

INTL 102: ECONOMICS, POLITICS, AND INTERNATIONAL CHANGE: ANALYZING CURRENT SECURITY PROBLEMS

University of California, San Diego
School of Global Policy & Strategy
Fall 2018, Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30-1:50
GPS Auditorium

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Course Outline and Readings

This is a course designed to teach you to analyze the behavior of key actors in the international system. The course is divided into two sections. The first focuses on the analytic tools students need to acquire in order to explain why individuals, organizations, and states behave the way they do and why they choose certain actions over others. These tools include an understanding of who the main decision makers are, the goals these players are trying to achieve, the information they have about each other, how this information shapes their behavior, and the way their strategic interactions produce certain predictable outcomes.

The second half of the course applies these tools to five major policy problems: the outbreak of interstate war, nuclear proliferation, unconventional violence and terrorism, civil wars, and democratization. Our goal is to explain why each of these events occurs, why these issues disproportionately affect certain countries and not others, and what can be done to resolve problems associated with these phenomena. We will also analyze ongoing cases to predict how the players involved are likely to behave in the future. The objective is not to become an expert on any particular historical event or topic, but to give students the skills needed to understand and analyze *any* international problem they may encounter, now and in the future.

Organization of the Course

This is a large lecture *and* discussion course that deviates from traditional courses in the following way. Roughly half of the classes are designed around class discussion in the auditorium using the case method developed at Harvard Business School. Each of these discussions centers around a number of questions which the class will explore without, in the end, arriving at a “correct” answer. Our discussion classes will include “cold calls” – I will start by asking one of you to answer a question that I consider central to the case. The two of us will go back and forth for a few minutes before the rest of the class chimes in. We will then move on to one or two additional questions. For the cold call and the class discussions to work, you must have read the required reading and case carefully, analyzed and answered the assigned questions, and be prepared and ready to talk. I will provide only very limited guidance to the discussion. If we both do our parts, the case method offers an exhilarating learning experience for all of us; for the most part, you will be teaching and learning from each other. At the end of each class, I will offer approximately 10 minutes of reflection on the specific case and how it relates to the broader themes of the course.

Requirements

The grade for this course will be based on:

- class and discussion section participation (35%),
- 4 short papers, maximum 3 pages in length (10%, 15%, 20% and 20% respectively).

Class Participation: Successful class participation will require thorough preparation, regular attendance, and active engagement in both class discussions and discussion section. One TA will act as a scribe to keep track of who speaks, the quality of a person's response, and to record absences.

Short Papers: Students are also required to write 4 papers, no longer than 3 double-spaced pages each. Paper should be 12 pt type, with one inch margins. Please make sure that your name and student number appear on the first page of the document, and that the pages are numbered.

You have the choice of topics on which to write your papers, with one caveat. You can choose 4 of the paper topics listed on the syllabus, but one topic must come from one of the topics listed between October 2nd – October 16th, one from one of the topics listed between October 23rd - November 1st, one from November 6th – November 20th, and the last from one of the topics listed between November 27th – December 6th. You will be given no additional credit for writing more than 4 short papers or for more than one paper written during each of the time periods.

An electronic copy of the paper must be submitted to Turnitin.com no later than 12:30 pm on the day it is due. Papers submitted late (after 12:30 pm on the day due) will not be graded.

You are free to use whatever outside sources are available to answer the short-paper questions. Note, there are good and bad sources of information on the internet. Some of the best sources for current international reporting are the major newspapers: the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Financial Times*, and the *Guardian*. In addition, the *Economist* has excellent coverage on a wide range of countries and international events. For more in-depth analyses see *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, the *New Yorker*, and the *Atlantic*. You should be familiar with all of these sources and be reading extensively about a particular event before writing your memos.

Memos must follow all conventions of attribution and notation. Quotes and paraphrasing must be explicitly cited. Memos found to include plagiarized material will be given an automatic "zero" and no make-up paper will be allowed. The plagiarized paper will then be reported to UCSD's Committee on Academic Integrity for whatever additional punishment the University would like to add.

