Political Science (POLS) 3361 (17798): International Security

Fall 2016
LART 319
M, W: 10:30-11:50

Dr. Charles Boehmer

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Office Hours:
1:30-2:30 (Mondays and Wednesdays)
and by appointment

Course Website:
Note that this course uses Blackboard (through the MY UTEP portal and the UTEP homepage) and will be used weekly to post vital information about the course schedule and content

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 Overview and Goals
This course involves the study of topics of international security. States may be insecure due to conflicts or issues within states and between states. This course involves the study of interstate war, nuclear weapons and proliferation, civil war, human security, and terrorism. This course also involves a team-based research project that involves research and library information literacy.

After the completion of this course, students should have the following skills or knowledge:

- Have a basic understanding of interstate war, civil war, weapons of mass destruction, human security, and terrorism
• Possess a higher level of library information literacy regarding searches and types of sources
• Write an analytical report that includes scholarly citations and contains logically presented policy prescriptions
• Work better in a team of peers and respond to deadlines in a professional manner

Requirements and Evaluation of Performance

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings and Current Events Quizzes</td>
<td>15% total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational Plan, Attendance, and Paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Research Team Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Policy Research Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Midterm and Final Exams: The midterm and final exams will cover material from the course textbooks and lectures. The purpose is to evaluate student comprehension of the subject matter. The format will likely be a combination of map identifications, essays, short answer questions, and multiple choice questions. Students are required to bring their own clean bluebooks or white lined paper. The final exam will be cumulative. Our final exam day is Friday, December 9 from 10:00-12:45. Students will not be admitted to the final exam if they are late more than ten minutes without a valid excuse that can be verified with evidence (such as pictures of you in your clothing that day in front of the fender-bender). The final exam is considered over when the instructor is no longer in the room (all other students present have completed the exam), so do not be late. The exam must be taken on this day unless you have a valid university accepted excuse. Going on vacation or booked flights are not a proper excuse. There may be a possibility of a take-home exam that would be a written paper, in case the instructor presents this as an option. If so, we will hold a democratic vote.

Reading and Current Event Quizzes: Most weeks there will be a quiz on the readings for that week, or thereabouts, and prominent news stories that directly relate to US foreign policy. These will be short quizzes of around ten questions or so. Students may drop their lowest three quiz grades.

Policy Research Team Project: This is a team project that includes some individual evaluation, and this is described in detail in other guideline documents to be provided to you early in the semester. There are multiple steps to this project. The first step is team organization and formulation of a team plan, including consultation with library instructors. The second step is approval of this plan. The next steps are the execution of the research plan, presentation of the case study, and finally the production of individual student papers. The purpose of this project is to practice research, writing, team-work, and presentation skills.
**Attendance and Participation:** Students who participate actively in class by asking relevant questions, fostering discussion, or debates, will earn points in the course. You will also earn points for attendance. However, a lack of attendance will result in not only lost points, but may result in being dropped from the course. See the attendance policy below.

**Other Course Policies**

This instructor abides by university policies, such as excused absences and attendance, as stated in the UTEP undergraduate catalog: [http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/](http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/). It is the student’s responsibility to understand their rights and university policies. In addition to university policies, I add the following:

**Attendance Policy (and make-ups):** UTEP expects that students will not miss classes without valid excuses. To deter absences, I will drop students, counting against the six course drop limit, who miss more than two classes without a valid excuse. Valid excuses 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 not usually feasible to document in advance any time lost due to illness. The exception is planned surgeries and appointments (not normal check-ups). Any class time missed will not be excused 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 may want to consider a complete withdrawal from the university for medical purposes. That is an option when all courses are affected. In cases where there is a significant, and documented, loss of time, the instructor may withdrawal a student (excused) or work with the student to set up an “incomplete” grade and course of action. The course of action will depend on how much time and assignments the student missed and the 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 due to conflicts with work, child care, etc. that make it impossible for you to regularly attend this class 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 many days; set yourself up for success.

