

Political Science (POLS) 3361 (28545): International Security

Online, Spring 2020

INSTRUCTOR: DR. CHARLES BOEHMER

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office: 202 Benedict Hall (not in use during the pandemic, unless otherwise noted)

Email: crboehmer@utep.edu (only use your UTEP miner email when contacting the instructor)

Phone: 747-7979 (during the pandemic, this will route to my UTEP email)

ONLINE OFFICE HOURS

- Cyber- Café synchronous Discussion, Q & A sessions in Blackboard Collaborate or Zoom, open to all – best oriented towards group discussion – these will be held based on the survey conducted at the start of the semester. See the course calendar for details on days, times, and themes.
- I am happy to set up a one-on-one Blackboard Collaborate, MS Teams, or Zoom virtual meeting on request.

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

An investigation into matters related to the security of countries around the world, that pays particular attention to issues such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, international war, terrorism, civil war, genocide, disease and ecological disaster. Prerequisites: POLS 2310 and POLS 2311 each with a grade of “C” or better.

COURSE GOALS AND OVERVIEW

This is an online course designed as a gateway to the study of international security. This course counts in the in the International Politics concentration of the Political Science BA program, the International Politics minor, and the INSS minor. It can also be counted as either fulfilling the requirement of courses in three of the six different subfields, or an elective, within the Political Science BA program. This course can also count as a block elective for those students within the College of Liberal Arts who are not a major or minor in political science. The goal of this course is to cover topics both traditional and cutting edge, including conventional state conflicts, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, civil war, human security, and other transnational security issues (cartels, cyber-security).

After the completion of this course, students should have the following skills or knowledge that relate to the UTEP EDGE Initiative (highlighted in bold and italics):

- Have a higher level of confidence about comprehending the concepts, important theoretical approaches, and topics included in the course, such as international conflicts, international environmental issues, ethnic conflict, terrorism, civil war, and WMDs.
- Have some foundation to analyze and think critically about topics of international security and cooperation, especially through the research paper assignment.
- Have greater global awareness of basic knowledge of some countries around the world through the readings and examples mentioned in lectures/discussions.
- Possess a higher level of library information literacy and higher confidence regarding searches and types of sources.
- Improve communication skills as part of the research process.

TIPS FOR PASSING THIS COURSE

1. Many students find that they need to cut corners due to income, but it is important that you find a way to rent the textbooks and read them. The instructor bases some quiz and exam questions on the textbooks. If you attempt to take this course and do not read the textbooks, then you will likely lower your course grade. When you do read and study, do not just aim to memorize the material. Study with an aim towards comprehension. Additionally, sometimes our minds stray when we read, or we become distracted; even when the book is open, sometimes we do not read carefully. If you are confused about ideas or concepts, then speak with the instructor, who would love to help you through written responses or using an appointment in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra/Zoom. I love talking about this subject matter; tap my time and expertise; that is what you are paying me for, in addition to assessing your performance in this course.
2. Stay informed about what is going on in the course by following the syllabus, paying attention to your miner email account (including emails that come through Blackboard), and not missing, or being late on assignments.
3. Review the power point slides and videos, but remember that they do not suffice as a reminder of everything covered in a lecture or module. For this reason, you need to take notes, which forces you to concentrate on lecture and class discussions. Typing up notes is an excellent way to study because it forces one to think about what we covered in class or what you read/viewed in course materials. Try to include your responses or ideas that you have in conjunction with the notes or content of the course as a way to connect it to your life in a way that you care about the subject matter. Take an active interest in the subject matter, even if it is not your top interest. After all, you are not going to learn what you don't want to know.

4. Study from your old exams and quizzes for the final exam. Follow the course guidelines and policies outlined below.

ASSESSMENTS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

• Discussion Board Participation	15% total
• 2 exams, each worth 10%	20% total
• Readings and Current Events Quizzes	15% total
• Final Exam	15%
• <u>Research Project</u> :	
• Paper Strategy/preliminary Research Paper	10%
• Library Literacy Assignments	10%
• Policy Research Paper	15%

Discussion Board:

The instructor will include some discussion questions that connect to the exams, and relate to the quiz questions, for each module. Students will earn full credit when they post an answer or a question on the subject matter, and then reply to at least one other student's posts. The goal of these discussions is for the instructor to highlight important content, including exam topics, and students should gain a higher degree of confidence, and the ability to think critically, about topics of the course. This should also expand global awareness of the world and help improve communication skills. A maximum of three points will be earned when a student posts a useful comment or question of substance, and two points in a reply to at least one other student's posting.

