I. Overview

Why do states engage in disastrous wars? Why do great leaders enact at bad policy? What explains variation in how the great powers of history have pursued their national interests? This course explores answers to these broad questions and more.

The central aim of this course is explain why different states design and implement different foreign policies. To do this, we will explore various theories that draw our attention to the role of individual leaders and their own psychology, the role of the military and other domestic groups, the importance of bureaucracies and government agencies, and the role of national identity and culture. We will apply our analysis to a number of major states today, including United States in the age of Trump, the rising power of China, Putin’s resurgent Russia, among others.

II. Central Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- summarize and apply theories of foreign policy-making;
- articulate central debates around explaining foreign policy-making;
- explain important decisions undertaken by the US and other state historically;
- devise policy-relevant ideas about major challenges facing US and other state interests today;
- think critically about and critique scholarly work;
- articulate their views confidently and competently in both discussions and written work.

III. Class Format

Our course meets for 75 minutes, twice a week. Classes will mix lecture with discussions and group activities. It is, therefore, essential that students attend having read and reflected upon the required readings for each class. Active participation in a number of forms within each class is a
requirement of this course. Most weeks will feature a more traditional lecture on Tuesday classes and group work and discussions on Thursday classes.

IV. Grade Distribution

1. Class Participation: 10% (on-going)
2. Reading Quizzes: 10% (on-going)
3. Midterm Exam: 20% (Thursday, March 7)
4. Research Essay: 35%
   a. Draft: 10% (Thursday, March 21)
   b. Writing Workshop Participation: 5% (Week 11, see below)
   c. Final: 20% (Tuesday, April 16)
5. Final Exam: 25% (TBA)

V. Requirements

1. Class Participation (10%): Students are expected to read, reflect upon, and be prepared to discuss the required readings for each class. Participation means active engagement in all discussions, group activities, and other forms of interaction with your colleagues and Instructor. Missing one or two classes is less consequential than attending all classes but remaining quiet, distracted, or disengaged.

To do well in this course you must come prepared and you must participate. If you have concerns about your performance or your ability to confidently engage within the class, please (at any time) speak with your Instructor in office hours.

Note that this course will rely on discussions that extend beyond our required readings and engage with current issues in global politics. It is therefore strongly recommended that students stay up to date with current global affairs by following a major news source (e.g. The Guardian, Washington Post, New York Times, or The Economist).

2. Reading Quizzes (10%): These short quizzes will be unannounced. They will be held periodically during the first ten or so minutes of class, as decided by the Instructor. We will have at least 10 quizzes. They will consist of multiple choice questions derived from the assigned reading for the week in which they are held, and may include widely reported current events and issues. Reading Quizzes will be equally weighted. For example, if there are 10 throughout the semester, each will be worth 1 point. If there are 16, each will be worth 0.625 points. Note that there is no opportunity to make-up Reading Quizzes without a formally documented (i.e. medical) absence and the approval from the Instructor. Make-ups, if offered, will vary from those held in class and may, necessarily, be more challenging.

Note also that no additional time will be provided (i.e. if you arrive to class a few minutes late to find a Reading Quiz in progress, you will not be granted extra time to complete it).

3. Midterm Exam (20%): The midterm exam will be held in class (see below schedule). It will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and/or long-answer questions. Further details will be provided in advance. Students will have 65 minutes to complete the midterm. No extra time will
be provided if students arrive late. Students should bring their own exam blue book(s) to complete the exam. The exam book may be inspected before the exam is administered.

4. Essay (35%): Students will complete a major essay in this class over three assignments: a draft essay (10%), participation in two Writing Workshops (5%), and a final version (20%). The essay (both draft and final) will be 1,500-2,500 words (the maximum, excluding bibliography). Further details will be provided via Blackboard within Week 3 of the course.

5. Final Exam (25%): The final exam will be held during the designated exam period as decided by the Registrar. It will consist of multiple choice, short answer and/or long-answer questions. The final exam will be cumulative. Further details will be provided in advance. Students should bring their own exam blue book(s) to complete the exam. The exam book will be inspected before the exam is administered.

VI. Submission of Assignments

All course assignments are required both in hardcopy and electronically through Blackboard. Assignments are not considered submitted until both submissions have been made and a late penalty will be applied upon fully submitted (see late policy below). The electronic and hardcopy submissions must be identical. Failure to do so will result in a zero on the assignment.

