Course Description:

“War, Empire and Ethics” is a course in which we ask the question: **What makes a war just?** In this class, we probe the western tradition as we attempt to put this question in historical and philosophical context. We will consume philosophical tracts and discuss wars –ancient and modern – all with a view to developing our knowledge and our ability to form meaningful judgments about morality and war.

Readings:

The following are REQUIRED texts. They can be purchased at either of the campus bookstores.

- Course packet

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance and Participation:

Your attendance and class participation are important components of the course and will make up 20% of your course grade. You are expected to participate in a lively manner, by answering questions about the texts, asking questions about the texts, and, generally, by offering insightful comments that will enrich your experience as well as that of your fellow students.

*Study Question Responses.* For every thinker/work we study, you will be given a set of study questions to help you prepare for class. Answer one per week; this comes to 15
weeks of classes (not counting the week of March Break). Answers should be about a paragraph long, and will only be accepted in person at the beginning of class. The purpose of these is to help you prepare to participate in class. If you complete one per week, then you will get 100% of half of your participation grade (10% of your overall grade). This is to say that 50% of your attendance and participation depends on these responses. If you hand in 11-14, then you get 20% deducted from this part of the grade. If you hand in 10-5, you have 50% of this part of the grade deducted. If you hand in fewer than 5 (4 or less), then you get no part of this grade. The content is not graded for substance, but if there is not a good face effort to answer the question, it will not be accepted as a submission.

2. Reading:

All reading assignments must be completed BEFORE the beginning of the relevant class. Please keep in mind that your ability to participate effectively will depend on your diligence in completing the readings as assigned. All readings as well as all lecture material are fair game for tests and examinations. You must study your readings and take good notes in class in order to do well on the tests and examinations.

Since particular passages of the text will be referred to and read in class, please bring the appropriate texts to class.

3. Tests and Assignments:

i) Quizzes (10% each). There will be two quizzes through the course of the semester. Quizzes will not be cumulative, but will test limited material that will be specified in class.

ii) Midterm Test (15%). Cumulative test, in class.

iii) Paper. This paper will be interpretive rather than research-based. Essay topics will be handed out in the first few weeks of the course. The parameters of the papers will be spelled out at that time. Papers will be submitted in class as well as through Safe Assign. The grade for this assignment is two-fold:

1. Essay Topic (5%): One paragraph with your thesis, which describes the way in which you are going about to prove your thesis
2. Final Essay (20%).

iv) Final Exam (20%). The final exam will take place at the University mandated exam time. It will deal with the themes covered throughout the course, which is to say, it is a comprehensive exam.

Study guides are provided for all tests and exams.

v) See also Study Question Responses under Attendance and Participation above.
Grading Scheme:

Attendance and Participation: 20%
Two Quizzes: 10% each (20% total)
Midterm Test: 15%
Essay Topic: 5%
Essay: 20%
Final Exam: 20%

Grading Scale:

93%-100% = A  
90%-92.9% = A-  
87.5%-89.9% = B+
83%-87.4% = B  
80%-82.9% = B-  
77.5%-79.9% = C+
70%-77.4% = C  
60%-69.9% = D  
Less than 60% = F

Lateness Policy:

Quizzes and midterm exam will not be rescheduled unless there are extraordinary circumstances that make it impossible for the student to complete work or come to class. Let it be clear that only EXTRAORDINARY and unexpected circumstances will be considered. For example, a heavy workload within or without the university does not count as extraordinary—and neither does a common cold or traffic problems. If there is a serious medical problem that has impeded the student’s ability to do his or her work, then please let the professor know and bring supporting documentation. NO consideration will be given to those students who do not alert the professor of a problem prior to the due date of an assignment, presentation, or exam.

For the essay, if it is not handed in on time (at the beginning of the class period when it is due), late penalties will apply. Each day of lateness will cost you 5% of your essay grade. Penalties accrue each day, including weekends and holidays, until the paper is received. For example, if you hand in the paper after the class period but on the same day the paper is due, you will incur a 5% penalty. Another 5% will accrue the following day, and so on. In principle, there are NO exceptions to this policy. This is a term paper. You will have over two months to work on it. It is your responsibility to work on it in a timely fashion such that last minute colds or work load surges or personal problems don’t get in the way of your assignment. You are encouraged to seek guidance from the professor on the essay itself early in the semester to avoid last minute difficulties.