Exams:

The course will include two exams during the semester, and then a final exam due during final exam week. The exams will cover material from the course textbooks and lectures. The purpose is to evaluate student comprehension of the subject matter. The ability to demonstrate comprehension and synthesis of the subject matter will earn higher points than those that just repeat what is provided in the textbooks and lecture content. The format will likely be a combination of essays, short answer questions, and multiple-choice questions.

Reading and Current Event Quizzes:

There will be a quiz for each module based on the readings, the lectures, and prominent news stories that relate to international relations and security studies. These will be short quizzes of around ten questions or so. Students may drop their lowest quiz grade.

Research Project:

Three grades are related to the research project, which are explained in more detail in the research project guidelines document. This is an individual research project. There are multiple steps to this project, and three of these steps involve a grade. The first step

is to choose a topic. The second step involves putting together a paper that shows preliminary research and a strategy for executing the research and later writing the paper. The instructor will need to approve this strategy before receiving a grade and then moving ahead to the next steps in the project. This preliminary paper is ten percent of the final course grade. Steps 3 and 4 are interrelated. Step 3 involves completing the assignments provided by our librarians and meeting with them. The librarians will post material that is mandatory to review and a virtual meeting is a requirement of this project and the course. These assignments will be graded and constitute ten percent of the final course grade. The final two steps involve completing the research and writing the final paper. Any student who does not complete the research paper will earn an automatic F for the course. The final paper counts for 15% of the final course grade. The purpose of this project is to practice research, analytical thinking, and writing skills.

MORE ON DISCUSSION POSTS/CLASS PARTICIPATION

Students should find that this is an important aspect of the course. The course content can be very abstract, and students should participate in, and pay close attention to, the discussion boards and the synchronous discussion sections of the course. Here students will find key themes, topics, and problems discussed. Students should log into Blackboard several times during the week to participate effectively in discussions. Each week students will submit:(1) a discussion post in response to a guided question (minimum of 250 words and maximum of 500 words); and,(2) respond to at least one of your classmate's posts (minimum of 100 words and maximum of 500 words). Be sure to submit your discussion post and response to your peers by the time and day set by the instructor to receive credit for your participation. Student posts must be of substance and offer something new, and responses should likewise offer something besides "I agree" without providing some new thought or evidence. Here are some suggestions for successful posts: Write with the curiosity of university students. The instructor is more interested in doubts and the questions you raise rather than providing concrete answers. Given that ultimately the goal of the content of this course is linked to the prescriptive behavior of governments, international organizations, multi-national corporations, and individuals, there are few to none absolute answers to big picture issues, due to differences in cultures and contexts that change across time and space. The expression of doubt and uncertainty is a skill and something to be practiced and developed. You are strongly encouraged to use the UTEP writing center for assistance in drafting all written work, including discussion boards, essay, and reviews. Examples of bad posts are those that simply repeat others' points or other forms of plagiarism, or otherwise are the type of regurgitated answers from the notes or texts that do not elicit much conversation or interesting dialogue. The instructor expects everyone to actively participate in class and do so in a positive and appropriate way (see the "Online Netiquette and Effective Communication" section below). Keep in mind that class participation is more than just completing the scheduled assignments and taking exams — you should be willing to ask and answer questions, and contribute intellectually to

class debates via online discussion posts. Before posting a discussion, please complete the assigned readings and go over the lecture notes. Full credit for a discussion post is reserved only for those that follow the online netiquette and effective communication rules below.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

This instructor abides by university policies, such as excused absences and attendance, as stated in the [UTEP Undergraduate Catalog](#). It is the student's responsibility to understand university policies and their rights. In addition to university policies, I add the following:

Support for Accommodations:

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS' Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities. The CASS phone number is 747-5148 or at cass@utep.edu or go to Room 106 Union East Building. The Student is responsible for presenting to the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions before arrangements need to be made for exams, quizzes, or other needs.

