



**POL 4910 CAPSTONE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE:
WHY WAR? EXTENT, CAUSES, AND SOLUTIONS**

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COURSE CONTENT:

My conception of the capstone course in political science is that it should enable students to develop a sophisticated understanding of the concepts, theories, and methods employed in political science. Insofar as possible, the capstone seminar, which for most students comes in their last semester, should combine extensive reading, in-depth research, oral student presentations where possible, and intensive class discussion. Students should prepare class presentations and a substantial research paper as part of the course requirements. Preparation of discussion questions, in my view, is an important part of the class participation grade, as the thoughtful formulation of questions by students allows us to properly structure class discussion, while permitting shy students to shine in the participation portion of the grade.

I do not believe it is possible for such a course to cover all of political science -- at least not very well. The fact is each professor is a bit more familiar with his or her own area within political science. Still, we should aspire to doing capstones that are as broad as possible. I wanted to teach this first capstone we are offering because I have had a relatively broad training. My areas of study in graduate school were international, comparative, American, and theory. This set of four areas embraces most of political science, and more of political science than many of today's Ph.D.'s, who have excellent training of course but often in a very narrow area.

As for this capstone on war, readings start with international (our first textbook, *What Do We Know about War?*) and comparative (our next book, *What Do We Know about Civil War?*). This mirrors my own book (*Resort to War*, honorable mention for best reference book in the Social Sciences and Humanities), which describes each of the 650 or so international and civil wars from 1816 to our current century. I have also designed projects for capstone students who are more interested in American politics or in political theory. Consequently, each student will have the possibility of writing a term paper on war in the area of international, of comparative, of American, or of political theory.

THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF PEACE AND SECURITY STUDIES, WITHIN THE FIELD OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

The logic leading us to this topic of war has been stated well by Thomas Hobbes, in the *Leviathan*, Part I, ch. 13: "During the time men live without a common power to keep them in awe, they are in a condition which is called war. . . . WAR consists not in battle only, or the act of fighting, but in a tract of time wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known. . . . All other time is PEACE. . . ." [In the non-peaceful, insecure times, there are] "no arts; no letters; no society; and, which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." Hobbes believes the only solution is for all to turn over their fortunes to strong central authority that will keep the peace.

Objectively speaking, we know that Hobbes was writing in 1651, just after the Thirty Years War in Germany had killed up to 1/3 of the population, and just after the English Civil War in his own country, which had lasted almost twenty years and killed tens of thousands. We also know from the work of anthropology (from the work of Mel and Carol Ember) that before strong central government, in "cave-age" times, about 20% of the males had died of wounds inflicted by other people. And nowadays, Syria has suffered destruction as great as any society has ever endured, and the U.S. has been at war continually since 9/11, which is the longest stretch of warfare in U.S. history. So, war has been bad in the past, as Hobbes said, and continues today. However, we should not be completely pessimistic, because some authors (e.g., Stephen Pinker of Harvard, and Paul Diehl and Gary Goertz, authors of last year's *Peace Puzzle*) believe we have begun to enter a more peaceful age. Diehl and Goertz believe the solution is to stop fighting over territorial change. This solution is similar to that proposed by Hobbes and John Locke, the most famous early Liberals.

In short, while there is a lot of controversy in the works of the above authors (not all of whom agree with each other), there are reasons to think that war is not just one of many topics that might have been chosen for the capstone, but is, let's say to give it a number, one of the several most central and important problems in

political science. (Other important problems might be the problem of justice and the problem of how to organize an effective government.)

Some might say that while war is the top problem in international politics, it is not so in the rest of political science. But (Sarkees and Wayman 2010), I would counter that there have been more civil wars than international wars, in the past two centuries, so in a sense war is more of a problem in domestic politics than in international politics. Consider, for example, the current war in Syria.

