

Final Paper Guidelines and Expectations

War & Power in International Politics

Kyle Mackey
kmackey1@binghamton.edu
Binghamton University
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1 Introduction

In order to receive credit for the course, students will be required to submit a final paper, worth 30% of their final grade. The topic of the paper will be determined by the student. However, I reserve the right, after reading paper proposals, to object any topic on the basis of feasibility, appropriateness, etc. Students will be graded on the thoughtfulness of their final paper, but these grades will be based on the following expectations:

- Choose a specific case (e.g. the onset **OR** termination of a war, or a crisis, etc.) that interests you, and that you can write a paper around answering why that case ended the way it did.
- Apply what you have learned from this course, from readings and lectures, to assess what happened in that case. Put differently, suppose you are interested in why a particular war started. Your task is to take what we have learned in the class and apply it to the events that led to the outcome of your case (why the war started).
- Did the events that occurred during that case follow from any of the arguments presented in the class? If not, what other theoretical explanation could have been made which would better explain the course of events in your case.
- This is a 3 week class (you probably know that by now...), so I don't expect you to have a brilliant understanding of every historical detail during your case—I expect a paper, not a book. But I do expect you to conduct some historical research on your case.

2 Grading Scale

The following grading criteria will be used to evaluate the final paper:

Criteria	Weight
Introduction/Research Question	15%
Case Description	20%
Theoretical Framework	25%
Evaluation of Theory & Case	25%
References/Citations	10%
Grammar/Spelling	5%
Total	100%

3 A Model of the Paper

This paper will be easiest to read when it is broken up into sections. It is easiest to break up the paper into the following:

- **Introduction:**

Tell me the research puzzle/question this paper is framed around answering. Also, tell me the theoretical framework you will be assessing (this comes from what you've been exposed to in the readings/lectures). Lastly, tell me the case you will use to evaluate that theoretical framework, why that case is important and appropriate for evaluating that theory. Spend about 1–2 pages on this section.

- **Case Description:**

Tell me more about the case, give a brief historical outline of what happened. This is all you, tell me a little history. About 1–2 pages in length.

- **Theoretical Framework:**

Write a description of the argument you will be assessing. This comes from the literature assigned for the class and the lectures. Tell me what the theoretical argument/framework would suggest for the study of war and foreign policy. Around 2–3 pages in length.

- **Evaluation of Theory & Case:**

In this section, you will evaluate the intellectual merit of the theoretical framework against your real historical case. Did the argument hold up against the evidence? Did you see some patterns with what we have discussed in the class? If not, what were some other explanations that you could suggest? Basically, apply the argument to the case. If there were characteristics that fit with what you've learned, then discuss them. If not, tell me what differed between the case and theory. Spend about 3 pages on this part.

- **Conclusion:**

Sum everything up in a brief conclusion. Tell me what you did in this paper, why it matters for the study of international politics, and if this provided an adequate assessment of some of the material presented in this class.

4 Rough Drafts

I am happy to read drafts of the final paper. In fact, it is encouraged that you send a draft of your paper to me. I will tell you my thoughts, and give you suggestions/advice. This is a habit that I suggest you become accustomed to doing in this class and in the future. I do have 2, and only 2, requirements that you must do before sending me a draft.

1. Read over your paper first before sending it to me.
2. Do not send a draft to me within 48 hours of the final paper due date. This paper is due at 5:00pm (Eastern Standard Time) on January 23rd. You have until 5:00pm (Eastern Standard Time) on January 21th to send me a rough draft.

5 Citations

Students will be expected to cite sources when taking material from other readings. Plagiarism will receive severe punishments, and will result in *at least* a grade of **0** for the paper, if not worse (see the syllabus). You will be expected to use in-text citations and have a references page that follows the style described below. I will give examples for articles, books, and chapters in what follows (please ask me for further citation styles if necessary):

5.1 In-Text Citation

- **Article:** (Fearon 1995) or Fearon (1995)
- **Book:** (Powell 1999) or Powell (1999)
- **Chapter in Edited Book:** (Frieden & Lake 2000) or Frieden & Lake (2000)

References

- Fearon, James D. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49:379–414.
- Frieden, Jeffrey A. & David A. Lake. 2000. "Introduction: International Politics and International Economics." In *International Political Economy: Perspectives on Global Power*, ed. Jeffrey A. Frieden & David A. Lake. 4th ed. New York: W.W. Norton and Company Chapter 1, pp. 1–16.

Powell, Robert. 1999. *In the Shadow of Power: States and Strategies in International Politics*.
Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.