

Introduction to Global Security: Threats to International Peace and Security

Winter Semester 2025/26

Monday, 14:15-15:45, C 12.101 Seminar room

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 9:30-10:30 (by email appointment)

Office Location: Room C4.024

Course Description

This course offers a rigorous examination of the evolving challenges facing international security in the 21st century. Grounded in both classical and contemporary theoretical perspectives, the course engages students with key threats to international peace and security, including intrastate and interstate conflict, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, forced migration, and climate change. Through the analysis of real-world case studies, students will explore the underlying causes and consequences of these threats, as well as the effectiveness of international responses—including diplomacy, economic statecraft, and the use of force—in maintaining and promoting global peace and security.

Course Objective

By the end of this course students will:

- Evaluate theoretical and scientific explanations to global peace and security threats.
- Apply theoretical approaches to analyze (current) real-world events.
- Get an introduction to empirically studying domestic and international conflicts, such as available data bases and sources.
- Learn to engage in group discussions, as well as provide and receive constructive criticism.

Course Requirements

1. Group presentation (20% of the grade): You will sign up to a group (2 students) to present a journal article related to one of the guiding questions for each session. The list of possible journal articles to present is provided in the syllabus. The presentation should focus on the guiding research question, hypotheses, methodology, and results of the selected article. You are also expected to prepare two discussion questions for the class. The presentation should not exceed 12 minutes.
2. Written test (80%): This written test will assess your understanding of the key concepts, theories, empirics, and literature covered in class. The written test will be in person in **room C 12.101 on January 26, 2025, at 14:15**. The duration of the written test is 90 minutes.

Important Dates

26 January 2026	Written test
[Enter date]	Group presentation

Other Information

- Attendance: You are expected to attend the weekly sessions. Reading assignments are given by date and should be completed prior to the respective class. You are strongly encouraged to offer suggestions and email material to me to circulate in class.
- Participation: Handle all your coursework diligently. Invest time to actively participate in class. Ensure that all assignments are submitted on time. Please be respectful to each other. All cell phones are to be turned off or silenced during class.
- Accommodation: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. Please let me know if you have a documented disability, so I can provide the accommodations you may need.
- Late submissions: Please note that late submissions will be penalized by subtracting 10% of the grade for each day of delay. This includes weekends and holidays. I only make an exception to this if you have a medical certificate.
- Plagiarism & AI: Please note that all work you submit to the university for assessment must be your own work. You can use AI to improve writing, but *not to generate* substantive parts of your work.
- Course schedule: The schedule and readings are subject to change. All changes will be announced by email and updated on MyStudy in advance. It is your responsibility to keep up with the current changes.

Course Plan

Session 1 (13 October 2025): Introduction

What are from your perspective the biggest threats to international peace and security? How can states respond to such threats?

Session 2 (20 October 2025): What is international security?

What is (international) security? What are contemporary challenges in conceptualizing global security?

Required readings

- Baldwin, D. A. (2018). The concept of security. In *National and International Security* (pp. 41-62). Routledge.

- Buzan, B., & Hansen, L. (2010). Defining–redefining security. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*.

Session 3 (27 October 2025): Intrastate armed conflict

What are the causes of intrastate conflicts? What are the differences between “greed” and “grievance” explanations to the onset of intrastate conflicts?

Required readings

- Collier, P., & Hoeffler, A. (2004). Greed and grievance in civil war. *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56(4), 563-595.

Group presentation

- Joshi, M., & Quinn, J. M. (2017). Implementing the peace: The aggregate implementation of comprehensive peace agreements and peace duration after intrastate armed conflict. *British Journal of Political Science*, 47(4), 869-892.
- Liendo, N., & Braithwaite, J. M. (2018). Determinants of Colombian attitudes toward the peace process. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 35(6), 622-636.

Session 4 (3 November 2025): Interstate armed conflict

Are the determinants of interstate and intrastate wars different? What roles do natural resources play in international conflicts?

Required readings

- Cunningham, D. E., & Lemke, D. (2013). Combining civil and interstate wars. *International Organization*, 67(3), 609-627.
- Colgan, J. D. (2013). Fueling the fire: Pathways from oil to war. *International Security*, 38(2), 147-180.

Group presentation

- Takeyh, R. (2010). The Iran-Iraq War: A Reassessment. *The Middle East Journal*, 64(3), 365-383.
- Willett, M. (2023). The cyber dimension of the Russia–Ukraine war. In *Survival: October–November 2022* (pp. 7-26). Routledge.

Session 5 (10 November 2025): No class!