Late Work:

The course has a compressed timeline of modules, activities, and assignments that need to be completed in order and this course will all go by quickly. Students falling behind and submitting late assignments will increase the chance of failing this course. This is not a self-paced course. Work submitted late may incur a 25% reduction in credit for one day, and 50% credit after two days, and zero credit after that.

Attendance Policy (and make-ups):

UTEP expects that students will not miss assignments without valid excuses. Students that have not logged into the course for over a week (not including spring break) may be dropped from the course. To deter lack of participation, students may be dropped by the instructor, counting against the UTEP six-course drop limit, who miss more than three class sessions without a valid excuse, which for our asynchronous course includes the discussion boards, quizzes, and exams. Valid excuses for missed work include religious holidays, recognized university related activities (with Dean of Students letter), and military leave. In addition, I add the following policies:

- The instructor reserves the right to accept, or not, excuses related to medical issues. Naturally, it is sometimes infeasible to document in advance time lost due to illness. The exception is planned surgeries and appointments (not normal check-ups). Any class time missed will be unexcused without medical or other valid documentation. I have the ability to read in Spanish, so documentation in

Spanish is permissible. Students with severe medical problems that result in missing a majority of the semester will want to consider a complete withdrawal from the university for medical purposes (this requires dropping all courses). That is an option when multiple courses are affected. In cases where there is a significant, and documented, loss of time, the instructor may withdraw a student (excused) or work with the student to set up an “incomplete” grade and course of action. The course of action established will depend on the amount of time and assignments the student missed and the estimated chance of the student passing the course. The more the work of a course is completed, the more an incomplete grade may be coordinated.

- Absences/missed assignments due to conflicts with work, child care, etc. that make it impossible for you to attend to this class regularly are not permitted. If you know you will have scheduling conflicts with this class, then you should make other arrangements or post-pone this class until a future semester. Treat this course as you would a professional job in which you cannot miss work; set yourself up for success.
- The instructor may not accept missed exams or quizzes due to family hardship or family medical problems as valid excuses. For example, helping family members move, picking up at the airport, driving family members to medical appointments when you know they conflict with class, and other such activities, will not be permitted as valid excuses. Emergencies such as deaths in the family must be documented, unfortunately.
- Missing any course assessments and work due to vacations and pre-booked travel arrangements are not valid excuses for make-ups. Note the date for the final exam on the course calendar. Moreover, please note that the university has used language on the academic calendar that confuses some students by stating the “last day of classes”, which means last normal class session excluding the final exams. There is a separate final exam calendar for each academic semester and term. See: [Final Exam and Semester Calendars website](#)

Safety and Disruption:

It is expected that students will treat the instructor and other students with respect, including refraining from disparaging remarks, personal insults, derogatory comments, and other unprofessional behavior, in person or electronically. Any problem related to rude conduct, or any threats to violence, etc., may result in the student being dropped from the course by the instructor and/or reported to the Dean of Students. Please also note that this course involves discussion of countries hostile to the USA, but it is important to maintain an objective and analytical approach to this subject matter and not debase course discussions with comments that are racist. There are at least two sides to every dispute.

Online Netiquette and Effective Communication

This is a political science course and we will be discussing at times sensitive and controversial topics. Please avoid any unnecessary arguments with other class

members, such as political polemical arguments (e.g., negative partisan talking points targeting those of opposing ideological perspectives or particular political figures) or, even worse, personal attacks on others for having different views. It is essential that the utmost respect and professionalism be adhered to in all exchanges between class members. Please carefully read the following rules for online etiquette and effective communication:

