

# Issues of War & Peace

POLI 334, sec. 2158

Spring 2008

Prof. Moran

<b>Class Hours</b>	M, 7-9:50 pm
<b>Classroom</b>	K-627
<b>My office:</b>	K-646
<b>Office Hours</b>	M, T, W 8-9 am M, 11 am - noon W, 11 am - noon
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Final Exam:

**Monday, 12 May, 7 pm in K-627**

## **I. Description**

The twentieth century was one of the bloodiest and deadliest in the history of the human species. The two world wars alone accounted for more than 60 millions deaths and untold numbers of personal tragedies, and the Cold War which followed in the wake of the Second World War produced technologies capable of, if not actually destroying the planet, at least rendering it largely uninhabitable for human beings. If the twenty first century is anything like the twentieth, there's probably no need to worry about the twenty second. Understanding issues of war and peace are vital to our continued existence. This course will attempt to provide a more theoretical and historically situated framework for understanding the obstacles and opportunities before us. Much of the reading and discussion will be focused on war, trying to understand its causes, for without that understanding it seems difficult if not impossible to begin to find solutions that make peace possible.

## **II. Materials**

We have one (1) required textbook for the course:

Betts, Richard K. 2008. *Conflict After the Cold War*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson.

In addition we'll be using some web based resources and films.

## **III. Requirements**

This is an upper level (300) political science course. Most of you are majors or minors in our program and as such I believe should be fairly comfortable in assuming a more active and engaged role in the learning process. The basic requirements

for the grade in this course fall into two broad areas: written work and class discussion. To do well in each of these aspects of the course, you are asked and expected to complete a fair amount of reading (usually between 25 and 50 pages) and to attend class on a regular basis.

### **A. Midterm Exam (20%)**

We will have a mid-semester exam sometime around spring break. I'll distribute a study guide prior to each exam. It will be take-home exams requiring about 5 to 8 pages of writing.

### **B. Final Exam (30%)**

The final exam will be held in class and given at the date and time designated by the University (12 May at 8:00 am in K-114). If you cannot make that time due to some emergency, I will offer some alternative dates. It will be essay format and you will receive a study guide well in advance of the exam.

### **C. Research Project (40%)**

Each of you are required to complete a semester length research project related to the readings and subjects covered in the course. The research project has two components – a 10-15 minute oral presentation of your research to the class and a written version of the research. The guidelines for the paper are 10-15 pages, using “normal” citation and bibliographic guidelines. Potential topics will be distributed early in the semester and we’ll nail down subjects certainly by the end of January.

### **D. Class Participation (10%)**

Class participation will be based on both the quality and the quantity of your participation in class discussions. Obviously, coming up with a brilliant *bon mot* in January and then sitting mute for the rest of the semester is as unrewarding as speaking constantly but off topic. Participation comes in various forms and the grading will reflect the fact that not everybody is comfortable speaking in a large class. To that end, we will have numerous small group exercises that should allow each of you to speak and express your views.

Generally I use the following as a rough guide for determining this part of the grade:

Participation in the form of regular *attentive* attendance to class is generally good for a “B” for this portion of the grade. I don’t have a hard mathematical formula for determining “regular attendance” – i.e., I don’t take attendance and you don’t have a set number of classes that you can miss before a penalty kicks in. You’re all adults and you should want to come to class rather than being coerced into doing so. Please note the “attentive” part of the criteria. Stopping by regularly

but then spending the class time dozing, dining, and engaging in other disruptive behaviors will adversely affect the grade.

The same general rules apply in the discussions (both full class and small group). As a rule, it’s better to speak more rather than less, but the discussion has to be on topic. Screaming in order to browbeat your peers into submission, for instance, will adversely affect the grade.

Occasional pop quizzes (see “Caveats” below) will be factored into this portion of the grade as well.

### **Extra Credit:**

You have at least 2 chances for extra credit in this course. NJCU and *The Jersey Journal* conduct survey research on Hudson County residents. These polls are invariably political (this semester we’ll focus much on the presidential primary season) and are featured regularly in the local and occasionally the national media. In order to conduct the surveys, we need student support, particularly in the form of phone callers. The polls are conducted on evenings throughout the semester (dates will be distributed shortly). They require you to spend roughly 3 hours (from 6 to 9 pm) manning the phones. In addition to the extra credit (a third of a grade on the nearest exam to the poll, meaning if you receive a “B” on the exam, the extra credit moves it to a “B+”), you get some remuneration from NJCU (I think it’s \$10.00/hour), and we provide free donuts!