Assignments are not accepted via email.

Written assignments must be double-sided, stapled, and clearly presented. Student names, student numbers, course code, and both the name of your Instructor and Teaching Assistant should be clearly visible on a title page (or header). Page numbers are required. Failure to comply with these requirements will see a reduction of marks.

All work must be clearly and formally cited and a bibliography provided (bibliography does not count towards word/page length restrictions). Failure to comply with this requirement risks a failure of the assignment and/or further sanctions (see Academic Integrity below).

For a useful guide to a straightforward and recommended citation style, see: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html).

Late Policy: A late penalty of 5% per day (including weekends) will be levied up to four (4) days at which point the assignment will not be accepted and will receive a zero. The application of penalties begins at 4:30pm on the due date, when the Department of Political Science closes (i.e. if you fail to submit the assignment in class on the due date and submit it the same day but after the Department is closed, you will receive a 5% deduction).

Late assignments are due in hardcopy to the Department of Political Science and electronically through Blackboard, unless otherwise noted by the Instructor. Assignments are not accepted by email.
**Extensions** and accommodations are possible for documented medical or family emergencies, or additional circumstances when agreed upon with the Instructor in advance. If you think you need to delay taking an exam or submitting a written assignment, talk to your Instructor generally at least *three weeks* before the exam/due date or as soon as possible. Extensions are never guaranteed. They will be based on University policy, the exigency of the circumstances, and timeliness of the request (i.e. the earlier the better).

**VII. Assessment & Appeals**

Written assignments and exams will be assessed by the Instructor and/or the Teaching Assistant. A common rubric will be used for the course, regardless of grader, and written commentary will be provided.

Both the Teaching Assistant and Instructor will make available office hour times to provide further feedback and guidance after the return of the midterm exam and written assignments. Students are encouraged to speak to their grader in office hours before and after the submission of the Draft Essay.

**Grade appeals** are possible. To appeal a grade – whether the material is graded by the Instructor or the Teaching Assistant – the following steps must be undertaken:

a. Within one week of the return of the material *but not before 48 hours* students must provide an **email** to the Instructor indicating the intention to appeal a grade.

b. Within 24 hours of the emailed notice of appeal, the student must provide a typed **written appeal** outlining the rationale for the request. That written appeal must be provided to the Department of Political Science or the Instructor in class or in office hours *along* with the original graded material (and any supplemental rubric or commentary provided). The appeal must no more than 1 typed page single spaced, and should be detailed enough to justify the appeal and outline the particularities of the apparent disagreement.

c. The Instructor will review the appeal and, if appropriate, undertake a detailed review of the assignment. The grade offered on appeal may increase, decrease, or maintain the original score. The grade offered on appeal will be final.

d. Students will, after the conclusion of the appeal, be invited to discuss the assignment and the rationale for its grade in the Instructor’s office hours.

**VIII. Academic Integrity**

This course will take academic misconduct seriously. All work submitted must be a students’ own in full and must be **cited** properly.

Any student in this course found to have plagiarized (*accidentally* or otherwise) the work of another individual (including, but not limited to, other students or from existing scholarship) will receive a **failing grade** in this course and may be subject to additional sanctions by the University.
Students are expected to have read and to abide by NIU’s Student Code of Conduct (http://www.niu.edu/conduct/student-code-of-conduct). This is your responsibility, and it is a requirement of this course.

Please take NIU’s Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity to re-familiarize yourself if you have doubts or concerns (http://www.niu.edu/ai/students/) and/or speak to your Instructor in office hours.

If you have any questions throughout the course relating to academic practices, academic integrity, and issues of plagiarism and/or citation please speak to the Instructor and/or consult the links noted above. Failure to understand these requirements does not constitute an excuse to deviate from them.

**Note:** With the above in mind, please ensure that all drafts, preliminary work, and research notes, as well as all graded and returned course assignments, are retained until course grades are finalized by the Registrar. Your Instructor may request to review either draft or finalized material at any point during the course and/or discuss student assignments in person.

**IX. Course Materials**

**Required readings:** There are two required texts for the course:


Students are required to acquire (buy, borrow, rent, etc.) both texts. Both are available through the NIU Bookstore and widely available online, new and used, at reasonable cost.

