

---

**PLSC 380N**  
**Political Economy of Armed Conflict**

**Term:** Winter 2014  
**Location:** Distance Learning

---

**Instructor:** Kyle Mackey  
**Office:** LNG 279  
**e:** [kmackey1@binghamton.edu](mailto:kmackey1@binghamton.edu)  
**u:** [Blackboard](#)

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is intended for undergraduate students as an advanced course on the political and economic factors that motivate choices about war and peace; an interaction of the political decisions involved in war planning with the economic consequences of war prosecution. More specifically, the material will connect the growth of the military as an instrument of organized violence to the economic hurdles that governments must overcome when arming for war. Topics covered in this course include: War and the modern state, the technology of military coercion, war finance and prosecution, institutions and commitment, economic coalitions and foreign policy, and the rationality of war. The primary goal of this course will be to teach students how to critically assess and evaluate competing explanations for the political and economic foundations of armed conflict.

---

### **READINGS**

Readings for the course will consist of books and a set of articles (listed by topic below). Articles and selected chapters will be posted in the appropriate topic folder in the **Content** section on Blackboard. The readings listed below use the following abbreviations (listed in **bold** as a superscript after the citation):

- (L): Available on [Binghamton Online Libraries](#)
  - (B): Available online on [Blackboard](#)
  - (R): Book is **required** for class
  - (S): Reading is **suggested** but not **required**
- 

### **REQUIRED BOOKS**

1. Kirshner, Jonathan. 2007. *Appeasing Bankers: Financial Caution on the Road to War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
  2. Bank, Steven A., Kirk J. Stark, and Joseph J Thorndike. 2008. *War and Taxes*. Washington, DC: The Urban Insite Press.
-

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Read the Syllabus!** The syllabus is for the benefit of the class; it informs you about required readings, grading expectations, course policies, how to contact me, required assignments, and any other general information pertaining to this class.

**Grading Scale:** Students will be assessed according to the following Binghamton University grade scale:

<b>A</b> (93–100)	<b>A–</b> (90–92)	<b>B+</b> (87–89)	<b>B</b> (83–86)	<b>B–</b> (80–82)
<b>C+</b> (77–79)	<b>C</b> (73–76)	<b>C–</b> (70–72)	<b>D</b> (66–69)	<b>F</b> (< 65)

Final grades are rounded to whole numbers, where  $\geq \#.5$  is rounded up and  $\leq \#.49$  is rounded down.

**Grading:** Most important to the course is keeping up with the reading material and being able to assess and compare the theoretical arguments you encounter in the literature. So the most important thing you must do is keep up with the reading. Grades for the class will be based on the following points system:

Final Paper Proposal	◇	50
Online Participation (3)	◇	150
Quizzes (3)	◇	150
Critical Reviews (2)	◇	300
+ Final Paper	◇	350
<b>Total</b>	◇	<b>1000/10 = 100%</b>

## ASSIGNMENTS

A detailed discussion of each assignment is posted on [Blackboard](#) under the **Assignments** tab; formal assignment deadlines are as follows:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Syllabus Quiz (#1) .....	Jan. 08 (5:00pm EST)
Final Paper Proposal .....	Jan. 12 (5:00pm EST)
Material Quiz (#2) .....	Jan. 13 (5:00pm EST)
Critical Review (#1) .....	Jan. 14 (5:00pm EST)
Material Quiz (#3) .....	Jan. 20 (5:00pm EST)
Critical Review (#2) .....	Jan. 22 (5:00pm EST)
Final Paper .....	Jan. 24 (5:00pm EST)

See the online participation guidelines sheet on [Blackboard](#) for weekly participation due dates. See also the quiz guidelines sheet for quiz time periods.

## LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Students will be expected to fully understand the implications of turning in their assignments late. There are no excuses that will be accepted for late assignments. If an emergency arises, creating a situation where an assignment cannot be completed by the deadline, students are required to submit

the work they have at the time of the emergency. Send me an email with the assignment as an attachment ([kmackey1@binghamton.edu](mailto:kmackey1@binghamton.edu)). I will judge the quality of the work, given the emergency. Keep in mind that I will need some sort of proof that an emergency occurred. Absent of an emergency, all late assignments will be penalized according to the following procedure:

$\leq 1$ day past deadline	◇	1/2 letter grade (e.g. B+ = B-)
Each additional day	◇	1 letter grade (e.g. B+ = C+)
$\geq 5$ days past deadline	◇	Will receive <b>F</b>

Failure to complete any of the assignments for the course implies more than just a zero for that assignment. Students are required to complete all assignments. **Failure to submit all assignments (late or on time) will result in a grade of F for the entire course, regardless of your overall grade in the class.**