The Essay Topic assignment will also incur a 5% penalty per day late, as with the essay itself.

Class Decorum:

You are expected to be courteous and collegial in this class. Here are some of the decorum guidelines:

❖ Be on time for class.
Do not leave during class. Use the restroom, get a drink of water, etc. before class begins or after it ends. If you must leave early or come in late, please provide a reasonable explanation and be as undisruptive as possible when you are coming or going.

Respect your classmates. Do not interrupt your colleagues, and make sure that your comments are civil. Discussion is wonderful and encouraged, but it is only possible when we listen to one another and make comments that are courteous.

Do not disrupt lectures. No cell phones, no private conversations, no snoring. If you wish to interrupt to ask a question, please put your hand up. Questions are encouraged!

**Unannounced Quizzes:**

The professor reserves the right to give unannounced quizzes if it becomes clear that students are not doing the assigned reading, and the quality of class participation and discussion is unsatisfactory.

**Extra Credit:**

Extra credit assignments will not be given on an individual basis to raise final grades.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

A student who believes that reasonable accommodations with respect to course work or other academic requirements may be appropriate in consideration of a disability must (1) provide the required verification of the disability to the Disabilities Resource Center, (2) meet with the Disabilities Resource Center to determine appropriate accommodations, and (3) inform the faculty in charge of the academic activity of the need for accommodation. Students are encouraged to inform the faculty of their requests for accommodations as early as possible in the semester, but must make the requests in a timely enough manner for accommodations to be appropriately considered and reviewed by the university. If contacted by the faculty member, the staff of the Disabilities Resource Center will provide advice about accommodations that may be indicated in the particular case. Students who make requests for reasonable accommodations are expected to follow the policies and procedures of the Disabilities Resource Center in this process, including but not limited to the Student Handbook.

A wide range of services can be obtained by students with disabilities, including housing, transportation, adaptation of printed materials, and advocacy with faculty and staff. Students with disabilities who need such services or want more information should contact the Disabilities Resource Center at 815-753-1303.

**Academic Integrity:**

University Policy: Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper
or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are responsible
for plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other
sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas
from such sources without acknowledging them. Students responsible for, or assisting
others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may
receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the
university.

A faculty member has original jurisdiction over any instances of academic misconduct
that occur in a course which the faculty member is teaching. The student shall be given
the opportunity to resolve the matter in meetings with the faculty member and the
department chair. If the facts of the incident are not disputed by the student, the faculty
member may elect to resolve the matter at that level by levying a sanction no greater than
an F for that course. The faculty member shall notify the student in writing whenever
such action is taken, and the Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct shall
receive a copy of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report indicating final disposition
of the case, which will be placed in the student's judicial file. In all matters where the
charge of academic misconduct is disputed by the student or if the faculty member feels a
sanction greater than an F in a course is appropriate (such as repeated offenses or
flagrant violations), the faculty member shall refer the matter to the Office of Community
Standards and Student Conduct making use of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report.
Additional sanctions greater than an F in a course can be levied only through the
University Judicial System. With regards to finding the student either responsible or not
responsible for his or her action, the ruling of the Judicial Hearing Board shall be
binding. In cases where there is either a finding of responsibility or an admission of
responsibility by the student, any recommendations by the hearing board regarding the
course grade are non-binding on the instructor, who remains solely responsible for
assigning a course grade, consistent with the policies set forth in the course syllabus.

Course policy: This course adheres to the University policy elaborated above. All
incidents of academic misconduct will be reported, and course sanctions will range from
an F on the assignment to an F in the course based on the severity of the misconduct. In
addition to the misconduct outlined above, from the point of view of this instructor in this
course, handing in work that has been handed in for another class also counts as
misconduct. You must produce your own original work specifically written for this class.

