

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

University of California, San Diego  
School of Global Policy & Strategy (GPS)  
Fall 2021, In Person, Tues & Thurs 12:30-1:50  
GPS Auditorium Professor

Professor Barbara F. Walter  
bfwalter@ucsd.edu  
Phone: (858) 822-0775  
Office: Robinson Bldg. 1323  
Student Hours: Thursdays 2-4

### **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 understanding who the main decision makers are, the likely 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 war between countries, the problems of democratic transitions, international and domestic terrorism, civil wars, and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. 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 the problems. Current examples and cases will be used. The objective of the course 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 using the case method developed at Harvard Business School. Each of these discussions will center around discussion questions which the class will explore without, in the end, arriving at a “correct” answer. Our discussion classes will start with a “cold call” – I will ask one of you to answer a question which 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. Subsequently, we will move to one or two additional questions. For the cold call and the subsequent class discussions to work, you must have read the required reading carefully, analyzed and answered the assigned questions, and be prepared and ready to talk. I will provide 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 case, I will offer approximately 10 minutes of reflections 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 (25%),
- 3 short papers, maximum 4 pages in length (20%, 25%, and 30% respectively).

Class Participation: Lecture attendance is mandatory. Successful class participation will require coming to class prepared (having read the assigned reading and prepared answers to the discussion questions), and active engagement in both class discussions and your 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 3 papers, no longer than 4 double-spaced pages each. Papers should be 12 pt type, with one inch margins. Please make sure that your name and student ID 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 3 of the paper topics listed on the syllabus (they are the questions listed as "Discussion Questions – please answer all questions), but one topic must come from each of the time periods listed between:

- one topic between September 28<sup>th</sup> – October 14<sup>th</sup>,
- one topic between October 19<sup>th</sup> – November 4<sup>th</sup>,
- one topic between November 9<sup>th</sup> – December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

You will be given no additional credit for writing more than 3 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 the Turnitin link on Canvas 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.

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

**TEACHING ASSISTANTS:** We are fortunate to have four great T.A.’s for this class. They are: Austin Beacham, Michael Seese, Grace Ann Pevehouse, and Halle Sousa. Below is the schedule for the discussion sections. Please contact them directly for their office hours.

<b>Section ID</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Building</b>	<b>Room</b>	<b>TA Assignments</b>
<a href="#">54164</a>	A01	M	1:00p-1:50p	RBC	GARDN	Halle Sousa
<a href="#">54165</a>	A02	M	2:00p-2:50p	RBC	GARDN	Halle Sousa
<a href="#">54166</a>	A03	Tu	9:00a-9:50a	RBC	GARDN	Michael Seese
<a href="#">54167</a>	A04	Tu	10:00a-10:50a	RBC	GARDN	Michael Seese
<a href="#">54168</a>	A05	W	9:00a-9:50a	RBC	GARDN	Grace Pevehouse
<a href="#">54169</a>	A06	W	10:00a-10:50a	RBC	GARDN	Grace Pevehouse
<a href="#">54170</a>	A07	Th	9:00a-9:50a	RBC	GARDN	Austin Beacham
<a href="#">54171</a>	A08	Th	10:00a-10:50a	RBC	GARDN	Austin Beacham

**DISCUSSION SECTIONS:** The discussion sections are also mandatory and will all be held in person. They 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 discuss 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 is mandatory and will count toward your overall participation grade.

**ACCOMODATIONS:** Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter (paper or electronic) issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (link to OSD website). Students are required to discuss accommodation arrangements with instructors and OSD liaisons in the department **IN ADVANCE** of any assignments.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

---

---

### ANALYTIC TOOLS

#### **Thursday September 23: Introduction**

No reading.

#### **Friday, September 24: Writing Tutorial** (Attendance optional but strongly encouraged). 9:30-10:30 in GPS Auditorium.

Suggested Reading (posted on Canvas):

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

#### **Tuesday September 28: Al Qaida's Attack Against the United States, September 11, 2001**

*Baseline Case to Analyze: Why did Al Qa'ida attack the United States on 9/11 2001?*

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

Discussion and Memo Questions (Please answer all questions if you are writing a memo):

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 with these attacks?
3. Why do you think they launch it in September 2001 as opposed to another time?
4. Was the attack successful? If so, in what way was it successful? If not, why was it not?

#### **Thursday September 30: Introduction to Game Theory**

Kenneth A. Shepsle, [Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions](#), pp. 3-37. Posted on Canvas.

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

Case: Bring your own favorite case to class:

- What recent event have you found puzzling and would like to see analyzed in class using game theory?  
This event can be any event: an international event, a decision by a state leader, an action by your roommate or favorite sports team. Use your imagination.

