Course Syllabus

Large-scale violence among humans has taken place at least since the dawn of recorded history. This course is about how societies arm themselves for and pursue war, how they have attempted to limit the destructiveness and likelihood of war, and how these pursuits have affected their political, organizational and technological development.

The course aims to acquaint students with the evolution of war’s technologies and the logics that underlie them, to help them become able critically to assess claims made by strategists, political and military leaders and weapons experts, about the role and control of force and military technologies in the international environment. Written assignments are intended to help students develop skills in writing clear, concise, factual, action-oriented memorandums.

Requirements and grading

Section 01 meets at 10:00-10:50 a.m., section 02 at 1:30-2:20 p.m., Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Students are expected to arrive on time and attend class, read, listen, and discuss.

A series of five memoranda and an in-class final exam will constitute the written work for the class. These are explained in a separate document. The final exam will be on Thursday, December 19: section 01 at 2:00-4:00 p.m., section 02 at 7:00-9:00 p.m.

All written work must be submitted for a passing grade to be earned.

Grades will be based upon the memoranda (approximately 60%), the final (approximately 30%) and attendance and class participation (approximately 10%).

Honor Code

Oberlin College students are on their honor to uphold a high degree of academic integrity. All work that students submit is expected to be of their own creation and give proper credit to the ideas and work of others. When students write and sign the Honor Pledge, they are affirming that they have not cheated, plagiarized, fabricated, or falsified information, nor assisted others in these actions.

Honor Pledge: “I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment.” The default assumption covering all academic exercises is that students are required to do their own work only utilizing the help and resources considered appropriate for each academic exercise, including sources of assistance routinely offered by the college to students, such as reference librarians and writing tutors.

For more information on the honor code, consult the Student Regulations. For questions about the Code’s application to Politics 227, please consult me.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities requiring note-taking, test or other accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services http://new.oberlin.edu/office/disability-services/.
Required Books

   ISBN 978-1-250-01395-8


   ISBN 978-0-870-03268-4

Electronic resources

Richard Gabriel and Karen Metz, A Short History of War (Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, 1992) on Blackboard without the weblinks (Gabriel and Metz - Short History) and complete online at http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/gabrmetz/gabr0000.htm

Al Jazeera “People and Power” video w/Chuck Spinney: http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2013/04/2013424113558268754.html

There are many assigned readings that can be found through links in this syllabus, directly through URLs or as Blackboard Documents. Direct links (when the syllabus is opened in Blackboard) can be clicked upon and should open. Blackboard documents are listed on the class Blackboard website under Course Documents in order of their appearance in the syllabus.

Please let me know ASAP if links don’t work or material is otherwise unavailable!

Some Useful Websites (there are many more)


Airbus Industrie military aircraft http://www.airbus.com/aircraftfamilies/military-aircraft/

Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation http://www.armscontrolcenter.org/ arms control advocacy public interest group.

Arms Control Treaties – texts – on the Arms Control Association web site http://www.armscontrol.org/treaties

Arms Control Association and *Arms Control Today* http://www.armscontrol.org access to (Carnegie Endowment supported) periodical on arms control.


Boeing Integrated Defense Systems http://www.boeing.com/bds/ major weapons producer and
defense/security contractor.

*Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* via OhioLink: [http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/journal.cgi?issn=00963402](http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/journal.cgi?issn=00963402)

Venerable periodical that covers energy, environment, and weapons. Its executive director and publisher is Oberlin alumna and former Trustee Kenette Benedict.


Center for Nonproliferation Studies (Monterey Institute of International Studies) [http://cns.miis.edu/index.htm](http://cns.miis.edu/index.htm)

Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments [http://www.csbaonline.org](http://www.csbaonline.org) think tank focusing on defense planning and spending rationality


FAS link page – very useful further links on nuclear issues: [http://www.fas.org/nuke/links.htm](http://www.fas.org/nuke/links.htm)


GlobalSecurity.Org [http://www.globalsecurity.org/index.html](http://www.globalsecurity.org/index.html), an excellent site dealing with current military technology and arms control matters. It is run by John Pike who used to run the FAS site.


contractor.


Nuclear Threat Initiative [http://www.nti.org](http://www.nti.org) excellent web site for information on WMD threats and anti-WMD efforts.


Private Military Organizations.Org [http://www.privatemilitary.org/](http://www.privatemilitary.org/) industry-oriented non-profit information website. It has a very useful long list of private military companies (somewhat out of date – doesn’t have Academi) [http://www.privatemilitary.org/private_military_companies.html](http://www.privatemilitary.org/private_military_companies.html)


US Department of Defense [http://www.defenselink.mil/](http://www.defenselink.mil/) with lots of further links to the armed services, Joint Chiefs, etc.


Wisconsin Project (seeking to control weapons proliferation) [http://www.wisconsinproject.org/](http://www.wisconsinproject.org/)

Topics and Readings


Class 1 9/4: Introduction; your interests
2 9/6: Discussion: Agincourt, technology and doctrine

2. Causes and nature of war. Sept. 9, 11, 13

For 9/9, read: Thomas Schelling, “The Diplomacy of Violence,” chapter 1 from Arms and Influence 1-34 [Blackboard].