## COURSE OUTLINE

Topic	Jan.	Topic
1	06	War & the State
2	07	Resources & Military Power
3	08–09	War [Finance] as a Commitment Problem
4	10–13	War Finance & Prosecution I
5	14–15	War Finance & Prosecution II
6	16–20	Preferences About War & Peace
7	21	Institutions & War
8	22	War Termination
9	23–24	Economic Consequences of War

## READING SCHEDULE

### Topic 1: War & the State

Jan. 06

#### *Required*

1. Please read the course syllabus and assignment guidelines posted on [Blackboard](#) .
2. Wagner, R. Harrison. 2007. *War and the State: The Theory of International Relations*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 3.<sup>(B)</sup>

#### *Suggested*

Olson, Mancur. 1993. Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development. *American Political Science Review* 87(3):567–576.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

Bates, Robert H. 2001. *Prosperity and Violence: The Political Economy of Development*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company.<sup>(S)</sup>

**Topic 2: Resources & Military Power****Jan. 07***Required*

1. Viner, Jacob. 1948. Power Versus Plenty as Objectives of Foreign Policy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. *World Politics* 1(1):1–29.<sup>(B)</sup>
2. Clark, David H., Timothy Nordstrom, and William Reed. 2008. Substitution is in the Variance: Resources and Foreign Policy Choice. *American Journal of Political Science* 52(4):763–773.<sup>(B)</sup>

*Suggested*

- Bean, Richard. 1973. War and the Birth of the Nation State. *Journal of Economic History* 33(1):203–221.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>
- Clark, David H. 2001. Trading Butter for Guns: Domestic Imperatives for Foreign Policy Substitution. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45(5):636–660.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

**Topic 3: War [Finance] as a Commitment Problem****Jan. 08–09***Required*

1. Slantchev, Branislav L. 2012. Borrowed Power: Debt Finance and the Resort to Arms. *American Political Science Review* 106(4):787–809.<sup>(B)</sup>
2. McDonald, Patrick J. 2011. Complicating Commitment: Free Resources, Power Shifts, and the Fiscal Politics of Preventive War. *International Studies Quarterly* 55(4):1095–1120.<sup>(B)</sup>
3. Wagner, R. Harrison. 2007. *War and the State: The Theory of International Relations*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 5.<sup>(B)</sup>

*Suggested*

- Fearon, James D. 1995. Rationalist Explanations for War. *International Organization* 49(3):379–414.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>
- Reiter, Dan. 2003. Exploring the Bargaining Model of War. *Perspectives on Politics* 1(1):27–43.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>
- Wagner, R. Harrison. 2007. *War and the State: The Theory of International Relations*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. Chapter 4.<sup>(S)</sup>

**Topic 4: War Finance & Prosecution (I)****Jan. 10–13***Required*

1. Bank, Steven A., Kirk J. Stark, and Joseph J Thorndike. 2008. *War and Taxes*. Washington, DC: The Urban Insitute Press.<sup>(R)</sup>

*Suggested*

- Bordo, Michael D. and Eugene N. White. 1991. A Tale of Two Currencies: British and French Finance During the Napoleonic Wars. *The Journal of Economic History* 51(2):303–316.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>
- Scheve, Kenneth and David Stasavage. 2012. Democracy, War, and Wealth: Lessons from Two Centuries of Inheritance Taxation. *American Political Science Review* 106(1):81–102.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

**Topic 5: War Finance & Prosecution (II)****Jan. 14–15***Required*

1. Poast, Paul. Forthcoming. Central Banks at War. *International Organization* .<sup>(B)</sup>
2. McDonald, Patrick J. 2007. The Purse Strings of Peace. *American Journal of Political Science* 51(3):569–582.<sup>(B)</sup>

*Suggested*

Weinstein, Jeremy M. 2005. Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49(4):598–624.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

Ferguson, Niall. 2006. Political Risk and the International Bond Market between the 1848 Revolution and the Outbreak of the First World War. *Economic History Review* 59(1):70–112.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

Scheve, Kenneth and David Stasavage. 2010. The Conscription of Wealth: Mass Warfare and the Demand for Progressive Taxation. *International Organization* 64(4):529–561.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

Horowitz, Michael C., Erin M. Simpson, and Allan C. Stam. 2011. Domestic Institutions and Wartime Casualties. *International Studies Quarterly* 55:909–936.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

**Topic 6: Preferences About War & Peace****Jan. 16–20***Required*

1. Kirshner, Jonathan. 2007. *Appeasing Bankers: Financial Caution on the Road to War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.<sup>(R)</sup>