ELECTRONIC-FREE CLASSROOM: This course is taught in a computer and phone-free classroom. The TAs and I will enforce this rule strictly. Please spare all of us the embarrassment of asking you to relinquish your electronics during class.

READINGS: All of the readings are available either through the hyperlinks included on the syllabus below (accessed through your university internet account), or through TED.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS: We are fortunate to have four great T.A.'s for this class. They are: Gregoire Phillips (g1philli@ucsd.edu), Rachel Schoner (rschoner@ucsd.edu), Nicholas Zinter (nzinter@ucsd.edu), and Justin Lesniak (jlesniak@ucsd.edu). Below is the schedule for the discussion sections and their office hours.

Fall 2018 TA Appointments					
Section ID	SECTION	DAY	TIME	ASSIGNED TO	Email Address
942476	A01	M	11:00 - 11:50 AM	Justin	jlesniak@ucsd.edu
942479	A02	M	12:00 - 12:50 PM	Rachel	rschoner@ucsd.edu
942480	A03	W	11:00 - 11:50 AM	Justin	jlesniak@ucsd.edu
942481	A04	W	12:00 - 12:50 PM	Rachel	rschoner@ucsd.edu
942482	A05	F	11:00 - 11:50 AM	Greg	g1philli@ucsd.edu
942484	A06	F	12:00 - 12:50 PM	Greg	g1philli@ucsd.edu
951352	A07	M	1:00 - 1:50 PM	Nic	nzinter@ucsd.edu
951353	A08	M	2:00 - 2:50 PM	Nic	nzinter@ucsd.edu

DISCUSSION SECTIONS: The discussion sections serve to provide a smaller forum for students to discuss and review course material (e.g., lectures, readings). Students can share insights, raise questions, and diffuse ideas in smaller groups with their classmates. This will give students added time to develop their own perspective, and to reinforce the main themes and theories of the course. Your participation in discussion section will count toward your overall participation grade.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

ANALYTIC TOOLS

Thursday September 27: Introduction

No reading

Friday September 28: Writing Tutorial (Optional). 11-12 in the GPS Auditorium.

Suggested Reading:

- 10 Tips for Writing an Essay
- Good Writing in Political Science
- Write Like a Mad Man or Woman

Tuesday October 2: Al Qaida's Attack Against the United States, September 11, 2001

Baseline Case to Analyze: Why did Al Qa'ida attack the United States in 2001?

Case Study: [The 9/11 Commission Report](#). Pages 1-14, and 47-70.

Assignment Questions:

1. On September 11, 2001, nineteen members of al Qa'ida carried out a coordinated attack on New York City and Washington D.C. Why did AQ target the U.S. with attacks?
2. What did AQ hope to achieve?
3. Why did they launch it in September 2001 as opposed to another time?
4. Was the attack successful? Of so, why? If not, why not?

Thursday October 4: Introduction to Game Theory

How does game theory help us analyze the behavior of different actors in the international system? What recent international event (or decision by a state leader) have you found puzzling and would like to see analyzed in class using game theory?

John McMillan. Games, Strategies, and Managers: How Managers Can Use Game Theory to Make Better Business Decisions. pp 1-41. To be posted on TED.

Assignment question:

“Based on game theory’s definition of ‘rational,’
President Trump is a highly rational individual.”

Please explain this statement to someone who knows nothing about game theory.
Make sure you include a discussion of what Trump is seeking to maximize and how
his behavior helps him maximize this objective.

Tuesday October 9: Actors and Their Preferences

*Who are the main actors in international affairs? How do you, the analyst, determine what
their interests (i.e., preferences) are?*

Joseph S. Nye Jr. “[Why the Gulf War Served the National Interest](#),” The Atlantic.
July 1991.