In one view, war, and its extension, the possession and threat to use force, is co-extensive with life and politics. "As Frederick the Great of Prussia is widely reputed to have said, 'Diplomacy without force is like music without instruments.'" (Quoted in Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, *Causes of War*, Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010: 9) But in practice ultimate weapons are not as dominant as one may suppose. Consider some of the limits. A president can veto a bill, or the Senate or House can vote it down, but much of the real work on the bill is usually in committee, and a veto or a negative majority is a blunt instrument; the President may decide to let the bill pass, as the good in it outweighs the bad. If so, the committee members have prevailed over him. As for war, it seems less used than in the past, perhaps because of the cost, and in its stead other ways of deciding or prevailing have come into use.

Some might say, despite Syria, that war is disappearing from the world (e.g., Pinker, author of *Better Angels of Our Nature*). Let's hope they are right. There has been a reduced frequency of international wars and civil wars, when one compares the 21st century to the 1990s. So we want to find out, in the course, why war ends, as well as why it starts, so we can assess this claim, that war is becoming less of a problem than it used to be. For now, let's just say, it's complicated.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

This course is designed to enable students to develop a sophisticated understanding of the concepts, theories, and methods employed in political science, as these emerge in studies of large-scale use of force (war, in one sense of that term). The seminar combines extensive reading, in-depth research, oral student presentations, and intensive class discussion. Students will prepare class presentations and a substantial research paper as part of the course requirements.

Learning Goals

- Understand the concepts of war, civil war, inter-state war, and related terms.
- Compare the causes of civil and of international war.
- Understand the debate over whether war is becoming less common, or is persisting or even becoming more of a hazard.

- Understand the role of scientific evidence in studying these debates, causes, and concepts.
- Evaluate the quality of published research studies on war.
- Debate the merits of arguments expressed in academic and policy articles.
- Write papers, making well-reasoned arguments supported by evidence.
- Write and present about the wars of a group of countries (e.g., major powers, Middle Eastern countries, North American countries), gathering and analyzing information from a variety of sources to reach comparative inferences, based insofar as possible on a method of examining data, and in particular the Correlates of War Project data of wars 1816-present, and our (Wayman et al.) extension of that back to the early modern period, 1492-1815.

Course Grade Component	% of Grade	Date/Deadline
Class participation and attendance	15	Every class
First exam and related quizzes	25	12pm, tentatively Feb. 21 for the exam
Second exam and related quizzes	25	April 25 for the exam
Research presentation	15	March 25th on in class. Paper draft due eight days prior to presentation. Slides due at 12pm on presentation day.
Research paper	20	12pm, April 11th

The course is built around reading, lectures, and class participation. **Use of laptop computers and cell phones is not permitted in class, except for course-related purposes.**

The following books are required of students and should be purchased in the bookstore:

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, *The Arc of War*. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2011, ISBN 978-0-226-47629-2)

John Vasquez, ed., *What Do We Know about War?*

T. David Mason and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell, eds., *What Do We Know about Civil Wars?*

TERM PAPER PORTION OF THE GRADE

There is a written assignment, of a term paper, examining the wars of group of countries of the world. In this, we will use as a basic resource Meredith Sarkees and Frank Wayman, *Resort to War*, which describes the wars of 1816-2007 as defined by the Correlates of War Project (www.correlatesofwar.org). Further, we will be using the Wayman-Schafer draft expanding the Correlates of War Project data (see first week's reading), to itemize all of the world's recent (2008-present) inter-state, extra-state, and intra-state wars, and all of the early modern (1492-1815) wars across the globe. The current plan is for each student to take one set of countries. This paper counts for 35% of the grade (15% for the oral presentation and first draft of that time, 20% for the paper itself, which is due April 11th.

CLASS PARTICIPATION PORTION OF THE GRADE

This portion of the grade will be based on three factors

1. Each student will be expected to submit, 36 hours before class, an email to me with five main points you found most educational in the reading; five puzzles (ambiguities, omissions, or things that are not comprehensible) in the reading; and two questions for class discussion.
2. Each student will be expected to participate in the class discussion of the reading.
3. There may be pop quizzes on the readings, which I reserve the option to administer at the start of class.

