
International Studies 400: Societies at War

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Office Hours:
T/TH 1:00-3:00
Or By Appointment or Skype
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Course Website

Visit Blackboard at

<http://blackboard.richmond.edu/>

Course Objectives

This course is a senior seminar examining the experience of war as a social experience shared by soldiers and non-combatants near and far from the field of battle. While I am a political scientist by training, we will be branching out beyond my field. We will study the social and psychological experience of war by reading work in the fields of sociology, political science, history, and psychology, purposefully taking an interdisciplinary approach consistent with the spirit of the International Studies major.

The first goal of this course is to engage students in a semester-long discussion about how individuals and societies fight, drawing on literature and films from multiple academic traditions. Students will confront challenging academic books and articles, articulate their opinions about those assignments persuasively and clearly, and evaluate the viewpoints of others in the class.

The second goal of this course is to provide a framework in which you can successfully complete a senior seminar paper in fulfillment of the graduation requirement for the International Studies major. While writing such a paper can seem to be a daunting task at first, a good portion of our class time and out-of-class individual meetings will be devoted to guiding you through the process of writing a high-quality student research paper. In addition, in lieu of traditional assessments like a midterm and final exam, your assignments in the course will be formative steps that will help you move forward on your papers.

Course Requirements

- Class Participation/Discussion Leadership (30%)

- Two Exploratory Annotated Bibliographies (30%)
- Research Paper and Presentation (40%)
- Attendance Required

Class Participation/Discussion Leadership (30%)

This is a discussion-oriented class in which there will be no full-length lectures. Each week, one or two students will lead the class in a discussion of the assigned readings. Where appropriate, I will help direct the discussion or provide brief mini-lectures.

Student discussion leaders will be expected to prepare at least five discussion questions *in advance* for each week they cover. **Leaders' questions will be due to me at 5:00 p.m. the day before the discussion via email.** The questions and outline for each student's two turns as a discussion leader will make up 10% of the course grade (20% total).

This does not mean that weeks in which you are not a discussion leader are not important. The remaining portion of the participation grade (10% of the course grade) will be based on:

- Your submission of one high-quality discussion question per week in the weeks for which you are not a discussion leader.
- Brief writing assignments performed in class without prior notice.
- The quality of your comments during discussions.

If you do not think you are speaking up enough in class, meet with me to discuss strategies for improvement. An absence from class without a medical excuse will result in a participation grade of 0% for that week.

Two Exploratory Annotated Bibliographies (15% each)

In order to practice the skills necessary for your research paper and to demonstrate your understanding of the research we are reading, you will prepare two complete annotated bibliographies during the semester. These bibliographies should identify the major arguments made by scholars about a phenomenon in previous research, group those arguments into schools of thoughts or camps, and summarize the articles or books that belong to each school of thought. For each bibliography entry, you should identify the general argument, the specific hypotheses being tested, the evidence used for analysis, and the conclusions reached. Try to keep your summaries concise, but detailed enough for me to understand the article without reading it myself. Each bibliography should cover a minimum of 10 sources. I recommend that you choose two topics from the literature that you believe may be useful for your research paper so that you can use one of the bibliographies as a starting point for your paper's literature review and another in your analysis section. See **Baglione, Chapter 3** for more on how to write an effective annotated bibliography.

Research Paper (35%) and Presentation (5%)

Your goal in this project is to identify a research question inspired by one of the weekly topics, formulate a research design to attempt to answer that question, and use an accepted method of historical, political science, or related analysis to investigate the question. I encourage you to try to use methods and forms of analysis with which you are familiar, most likely from your prior courses in the IS major. If you have an interest and background in history, consider a historical study and form of argumentation; if you took several courses in sociology, consider using one of the methods applied in that field, for example. I recommend using quantitative/statistical methods in your project only if you have prior exposure to statistical software like SPSS. I have training in many forms of analysis, but if I cannot provide sufficient direction on a project you choose, I will refer you to other faculty who are better suited to provide advice on your research design. I will also provide examples of top-notch seminar papers from historical and social science approaches on Blackboard.

Research

To complete the project you will need to conduct library research. Library sources include relevant books, professional journal articles, magazines, major newspapers, narratives of individuals, and many other types of documents. A bibliography must be included with each section. The bibliography is not counted as a part of the project length requirement. Internet sources can be used to compliment your research, provided you include the appropriate URLs in your bibliography, but you may not use *primarily* internet sources. You must also make an effort to demonstrate that internet sources are credible and be mindful of ideologically-oriented news sources. If you have questions about the political leanings of a news source, ask me about it. Where feasible, I will expect projects to use a variety of source types, rather than rely solely on autobiographical sources or secondary histories, for example.