Helen Milner, Interests, Institutions and Information: Domestic Politics and
International Relations. (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997), pp. 9-23, pp. 33-
46 and 60-65. To be posted on TED.

Assignment Questions:

1. The vast majority of scientists in the United States agree that climate change is the
biggest security threat to the United States, much more so than ISIS or any other
issue. If this is true, why do Democrats and Republicans disagree so much on its
cause and how to address it?
2. Under what conditions are Republicans likely to change their view?

Thursday October 11: What Strategies Do Players Pursue? (Theory)

*The strategy a player chooses to pursue depends on the player’s (a) capabilities/resolve and
(b) the information she has at her disposal.*

Thomas Schelling. “The Diplomacy of Violence,” in Arms and Influence. pp. 1-34.
To be posted on TED.

Case: Evan Osnos, “Making China Great Again,” [The New Yorker](#), January 8, 2018.

Assignment Questions:

The United States has traditionally wielded both “soft” and “hard” power. Soft power
generally comes from the diplomatic arm of the U.S. government, most notably

represented by the Department of State. Hard power comes from the military arm of the U.S. government, most notably the Department of Defense. President Trump has made it clear that he intends to significantly reduce the budget (and influence) of the DoS and increase the budget of the DoD.

At the same time, President Xi Jinping of China has greatly increased his government's investment in Chinese soft power abroad: (investing in international infrastructure projects, implementing international aid programs, promoting Chinese language and educational exchanges, etc.)

1. Identify and analyze two reasons why Trump might be pursuing hard over soft power.
2. Identify and analyze two reasons why President Xi might be increasingly investing in soft power.
3. Which country is likely to gain more influence internationally as a result of their investments in different forms of power, and why? Please support your answer with as much evidence as possible.

Tuesday October 16: What Strategies Do Players Pursue? (Application)

Case: Ned Lebow, [The Cuban Missile Crisis](#), CIAO Case Study.

Assignment Questions:

Some of President Kennedy's advisors suggested he launch a targeted military strike against Cuba in order to eliminate Russia's nuclear missiles. Ultimately, he chose a different strategy. What strategy did Kennedy choose and why did he prefer this strategy to a military strike? (Hint: assume that Kennedy, like all politicians, wanted to be re-elected.)

Thursday October 18: No Class.

Tuesday October 23: The Importance of Information and Signaling (Theory)

John McMillan, "Gaining Bargaining Power," and "Using Information Strategically" in Games, Strategies and Managers. pp. 59 -75. To be posted on TED.

Case: The United States and Russia.

Julie Hirschfeld Davis, "[Trump, at Putin's Side, Questions U.S. Intelligence on 2016 Election](#)," The New York Times, July 16, 2018.

Assignment Questions:

On July 16, 2018, President Trump stood next to Vladimir Putin at a televised press conference in Helsinki, heavily criticized the U.S. intelligence community and sided with Putin over possible Russian meddling in the 2016 election. This shocked most of the world, most Americans, and many Republicans.

1. What was President Trump hoping to accomplish with his very public statements (please read the transcript of the press conference before answering this question)?
2. To whom was he communicating?
3. What message was he attempting to convey and why?
4. How successful do you think he was in conveying his message or messages?

Thursday October 25: The Importance of Information and Signaling (Application)

Case: The 1996 Taiwan Straits Crisis.

Case: Richard L. Russell, [The 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis](#): The United States and China at the Precipice of War?

Assignment Questions:

1. What motivated Taiwan's President Lee to make such a provocative speech at Cornell?
2. Why did Chinese President Jiang Zemin respond the way he did?
3. Why did U.S. President Bill Clinton respond the way he did?
4. Why were the three players able to avoid war over this issue?

ANALYZING CURRENT PROBLEMS

Tuesday October 30: The Breakdown of Bargaining = War

Information Problems and the Outbreak of War (Theory)

Why did the 1st Gulf War occur, and to what degree did information problems play a role?

