This class is a capstone seminar – the main goal is to write a scholarly research paper that satisfies the Political Science Department’s and the University’s writing requirement. Our general purview will be matters of international security, but this course will not provide an exhaustive review of the literature. Instead we will discuss a handful of topics, such as reputation and international politics, revolutions and war, offensive realism, bargaining and war, public diplomacy, and terrorism. The readings on each of these subjects will consist of several articles or excerpts from books. Your paper topic can be taken from these subjects or other aspects of international security. The point of this reading is secondarily to provide topic ideas. We will primarily be using these readings as exercises in assessing arguments. Your research project will be an empirical test of an analytical argument, so we will be using this literature to provide examples about how one goes about doing that.

In class we will discuss the substantive issues mentioned, your and your peers work, writing and researching skills, and issues of theories and theory testing. Because this course requires a research paper at the end of seven weeks, the demands on your time are considerable. The readings for class will be relatively light to make time for your research, but you must do the readings, and you must do them carefully – whether it is a published paper or another student’s work. Seminars are different from other classes both in size and in the requirement that each student participate in what is a discussion, not a lecture. Each student is required to actively take part in the conversation. This requires that you be able to summarize and assess the arguments.

The goal of this course is to gain a substantive knowledge about some of the topics in the international security literature, especially your topic of research; but more importantly, it is to perfect more general skills of how to research, how to write, and how to assess arguments. Some of the issues we will discuss – selection effects, endogeneity, omitted variable bias – are of general usefulness. The course will hopefully contribute to the overall goal of your education, which is to make you a better thinker.

**Assessment**

- Participation 10%
- Proposal 4%
- List of Sources, Revised Proposal 6%
- Rough Draft, Presentation 10%
- Final Paper 50%
Your participation is not to be taken lightly – poor performance can significantly affect your overall grade. This requires attendance, especially when your fellow students are presenting, but also active participation in the discussion of articles and student projects. Everyone should come to class able to explain and assess the arguments assigned. This is a small group, and it will be obvious to everyone who has thoroughly digested the material. Be prepared for me to call on you.

I will provide handouts that give further instructions about the proposal, revised proposal/list of sources, rough draft, and final paper. Your rough draft will be due three days before you present your project. You will email a copy to me and your fellow students to read. You must receive at least a C- on your final paper in order to fulfill the university’s advanced writing requirements.

**Tentative Schedule and Reading**

(The readings will be posted on the course website. I will also provide handouts on research and writing)

21 June – Introduction to course

23 June – Identifying arguments and their observable implications/identifying the literature

Marc Trachtenberg, “The Meaning of Mobilization in 1914”


25 June – Offensive Realism

John Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 1-12, 234-252, 334-359

Colin Elman, “Extending offensive realism: The Louisiana Purchase and America’s rise to regional hegemony”

28 June – Revolution and War *(Proposal due)*

Gregory Gause, “Iraq’s Decisions to Go to War, 1980 and 1990”

30 June – No class: individual meetings

2 July – The Military and International Affairs
   Stanislav Andreski, “On the Peaceful Disposition of Military Dictatorships”
   Barry Posen, “Nationalism, the Mass Army, and Military Power”

5 July – Holiday

7 July – Preliminary Reports (Revised Proposal and Bibliography due)

9 July – Reputation and International Politics
   Anne Sartori, “The Might of the Pen”
   Daryl Press, “The Credibility of Power: Assessing Threats during the Appeasement Crises of the 1930s”

12 July – The Concert of Europe
   AHR Forum on Paul Schroeder, “Did the Vienna Settlement Rest on a Balance of Power?”

14 July – Bargaining and War
   James Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War”
   Dov Levin, “War ‘finds a way’: An attempt to develop a new theoretical pathway to issue indivisibility as a cause of war”

16 July – Public Diplomacy
   James Fearon, “Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands Versus Sinking Costs”
   Michael Tomz, “Domestic Audience Costs in International Relations: An Experimental Approach”
19 July – Terrorism

   Robert Pape, “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism”

   Max Abrahms, “Why Terrorism Does Not Work”

21 July – Writing Tips

   Handouts

23 July – Holiday

26 July – Revising Tips, Grammar and Style

   Handouts

28 July-4 August – Student Presentations

   (you will be required to read your fellow students’ work and provide feedback)

9 August – No class

13 August – **Final Paper due**
Learning Outcomes:

For information on the goals of a political science education, see: http://fhssadv.byu.edu/Advisement/polisci1.dhtml

Plagiarism:

While all students sign the honor code, there are still specific skills most students need to master over time in order to correctly cite sources, especially in this new age of the internet; as well as deal with the stress and strain of college life without resorting to cheating. Please know that as your professor I will notice instances plagiarizing on papers. General information about the honor code can be found at honorcode.byu.edu. Details about Academic Honesty are found at http://honorcode.byu.edu/contentacademic-honesty-details.

Writing submitted for credit at BYU must consist of the student's own ideas presented in sentences and paragraphs of his or her own construction. The work of other writers or speakers may be included when appropriate (as in a research paper or book review), but such material must support the student's own work (not substitute for it) and must be clearly identified by appropriate introduction and punctuation and by footnoting or other standard referencing.

The substitution of another person's work for the student's own or the inclusion of another person's work without adequate acknowledgment (whether done intentionally or not) is known as plagiarism. It is a violation of academic, ethical, and legal standards and can result in a failing grade not only for the paper but also for the course in which the paper is written. In extreme cases, it can justify expulsion from the University. Because of the seriousness of the possible consequences, students who wonder if their papers are within these guidelines should visit the Writing Lab or consult a faculty member who specializes in the teaching of writing or who specializes in the subject discussed in the paper. Useful books to consult on the topic include the current Harbrace College Handbook, the MLA Handbook, and James D. Lester's Writing Research Papers.

Discrimination:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU’s policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Opportunities Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.
Disabilities:

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the UAC office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.