- **Language**: Given the absence of face-to-face clues (such as in Discussion Boards), written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language, all capital letters, and the excessive use of exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.
- **Respect**: A web-based classroom is still a classroom, and comments that would be inappropriate in a regular classroom are inappropriate in a Web-based course as well. Treat your professor and your fellow students with respect. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings.
- **Be Forgiving**: If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the professor in an email. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion may be new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can possibly be cleared up with the help of the professor. In cases where students remain in dispute, and this affects the atmosphere of the course or senses of threat, the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCR) will be contacted: [OSCR Website](#). The instructor will not tolerate unprofessional conduct, which will be dealt with swiftly through the University.
- **This is Permanent**: Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent, there is no taking it back. When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation. Always consider your audience and remember that the instructor and other class members will be reading what you write.
- **A Private Environment**: Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential within the course. Whatever is posted in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space. If students wish to do so, they have the ethical obligation to first request the permission of the writer(s).
- No inappropriate behavior will be tolerated and it is at the professor's full discretion to report a student for any inappropriate behavior.

Academic Dishonesty:

The instructor follows the university policies on academic honesty concerning cheating and plagiarism. Such acts will not be tolerated. Students will be reported to OSCR. To

learn more see the [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#). Here is a list of forms of academic dishonesty:

- **Plagiarism:** The use of other people's words, ideas (concepts, sentence or paragraph structure or phrasings), songs, or images without documentation or their consent. The instructor will use anti-plagiarism software to evaluate papers for non-original content. One can avoid plagiarism by being honest and using proper style guidelines concerning citations, footnotes, or endnotes for passages in the text that are borrowed or inspired by other person's works. This course involves exams that are open book. This means that if you use content from our textbook, or other sources, you must cite this source. You should most often paraphrase and use quotations sparingly. When using quotations, you must cite page numbers when available. The vast majority of words in an exam or paper should be one's own; writers need to put work that is cited in a context, such as an argument, and not rely on other authors to provide the argument. If you do not know how to paraphrase properly, please seek help from the University Writing Center. See the paper guidelines for other instructions and tips.
- Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student and possessing unauthorized materials during a test.
- Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. One example of collusion is preparing a discussion entry for another person or having someone prepare a discussion entry for you. The instructor encourages students to study together and work collectively; however, working together to write any part of a written assignment, research paper, and/or exam is collusion.

CLASS RECORDINGS

The use of recordings will enable you to have access to class lectures, group discussions, and so on in the event you miss a synchronous class meeting due to illness or other extenuating circumstance. Our use of such technology is governed by the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and UTEP's acceptable-use policy. A recording of class sessions will be kept and stored by UTEP, in accordance with FERPA and UTEP policies. Your instructor will not share the recordings of your class activities outside of course participants, which include your fellow students, teaching assistants, or graduate assistants, and any guest faculty or community-based learning partners with whom we may engage during a class session. **You may not share recordings outside of this course.** Doing so may result in disciplinary action. If you do not wish to have your camera on during discussions, you may turn it off. An exception to this is when you are presenting, and thus will be in a presenter role in the session.

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

You must STAY AT HOME and REPORT if you (1) have been diagnosed with COVID-19, (2) are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or (3) have had recent contact with a person who

has received a positive coronavirus test. Reports should be made at screening.utep.edu. If you know of anyone who should report any of these three criteria, you should encourage them to report. If the individual cannot report, you can report on their behalf by sending an email to COVIDaction@utep.edu.

For those that will either come to campus during the pandemic, or need to declare that they are infected, are required to notify UTEP through the screening portal: <http://www.screening.utep.edu/> The website will verify if you are permitted to come to campus. Under no circumstances should anyone come to class when feeling ill or exhibiting any of the known COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, and alternative instruction will be provided. Students are advised to minimize the number of encounters with others to avoid infection.

Wear face coverings when in common areas of campus or when others are present. Even though this course is online, remember that you must wear a face covering over your nose and mouth at all times on campus, or depending on local government policies.