James D. Fearon. "[Rationalist Explanations for War](#)," International Organization. 49, No. 3 (1995): pp. 379-414.

Assignment Questions:

1. What are the main causes of bargaining failures that lead to war?
2. Why would leaders ever withhold or misrepresent information from each other if sharing it would allow them to avoid a costly war?

3. What effect, if any, do you think new information and communication technology (especially surveillance technology) is likely to have on information problems? Be as specific as possible about the type of technology you think will have an effect and why.

Thursday November 1: Information Problems and the Outbreak of War (Application)

Case: The First Gulf War

Case: Steven Yetiv, The Persian Gulf Crisis. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1997), Chapters 1-4. Posted on TED.

Assignment Questions:

Many people have argued that Saddam Hussein could have been deterred from invading Kuwait had President George H. W. Bush more clearly communicated his willingness to go to war if this happened. War, in essence, was the result of an information failure between the two leaders.

If you agree with this argument, what could President Bush have done to better signal his intent to go to war if Saddam Hussein invaded? Why didn't he do this? Please support your argument with available evidence.

If you do not agree with this argument, why would Saddam Hussein choose to put himself in a situation where he would have to fight a war against a much stronger opponent (the United States)? If your argument is that Hussein believed he would win the war, please explain why Hussein miscalculated his chances? What information would he have needed to correctly assess the outcome of the war, and why didn't he have this information? Is there anything President Bush could have done to provide it? Please support your argument with available evidence.

Tuesday November 6: Commitment Problems and the Outbreak of War.

Why did the 2nd Gulf War occur, and why were Saddam Hussein and George W. Bush not able to reach a settlement?

Robert Powell, "[War as a Commitment Problem](#)," International Organization. (Winter 2006) pp. 169-204.

Case: Kenneth M. Pollack, "[Next Stop Baghdad](#)," Foreign Affairs. March/April 2002.

Assignment Questions:

A number of people have argued that the 2nd Gulf war was the result of a commitment problem, possibly on both sides. Lay out all the reasons you can think of why Saddam Hussein and George W. Bush may not have been able to credibly commit to a peace agreement, and then offer at least one criticism about why this explanation may not be sufficient to explain why war broke out. If a lack of credible commitments is unable to fully explain why war broke out in 2003, what is needed to make a more comprehensive, compelling explanation?

Thursday November 8: Nuclear Proliferation (Theory)

Why do states seek nuclear weapons? And can states cooperate to contain the spread of nuclear weapons?

Kyle Beardsley and Victor Asal, "[Winning with the Bomb](#)". Journal of Conflict Resolution. Vol. 53, no. 2 pp. 278-301.

Case: Iran. "[Everything You Want to Know About the Iran Nuclear Deal](#)." The Economist, April 5, 2015.

Assignment Questions:

1. On July 14, 2015 President Obama (along with the leaders of China, France, Russia, the UK and Germany) signed an agreement with Iran on the future of Iran's nuclear program. What were the terms of the deal?
2. Why did the United States and Iran both agree to sign the deal?
3. On May 8, 2018, President Trump withdrew from the agreement despite the fact that a majority Americans (according to a CNN poll) said the U.S. should remain. Trump has described the deal as "disaster," "the worst deal ever," and so "terrible" that it could lead to "a nuclear holocaust." How do you explain Trump's decision to reject the deal? How do you think the Iranian government is likely to respond and why? Is the United States safer or less safe as a result? Why do you think this is the case?

Tuesday November 13: Nuclear Proliferation (Application)

Case: North Korea.

Case: Evan Osnos, "[The Risk of Nuclear War with North Korea](#)," The New Yorker, September 18, 2017.