EXAMINATION PORTION OF THE GRADE

The exams in the course will be designed to test your knowledge of the readings and class sessions. Each exam will be half multiple choice and half essay. The multiple choice questions will be designed to test your knowledge of specific points in the readings and classes. The essay portion of each exam will be 25 minutes long, and during that period you will answer one question, assigned to you from a set of questions that will be distributed at least one week before the exam. The questions will attempt to give you the opportunity to integrate your knowledge into a broad perspective of your own on some aspect of foreign policy. You will have to answer the question on the exam without aid of notes, but the opportunity to prepare in advance will insure that you are not caught by surprise by the question. Each exam will have equal weight, which is 15% of the course grade

Grading Scale:

Grading of the multiple choice tests is curved, to roughly correspond to the historic average University grade, in the B to B- range. Grading of the essay portion of the exam and of the term papers is on a basis of absolute quality rather than a curve. Grades of A correspond to a GPA of 4.0, B is a 3.0, C is a 2.0, and so on down through D (1.0) and E or F (0).

THERE WILL BE NO MAKE UP EXAMS EXCEPT UNDER THE MOST EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND WITH PROOF.

On occasion, there will be a few points extra credit offered for an event that is relevant to this course. However, some of you will not be able to take advantage of these because of time restrictions, so don't count on getting extra credit.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES AND POLICIES:

I have been asked by the Provost to include the following statement (which should go without saying) --

Code of Conduct from the office of the Provost:

The University of Michigan values academic honesty and integrity. Each student has a responsibility to understand, accept, and comply with the University's standards of academic conduct as set forth by the Code of Academic Conduct, as well as policies established by the schools and colleges. Cheating, collusion, misconduct, fabrication, and plagiarism are considered serious offenses. Violations will not be tolerated and may result in penalties up to and including expulsion from the University.

Any incidences of the above will be reported to the Social Science Department Chair, the CASL Deans office, and the Student's unit and/or school.

DISABILITIES:

The University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students need to register with Disability Resource Services (DRS) every semester they are enrolled for classes. DRS is located in Counseling & Support Services, 2157 UC. To be assured of having services when they are needed, students should register no later than the end of the add/drop deadline of each term.

BROADER PURPOSES OF OUR CONCENTRATION IN POLITICAL SCIENCE:

For the purpose of stating our goals, I have been told to place this website in the syllabus, as a source if you seek it:

<http://www.casl.umd.umich.edu/politicalsciences/>

CLASS POLICIES:

1. No make-up exams will be given except under documented circumstances.

2. **RESPECT.** We are all to respect others opinions, beings, comments, and habits. This does not mean we cannot disagree, nor does it mean we cannot have fun. However, we each need to respect the diversity of our fellow students. There are also topics discussed that may challenge you either intellectually or emotionally; while we try to be sensitive, a university is also a place for inquiry and discovery. More about this in class.

3. Students arriving late should do so as quietly and unobtrusively as possible.

4. In the event that I am aware of a major accident on the road or a weather problem, I may delay class start by five to ten minutes.

5. **ON E-MAIL: E-MAIL IS THE MAIN VEHICLE WE WILL USE TO STAY IN TOUCH OUTSIDE OF CLASS.** For example, if school is canceled, I will send you an email with some attached materials. Anyone without access to the Internet at home should see me the first week of class to have alternative plans in place. While e-mail has become a very important means of communication between students and faculty, there is so much trouble for all of us from hackers and viruses, that it is good to observe appropriate norms of behavior. Because of the threat from viruses and similar plagues, I do not open emails that do not have your name as the sender, or emails that do not have a subject heading that indicates a topic related to you and the course. We should all also be cautious about opening e-mail attachments. This means, for example, your e-mail must actually be readable by me when I click on it; in other words, when I open an e-mail and there is no text because all the text has been placed in an attachment, I do not open the attachment out of caution. I look forward to hearing from you; on the whole, this email system is a blessing.