- Missed exams or quizzes due to family hardship or family medical problems may not be accepted by the instructor 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.

**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 in regard to other races, nations, and cultures. There are at least two sides to every dispute.

**Outside work or electronic disruptions:** Outside work and other non-class related activities are not permitted in our classroom. If you engage in behaviors that distract others or create a disturbance, you will be asked to leave the class. If you refuse to leave class, university police will be contacted.

**Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:** The instructor follows the university policies on academic honesty concerning cheating and plagiarism. Such acts will not be tolerated. Plagiarizing is the use of other people’s words, ideas (concepts, sentence or paragraph structure or phrasings), songs, or images without documentation or their consent. Anti-plagiarism software will be used in this course to evaluate papers. 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. See the paper guidelines for other instructions and tips.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, or otherwise seek additional information, 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 Union East, Room 106. CASS’ staff are the only individuals who can authorize accommodations for students with disabilities. 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.

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

- Cynthia C. Combs. *Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century, 7th edition*, Pearson (now out of print, so obtain used versions)

**Schedule of Classes**

**Week 1 (8/22 & 24):** Introductions to the course and topic of insecurity
- CW Chapters 1 & 10
- BRH Chapter 3

**Week 2 (8/29 & 31):** Conventional Conflicts and Interstate War
- CW Chapter 2
- Library Information Session
Week 3 (9/07): Nuclear Weapons and Insecurity
  - CW Chapter 3

Week 4 (9/12 & 14): WMD and Proliferation
  - CW Chapters 4 & 6
  - Combs Chapter 14

Week 5 (9/19 & 21): State Violence and Civil War I
  - BRH Chapters 4, 5, & 6

Week 6 (9/26 & 28): State Violence and Civil War II
  - BRH Chapters 7, 10, & 11

Week 7 (10/03 & 5): Catch-up & Midterm
  - Midterm Exam

Week 8 (10/10 & 12): States & Human Security I
  - CW Chapters 11 & 12

Week 9 (10/17 & 19): States & Human Security II
  - CW Chapters 13 & 7
  - Presentation start about here. The exact date TBA

Week 10 (10/24 & 26): Terrorism I Perspectives and Data
  - Combs Chapters 1, 2, & 3
  - CW Chapter 8

Week 11 (10/31 & 11/02): Terrorism II Who and Why?
  - Combs Chapters 4, 5, & 6
  - Team Presentations

Week 12 (11/07 & 9): Terrorism III How?
  - Combs Chapters 7 & 8
  - Team Presentations

Week 13 (11/14 & 16): Terrorism IV Responses
  - Combs Chapters 10, 11, & 13
  - Team Presentations

  - CW Chapters 8 & 9
  - Papers due around here; exact date TBA
Week 15 (11/28 & 30): Forecasting Instability and Recent Conflicts

- BRH Chapters 13, 15, & 16

Week 16 (12/09, 10am-12:45pm) Final Exam

Tips for Passing this Course

1. Purchase or borrow the textbooks and read them. Many quiz and exam questions are based on the textbooks. If you attempt to take this course and do not read the textbooks, then you will likely lower your course grade or fail. When you do read and study, do not just do it to memorize the material. Study with an aim towards comprehension. Additionally, sometimes our minds stray when we read, or we are distracted; even when the book is open sometimes we do not read carefully. If you are confused about ideas or concepts, speak with the instructor. Utilize the instructor’s office hours or make appointments.

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 to class in case there are stated announcements or instructions.

3. Review the power point slides, but remember that they do not suffice as a reminder of everything that was covered in a lecture. For this reason, you need to take notes, which forces you to concentrate on lecture and class discussions.

4. Typing up notes is an excellent way for you to study from your notes because it forces you to think again about what was said. 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. Typing these thoughts will also trigger in your mind what we discussed. 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.