All additional required readings are available online, online through the NIU Library, or will be posted as pdf files on Blackboard (BB in the below schedule. See the “Additional Readings” folder under “Content” for these files).

**Current events:** Students are expected to follow current events related to global politics and foreign policy-making in the US and elsewhere. It is therefore **required** that students stay up to date with current global affairs by following a major newspaper or online news source (e.g. The Guardian, Washington Post, New York Times, or The Economist). I highly recommend getting in the habit of reading the news every day and consulting more than one source. **Note** that familiarity with current issues in global affairs will be a component of assessment in this course in a number of ways, including the participation score in class, the Reading Quizzes, and through questions on the Midterm and Final Exams.
**Recommended readings:** a number of recommended readings are noted in the outline below. These are *not* required reading material, but provided for further reading should students so desire. If any student desires additional recommended material, please let me know as I will happy to provide suggestions on any and all topics!

**Reading Academic Articles:** A number of the readings for the course are rather challenging academic articles from leading scholarly journals in International Relations. If you are not experienced reading scholarly work in academic journals, you may wish to review this short video providing one approach to reading scholarly articles:

https://www.lib.uwo.ca/tutorials/howtoreadascholarlyarticle/index.html

**X. Office Hours**

Your Instructor will hold weekly Office Hours (as noted on page 1). These are drop-in times and all students are always welcome to attend to discuss anything related to the course, or anything else you feel that your Instructor could potentially help with.

No RSVP is required. Students are encouraged to visit as often as they like, and are invited to attend in small groups if you wish. If you cannot meet during this period, please email me well in advance to arrange an alternative time.

Your Teaching Assistant will hold Office Hours at set times after the return of graded material and in advance of the exams. Notice of these times and locations will be provided in class and via Blackboard.

**XI. Email Contact**

Both the Instructor and the Teaching Assistant will (try to) answer questions by email when appropriate. Please use the course code somewhere in the subject line and ensure you make use of your official NIU email address for all communications. Those two requirements help ensure that emails are received and read in a timely manner. A 24-48-hour turnaround time should be anticipated, so please do not leave questions to the last minute.

Substantive questions regarding course materials and discussions, or concerns or questions about the assignments are best discussed in class or in Office Hours and not by email. Please always feel free to raise questions at the onset of class for the benefit of all your colleagues in the course. As a rule of thumb, if a question or a welcomed response is longer than three or four sentences, it is likely a topic to chat about in Office Hours or in class.

**XII. Our Space and Issues of Accessibility**

Together, we will foster a comfortable, engaging, and accessible scholarly environment. All students should feel welcome to attend and speak freely in class and in Office Hours. To this end we will approach this course as colleagues, and we will treat each other with respect and dignity at all times.
NIU, and myself as your Instructor, are committed to making reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. If any disabilities may impact on coursework or other academic requirements, please notify both your Instructor and the Disability Resource Center (Tel. 815-753-1303) on the fourth floor of the Health Services Building as soon as possible, and within the first two weeks of the start of this course. If you would rather not speak to your Instructor, note that the Disability Resource Center can assist students in making appropriate accommodations with Instructors discretely.

If you have any concerns about the course or your ability to access or engage with the course material or our discussions – at any point throughout the course – please also feel free to contact me by email or speak to me in person. I will happy to assist as best as I am able. I am also happy to raise any issues or concerns you may have on your behalf with the Department or the University directly.

**XIII. Laptops and Technology**

I strongly recommend students take notes in class by hand and transcribe those into typed notes. That is an excellent way to begin your exam preparations in this and other courses. If students choose – or need – to make use of a laptop computer, please sit towards the back of the room to not distract your colleagues. Additionally, do not deviate from a productive use of your computer (e.g. typing notes or researching during group work) or *any* use of your phone for the duration of our time in class.

If I suspect that a student is misusing their computer, witness the use of a phone, or deem a student’s behaviour to be a distraction to myself or your colleagues in the class I will ask the student to leave the room for the remainder of the class. This will also negatively affect your participation score.

**XIV. Preferred Names and Pronouns**

Class rosters and University data systems are provided to faculty with the student’s legal name and legal gender marker. As an NIU student, you are able to change how your preferred/proper name shows up on class rosters. This option is helpful for various student populations, including but not limited to: students who abbreviate their first name; students who use their middle name; international students; and transgender students. As your Instructor, I am committed to using your proper name and pronouns as you prefer them.