6. Class discussion and participation is an integral part of this class. If you are within two or three points of a higher grade, your participation and attendance will be taken into account. (I do not count you as present if you are sleeping, carrying on personal discussions, or otherwise “tuned out.”)

7. As a general rule, use of laptop computers and cell phones is not permitted in class, but there are reasonable exceptions for portable computers for class purposes. Please step up to the podium area and notify me, in the first week of class, if you are wish to use a laptop computer.

Put your pagers on vibrate and turn off your cell phones. (In the event that you are on stand-by to be asked by President Obama to be a liaison in secret meetings with the Syrian rebels, or Donald Trump has asked you to be his on-call foreign policy advisor, or some critical personal reason, let me know ahead of time). **If your pager or cell phone goes off, or if you read or answer a text, YOU LOSE 5 POINTS. If you get up and leave to be on the phone, you lose five points. If mine goes off, you get five points.**

8 The use of a laptop in class is acceptable ONLY FOR CLASS PURPOSES. Game playing, emailing, and web surfing, unless approved by instructor, are not acceptable. This has become a problem and students have complained privately that it is distracting and annoying. If you feel a need to keep emailing your friends, surfing the web, or playing games, you probably should not come to class. It is your choice. If you have a laptop, I will, on occasion, ask you to look up something we are discussing.

9. I reserve the right to make minor changes to the syllabus, and we may fall behind or surge ahead, but any changes to exam dates (due to school closure, falling behind because we had a speaker, etc.) will be decided by the class by vote.

10. UM-Dearborn’s official attendance policy states that, “a student is expected to attend every class and laboratory for which he or she has registered. Each instructor may make known to the student his or her policy with respect to absences in the course. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of this policy. The instructor makes the final decision to excuse or not to excuse an absence. An instructor is entitled to give a failing grade (E) for excessive absences or an Unofficial Drop (UE) for a student who stops attending class at some point during the semester.” If you are absent, you must get notes from a fellow student. I will not go over what we covered in class, nor will I excuse you from any assignment or new information unless a real (documented) emergency occurred.

11. I will make every effort to meet with any student so requesting. You need to build relationships with your instructors so when it is time for a recommendation for a scholarship or something else, your instructors will know you. Try to come up and see me at least twice during the semester. I am around many other times than my official hours indicate; just ask. Using my email sledward@umich.edu is definitely the BEST way to contact me.

Emergency Preparedness:

All students are encouraged to program 911 and UM-Dearborn's University Police phone number (313) 593-5333 into personal cell phones. In case of emergency, first dial 911 and then if the situation allows call University Police.

The Emergency Alert Notification (EAN) system is the official process for notifying the campus community for emergency events. All students are strongly encouraged to register in the campus EAN, for communications during an emergency. The following link includes information on registering as well as safety and emergency procedures information:

<http://umdearborn.edu/emergencyalert/>.

If you hear a fire alarm, class will be immediately suspended, and you must evacuate the building by using the nearest exit. Please proceed outdoors to the assembly area and away from the building. Do not use elevators. It is highly recommended that you do not head to your vehicle or leave campus since it is necessary to account for all persons and to ensure that first responders can access the campus.

If the class is notified of a shelter-in-place requirement for a tornado warning or severe weather warning, your instructor will suspend class and shelter the class in the lowest level of this building away from windows and doors.

If notified of an active threat (shooter) you will Run (get out), Hide (find a safe place to stay) or Fight (with anything available). Your response will be dictated by the specific circumstances of the encounter.

<http://www.casl.umd.umich.edu/classroomsafety>

Any late assignment without a signed letter from an M.D. or equivalent authority will result in a two-notch reduction in grade for that exam (e.g., from B- to straight C).