Installment #1 Identifying The Question

Due September 14. In this stage of the project, you will address the following three issues: (1) What is the research question that you will address? (2) Why is this a puzzle that requires serious consideration and new research? Expected length: 1 page.

Installment #2: Evaluating the Literature

Due October 5. After establishing your puzzle, you must identify the relevant set of studies that have attempted to address the puzzle in the past. This will require substantial reading and note-taking before you begin to write the installment. As you read the research papers that you identify through JSTOR, Google Scholar, and other search tools and databases, you should identify major arguments, themes, and schools of thought that appear in the literature. In the literature review, you will discuss the specifics of each explanation or school of thought as well as identify the plausible and implausible aspects of each explanation. The review should emphasize the opportunities for new research that the existing studies provide. Include a bibliography containing no fewer than 15 sources with this assignment. You may review sources that you used in one of your exploratory literature reviews, but they should be discussed in the context of the larger review you do for this installment

of your research paper, not copied verbatim. Expected length, excluding the bibliography: 5-7 pages. See **Baglione, Chapter 4** for more on how to write an effective literature review.

Installment #3: Your Argument

Due October 19. In this installment, you will propose your own explanation of the phenomenon in question. This may be a theory from another part of the literature on conflict that you think applies to your question, a modification of an existing argument relating to your question, or a new argument of your own. This section should conclude with a clearly stated, testable hypothesis. Expected length: 5 pages. See **Baglione, Chapter 5** for more on how to develop your argument into testable hypotheses.

Installment #4 (Research Design)

Due November 2. In this section, you will explain the sociological, historical, or other established methods that you intend to use evaluate your argument, describe the evidence and sources you will be using and why, and discuss the benefits and drawbacks of your approach. Expected length, excluding the bibliography: 4-5 pages.

Installment #5 (Analysis, Conclusion, and Final Revisions)

Due November 21. In this most important and longest section, you will execute the analysis as described in the research design section. In most cases, this will involve a critical analysis of additional sources beyond the original literature review to evaluate the strength of the evidence for or against your theoretical argument or specific hypotheses. The structure of this section will depend largely on the type of analysis you choose earlier in the semester, as treatment of evidence varies between history and the social sciences. You will also write a brief conclusion explaining what you have learned from the project and suggesting a direction for future research, as well as revising prior sections in response to my comments. Expected section length, excluding bibliography: 15-20 pages. Expected total project length, excluding the bibliography: 30-40 pages.

Presentation

You will prepare a 15-20 minute presentation (including Q&A) of your research project for the class. Powerpoint is advisable. Your presentation should explain the research question, existing literature on the topic, your theory, and the results of your analysis. Presentations will begin in class on November 21 and continue through December 2.

Assessment & Details

Failure to turn in an installment by 5 p.m. on its due date without prior contact with the instructor will result in a 5% reduction in the maximum grade you can receive on the final version of the research paper. If you are late with every section, that means that you will not be able to receive a grade above 80% on the full paper, even if it is otherwise outstanding. Please submit project installments in MS Word .doc/.docx or Adobe PDF format using 1-inch margins and a standard font (12 points, double spaced) for any written content. You will be graded not only for the depth of your ideas, reasoning,

and evidence, but also for your presentation (spelling, punctuation, organization, grammar). I will return comments by marking up the papers digitally in MS Word or Adobe Acrobat and sending them to you by email. This eliminates unnecessary printing and decreases the risk of any installment being misplaced.

Grading Policy

Letter grades for the course will be assigned along the following scale:

A+:	96.5% or greater
A:	93.5-96.4%
A-:	89.5-93.4%
B+:	86.5-89.4%
B:	83.5-86.4%
B-:	79.5-83.4%
C+:	76.5-79.4%
C:	72.5-74.4% ¹
C-:	69.5-73.4%
D+:	66.5-69.4%
D:	63.5-66.4%
D-:	59.5-63.4%
F:	Below 59.5%

Required Books

- Jack David Eller, *From Culture to Ethnicity to Conflict: An Anthropological Perspective on International Ethnic Conflict*. 1999. ISBN: 0-472-08538-7 (paperback).
- John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. 1987. ISBN: 978-0394751726 (paperback).
- Evan Wright, *Generation Kill*. 2008. ISBN: 978-0425224740 (paperback).
- Chris Hedges, *War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning*. 2003. ISBN: 978-1-4000-3463-5 (paperback).
- Lisa Baglione, *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, and Methods*. 2015. ISBN: 978-1-4833-7616-5 (paperback).
- Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method*. 2006. ISBN: 978-0-691-12569-5 (paperback).