Here are some examples of questions that students asked in previous years:

- Why did the Dallas Cowboys trade Tony Romo?
- Why is there so little parking for students on campus?
- Why did President Trump do x?

## **Tuesday October 5: Actors and Their Preferences**

*Who are the main actors in international affairs? How do you, the analyst trying to explain behavior, determine what an actor's 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. Posted on Canvas.

## **Thursday October 7: Preferences, continued**

Elaine Kamarck, "[The Challenging Politics of Climate Change](#)," Brookings Report, September 23, 2019.

Charles Waugh, "[The Politics and Culture of Climate Change: US Actors and Global Implications](#)," 2011.

Cary Funk and Meg Hefferon, "[U.S. Public Views on Climate and Energy](#)," Science & Society. November 25, 2019.

Case. Why do Democrats and Republicans Disagree about Climate Change?

### Discussion 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 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 Republican politicians likely to change their view?

### **Tuesday October 12: Why do Actors Pick Certain Strategies and Not Others?**

*The strategy a player chooses to pursue depends on the player's (a) capabilities/resolve and (b) the information they have at their disposal.*

Azhar Ahmad, "[Concept of National Power](#)," *Strategic Studies*, Summer/Autumn 2012.

Eleanor Albert, "[China's Big Bet on Soft Power](#)," Council on Foreign Relations, February 9, 2018.

Evan Osnos, "Making China Great Again," [The New Yorker](#), January 8, 2018.

#### Memo and Discussion Questions:

1. Identify and analyze two reasons why President Xi might be increasingly investing in Chinese soft power around the world. What goal or goals is he hoping to achieve and how is this investment designed to help him and the Chinese Communist Party achieve it?
2. Identify and analyze two reasons why former President Trump de-emphasized the use of U.S. soft power around the world. What goal or goals was he hoping to achieve and why was this seen as necessary to achieve it?

### **Thursday October 14: Why do States Pursue Some Strategies and Not Others? (Case)**

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

#### Memo and Discussion 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 every other strategy including a military strike? Briefly discuss each of the other strategies and explain why Kennedy believed his choice was better than the others (Hint: assume that Kennedy, like all politicians, wanted to be re-elected.)

## **Tuesday October 19: The Importance of Information and Signaling (Theory)**

John McMillan, “Gaining Bargaining Power,” and “Using Information Strategically” in Games, Strategies and Managers. pp. 59 -75. Posted on Canvas.

Case: The Cuban Missile Crisis, continued.

### Memo and Discussion Questions:

Every actor playing a game makes decisions without full information. In other words, they operate under the condition of uncertainty. What pieces of information did President Kennedy and Khrushchev not have about each other in terms of their motivations, the actions at their disposal, their respective resolve to follow through with each action, and the costs and benefits each would receive from each possible outcome? Be as specific and detailed as possible.

## **Thursday October 21: The Importance of Information and Signaling (Case)**

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?

### Memo and Discussion Questions:

1. What did Taiwan’s President Lee hope to achieve by making such a provocative speech at Cornell?
2. How was the speech designed to deliver this goal?
3. Did President Lee’s strategy work?
4. Do you think the current Taiwanese President would ever precipitate such a crisis today (i.e., travelling to the U.S. to make a provocative speech, or anything to get the Chinese government’s ire)? If so, why? If not, why not?

## **ANALYZING CURRENT PROBLEMS**

## **Tuesday October 26: The Breakdown of Bargaining = War**

### **Information Problems and the Outbreak of War (Theory)**

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

Memo and Discussion Questions:

1. What are the three 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 advances in technology related to espionage are likely to have on information problems? Are these advances likely to reduce the possibility of war between countries who have these technologies (because they reduce information problems)? Are they likely to increase the possibility of war? Or are these advances in technology likely to have no effect? Please explain why.

**Thursday October 28: Information Problems and the Outbreak of War (Application)**

*Why did the 1<sup>st</sup> Gulf War occur, and to what degree did information problems play a role?*

Case: The First Gulf War

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

Memo and Discussion 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 share this information? Please support your argument with any 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 believed this and why he got it wrong. 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 2: Commitment Problems and the Outbreak of War.**

*Why did the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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: Iraq.

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

Memo and Discussion Questions:

Twelve years after Saddam Hussein fought and lost the First Gulf War against President H.W. Bush of the United States, he faced a 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulf War against President George W. Bush of the United States. This war ended with Saddam Hussein's death.

