PURPOSE: This course is intended for advanced graduate students interested in formal and quantitative analysis of international conflict. It pulls together various techniques for such analysis and applies those techniques in a systematic manner to issues in international conflict. Particular attention will be paid to formalizing theories of conflict and then testing those theories with statistical models derived from the formalizations. The goal will be for students to (1) derive or prove results presented by the various authors, (2) identify contributions made by the authors, and (3) identify ways to improve upon the research. Because the course involves the application of game-theoretic and statistical techniques, students must have completed graduate courses in (1) mathematical statistics, (2) introductory econometrics, and (3) introductory game theory.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: There are two requirements for this course: a research paper (50%) and weekly presentations of articles (50%). The main requirement is a 20-30 page paper, which must be original research, single authored, and on a topic that is consistent with the course. The final paper will be due the first day of class of the Fall semester.

In addition to the paper, each week each student will be responsible for presenting and critiquing one of the articles below. The presentation should consist of (1) a summary of the article’s main points, (2) proofs or derivations of technical results, and (3) a critique of the paper. Overhead transparencies are not required. However, handouts should be provided for everyone in the class.

READINGS: Almost all of the readings are articles. Many are available on JSTOR. Readings will be assigned two weeks in advance. For an article not available on JSTOR, the student presenting it is also responsible for ensuring the rest of the class has access to it a week in advance.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

1. Organizational Meeting

2. Rational Choice and International Relations


   • Walt, Steven. Spring 1999. “Rigor or Rigor Mortis”. IS.


3. Bargaining, Inefficiency, and War

• Gartzke, Erik. 1999. “War is the Error Term”. *IO*.

4. Deterrence


5. Cheap Talk, Diplomacy, and Mediation


6. Alliances and the Balance of Power

• Smith, Alastair. 1998. “Extended deterrence and alliance formation”. II. Vol. 24, no. 4. (Note: Be careful of typos.)


7. Power Transition


8. Cooperation and Repeated Interaction


9. Arms Races


10. Domestic Politics: Two-Level Games


11. Domestic Politics, pt II

• Morgan, T. Clifton and Valerie Campbell. 1991. “Structure, Decisional Constraints, and War.” *JCR.*

12. Domestic Politics, pt III

13. Common Knowledge, Common Priors, and War


14. War Termination


15. Models and Empirical Testing