COVID-19 ACCOMMODATIONS

Students are not permitted on campus when they have a positive COVID-19 test, exposure or symptoms. For our online course, you should still notify UTEP through the screening AP and notify me in case there is missed work so we can arrange necessary and appropriate accommodations.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you require specific accommodations and support services, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Please keep in mind that accommodations need to be requested at least two weeks (or a month if advance planning, such as the acquisition of books-on-tape, is required) prior to the beginning of the semester. Here is the contact information see the [CASS website](#); phone: (915) 747-5148; fax: (915) 747-8712; e-mail: cass@utep.edu location: UTEP Union Building East Room 106. The Student is responsible for presenting to the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions before arrangements need to be made for exams, quizzes, or other needs.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

You will need the following software on your computer to efficiently work in this course (your computer may already have some of these programs installed):

- Adobe Acrobat Reader. To get this program, go to <https://acrobat.adobe.com/us/en/products/pdf-reader.html> and follow the instructions.

- QuickTime Player. To get this program, go to <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/> and follow the instructions.
- Microsoft Office. If you do not have a word-processing software, go to <https://my.apps.utep.edu>. Using My.Apps interface, UTEP students can access most software offered in student computer labs (including Microsoft Office) from their personal computing devices. Students can use any laptop, tablet, or smartphone with an Internet connection and use the software from anywhere at any time. For more information, go to <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=73740> and follow the instructions.

UTEP TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The University of Texas at El Paso offers complete technical information and Help Desk support at: <http://issweb.utep.edu/techsupport/>. For a webpage on Blackboard for UTEP Students and what is required for Remote Learning, including topics such as required technology, software, internet access, etc., please see: https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/ServiceCatalog/BB_Students.html

ALTERNATE MEANS OF SUBMITTING WORK IN CASE OF TECHNICAL ISSUES

Most disruptions to the submission of assignments or participation in the course can be reduced by following the necessary technology requirements to operate online. The instructor promises to be understanding and flexible in cases where there are disruptions and unforeseen problems beyond the control of the student, ranging from the university taking Blackboard offline to a zombie apocalypse. We should often have prior knowledge about planned blackboard maintenance and similar issues. The instructor strongly suggests that students save all of their work as evidence (answers to discussion points, quizzes, exams, and essays) in a separate Word document as a backup in case there is a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, you can always email the instructor (crboehmer@utep.edu) your back-up document. However, this is just to prove you completed the assignment. The instructor will ask you to resolve your technology issues and submit the assignment via Blackboard once they are

COURSE RESOURCES: WHERE YOU CAN GO FOR ASSISTANCE

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support:

Technology Resources

- [Help Desk](#): Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.

Academic Resources

- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students. Our Reference Librarians [Ms. Angela Lucero](#) and Mr. Jacob Galindo [Mr. Jacob Galindo](#)
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): This is an important resource for improving student writing skills, including topics such as how to argue a point in a paper, how to use APA style and cite references properly, and otherwise organize a paper. Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing Individual Resources. Note that academic disciplines often have different writing styles, and the social sciences can be different from other areas such as the humanities, such as a strong focus on clarity as opposed to poetic prose.
- [Military Student Success Center](#): Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.
- [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#): Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#): Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT FOR COURSE MATERIALS

Copyright law protects all the materials used in this course. Course materials are only for the use of students enrolled currently in this course, and only for the purpose of this course, and may not be further disseminated.

READINGS

Mandatory Course Materials (available at UTEP Bookstore, and note price matching policy with Amazon and a few other online vendors)

- ❖ Backer, David A., Ravi Bhavnani, Paul K. Huth. 2016. *Peace and Conflict 2016*. CIDCM Center for International Development & Conflict Management. Routledge. ISBN: 978-1-857-43843-7 [BRH on course calendar]



Figure 1 Backer, David A., Ravi Bhavnani, Paul K. Huth & textbook

- ❖ Caldwell, Dan, and Robert E. Williams, Jr. 2016. Seeking Security in an Insecure World, 3rd edition. Roman & Littlefield. ISBN: 978-1-4422-5214-1 [CW on course calendar]

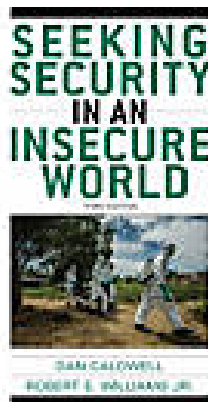


Figure 2 Caldwell & Williams textbook