Assignment Questions:

1. President Trump has vowed to put an end to North Korea's nuclear program. What strategies does he have at his disposal to achieve this objective? What strategy has he chosen to pursue and why do you think he has chosen this strategy versus other potential strategies?
2. How likely do you believe this strategy is to work (i.e., convince Kim Jong Un to end North Korea's nuclear program?) If you think it is likely to work, please explain how. If you think it is likely to fail, please explain why Trump has chosen such a strategy.

Thursday November 15: What We Know About Terrorism

Terrorism has become increasingly popular over the last twenty five years. Why has this particular form of violence emerged, and why now?

Robert Pape, [Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism](#). (New York: Random House, 2005), pp. 3-76. Posted on TED.

Film: The Battle of Algiers

Assignment Questions: Paper Topic. Please answer questions 4-6 for the paper.

1. What was the FLN fighting for?
2. How did they recruit?
3. Who were the early recruits and why did they join?
4. The tactics the FLN pursued changed over time. In what way did they change and why?
5. There's a struggle over information in the film. What information is the FLN seeking to signal?
6. The French won the battle over Algiers, but lost the war. Why did they lose the war?
7. The Pentagon screened this movie in the summer of 2003. What lessons do you think those who watched it learned from it?

Tuesday November 20: How Terrorism Is Designed to Work and How to Counter It

Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter, "[The Strategies of Terrorism](#)," [International Security](#) (Summer 2006) pp. 49-80.

Case:

Max Fisher and Amanda Taub, "[Mexico's Record Violence is a Crisis 20 Years in the Making](#)," [The New York Times](#), October 28, 2017.

Assignment Questions:

Some people have argued that violence perpetrated by drug cartels in Mexico is a form of intimidation. Assuming this is true, lay out the logic by which violence by drug lords is designed to achieve the goals these leaders are seeking. Assuming this argument is false, give an alternate explanation for why violence is being used.

Thursday November 22: No Class. Happy Thanksgiving!

Tuesday November 27: Explaining Civil Wars

What makes a country prone to civil war?

James Fearon and David Laitin, Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War, [American Political Science Review](#), February 2003.

Case: Barbara F. Walter, "[The New, New Civil Wars](#)", Annual Review, 2017.

Assignment Questions:

Since the early 2000's, almost all new civil wars have occurred in Muslim majority countries. Given existing theories and evidence for why civil wars break out in some countries and not others, why do you believe Muslim countries have been disproportionately affected by civil wars recently?

Thursday November 29: Why So Few Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars?

Why are civil wars so difficult to resolve in negotiated settlements?

Barbara F. Walter, Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), Chapter 2, pp. 19-43. Posted on TED.

- Case: Kathy Gilsinan, "[The Confused Person's Guide to the Syrian Civil War](#)", The Atlantic. October 29, 2015.
- Andrew Tabler, "How Syria Came to This," The Atlantic, April 15, 2018.

Assignment Questions:

Numerous attempts have been made to negotiate a settlement to the civil war in Syria. All of them have failed.

- Give three reasons (based on your knowledge of factors necessary for peace agreement to be signed and implemented) why these negotiations have failed.

- What conditions must exist in Syria in order for these negotiations to have any chance of success?
- What role, if any, do Russia and Iran play in the resolution of this war?
- How do you think this war is likely to end and why?

Tuesday December 4: Why Do Democracies Not Fight Each Other and Why Are Transition to Democracy So Violence-Prone?

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et.al. "[An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace](#)," *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 93, No. 4 (December 1999).

Assignment Questions:

Duncan Hunter, Congressman from San Diego, argued last year that the United States should launch a preemptive military attack against North Korea. Given what you know about democracies and the conditions under which they are willing to start a war, how likely do you think it is that Donald Trump will follow Hunter's advice? (Hint: in order to answer this well you need to explain what the likely repercussion to the U.S. would be for a preemptive strike, how this would affect President Trump's ability to get re-elected, and to what degree Trump is likely to be influenced by this.)

Thursday December 6: What Have We Learned?

Final case analysis and assignment questions: TBD based on current event.

GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN WITH THIS!