THE INSTRUCTOR:

Prof. Wayman has been on the UM-D faculty since 1972. He has also taught courses on foreign policy at the University of Pennsylvania and on the Ann Arbor campus of this University. He has a B.A. from Cornell University and a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. He has published a monograph on what conditions produce military dictatorships (*Military Involvement in Politics*), a book on American presidential elections (*A Time of Turmoil*, co-authored with Ronald R. Stockton), and a number of articles on American, world politics and comparative politics. A long-time associate of the Correlates of War Project at the University of Michigan, he has especially written about the causes of war and the conditions of peace. Meredith Sarkees and Frank Wayman have recently completed *Resort to War: Data, Trends, and Narratives Concerning All Inter-State, Extra-State, Intra-State and Non-State Wars, 1816-2008* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2010). This book has a one-page essay with supporting data on each U.S. international war since 1816. Civil wars, while included, receive briefer attention. He is also an active scholar in the fields of American public opinion and of the effect of interest groups on Congress. His articles have been reprinted in such compendia as *Classics of International Relations*, *Classic Readings in American Politics*, and *Classics of Interest Group Behavior*. He has won the prize for the best paper at the Midwest Political Science annual meeting, as well as grants from the National Science Foundation and Resources for the Future. One of his recent projects is *Predicting the Future in Science, Economics, and Politics*, a book on the prediction of global conditions, and, in that endeavor, the proper role of "consilience," the quest for reduction and unity of the sciences.

LECTURE TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Note: additional readings, many in the form of handouts, and some perhaps from JSTOR for journal articles, will be assigned from time to time (note especially the last five weeks of this chronology), as this course is a seminar-style course, and we are going to be following the thread of our conversations as they develop out of the convergence of your interests, research, and curiosity with my expertise.

Complete by Jan. 14th:

Handout: Wayman on the concept of war, from work of Wayman and Schafer ("Chapter One: The Scientific Study of Modern Wars") -- (70 pages)

Complete by Jan. 21st:

Wayman, "The Japanese Case," in Wayman, *When the Sword Is Mightier: A Theory of Military Involvement in Politics*.

Wayman and Tago, "Predicting the Onset of Mass Killing, 1949-1987," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 47 (No. 1, January 2010): pp. 3-13. Access via JSTOR or similar UM-D library e-resources.

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, *The Arc of War*, pp. 1-18

Complete by Jan. 28th:

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, *The Arc of War*, pp. 19-125

Complete by Feb. 4th:

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, *The Arc of War*, pp. 126-back cover

Complete by Feb. 11th:

Vasquez, front cover to p. 84.

Report on Sarkees and Wayman, pp. 1-73.

Complete by Feb. 18th:

Vasquez, pp. 85-164.

EXAM ON ABOVE MATERIAL ON Wed. Feb. 21st

Complete by Feb. 25th:

Vasquez, pp. 165-258.

Spring Break is Feb. 24th-March 4th

Work on Term Papers

Complete by March 4th:

Vasquez, pp. 259-370.

Complete by Mar. 11th:

Mason and Mitchell, front of book to page 92.

Complete by Mar. 18th:

Mason and Mitchell, pp. 93-108, 197-214, 247-260.

Complete by Mar. 25th:

to be assigned (The readings in the last few weeks will be related to the student term papers, and will in fact include copies of each term paper, read by all of us the week before the oral presentation of that paper.)

In class on Wed., Mar. 28th: student term paper presentations

Complete by April 1st:

to be assigned [Prof. Wayman will not be in class on April 4th]
(This week will probably be set aside exclusively for independent term paper writing.)

Complete by April. 8th:

to be assigned.

In class on Wed., April 11th: student term paper presentations

Complete by April 15th:

to be assigned

In class on Wed., April 18th: student term paper presentations

UM-D study day is Sat., April 21st

FINAL EXAM WILL BE Wed, April 25th, at 6:30 P.M.

References :

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, *Causes of War*, Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010