- Knowing that he was likely to lose this second war against the U.S., why was Saddam Hussein not able to avoid it?
- What commitment problem may have stood in the way of Saddam Hussein agreeing to sign a negotiated settlement with George H.W. Bush?
- What commitment problem may have stood in the way of George H.W. Bush agreeing to sign a settlement with Saddam Hussein? Be as specific as possible.

**Thursday November 4: Why Do Democracies Not Fight Each Other**

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

Memo and Discussion Questions:

Duncan Hunter, a former Congressman from San Diego, argued in 2017 that the United States should launch a preemptive military attack against North Korea because of its nuclear weapons. 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 any President (Republican or Democrat) would 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 a President's ability to get re-elected, and to what degree a President would be influenced by this.)

**Tuesday November 9: Why Are Partial Democracies So Violence-Prone?**

Havard Hegre et al. "[Toward a Democratic Civil Peace? Democracy, Political Chance and Civil War, 1816-1992](#)," American Political Science Review, March 2001.

Case: Saudi Arabia.

"[The Authoritarian Resurgence: Saudi Arabia's Anxious Autocrats](#)," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 15, 2015.

Memo and Discussion Questions:

- You are advisor to the President of the United States. You have read all the literature on the democratic peace and must decide whether the President should try to encourage our least democratic ally (Saudi Arabia) to democratize. You must now decide whether to allow the House of Saud to continue as is, or to put pressure on the regime to pursue significant political reform designed to democratize the country? What policy would you pursue and why?

**Thursday November 11: Veteran’s Day. No class due to holiday.**

**Tuesday November 16: Explaining Civil Wars**

*What makes a country prone to civil war?*

Jack Golstone et al: [A Global Model for Forecasting Political Instability](#), American Journal of Political Science. January 2010.

Lars-Erik Cederman: [Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel: New Data and Analysis](#), World Politics. January 2010.

Discussion Questions:

In 2020, the United States officially became an “anocracy” based on its democracy/autocracy rating in the Polity dataset. It is also now considered “factionalized”. Do you think the United States is likely to experience a civil war as a result? If so, please give a detailed explanation why you think a civil war is likely. If not, please give an equally detailed explanation why not.

**Thursday November 18: 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 Canvas.

Case: Algeria. Film: The Battle of Algiers

Discussion Questions: If you are writing the paper, please answer only questions 4-6.

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 23: 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: The United States

Seth G. Jones, [The Escalating Domestic Terrorism Problem in the United States](#). CSIS Briefs. June 17, 2020.

Seth G. Jones, "[Domestic Terrorist Tactics and Targets](#)," Statement before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. August 3, 2021.

### Discussion Questions:

Domestic terrorism in the United States has greatly increased since 2002, driven in large part by the rise of both white supremacy groups and anti-government groups. If you were a white supremacist or an anti-government advocate (pick just one) how might terrorism help you achieve your goal of white political dominance, or a weakened federal government (in the case of anti-government activists)? What strategy would you most likely pursue and how might this strategy help you achieve this goal? Who would you target and why?

## **Thursday November 25: No Class. Happy Thanksgiving!**

## **Tuesday November 30: 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.

Samuel M. Hickey and Manuel Reinert, "[What's Iran's Nuclear Deal?](#)" War on the Rocks, August 31, 2021.

### Memo and Discussion Questions:

On July 14, 2015 former 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.

1. What were the terms of the deal, and why did the United States and Iran both agree to sign it?
2. 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 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 (i.e., what was he hoping to achieve by withdrawing?)
  - How did the Iranian government respond to the US's withdrawal?
  - Is the United States safer or less safe as a result?
  - Do you think the Biden administration and the new hardline Iranian government will likely sign a deal by 2024 (the next US Presidential election)? If so, why? If not, why not?

### **Thursday December 2: Nuclear Proliferation (Application)**

Case: North Korea.

Case: Ted Galen Carpenter and Doug Bandow, The Korean Conundrum: America's Troubled Relations with North and South Korea. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004) Chapter 2-3, pp. 39-100. On Canvas.

Ken Dilanian, Carol E. Lee, and Dan De Luce, “[North Korea has more nuclear weapons than ever. What should Biden do?](#)” NBCnews.com. April 17, 2021.

### Discussion Questions:

No American President (Democrat or Republican) has been able to eliminate North Korea's nuclear weapons or rollback its nuclear weapons program.

- Why did Clinton, Bush, Obama, and Trump all fail to denuclearize North Korea despite pursuing, in some cases, quite different strategies?
- If you were President Biden and your goal were to stop North Korea from developing any more weapons, including the missile technology necessary to fire a missile at the continental US, what strategy would you pursue toward Kim Jong-un and why?
- How likely do you believe this strategy is to work and why?

GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN WITH THIS!