COURSE OUTLINE AND OBJECTIVES

This course introduces students to the main theories and issues in international security. The focus is both theoretical and analytical. The course aims at providing students with the fundamental tools necessary to understand basic problems in international security now and in the future. We will cover the basic approaches to the study of international security – realism, liberalism, and constructivism – and then explore key topics in international security including: the roots of competition and cooperation among states; the causes of war; the sources of military effectiveness; the effects of nuclear weapons on world politics; the dynamics of international crises; the rise of China; and U.S. grand strategy.

Note to Global Affairs students: This course (GLBL S275E) can be taken in lieu of GLBL 275 during the academic year in fulfillment of the major’s requirements.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

There are no pre-requisites for this course. The course will consist in a series of seminar sessions with pre-assigned readings and pre-recorded lectures. Students are expected to do all the readings and watch all asynchronous content prior to each session, as well as attend and participate in all sessions. The sessions will focus on critically discussing the assigned readings.

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

- Participation in discussions: 20%;
- Five short (3-page) response papers: 5 x 16% = 80%.

Note: In order to receive an overall passing grade, students must receive a passing grade in both components of the final grade. In other words, failing one component of the course will lead to a failing grade in the overall course.
DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Participation: Students should do all the readings and watch all the prerecorded asynchronous lectures for each session in advance and come to the synchronous sessions prepared to contribute to class discussion by bringing questions that stem from the readings. As should be obvious, participation does not mean just attendance. Please be an active participant in the synchronous discussions.

Response Papers: Each student will post a 3-page reaction to the readings for five different sessions, one per week. Papers should be written on letter-sized paper, using Times New Roman or equivalent font, size 12, double-spaced, with one-inch margins all around. Your response papers should be posted on the Canvas website or emailed to me by 8:00pm the day before the class meeting in which we will discuss these readings. Short papers received after these deadlines but before the relevant meeting begins will be dropped one full letter grade. Short papers will not be accepted after the relevant meeting starts. Each of the short papers will be worth 16% of the final course grade. These short statements should include an analysis of the weaknesses of arguments and evidence presented by the authors. (You should not summarize the readings; assume that everybody else has done the reading as well and understands the basic arguments.) You do not have to discuss all of the readings assigned for the session; you may discuss just one or two pieces, or you can pick a broader range and compare them to each other (or to readings for earlier sessions). Likewise, within each reading you select to engage, you do not have to discuss the whole piece. You may do so, but you may equally well focus on a section, a paragraph, or even a sentence that piqued your interest. You are welcome to choose any five sessions in which to write your reaction papers, provided you do one per week throughout the duration of the course.

COURSE POLICIES

Policy on Plagiarism: Please note the following:

• You need to cite all sources used for papers, including drafts of papers, and repeat the reference each time you use the source in your written work;
• You need to place quotation marks around any cited or cut-and-pasted materials, IN ADDITION TO footnoting or otherwise marking the source;
• If you do not quote directly – that is, if you paraphrase – you still need to mark your source each time you use borrowed material; otherwise you have plagiarized;
• It is also advisable that you list all sources consulted for the draft or paper in the closing materials, such as a bibliography or roster of sources consulted;
• You may not submit the same paper, or substantially the same paper, in more than one course;
• If topics for two courses coincide, you need written permission from both instructors before either combining work on two papers or revising an earlier paper for submission to a new course.

It is the policy of Yale College that all cases of academic dishonesty be reported to the chair of the Executive Committee. Please make sure to consult the relevant section of the Yale College regulations available here.

Policy on Electronic Devices: Please keep other applications other than Zoom off during the synchronous sessions.
READINGS

The selected texts were chosen to represent the major theoretical positions and empirical findings on the main problems and issues in international security. They provide a wide range of views and differ in both the evidence they provide and their persuasiveness. As a whole, the selection is designed to encourage critical evaluation of existing academic literature. In order to best achieve this goal, keep in mind the following questions when doing the readings: What is the argument the author is trying to make? Why does it matter? What are its strengths and weaknesses? How convincing is it? What are possible counter-arguments? Above all, how does the argument advance our understanding of international politics?

All readings are available in PDF format on the course website on the Canvas server, under the “Files” tab in folders created for each session. Below, the readings for each session are listed in the order you should do them.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Module 01 – June 07, 2021
Traditions of Thought in International Security: Realism and Its Critics


Module 02 – June 09, 2021
Traditions of Thought in International Security: Liberalism and Its Critics

Module 03 – June 14, 2021

The Causes of Competition and Cooperation


Module 04 – June 16, 2021

The Logic of Political Violence


Module 05 – June 21, 2021

The Causes of War


Module 06 – June 23, 2021

Military Effectiveness

- Stephen Biddle, Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), chapters 1, 3-4 and choose one of 5-9;
Module 07 – June 28, 2021

Nuclear Weapons


Module 08 – June 30, 2021

International Crises

- Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), chapters 1-3;

Module 09 – July 05, 2021

The Rise of China


Module 10 – July 07, 2021

U.S. Grand Strategy and the Future of International Order


