular historical episode, then there is not much point to doing yet another study. This norm is if anything more pronounced in political science. The aim is to demonstrate not only that one's interpretation is consistent with the historical evidence, but also to demonstrate that it fits the evidence better than do the interpretations of other scholars. By focusing in paper #1 on the alternative historical interpretations of your war, you are situating your paper in the broader literature and setting up your final research paper. I am generally looking for three to five alternative interpretations for a particular crisis or war.

Sometimes it is fairly easy to identify alternative interpretations of a particular war. For the U.S. decision for war against Iraq in 2003, some argue that it was "all about oil." Others emphasize the ideological aim of overthrowing an evil dictator and bringing democracy to Iraq and the region; misperceptions associated with the belief that Iraq had an ongoing nuclear weapons program; the role of neoconservatives in the U.S. decision-making process; or the world view and personality of U.S. President George W. Bush.

Alternative interpretations are sometimes reflected in the title of books and articles. The subtitle of Herbert Bass's book on *American Entry into World War I* (1964), for example,

is *Submarines, Sentiment, or Security*. This suggests the ongoing debates about whether American decision to enter the war was motivated primarily by the German submarine threat to U.S. commerce, to US control over the Atlantic Ocean, or to the principle of freedom of the seas; by the US ideological commitment to liberal democracy; or by US concerns about the European balance of power.

Identifying alternative interpretations is often complicated by the fact that it is usually possible to identify one or two variations of each alternative interpretation. You have to use your own judgment as to whether a given variation is important enough to qualify as a separate alternative interpretation. The more you read about theories about war and about particular wars in history, the easier it is to make these judgments.

If alternative explanations do not “emerge” from debates among historians, you can suggest some yourself based on your understanding of theories of war and peace. One approach would be to adopt an approach based on the levels of analysis framework. This might lead to the identification of an international system level (or realist) interpretation, a domestic political interpretation, and an individual-level interpretation. Some might want to add a bureaucratic politics interpretation. Others might want to suggest two domestic interpretations – for example, one based on the diversionary theory of war, and another based on the pressure from powerful domestic economic interests.

My primary reason for assigning this first paper is to help you write a better second paper. As I said earlier, you can write a better paper if you are clear about whom you are arguing against. In my experience, one thing that separates many excellent research papers from merely good papers is that an excellent paper often includes a discussion of why the student’s interpretation is better than the leading alternative explanations. You can incorporate a condensed and revised version of paper #1 into your final research paper.

Paper #1 need not follow any rigid format. One approach, however, is to include a paragraph for each alternative interpretation, surrounded by an introduction and a conclusion. I have set aside a day in class (October 10) to talk about your alternative interpretations paper. The best way to do this is to read a few sample papers from past classes and to discuss them. I will put these “sample papers” in folder #3 on Sakai once students have selected their historical cases. You might note that each of the sample papers lists at least five or six sources in its reference list. I have no rigid number, in mind, and books “count” more than articles, but 5-6 is a useful rule of thumb for a minimum. If there are sources you plan to read but have not yet had the opportunity, it is okay to list them in the bibliography of this paper (but in paper #2 list only sources cited).



**Paper # 2: Research Paper**

12-16 pages, single space, extra space between paragraphs, footnotes rather than endnotes; includes list of references cited.

due Friday, December 15, noon, at the “Assignments” tab on the course Sakai site.

The paper should focus on the causes of the war that you selected for investigation. I will provide, in folder #1 on my Sakai site, additional guidelines about the paper, and we will talk more about it on and off throughout the course. In addition, I have set aside our October 24 class meeting to talk about the paper and the oral presentation. Let me briefly describe the paper here, however, because it is a major project that requires a major commitment on your part, and you should take this seminar only if the paper is something that you would enjoy doing.

The paper must be more than a historical chronology of the events leading to the outbreak of war. It must provide a theoretically-informed, causal interpretation of the outbreak of the war. That is, you should use some of the theoretical concepts from the first part of the course to help explain the outbreak of your war.

