Political Science 378: Conflict Resolution
Fall Semester 2013
Mondays 1:20-3:15
Education Building, Room L155

Course Overview

In this course, we will discuss how international and civil conflicts are resolved. Some of the topics covered will include theories of war termination, negotiation, partition, humanitarian intervention, mediation, and peacekeeping. We will also discuss some particularly noteworthy cases, including World War I, World War II, the Cold War, and the Arab-Israeli dispute. In addition, we will engage in a simulation activity related to the more obscure Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

This is a small seminar-style class that will require active student participation in class discussions and the simulation. It is essential for the success of the class that you come prepared to participate in these activities.

Course Grade

Your course grade will be based on discussion participation (30%), response papers (35%), and simulation activities (35%). There is a separate section on each of these things below.

The grade cutoffs will be as follows, using standard rounding:

- 93-100%: A
- 88-92%: AB
- 83-87%: B
- 78-82%: BC
- 70-77%: C
- 60-69%: D
- 0-59%: F

Discussion Participation (30% of course grade)

During all class meetings except simulation days, we will discuss the readings listed below in the syllabus. It is essential that you arrive at class having completed the readings and ready to discuss them.

I will give you a discussion score between 0 and 10 for each day that we discuss readings. The score will be based on my assessment of the frequency and quality of your participation. By quality, I mean the extent to which your participation reflects having done the readings as well as critical thinking and analysis. I will send out interim participation scores on October 22 in order to enable you to assess how you are doing. If you are concerned about your participation grade, you may also inquire about it at other times.
Here is a rough breakdown of how I will assign participation scores. I will assign a minimum score of...

- 7 points for being physically present.
- 8 points for contributing at least once to discussion.
- 9 points for making several contributions to discussion, at least some of which are of reasonably high quality.
- 10 points for making frequent contributions to discussion, most of which are of high quality.

**Response Papers (35% of course grade)**

For 4 out of the 11 weeks when we discuss readings, you are required to write a response paper covering some or all of the assigned readings. Response papers should be 500-750 words long, including all words in the document. You may write these papers for any 4 weeks of your choosing. It is suggested that you plan ahead and write at least some of these papers around the beginning of the semester when you are probably less busy.

If you choose to write a response paper for a given week, it will be due in the Learn@UW dropbox no later than 8am on the morning of class. Late papers will not be accepted. I will read your response paper before class and possibly incorporate some of your ideas into the discussion.

I appreciate that there might be a learning curve in writing the response papers, so your response paper with the lowest grade will be worth only 5% on your course grade, while the other 3 response papers will each be worth 10% of your course grade.

Here are some tips on how to write a response paper:

- Response papers should not just summarize the readings, but respond to them by analyzing, comparing, or critiquing them.
- Your paper should have only one focus. This could mean analyzing just one argument from the readings, comparing two related arguments, or focusing on one theme that runs through several of the readings.
- Your paper should have a clear thesis which is presented in the first paragraph.
- You are not necessarily required or expected to incorporate all of the readings into your paper, but you should read them all before writing your paper, and I might flag it if you miss an obvious connection between them.
- The word limit is intentionally low to force you to focus your thoughts and gain practice writing in a concise manner (an important skill in many careers). You will probably end up writing more than the word limit and then editing it down.
- Because of the low word limit, you should avoid long summaries or quotes.
- When you refer to the assigned readings, please use in-text citations with the author’s name and page number. No bibliography is necessary unless you bring in outside sources, which is not required or expected.

Each response paper will receive a score between 1 and 10 as well as feedback from me. Here are the criteria I will use in assigning scores:

- Quality of the argument (worth 6 points)
  - Does the paper have a single thesis/argument?
  - Does the paper include original and insightful analysis?
  - Is the argument free of logical contradictions?
Is the argument supported by evidence from the readings?
Does the paper take into account potential competing arguments?
Does the paper demonstrate that the author understood the readings?
Is it clear how everything in the paper is related to the central argument?

Presentation of the argument (worth 4 points)

Does the paper have a structure which is logical and easy to understand?
Is it easy to tell up front what the thesis is?
Does the paper have sentences which are clear, easy to understand, and professional in tone?
Does the paper use proper English grammar, spelling, and punctuation?
Does the paper properly cite the readings with author and page number?

Papers that exceed 750 words will automatically lose 2 points.
Again, late papers will not be accepted.

Simulation (35% of course grade)

This course will include a simulation in which the class attempts to find a resolution to the long-running conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh. This conflict was selected because its obscurity means that most students will approach it without preconceived notions, yet a wide variety of international actors and US domestic actors have stakes in the outcome.

Each student in the class will adopt the identity of a figure with a stake in the conflict. Some available roles are listed in the table below. Students are welcome to suggest additional roles, as long as the person might reasonably be involved in the issue. Simulation roles will be selected in class on September 16. Students will be given the opportunity to select roles in a randomized order.

Possible Simulation Roles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Current Incumbent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US President</td>
<td>Barack Obama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Vice President</td>
<td>Joe Biden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US National Security Advisor</td>
<td>Susan Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Secretary of State</td>
<td>John Kerry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Secretary of Defense</td>
<td>Chuck Hagel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Ambassador to Armenia</td>
<td>John Heffern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Ambassador to Azerbaijan</td>
<td>Richard Morningstar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Ambassador to the United Nations</td>
<td>Samantha Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Ambassador to the OSCE</td>
<td>Daniel Baer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenian President</td>
<td>Serzh Sargsyan (Sarkisian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijani President</td>
<td>Ilham Aliyev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagorno-Karabakh President</td>
<td>Bako Sahakyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of the Armenian National Congress</td>
<td>Levon Ter-Petrossian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair of Azerbaijan's National Council for Democratic Forces</td>
<td>Rustam Ibragimbekov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iranian Foreign Minister</td>
<td>Ali Akbar Salehi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish Foreign Minister</td>
<td>Ahmet Davutoğlu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The simulation will take place over 3 class sessions:

1. In the first session on October 14, each student will introduce the class to his or her role. Students will give a biography, outline the person’s role and/or the role of the institution the person heads in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and give the person’s attitude or position toward it. If the person has not made any direct statements about the conflict, try to infer his or her position from the person’s role and/or the position of the institution the person heads. See me if you are having trouble with this.