We will take time during our first class together to do introductions, at which point you can share with all members of our class what name and pronouns you use, as you are comfortable. Additionally, if these change at any point during the semester, please let me know and we can develop a plan to share this information with others in a way that is safe for you.

Should you want to update your preferred/proper name, you can do here:  
http://www.niu.edu/regrec/preferredname/index.shtml
XV. Blackboard

This course will use Blackboard as our course webpage to host readings (that are not available in the above-mentioned textbooks), document student grades, and disseminate announcements. Blackboard will also host copies of all additional material provided in the course (e.g. assignment details). Please check Blackboard before contacting the Instructor or Teaching Assistant for information regarding assignments or readings, and regularly visit the webpage to ensure you are up to date on announcements in the course.

XVI. Letter Grade Distribution:

Students will receive a percentage score for each assignment that can be totaled and translated into a letter grade according to the scale below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;= 93.00</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.00 - 92.99</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87.00 - 89.99</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.00 - 86.99</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.00 - 82.99</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.00 - 79.99</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.00 - 76.99</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.00 - 69.99</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;= 59.99</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

XVII. Class Schedule Overview:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course &amp; Core Concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>Comparative Foreign Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>January 29</td>
<td>Rationality and the State</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>February 5</td>
<td>The Role of the Individual</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>Groups and Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>Culture and Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>February 26</td>
<td>Domestic Politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>Review &amp; Midterm Exam (Thursday March 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>Spring Break (No Classes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>USA I</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Draft Essay Due (Thursday March 21)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>March 26</td>
<td>Writing Workshop I &amp; II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>USA II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>April 9</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>April 16</td>
<td>China</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Essay Due (Tuesday April 16)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>April 23</td>
<td>Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>Great Britain &amp; Review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Topics and readings may be subject to change at the discretion of your Instructor. Any change in the above schedule (e.g. the cancellation or rescheduling of a class or the hosting of the class by a guest other than your Instructor) will be noted as soon as possible by your Instructor through Blackboard.
XVIII. Detailed Class Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction & Core Concepts

Class 1. Introduction

Read the syllabus in full

Class 2. Core Concepts

Hudson (2014) Chapter 1


Week 2. Comparative Foreign Policy

Class 3. Foreign Policy Analysis: IR and the Levels of Analysis


Class 4. Comparative Foreign Policy Analysis

Beasley et al. (2013) Chapter 1

Week 3. Rationality and the State

Class 5 & 6. Realist Foreign Policy


**Week 4. Political Psychology**

Class 7 & 8. Political Psychology

Hudson (2014) Chapter 2


**Week 5. Groups**

Class 9. Group and Bureaucratic Decision-Making

Hudson (2014) Chapter 3

Week 6. Ideas and Identity

Class 11 & 12. Culture and National Identity

Hudson (2014) Chapter 4


Week 7. Domestic Politics


Hudson (2014) Chapter 5


Week 8. Review & Midterm

Class 15. Review Class

Class 16. Midterm Exam (in class)

Week 9. Spring Break
Week 10. The United States I

Class 17 & 18: US Foreign Policy Paradoxes: Liberalism and Human Rights


Week 11. Writing Workshops

Class 19: Writing Workshop I
Class 20: Writing Workshop II

Reminders: all students must read all Draft Essays from their group, attend both Workshops, and prepare one Peer Review Form for each group member to be discussed and shared in the Workshop.

Week 12. The United States II

Class 21 & 22: US Foreign Policy in the Trump Era


Week 13. Russia

Class 22 & 23. Russian Foreign Policy and ‘Russia’s Near-Abroad’

Beasley et al. (2013) Chapter 5


Fyodor Lukyanov (2016), “Putin’s Foreign Policy: The Quest to Restore Russia’s Rightful Place” *Foreign Affairs* 95(3): 30-37. (BB)


Week 14. China

Class 24 & 25: Chinese Foreign Policy and Growing Global Power

Beasley et al. (2013) Chapter 6


**Week 15. Europe**

**Class 26 & 27. German & European Union Foreign Policy**

Beasley et al. (2013) Chapter 4


**Week 16. Great Britain & Review**

**Class 28. Great Britain**

Beasley et al. (2013) Chapter 2


**Class 29. Review**

**Exam: TBA**