The paper must include an evaluation of the relative importance of different causal factors at different levels of analysis in the processes leading to the outbreak and escalation of the war. I do not want a “laundry list” of ten or twenty causes of the war. You need to prioritize among the many causes, and identify primary and secondary causes of the war. You also need to support your interpretation with historical evidence. This requires extensive research and extensive footnoting. In your first paper – on alternative interpretations of your war – you should include a list of sources that you have consulted or plan to consult. If I know enough about your case to know that something critical is missing, I will let you know. If I recommend additional sources that you have omitted, you would be wise to follow up on my suggestions.

Among the various theoretical questions we will attempt to answer in our historical cases are the following: What is the relative importance of causal factors from different levels of analysis on each state’s behavior? Or, to ask the same question in a slightly different way, what is the relative importance of strategic, ideological, economic, and domestic political motivations in political leaders’ decisions? Did states escalate a crisis or go to war primarily to increase their power and security, to promote certain principles of justice or forms of socio-political organization, to increase their wealth, or to consolidate the domestic positions of key elites? How important were conflicts of interests over tangible issues, like territorial disputes, as opposed to concerns over power, reputation, and internal politics? How influential were parochial private interests or the military? Did individual decision-makers make a difference, or would policy choices have been similar

if someone else was in power? Did political leaders have reasonably accurate perceptions of the intentions and capabilities of their adversaries and third states, or were there substantial misperceptions? Questions like these are likely to come up during the discussion period following student presentations, and students should do their best to incorporate answers to these questions into the conclusions of their final research paper.

To give you a sense of what my expectations are on the papers, and hopefully to reduce the level of uncertainty and anxiety, I have posted a few sample research papers from previous undergraduate research seminars in folder #4 of my Sakai site.

### **The Oral Presentation** (10-15 minutes followed by discussion)

Your oral presentation is based on your research paper but comes before the paper, and basically serves (informally) as a first draft of your research paper. The question-and-answer period following your presentation will provide feedback on your argument and suggestions as to how you might fine-tune your argument and improve your paper. Thus the discussion following your presentation is as important as the presentation itself. For this reason, and given time constraints, you must restrict your presentation to 10-15 minutes.

You should spend no more than half of your time tracing the historical events leading to the war (which the students in the class will have a decent sense of given their background reading). You should focus the bulk of your remarks on summarizing your causal argument as to what caused the war, differentiating between primary and secondary causes, suggesting the path through which each cause contributed to the outbreak of the war, and providing some evidence to back up your argument. You might also note, building on paper #1, how your interpretation fits into the existing literature on the war. You will have more opportunity to elaborate on your interpretation and supporting evidence in the discussion session.

In the question and answer session, other students and I will raise questions relating to the theoretical coherence of your argument, the strength and validity of your supporting evidence, how your interpretation fits with various theories surveyed in the first part of the course, how your interpretation differs from other interpretations of the war, and other topics. Some of these questions will be relevant for your final paper. This gets back to the presentation-as-first-draft theme. With this in mind, I strongly recommend that after your presentation you take the time to write down all the useful ideas and any responses that come to mind while things are still fresh, so that you can deal with those questions in your final research paper. Or, even better, make a deal with a friend in the class for them to take notes on the questions pertaining to your paper, and you on theirs.

It is worth noting that the more focused and coherent your presentation on the causes of your war, the more useful feedback you will get. This provides an additional incentive to do as much research on your case as possible before your presentation. Know your case.

As I note in the next section, I have no objections to several students researching the same historical case. In that event, the presentations will take the form of a panel. This would require some coordination on the summary of the history leading up to the war, as I would like to minimize overlap. However, there is no need to coordinate on presentations of causal interpretations. Your interpretation is your own. That is, students doing the same case should divide up the history, and then each will present their own argument as to the primary and secondary causes of the war. Questions following the presentations could be directed toward the panel as a whole or toward a particular student's interpretation, but all presenters would be welcome to respond.

Time constraints prevent me from reading drafts of your papers, but I would be happy to look at an outline and discuss it with you.