#### IV. Meeting Schedule

14 Jan:

Introduction

Reading: Pick up the textbook mentioned above.

For this first week we'll review the structure and content of the course and refresh ourselves as to the basics of American political life.

**No class on 21 January for MLK Jr. Holiday.**

28 Jan:

Current Visions of the Global Predicament  
Realism: Anarchy and Power

Reading: Betts, Part I, II

Because we miss a week for the holiday, we're going to have to cover a pretty good chunk of reading this week. The readings in Part I provide a current overview of the main contours of at least US thinking on foreign policy and the likelihood of warfare. The readings in the next couple of weeks will try to establish the theoretical and historical roots of these approaches. We'll start with the realist approach.

4-11Feb:

International Liberalism

Reading: Betts, Part III

Questions about the distribution of power and of the relative power of state and local authorities within a national political system have been central to American political life since the Revolution. This week we explore the way in which the Constitution as written and interpreted has attempted to settle these questions.

**No class February 18 due to the President's Day holiday**

25 Feb:

Evolution and Warfare: Biological and Psychological Bases of War and Violence

Reading: Betts, Part IV

Our readings for this week look at the underlying biological and/or psychological roots of warfare. Is war and violence part of our genetic legacy? Is it rooted in human psychology? If so, what can we do to ameliorate or contain these drives? Is war inevitable?

3 Mar:

Culture and Violence

Reading: Betts, Part V

Perhaps war is not a function of our evolutionary legacy, but instead an artifact of human culture. The readings this week explore the ways in which the way human beings organize their social and political life may account for a prevalence to violence and war.

**The midterm will be held sometime around here.**

**March 10: No Class for Spring Break**

17 Mar:            Economics and Warfare

Reading:            Betts, Part VI

To what extent is warfare driven by economic concerns? If so, can war be mitigated by a more equitable distribution of resources? If so, who or what decides what is equitable? What obligations do wealthy countries have to the poor in the world? Happy Saint Paddy's Day! Taofaidh ar la!

24 March:        Ideology and Identity

Reading:            Betts, Part VII

The readings this week explore the extent to which nations war over more abstract notions like the idea of "nation," "freedom," "god," etc.

31 Mar – 7 Apr:   Military Strategy I

Reading:            Betts, Part VIII

This week we look at the basics of "conventional" warfare; rules for warfare, arms races and the role in promoting or preventing war, and the ways in which technology can either prevent or promote warfare.

14 – 21 Apr:     Military Strategy II

Reading:            Betts, Part IX

For the next two weeks we'll examine various sorts of "unconventional" warfare -- guerilla campaigns and strategy, terrorism, insurgencies -- and "unconventional" weapons systems -- chemical, biological, and nuclear.

28 Apr:            Tensions for the Future

Reading:            Betts, Part X

This week's readings explore some of the likely or at least plausible sources of conflict in the future.

5 May:             Give Peace a Chance

Reading:            Betts, Part XI

Well, given the title of the course, I suppose we should spend a few hours on peace.

12 May:            Final Exam

## Caveats

7. **Plagiarism:** All submitted work must be the product of your own thought. If you are found to have plagiarized all or part of an assignment, you will receive a grade of “F” for that assignment. Furthermore, notification of, and supporting documentation for, the violation will be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Dean of Students. Consult your student handbook for the gory details.

1. This syllabus is meant as a guide for the course. While I will do my best to maintain the pace outlined above, I am not guaranteeing that that will in fact occur. *Any substantive changes related to due dates, course content, or course requirements will be distributed in class.*

2. Please do your best to **get to class on time**. I am well aware of the joys of traveling in this little corner of the Garden State. That being said, you all know traffic is a nightmare and parking can be a pain, so plan accordingly. Tardiness adversely affects the “Participation” part of the grade.

3. **Keep the food consumption to a minimum.** Coffee, tea, or something to drink is fine; a five-course meal from the truck is not. If you’re going to chow down, bring enough to share with everybody or keep it out of the classroom (and I strongly prefer the latter – eat on your own time).

4. **Turn off the cell phones, pagers, two ways, Ipods, or whatever latest bit of technological wizardry you possess.** If I hear or see any of these in use during class, class stops and it’s quiz time. The grades for the quizzes will be factored in to the “participation” part of the course.

5. **Respect your colleagues.** Politics is great fun to talk about and I want to encourage you all to express your thoughts freely, but be mindful of the impact your words can have on others in the room.

6. **Missed and Late Exam Policy:** All exams are due on the date assigned. Exams received after that time will be docked 1/3 of a grade for each class day late unless you give me prior notification of the conflict and reason for missing the exam.