Course description
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the major theoretical approaches in the systematic study of international conflict. The emphasis of this course is on theory, not current events. The semester begins with an introduction to the theoretical and methodological foundations of the international relations subfield, which includes an in-depth treatment of how to evaluate theoretical arguments. This introduction becomes the backdrop for our discussions of several relevant topics in the study of international conflict, such as the role of military power and alliances, the sources of threat credibility in deterrence and coercive bargaining, and more specific theories such as the democratic peace, and diversionary theories of war. We conclude the class with an examination of some specific issues, such as U.S. grand strategies, the problem of terrorism, ethical issues surrounding the use of force, and the effectiveness of peacekeeping and peacemaking. The goal of this course is not only to familiarize you with the theoretical approaches to international conflict and cooperation, but also to develop the skills to analytically and critically approach the literature in this area.

Reading Materials
There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, the required readings are a series of articles and book chapters that are available either through the LSU Library electronic journal holdings and/or as PDF files available on the course webpage.

Course Requirements and Grading Scheme
The final grade in this course will be based on three main components: (1) two in-class examinations, (2) Four in-class quizzes, and (3) class participation.

1. Two in-class midterm examinations (70% total; 35% each)
   • The exams will be a combination of short-answer identification-definition questions and essay questions. Each exam will be worth a total of 35% of the student’s final grade. Questions will be based on the student’s comprehension of both the assigned reading materials and the class lectures.

2. Four in-class quizzes (20%):
   • The quizzes are multiple choice and the questions will be based on the class readings and lectures. The dates of the quizzes are not announced, so if you know in advance that you will be missing a class for a university excusable reason, let me know early.
3. Class participation (10%)
   • Class participation is based on active participation in class discussions. The students are expected to come to class having read the material and able to answer questions and/or engage in informed discussion. This can only be done if you conduct yourselves in a professional manner and are tolerant of other students’ ideas, even if they directly contradict your own personal views.

The breakdown for final grades is as follows:
   90-100 % = A
   80-89.9% = B
   70-79.9% = C
   60-69.9% = D
   < 60% = F

Missed Assignments and Excused Absences
Class attendance is not mandatory, but is strongly encouraged. I will only allow students to make up an exam or missed assignment in the event of a university excused absence. Documentation detailing the reason for the absence must be given to me as soon as possible, but no later than the second class period after the absence. If a student knows in advance that he/she will be absent from a class, it is his/her responsibility to notify me well ahead of time, so that accommodations can be made.

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 the prior 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. 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.

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.
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.
Course Schedule and Readings

PART I: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

January 19: Class Introduction

January 21 - 26: Theory and Evaluating Theory
— Read Chapter 2 (pp. 51-81).
—Read pp. 238-251.

PART II: THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

January 28 - February 2: (Neo)Realism and the Balance of Power
— Read Ch. 1: “A Realist Theory of International Politics”.

February 4: Alliances and War

February 9 - 11: Power Transition and Hegemonic Stability
— Read Chapter 8: “The Abacus of Power”
—Read Chapter 5: “Hegemonic War and International Change”
— Read Chapter 1: “Power Transition Theory for the Twenty-First Century”

February 16
Mardi Gras Holiday

February 18
The instructor will be attending the annual meeting of the International Studies Association
February 23 - 25: Crisis Bargaining
—Read Chapter 1: “The Diplomacy of Violence”
—Read Chapter 3: “Coercive Air Power”

March 2 - March 9: Strategic Bargaining and Deterrence
—Read Chapter 2: “The Art of Commitment”
—Read Chapter 1: “Introduction” and Chapter 3: “Deterrence and Conflict”

EXAM #1
Tuesday, March 11

March 11 - 18: Documentary

March 23 - 25: Domestic Politics and International Conflict
—Read Chapters 1 and 2

March 30 - April 1: Grand Strategy

April 6 - 8: No Class (Spring Break)

April 13 - 15: Terrorism and Counterterrorism
Georgetown University Press, Chapter 2 (pp. 46–73).


**April 20 - 22: Ethics and Force**


**April 27 - 29: Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding**


**May 4: New Sources of Conflict?**


**May 6: Review, Wrap-Up, and Conclusions**

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**FINAL EXAM**

*Thursday, May 13*

*3:00 - 5:00 pm*