### **Selecting a Paper Topic**

You should move as quickly as possible to select a war to serve as the topic of your research paper for the class. The sooner you select a topic, the sooner you can move ahead with your reading, and the sooner I can set up a schedule, select the background reading, and provide suggestions as to sources for your projects. (Depending on which cases you pick, I may have many or few suggestions.) With paper #1 due October 19, I would like you to select your topic by the third week of class, September 19. Email me with your topic at any time. Selecting a topic early is also important so that you can begin collecting research materials. A fair amount of material will be available on the internet, especially in the form of journal articles, but other material is available only in books. Some books, but perhaps not too many, might be available for free on the internet. Hopefully most other books will be available in Rutgers libraries. If not, you might have to go through EZ Borrow or Interlibrary Loan (if these are unfamiliar, ask the librarian at the Alexander Library Reference Desk for details). These are efficient systems, but they do not work overnight, so please do not put off your collection of research materials until the last minute.

A few of you might already have a good sense of diplomatic/international history, and be able to narrow down the choices for a research topic fairly quickly. Many of you will have less historical background, and for that reason I have provided the following list of interstate wars to think about. Let me emphasize, however, that you are not restricted to this list.

### Selected List of Interstate Wars

You are not restricted to this list, but you must clear your choice with me.

Peloponnesian War (431BCE)

War of the Spanish Armada (1585)

Imjin War (1592)

Second Northern War (1700)

War of the Spanish Succession (1701)

French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792)

War of 1812

Mexican-American War (1846)

Crimean War (1854)

Paraguayan War (1864)

Franco-Prussian War (1870)

War of the Pacific (1879, Chile vs. Bolivia & Peru)

Sino-Japanese War (1894)

Spanish-American War (1898)

Russo-Japanese War (1904)

World War I (1914)

World War I – American Intervention (1917)

Russo-Finnish War (1939)

World War II (1939, Europe)

Pacific War (1941, U.S.-Japan)

Korean War (1950-53)

Arab Israeli Wars (1956 or 1967 or 1973)

Sino-Indian War (1962)

Cuban Missile Crisis (1962) [question: why initiation & peaceful resolution of crisis]

Vietnam War (1965-1973)

Indo-Pakistani Wars (1965 or 1971)

Iran-Iraq War (1980)

Falklands/Malvinas War (1982)

Persian Gulf War (1990/91)

2003 Iraq War (2003)

Assuming that no single war leaps off the page, you need a way to quickly learn enough about a few of these wars to make a decision. I will say a little about some of these wars in class. I hope that some of you are adventurous enough to expand your horizons and at least think about going back in time rather than selecting a more familiar recent war. I

think that you can get a pretty good sense of most of these wars from the internet. Internet sources like Wikipedia generally focus more on the history of particular wars and what led up to them than on scholarly debates about the causes of the war. That will be a serious limitation when it comes to writing your two papers, but it is perfect for gaining enough familiarity about the war to make a decision as to whether it would make for a research project that you could get interested in.

However you proceed, one thing to keep in mind is that this class focuses on the causes of the war, not how the war is fought, how it ended, or what its consequences were. Consequently, I suggest that – for the purposes of this class, at least – that you stop reading when they start fighting. An exception, of course, is if a war expands through the intervention of outside states, like American intervention in World War I. For that, you would need some understanding of the course of the war to explain the American decision to intervene.

Although we can make some exceptions, we will generally do the presentations in chronological order. However, please do not hesitate to pick one of the early cases just because that would mean you are presenting early. For one thing, my expectations are lower for the early presentations, given the more restricted time to do background research and less familiarity with how things will work. In addition, one significant advantage to presenting early is that you receive early feedback and have more time to do more research and fine-tune the final research paper before it is due, and before the end-of-semester crunch. In this sense, presenting last can be a disadvantage. Presumably your presentation will be better, but you will be less able to respond to feedback.

**NOTE #1:** Please silence your cell phones before class begins. If you need to have your cell phone on for medical or family reasons, please provide a note from your dean. You are free to use a laptop computer, iPad, or other device to take notes, to look at the syllabus or reading material online, or to look up other factual material relating to the course, but not for any other purpose. Texting or emailing or surfing the web is not permitted and will hurt your class participation grade.

**NOTE #2: ABSENCES.** Attendance is required at all sessions.

**NOTE #3: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.** The University, the Political Science Department, and I each take academic integrity very seriously. The University imposes heavy penalties for plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. If the meanings of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty are not clear, please see the Rutgers policy on academic integrity: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/> .