2. In the second session on November 11, the US Administration (consisting of the President, Vice President, National Security Advisor, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, ambassadors, and any other US government roles suggested by students) will present a proposal for solving the conflict. This group is required to work collaboratively to come up with the proposal and presentation. Each member of the Administration must present some aspect of the plan. Other actors can then question the Administration on the plan.

3. In the last session on December 9, other students representing domestic or foreign actors will present their reactions to the proposal. Then the presidents of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Nagorno-Karabakh will agree to the proposal, agree to a modified version of the proposal, or decide to continue the conflict. Other actors may chime in and lobby them. Finally, the US domestic actors will decide whether to reward or punish the Obama Administration for its performance.

Presentation Requirements

- Individual presentations on Day 1 and Day 3 should be 4-5 minutes long. After 5.5 minutes, I will be forced to cut you off, regardless of how far along you are. Please practice your presentation to ensure it is the correct length.
- The group presentation on Day 2 should be at least 20-30 minutes long, but can go longer if necessary since Day 2 is not as tightly scheduled.
- Presentations should be made with the aid of slides created using PowerPoint or similar software.
- Your slides should include a bibliography slide at the end, but you do not have to talk about this during your oral presentation.
- Presentations should be emailed to the class list (polisci378-1-f13@lists.wisc.edu) in PowerPoint or PDF format by midnight the night before class. I will have the presentations ready to go on my laptop when you arrive at class.
Simulation Grading

- Your simulation grade, worth 35% of your course grade, can be broken down further into 17% for your first presentation (on Day 1), 17% for your second presentation (on Day 2 or Day 3, depending on your role), and 1% for the quality of your participation in unstructured simulation interactions on Days 2 and 3.
- The grade for each presentation will be based 70% on content and 30% on presentational attributes.
  - Presentational attributes include whether the presentation has a clear and logical structure, whether the slides are visually appealing and free of errors, and whether the oral presentation is smooth and fits within the time limit.
  - For Day 1 presentations, the content portion of the grade will be based on the quality of research regarding your actor.
  - For the Day 2 presentation, all group members will receive the same grade. The content portion of the grade will be based on the quality of the peace proposal: Does it demonstrate understanding of the conflict and the conflict actors’ preferences? Is it creative (but not impossibly far-fetched)? How detailed is it?
  - For Day 3 presentations, the content portion of the grade will be based on the quality of the response to the peace proposal: Does it demonstrate understanding of the proposal? Does it give adequate reasoning behind the response? Is it consistent with the actor’s established position?
  - In all cases, additional points will be deducted for not complying with the presentation requirements immediately above.

Attendance Policy

If you have a valid reason for missing class—namely, a medical problem, family emergency, religious observance, or university-sponsored activity—please get in touch with me in advance when at all possible, and I will arrange for you to make up the work in some manner. Failure to notify me promptly or make up the work will result in a 0 for the day’s activity.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct will be penalized with an F in the class and will be reported to the Dean of Students. To avoid such an outcome, avoid using others’ work without proper citations and quotations. Questions about citation and quotation procedures can be addressed to me or the Writing Center.

McBurney Center

Students utilizing the McBurney Disability Resource Center and desiring accommodations in this class must present their Verified Individualized Service and Accommodation (VISA) plan to me within the first two weeks of class. I am happy to work with you to arrange accommodations.

Contacting Me

I encourage you to visit me during my office hours (Wednesdays 9:30-10:30 and Fridays 9:30-10:30 in North Hall, room 411), and I am also happy to make other appointments with 2 days’ notice. If your question is brief, you may also talk to me after class. In addition, you are welcome to contact me by email (rmcmanus@wisc.edu).
Required Readings

Substantial portions of the required readings come from these books. I suggest that you purchase them, although I have also put them on reserve at College Library:


Any required readings that are not found in these 4 books will be available online at the Learn@UW website for the course.

Recommended Readings

Thomas de Waal has written two excellent books discussing the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. In preparation for the simulation, I highly recommend that you read at least the first one, which discusses the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in most detail. If you are interested, you might also want to read the second one, which provides more background on the entire region and oil and gas politics. If you would prefer not to buy these books, the first is available in an electronic version through the library website, while the second is on reserve at College Library.


For the latest news and analysis on Nagorno-Karabakh, you may want to look at:


You are also encouraged to read the general international news on a regular basis. *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* have high quality international coverage.

Course Outline

We will start by talking about some specific conflicts and then move to focusing on conflict resolution techniques and debates. The three simulation days are interspersed throughout the semester. All of the readings listed under each day are required.

September 9: Introduction and Overview

September 16: World War I and World War II


September 23: The Cold War


September 30: The Arab-Israeli Conflict


October 7: Civil War

5. Correspondence by Nathan and Toft.

October 14: First Simulation Day

Presentations of biographical sketches and positions.
October 21: Peace Agreements and Durability


October 28: Outbidding and the Spoiler Problem


November 4: The Partition Debate


November 11: Second Simulation Day

Presentation of US proposal

November 18: Mediation

November 25: Peacekeeping and Reconstruction


December 2: Dilemmas of Humanitarian Intervention


December 9: Final Simulation Day

Presentation of responses to US proposal