Department of Political Science Web Site
Undergraduates are encouraged to consult the Department of Political Science web site
on a regular basis. This up-to-date, central source of information will assist students in
contacting faculty and staff, reviewing course requirements and syllabi, exploring
graduate study, researching career options, tracking department events, and accessing
important details related to undergraduate programs and activities. To reach the site, go to
http://polisci.niu.edu. For the most up-to-date information on scholarships, internships,
and other department news, I encourage you to “like” the department on Facebook
(https://www.facebook.com/NIU.PoliticalScience ) or follow us on Twitter (@niupols).
Undergraduate Writing Awards:

The Department of Political Science recognizes, on an annual basis, outstanding undergraduate papers written in conjunction with 300-400 level political science courses or directed studies, such as independent studies or honors theses. Winners are expected to attend the Department’s spring graduation ceremony where they will receive a certificate and a check for $50.00. No more than two papers may be submitted by a student. There is no requirement as to the length of papers submitted for the award. Often the Department awards prizes for both an outstanding short paper and an outstanding long paper. The number and types of award is dependent upon the papers submitted for consideration in any given year. Authors do not have to be political science majors or have a particular class standing. Only papers written in the previous calendar year are considered for the award. However, papers completed in the current spring semester are eligible for the following year’s competition even if the student has graduated. Papers can be submitted by students or faculty and must be supplied in triplicate to the undergraduate secretary. All copies must have two cover pages – one with the student’s name and one without the student’s name. Papers are not to be stapled or bound. Instead, please use paper clips. Papers are generally due in March and notice of call for papers and submission deadlines will be published in the department e-announcements. You may also contact the department for information at 753-1015.

Religious Observance:

If classes or assignments coincide and conflict with your religious observance, please let the professor know as soon as possible so that you can be accommodated in the best possible way.

Course Outline and Due Dates:

- **Introduction**
  - January 16
    - Purpose and aims of course

- **Realism: Are ethics a relevant dimension of international relations?**
  - January 18
    - Walzer, Preface and Chapter 1
    - Kaplan, Chapter 1

- **Thucydides – Father of Realism**
  - January 23
    - Thucydides, Pericles’s Funeral Oration: In defense of empire (Packet)

- **January 25**
  - Thucydides, Melian Dialogue (Packet)

- **January 30**
  - Melian Dialogue, finish
    - Reference: Kaplan, chapter 4
Christian Just War Theory
February 1

February 6
- Vitoria, *On the American Indians* (p. 250-292)

February 8
- Con’d, Vitoria
- Kaplan, chapter 5

Hobbes: Modern Realism
February 13
- Quiz 1

February 15 & 20

February 22
- Hobbes, finish

Montesquieu: Liberty, Commerce, and New Prospects for International Peace
February 27 & March 1
- Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*, Books 1-3 (entire); consult also Book 26, chapter 20; Book 4, chapters 5-8; Book 5, chapters 1-7; Book 8, chapters 16-20.

March 6 & March 8
- Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*, Books 9-10 (entire), Book 11, chapters 1-6; Book 19, chapter 27; Book 20, chapters 1-14; Book 21, chapter 20.

March 13 & March 15
- *March Break*

Kant and Modern Idealism
March 20
- Midterm Test

March 22
- Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals* (packet)

March 27
- Kant, *Perpetual Peace*

March 29
- Finish Kant; Kaplan, chapter 8

Walzer’s Just War Theory
April 3
- Walzer, Chapters 2 and 3

Crime of Aggression
April 5
- Walzer, Chapters 4 and 5
April 10
- Walzer, Chapter 16

Essay Topic Due

April 12
**Interventions**
- Walzer, Chapter 6

April 17
Quiz 2; Essay clinic

April 19
**Non-Combatant Immunity**
- Walzer, Chapter 8 & 9

April 24
**Asymmetrical Warfare and Terrorism**
- Movie: “Battle of Algiers”

April 26
- Movie, finish
- Walzer, Chapter 12

May 1
- Con’d

**Future of War, Empire and Ethics**
- Kaplan, Chapter 10 and 11

Essays Due

Final Exam: Tues. May 8, 10-11:50a.m.