¹The International Studies program requires that you earn a C or above in this course in order for it to count as your senior seminar. Without a senior seminar at the C level or above, you will not be allowed to graduate with an International Studies major, regardless of your completion of all other requirements. In other words, a C- or below in this course will result in you taking a different seminar in the spring semester.

Schedule

August 22-24: Introduction

- Read entire syllabus, get required books through Amazon or other source (not in book store).
- Prepare to discuss three potential topics of interest for research paper relating to conflict.
- Sign up for discussion leader dates.

August 29-31: Origins of Human Violence

- Whitehead, “Violence and the Cultural Order” (BB)²
- LeBlanc, “Why Warfare? Lessons from the Past” (BB)
- Chagnon, “Yanomamo Social Organization and Warfare” (BB)
- **Discussion Leaders:**

September 5-7: Comparing Research in History and the Social Sciences

- Trachtenberg Chapter 3, “The Critical Analysis of Historical Texts”
- Trachtenberg Chapter 4, “Developing an Interpretation through Textual Analysis: The 1941 Case”
- Trachtenberg Chapter 7, “Writing It Up”
- Baglione Chapter 6, “Effectively Distilling Your Argument: The Thesis, Model, and Hypothesis”
- Baglione Chapter 8, “Making Your Plan and Protecting Yourself from Criticism: The Research Design”
- Baglione Chapter 9, “Evaluating the Argument: The Analysis and Assessment Section”
- **Discussion Leaders:**

²BB indicates that the assigned reading is posted on Blackboard as a PDF.

September 12-14: Historical Forms of Warfare

- Installment 1: Research Question due September 14 5pm
- Tuchman, selections from *A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14th Century* (BB)
- Keegan, *The Face of Battle* Chapter 2: Agincourt (BB)
- Keegan, *The Face of Battle* Chapter 4: The Somme (BB)
- Beckett, “Total War” (BB)
- **Discussion Leaders:**

September 19-21: Modern Warfare

- Annotated Bibliography 1 due September 21 5pm
- Wright, *Generation Kill* (all)
- Biddle, *Military Power* Ch. 3 “The Modern System” (BB)
- Brown, “Limited War” (BB)
- **Discussion Leaders:**

September 26-28: How to Make Men Fight

- Hedges, *War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning* (all)
- Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime” (BB)
- Wagner, *War and the State* Ch. 3 pp. 105-130 (BB)
- **Discussion Leaders:**

October 3-5: Gender in War

- Installment 2: Evaluating the Literature due October 5 5pm
- Arkin and Dobrofsky, “Military Socialization and Masculinity” (BB)
- Gentry and Sjoberg, *Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Women’s Violence in Global Politics*, “Introduction” and “Triple Transgressions at Abu Ghraib” (BB)
- Young, “The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State” (BB)
- MacKenzie, “Let Women Fight” (BB)
- Recommended: “Over There” Television Series (FX, 2005)
- **Discussion Leaders:**

October 12-14: Religion and War

- Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God* Chapters 1-4. (BB)
- Horowitz, “Long Time Going: Religion and the Duration of Crusading” (BB)
- **Discussion Leaders:**

October 17-19: Ethnicity and Exclusion I

- Installment 3: Your Argument due October 19 5pm
- Friedlander, selections from *Nazi Germany and the Jews Volume 1: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (BB)
- Kopstein and Wittenberg, “Deadly Communities: Local Political Milieus and the Persecution of Jews in Occupied Poland” (BB)
- **Discussion Leaders:**

October 24-26: Ethnicity and Exclusion II

- Annotated Bibliography 2 due October 26 5pm
- Eller, *From Culture to Ethnicity to Conflict* (all)
- **Discussion Leaders:**

October 31-November 2: Race and Dehumanization

- Installment 4: Research Design due November 2 5pm
- Opton, “It Never Happened and Besides They Deserved It” (BB)
- Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (all)
- **Discussion Leaders:**

November 7-9: Psychological Dimensions of War

- In-Class Film: “The Act of Killing” (2012)
- Grossman, “Emotional Distance” (BB)
- Waller, “Psychological Construction of the ‘Other’” (BB)
- **Discussion Leaders:**

November 14-16: Research Presentations

- 15-20 minute presentations, schedule to be announced.

November 21 and 28-30: Research Presentations

- Installment 5: Analysis and Conclusion due November 21 5pm
- 15-20 minute presentations, schedule to be announced.