Course Description
This seminar provides a survey of different approaches to the study of international conflict. We will discuss major theories that link conflict to power distributions, alliances, deterrence and bargaining, domestic regime type (the democratic peace), domestic instability, and economic interdependence. Some current topics, such as ending conflicts (mediation and peacekeeping) and ethnopolitical conflict, will also be covered in the context of systematic theoretical and empirical approaches. Besides the substantive focus on theoretical varieties in explaining conflicts, we will also tackle methodological issues such as measurement, selection bias, units and levels of analysis, and similar problems that often arise in the systematic study of international conflict. The readings include a selection of classic seminal writings as well as more recent leading studies in the area.

Reading Materials
All required readings for the course consist of selected book chapters and journal articles. If not available through the LSU library’s electronic journal holdings (http://www.lib.lsu.edu/epubs/ejournals.html), they can be accessed on the Moodle page for this course. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to download all materials.

Course Requirements
Final grades will be based on three components: class participation (20%), two short papers (30%), and a seminar paper (50%).

- **Class participation:** Students are expected to complete the assigned readings each week according to the topic covered. For this part of the grade, students will be expected to perform consistently well both when participating on a voluntary basis as well as when called upon to discuss the readings. Class participation will count for 20% of the final grade.

- **Two short papers:** Beyond regular attendance and active participation in class discussion, each student is expected to make two brief (10-15 minute) in-class presentations on the weekly topics, based on a short (approximately 6 pages double-spaced) paper to be e-mailed to me by 4 p.m. one day before the scheduled class for that topic. These papers and presentations should highlight the principle points of all the week’s readings, critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the
readings (and of their theoretical contributions), and provide guidance for future research in this area (such as identifying a related question that has been left unanswered or answered incompletely by the readings, or by proposing an extension of the week’s reading to a new question or area). They should not be simple summaries of the readings or annotated bibliographies; suggestions on how to analytically and critically evaluate the readings will be detailed in an additional handout. These presentations are meant to help focus the class discussion on the week’s topic, readings, and future directions; as a result, each presentation will be followed by a period of general class reaction and discussion. Each short paper/presentation will count for 15% of the overall course grade, for a total of 30%.

• **Seminar paper:** Each student is required to write a conference-style paper, minus the actual quantitative analysis, on a selected topic within the area of international conflict. The paper must not exceed 20 pages and should conform to the APSA style manual. It must include all elements of an academic paper, including: a research question/puzzle that motivates the study, an analytical review of the relevant literature, a theoretical argument, testable hypotheses, a research design (discussion of the unit of analysis, variables, measurement, data, a briefly explained method), and a concluding discussion in terms of how the study adds to and addresses any puzzles within the extant literature. The literature review should not be a simple summary of the extant research, but rather analytically integrate, assess, and evaluate the previous research. Although both a hard copy and electronic version of the paper is preferable, an electronic version is required and must reach me by e-mail by the deadline. The seminar paper will count toward 50% of the final grade.

**Excused Absences, Deadline Extensions, and Make-Ups**
This is a graduate-level seminar, and students are expected to attend all classes. If the student is seeking an excused absence, s/he must notify me as soon as possible after the absence, but no later than the end of the second working day after the last date of absence. If the absence occurs the same day as a scheduled presentation or other graded procedure, the student must notify me or the department by the end of the next working day after the absence in order to ensure full rights. The student is responsible for providing satisfactory documented evidence to the instructor within one week of his or her absence to substantiate the reason for the absence. Deadline extensions and make-ups will be given ONLY in documented cases of serious illness or family emergency. Otherwise, short review papers and the seminar paper will be graded F if not turned in to me by the specified deadlines. The same applies for the failure to present a short paper in class as scheduled.

**Plagiarism Statement**
“Academic Misconduct” includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give an unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without permission of the instructors, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or attempts to commit such an act. Students should be familiar with the definition of academic misconduct and the Code of Student Conduct, available at [http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs/code.htm](http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs/code.htm) If a student is found to have committed an act of academic misconduct, s/he will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs and penalized appropriately.
Students with Disabilities Policy
If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office of Disability Services so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your Accommodation Letters, please meet with someone in that office to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible. For additional information, check the Office of Disability Services Faculty Handbook.

Equal Opportunity Statement
LSU’s PS 1 assures equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, marital status, sexual orientation, or veteran’s status in admission to, participation in, and treatment or employment in the programs and activities that the University operates. This policy statement applies equally to the teaching and learning environment within all university recognized courses, curriculum and co-curriculum programs.

Copyright Statement
Unless otherwise noted, the handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By “handouts,” I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, web pages, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission.
COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

Week 1: January 13
COURSE INTRODUCTION

Week 2: January 20
GENERAL OVERVIEW

Week 3: January 27
RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA
Research Design Issues

Brief Survey of Data Sources and Standard Variables
1. Conflict Data
— Data and codebooks are available at http://correlatesofwar.org/
— Documentation and software are available at http://www.eugenesoftware.org/

2. Capabilities: COW Composite Indicator of National Capabilities (CINC)
3. Domestic Regime Type: Polity

Integrated Data Analysis

Week 4: February 3
STRUCTURAL AND DYADIC POWER BALANCES/SHIFTS

Measuring (Dis)Satisfaction
— Also read the debate in *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42 (4): 511-20: Lemke and Reed (pp. 511-16) and de Soysa, Oneal, and Park (pp. 517-20).

Week 5: February 10
ALLIANCES
Alliance Motivations
Alliance Reliability

Alliance Duration and Termination

Week 6: February 17
No class: The instructor is attending the International Studies Association Conference

Week 7: February 24
No class: Mardi Gras Holiday

Week 8: March 3
DETERRENCE AND BARGAINING I
Classical Deterrence Theory

Conceptual Issues and Empirical Evidence

Week 9: March 10
DETERRENCE AND BARGAINING II
Credibility, Signals, and Commitments


**Bargaining and War**


**Week 10: March 17**

**DOMESTIC REGIME TYPE I**


**Democratic Peace: Structure/Institutions versus Norms**


**Democratic Peace: Critiques**


— Also read the debate in *American Political Science Review* 99 (3): Kinsella (pp. 453-57), Slantchev, Alexandrova, & Gartzke (pp. 459-62), Doyle (pp. 463-66), and Rosato (pp. 467-72).

**Week 11: March 24**

**DOMESTIC REGIME TYPE II**

**Democratic Peace: Institutions, Audience Costs and Strategic Interaction**


Domestic Politics and Conflict Outcomes

Further Extensions

Week 12: March 31
INTERDEPENDENCE AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

Week 13: April 7
NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK

Week 14: April 14
DIVERSIONARY THEORY AND PRESIDENTIAL USES OF FORCE


**Week 15: April 21**

**MAKING AND KEEPING PEACE**


**Week 16: April 28**

**ETHNOPOLITICAL CONFLICTS**


~ Have a Good Summer~