RPOS 582 Global Security
Class Meeting Time: Monday, 5:45-9:25p
Class Meeting Location: Draper Hall 246
Office Hours and Location:
MWF 9:30-10:15am (Uptown Campus, Humanities B-16 Contact Office)
By Appointment (Downtown Campus, Milne 220)

Course Description:
This is a course about the nature, causes, effects, and prevention of war and political violence in the modern world. Students taking the course will be asked to critically analyze contemporary global security problems. Why do wars occur despite their cost? How dangerous is the proliferation of nuclear weapons? What causes terrorism? When do civil wars emerge and how do they end? Political violence causes enormous suffering. The course aims to provide theoretical tools and analytical approaches to help make sense of why that suffering occurs, and the manner in which it can be alleviated.

Learning Objectives:
By the end of the course, all students should be able to

1. Identify key concepts in readings and describe the steps of an argument
2. Critically evaluate common readings in discussions with instructor and fellow students
3. Ask incisive questions of texts as well as of fellow seminar participants
4. Speak and write effectively about course topics
5. Identify an appropriate research question, a research design that can answer that question, and marshal evidence to test potential arguments utilizing that research design

Accommodations:
Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please go here http://www.albany.edu/disability/current.shtml and arrange for an academic accommodation letter to be sent to me. If you wish to discuss academic accommodations for this course, please also inform me as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity:
Don’t do unethical stuff, or your grade could suffer catastrophically. For a good survey of potential dangers, see http://www.albany.edu/eltl/academic_integrity.php.

Assignments:
Reaction Papers 30%
Each student will be asked to sign up for three sessions. For that session, they will be responsible for generating an analytical reaction/review paper of 3-4 pages. That paper might critique portions of that week’s reading, it might situate the reading in terms of prior or subsequent scholarship, or it might attempt to extrapolate from the reading to a different context. Most importantly, it should show thoughtful engagement with the reading, and offer some interesting response to it. It should not merely summarize the reading, though a summary of arguments and evidence is fine as a component of the reaction paper.
**Discussion Leader 10%**
For those sessions where students are responsible for reaction papers, they will also serve as discussion leaders. They ought to bring with them several discussion questions to spur conversation on the readings.

**Participation 10%**
Students will be assessed on their active participation in discussion on those weeks when they are not discussion leaders.

**Research Paper 50%**
The research paper is the most important component of the final grade, so students should begin work on this as early as possible. Papers should be between 20 and 30 double-spaced pages and can be on any topic related to global security. The papers must include (1) a brief literature review, (2) a clearly stated argument or hypothesis (derived from the readings, another source, or an original argument), (3) a description of how the argument/hypothesis will be evaluated empirically, and (4) an evaluation of the argument using qualitative and/or quantitative evidence.

In week 5 (September 25), students are required to submit a research paper proposal (1-2 pages) that identifies the argument/hypothesis to be tested and the case(s) that will be examined. In week 9 (October 23), students are required to submit a progress report updating and expanding the research proposal, along with enumerating and describing major theoretical, empirical, and/or historical works from which the student intends to draw. I will provide written feedback to both the research paper proposal and the progress report.

Students are permitted to submit and receive feedback on one rough draft, but this must be submitted electronically no later than November 20. I will provide comments within two weeks of receiving a rough draft. Students are also encouraged to consult with university-wide resources for writing assistance, such as the Writing Center (HU 140), or meet me during office hours or by appointment to discuss the paper. The final draft of the paper is due electronically on December 19. Failure to turn in the paper on time will result in substantial penalties.

**Required Texts**

Course Schedule:

Week 1 – August 28 – First Day

Week 2 – September 4 – NO CLASS [Labor Day]

Week 3 – September 11 - Coercion [318 pages]


Week 4 – September 18 – Causes of War [136 pages]


Week 5 – September 25 – Neorealism [402 pages]

Research proposal due in class.


Week 6 - October 2 – Perception [424 pages]


Week 7 – October 9 – Experiments in Security Studies [138 pages]


Week 8 – October 16 – Status [272 pages]


Week 9 – October 23 – Nuclear Weapons [144 pages]

**Progress report due in class.**


Week 10 – October 30 – Nuclear Nonproliferation

Nicholas L. Miller, TITLE.

Week 11 – November 6 – Liberalism, part 1 [151 pages]


Week 12 – November 13 – Liberalism, part 2 [274 pages]


Week 13 – November 20 – NO CLASS [INSTRUCTOR ON THE ROAD]

**Last day that draft papers can be submitted electronically for feedback.**
Week 14 – November 27 – Constructivism/Ideas/Norms [171 pages]


Week 15 – December 4 – Terrorism [116 pages]


Mia Bloom, “Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share and Outbidding,” *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 1 (2004): 61-88. [27]


Week 16 – December 11 – Civil War [188 pages]


End of finals period – December 19

| Final paper due electronically |