**NOTE #4: RUTGERS DISABILITY POLICY.** See <https://ods.rutgers.edu/> .

## COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Number indicates the week of the term, beginning September 5; letters represent multiple topics each week. All reading except the Levy & Thompson book is on Sakai.

### PART I: THEORIES OF WAR AND PEACE

- 1a. **Course Introduction** (September 5)  
focus, aims, organization, requirements  
preliminary discussion of research project
  
- 1b. **The Decline of Interstate War**  
Steven Pinker, "A History of Violence." Edge Master Class, 2001. Excerpt from  
<http://edge.org/conversation/mc2011-history-violence-pinker>  
Alternatively, watch the video at  
<http://edge.org/conversation/mc2011-history-violence-pinker>. After a  
minute or so, when Pinker gets to The Pacification Process, you can fast  
forward to the section on "The Long Peace," about a sixth of the way in,  
starting just before the figure on "The 100 Worst Wars & Atrocities."
  
- 1c. **The Politics of Force**  
Clausewitz, *On War*, Book I, chap. 1.  
Robert J. Art, "The Four Functions of Force"
  
- 1d. **Classifying the Causes of War: The Levels of Analysis Framework**  
Waltz, "Introduction" to *Man, the State, and War* (chap. 1)  
Levy and Thompson, *Causes of War*, chap. 1
  
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- 2. **The System Level: Realist Theories** (September 12)
  
- 2a. **Realist International Theory**  
Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*,  
6<sup>th</sup> ed. Chap. 1.  
John Mearsheimer, "Anarchy and the Struggle for Power"  
Levy and Thompson, *Causes of War*, chap. 2

2b. **Balance of Power Theory**

Edward Vose Gulick, "The Aims of Europe's Classical Balance of Power"  
 Stephen M. Walt, "Alliances: Balancing and Bandwagoning"  
 Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, "Balancing on Land and at Sea: Do  
 States Ally against the Leading Global Power?"

2c. **Power Transition Theory**

Ronald L. Tammen, et al. *Power Transitions*, Chap 1  
 Levy, "Preventive War: Concepts and Propositions"

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3. **Dyadic-Level Theories** (September 19)

3a. **The Prisoner's Dilemma Model**

Bruce Russett, *The Prisoners of Insecurity*, chap.5-6.

3b. **Deterrence and the Spiral Model**

Levy and Thompson, *Causes of War*, pp. 55-63  
 Robert Jervis, "Deterrence, the Spiral Model, and the Intentions of the Adversary"

3c. **Why Can't They Settle? The Bargaining Model of War**

Blainey, "The Abacus of Power"

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4. **Economic and Societal Theories** (September 26)

Levy and Thompson, *Causes of War*, pp. 70-77 & chap. 4.  
 John M. Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace"

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- 5a. **The Decision-Making Approach** (October 3)  
Joe Hagan, “Does Decision Making Matter? Systematic Assumptions vs. Historical Reality in International Relations Theory”
- 5b. **Psychology of Decision-making**  
Levy and Thompson, *Causes of War*, chap. 5  
Robert Jervis, "War and Misperception"  
Levy, “Misperceptions and the Causes of War,” pp. 82-93 only.
- 5c. **Politics and Processes of Decision-Making**  
Levy and Thompson, *Causes of War*, chap. 6  
Allison and Halperin, “Bureaucratic Politics”  
Thomson, “How Vietnam Happened: An Autopsy”
- 5d. **Crisis Decision-Making**  
Ole R. Holsti, “Crisis Decision-Making”
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6. **Writing Paper #1: Discussion of Sample Papers** (October 10)  
3 papers to be selected
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7. **Theoretical Summary** (October 17)
- \*\* Thursday, October 19, PAPER #1 DUE (“Assignments tab” on Sakai, by 11:59pm)
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8. **Oral presentation & paper #2: Discussion of Sample Papers** (October 24)  
3 papers to be selected
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- PART II: STUDENT PRESENTATIONS**  
background reading to be provided for each case
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- 9...
14. **Theoretical Comparisons Of Historical Cases** (December 12)



**LIST OF DEADLINES**

October 19 (midnight)                      paper #1

December 15 (noon)                        paper #2

submit each paper to class Sakai site, "Assignments" tab (Word or pdf only)