*Suggested*

Narizny, Kevin. 2003. Both Guns and Butter, or Neither: Class Interests in the Political Economy of Rearmament. *American Political Science Review* 97(2):203–220.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

**Topic 7: Institutions & War****Jan. 21***Required*

1. Cox, Gary W. 2011. War, Moral Hazard, and Ministerial Responsibility: England After the Glorious Revolution. *Journal of Economic History* 71(1):133–161.<sup>(B)</sup>

*Suggested*

North, Douglass C. and Barry R. Weingast. 1989. Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England. *The Journal of Economic History* 49(4):803–832.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, James D. Morrow, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alastair Smith. 1999. An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace. *American Political Science Review* 93(4):791–807.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

Schultz, Kenneth A. and Barry R. Weingast. 2003. The Democratic Advantage: Institutional Foundations of Financial Power in International Competition. *International Organization* (3–42).<sup>(S)(L)</sup>

**Topic 8: War Termination****Jan. 22***Required*

1. Slantchev, Branislav L. 2003. The Power to Hurt: Costly Conflict with Completely Informed States. *American Political Science Review* 97(1):123–133.<sup>(B)</sup>
2. Shea, Patrick E. 2013. Financing Victory: Credit, Democracy and War. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* .<sup>(B)</sup>

*Suggested*

- Reiter, Dan. 2009. *How Wars End*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1–3.<sup>(S)</sup>
- Powell, Robert. 2012. Persistent Fighting and Shifting Power. *American Journal of Political Science* 56(3):620–637.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>
- 

**Topic 9: Economic Consequences of War****Jan. 23–24***Required*

1. Organski, A.F.K. and Jacek Kugler. 1977. The Costs of Major Wars: The Phoenix Factor. *American Political Science Review* 71(4):1347–1366.<sup>(B)</sup>
2. Balderston, T. 1989. War Finance and Inflation in Britain and Germany, 1914–1918. *The Economic History Review* 42(2):222–244.<sup>(B)</sup>
3. Dinicecco, Mark and Mauricio Prado. 2012. Warfare, Fiscal Capacity, and Performance. *Journal of Economic Growth* 17(3):171–203.<sup>(B)</sup>

*Suggested*

- Rockoff, Hugh. 1981. Price and Wage Controls in Four Wartime Periods. *The Journal of Economic History* 41(2):381–401.<sup>(S)(L)</sup>
- 

**PLAGIARISM & CHEATING**

Plagiarism and cheating are serious matters that, should they occur, will be pursued to the limits of University rules. Moreover, academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the course. For details regarding the University's policy on cheating and plagiarism and academic dishonesty more generally, see the University Handbook.

**COURSE MATERIAL**

Students are advised to **retain all course material** for all course work for **two weeks** after grades are received. This includes: Returned assignments, Turnitin email receipts, and electronic versions of written assignments. I will not consider any grading questions without evidence of the assignment.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities should register with the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (607.777.2686), University Union (Room 119), [ssd@binghamton.edu](mailto:ssd@binghamton.edu). Extra time and necessary arrangements can be made in conjunction with that office and the instructor.

## COURSE WEBSITE

Please visit the course website on Blackboard; I'll update it weekly with electronic versions of the chapters from books that are not listed as *required* for the course. Students will be expected to find articles on [JSTOR](#) through the [Binghamton Libraries](#) website.

## SYLLABUS

The online version of the syllabus is the official syllabus for this course as it is updated periodically. I reserve the exclusive right to alter the syllabus if I feel such changes are necessary for the class. Visit the course website to view the most recent version of the syllabus (updated date is located at the lower right corner of the document). You will be notified in your Binghamton email of any changes to the syllabus. **YOU** as the student are responsible for having the most updated copy of this document, and I will make sure you are notified of any changes.

## INTERNET ACCESS & ASSIGNMENTS

Failure to complete an assignment because of a faulty or lacking internet signal will not be excused. Assignment dates and times are posted well in advance, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you will have adequate access to Blackboard during those and other times required to fulfill discussion requirements, if necessary. All writing assignments are to be submitted through Turnitin, and students are required to hold evidence of paper submissions until two weeks after the final day of the class. Each time you submit to Turnitin, an electronic receipt is emailed to you—no receipt means something went wrong, so check your email after you submit to the Turnitin link. No evidence from Turnitin means the assignment will be treated as an incomplete assignment. **Remember, this is an online course. When in doubt, cover your bases when it comes to ensuring that you completed the assignments.**

## EXTRA CREDIT

No extra credit assignments will be provided for this course, and I will not respond to requests for extra credit.