Session 6 (17 November 2025): Terrorism

How can terrorist organizations finance their operations? How can access to (inexpensive) financial credit finance terrorism

Required readings

- Baradaran, S., Findley, M., Nielson, D., & Sahrman, J. (2013). Funding terror. *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 162(3), 477-536.

Group presentation

- Bapat, N. A. (2011). Transnational terrorism, US military aid, and the incentive to misrepresent. *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(3), 303-318.
- Thomas, J. (2014). Rewarding bad behavior: How governments respond to terrorism in civil war. *American Journal of Political Science*, 58(4), 804-818.

Session 7 (24 November 2025): Migration

When is migration a threat to security and stability? What explains citizens' attitudes toward hosting refugees from conflict zones?

Required readings

- Weiner, M. (1992). Security, stability, and international migration. *International Security*, 17(3), 91-126.
- Ghosn, F., Braithwaite, A., & Chu, T. S. (2019). Violence, displacement, contact, and attitudes toward hosting refugees. *Journal of Peace Research*, 56(1), 118-133.

Group presentation

- Choi, S. W., & Salehyan, I. (2013). No good deed goes unpunished: Refugees, humanitarian aid, and terrorism. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 30(1), 53-75.
- Savun, B., & Gineste, C. (2019). From protection to persecution: Threat environment and refugee scapegoating. *Journal of Peace Research*, 56(1), 88-102.

Session 8 (1 December 2025): Climate change

What is the link between climate change and conflict? What are the determinants of bargaining success in climate change negotiations?

Required readings

- Koubi, V. (2019). Climate change and conflict. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 22(1), 343-360.
- Weiler, F. (2012). Determinants of bargaining success in the climate change negotiations. *Climate Policy*, 12(5), 552-574.

Group presentation

- Chesler, A. (2025). Environmental displacement and political instability: Evidence from Africa. *Journal of Peace Research*, 62(4), 1076-1094.
- Kim, K., & Garcia, T. F. (2023). Climate change and violent conflict in the Middle East and North Africa. *International Studies Review*, 25(4), viad053.

Session 9 (8 December 2025): Economic security

When do security concerns lead states to weaponize economic cooperation? What are the advantages and disadvantages of increased interdependence?

Required readings

- Farrell, H., & Newman, A. L. (2019). Weaponized interdependence: How global economic networks shape state coercion. *International Security*, 44(1), 42-79.
- Liberman, P. (1996). Trading with the enemy: security and relative economic gains. *International Security*, 21(1), 147-175.

Group presentation

- Kim, S. E., & Margalit, Y. (2021). Tariffs as electoral weapons: the political geography of the US–China trade war. *International Organization*, 75(1), 1-38.
- Davis, C. L., Fuchs, A., & Johnson, K. (2019). State control and the effects of foreign relations on bilateral trade. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 63(2), 405-438.

Session 10 (15 December 2025): No class!

Winter break — No Class!

Session 11 (5 January 2026): Responding to global security challenges I (Economic statecraft)

Can we utilize economic tools to respond to threats to international peace and security? Are economic tools effective for achieving foreign policy goals?

Required readings

- Baldwin, D. A. (2000). The Sanctions Debate and the Logic of Choice. *International Security*, 24(3), 80-107.
- Chan, S., & Drury, A. C. (2000). Sanctions as economic statecraft: an overview. In *Sanctions as Economic Statecraft: Theory and Practice* (pp. 1-16). New York: Palgrave.

Group presentation

- Attia, H., & Grauvogel, J. (2023). Monitoring the monitor? Selective responses to human rights transgressions. *International Studies Quarterly*, 67(2).
- Torbat, A. E. (2005). The Impact of US Trade and Financial Sanctions on Iran. *The World Economy*, 28(3), 407-434.

Session 12 (12 January 2026): Responding to global security challenges II (Diplomacy and mediation)

How effective is mediation in responding to international conflicts? When can mediators build trust?

Required readings

- Clayton, G., & Dorussen, H. (2022). The effectiveness of mediation and peacekeeping for ending conflict. *Journal of Peace Research*, 59(2), 150-165.
- Kydd, A. H. (2006). When can mediators build trust? *American Political Science Review*, 100(3), 449-462.

Group presentation

- Duursma, A. (2017). Partnering to make peace: The effectiveness of joint African and non-African mediation efforts. *International Peacekeeping*, 24(4), 590-615.
- Portela, C., & Perroux, J. L. R. (2022). UN Security Council Sanctions and Mediation in Libya: Synergy or Obstruction? *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations*, 28(2), 228-250.

Session 13 (19 January 2026): Responding to global security challenges III (UNSC Simulation)

Session 14 (26 January 2026): Written test