For 9/11: John Keegan, ch. 1 “What is War?” from A History of War (Vintage, 1994), 3-12, 24-46 [Blackboard: Keegan - What is War?].


http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Hudson_Valerie_M.pdf?issn=15314804&issue=v26i0004&article=5_asomadsrials


Greg Cashman, What Causes War?, ch. 10 (279-289) [Blackboard: Cashman - Causes?].

Class 3 9/9: Fog of war, friction, real versus ideal war, the object of war (war and rationality).
4 9/11: War as an instrument and producer of culture (hence irrational); language and war, desensitization..
5 9/13: Looking for theories on the causes of war: system, state, individual.


For 9/16, read: Barry Posen, “The Importance of Military Doctrine,” chapter 1 of The Sources of Military Doctrine (Cornell, 1984) 3-33 [Blackboard].

http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Hudson_Valerie_M.pdf?issn=15314804&issue=v26i0004&article=5_asomadsrials

For 9/20: Gabriel & Metz, Short History of War, ch. 1-3.
Class 6 9/16: Role of doctrine, strategy. Ideas matter a lot!
7 9/18: Does technology drive doctrine, or vice versa?
8 9/20: Evolution of technology


For 9/23, read: Gabriel & Metz, Short History of War, ch. 4-6 (5 and 6 are very short!)


Class 9 9/23 Attrition, air power, and total war
10 9/25 The nuclear triad, deterrence, war-fighting, prevention and pre-emption.
11 9/27 Generations of warfare

5. 4GW versus RMA. Sept. 30, Oct. 2, 4.

For 9/30, read: Hammes, ch. 5-7, “Mao”; “Vietnam”; “Sandinistas” (p. 44-88);

For 10/2: Hammes, ch. 8-9, “The Intifada: Civilians versus an Army,” “Al Aqsa Intifada”, “Al-Qaeda” (p. 89-129).

Kilcullen, “Principles of Counterinsurgency” [Blackboard].


Class 12 9/30: People’s war and insurgency
13 10/2: Counter-insurgency
14 10/4: Revolution in Military Affairs

Recommended: Fred Kaplan, The Insurgents: David Petraeus and the plot to change the American Way of War (Simon & Schuster, 2013) 1-60. [Blackboard]

For 10/7, read: Franklin “Chuck” Spinney, “Defense Power Games” (this is a classic!) [also on Blackboard].

For 10/9

Feinstein, TSW, ch. 12-14, “Legal Bribery,” “In the Name of Uncle Sam,” and “Taking the Mickey, the Toilet Seat and the Hammer . . . in a Galaxy Far, Far Away,” 237-304.

For 10/11


Recommended: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Analysis

http://www.csbaonline.org/research/budget-and-resources/

Look for most recent analysis of US defense budget.

Class
10/7: Defense budget process
10/9: Rational versus real procurement logic
10/11: People and Power: “America’s War Games” Al Jazeera video with Chuck Spinney.

http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2013/04/2013424113558268754.html

Can military spending be controlled?


For 10/16:

http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/White_Nigel_D.pdf?issn=14617781&issue=v11i0001&article=133_tpmastuwgdc

For 10/18:

Check out some PMC websites: Dyncorp, Academi, Engility (formerly MPRI) (or any others on the list link as above at http://www.privatemilitary.org.

Class
10/14: Contractors and recent wars
10/16: Regulation possibilities
10/18: First half wrap-up

Fall Break. Oct. 19-27

For 10/28, read: Schelling and Halperin, *Strategy and Arms Control* (originally published in 1961) (excerpts) [Blackboard] 1-61. (It’s not really that long – there are a lot of partial and blank pages included.)


For 11/1: Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
http://www.armscontrol.org/documents/npt


Recommended: Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control, “Nuclear Weapons” web page;

Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control, “Chemical Weapons” web page.
http://www.wisconsinproject.org/bomb-facts/chemicalessay.htm

Bioweapons treaty December 2011 review conference - *Arms Control Today* interview with US representative to the preparatory meetings.
http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2011_06/Kennedy_ACT

Class 21 10/28:  Arms races and arms control
22 10/30:  Bilateral arms control
23 11/1:  Multilateral arms control

Recommended: *The Progressive* H-Bomb Issue (1979) [Blackboard].

9. **Proliferation, counter-proliferation.** Nov. 4, 6, 8.

For 11/4, read: Mousavian, INC.  If possible, read the whole book!  You can read it fast: the broad sweep of diplomacy is the important part, not the details of each proposal and counter-proposal.  Read at least: 57-65; 71-87; 97-107, 117-123, 149-156, 169-190.


For 11/8: Mousavian, INC, “Conclusion” 431-469.

Class 24 11/4:  How to make a nuclear weapon
25 11/6:  Multilateral nuclear non-proliferation efforts
26 11/8:  Iran and nuclear diplomacy
10. **Conventional Arms Trade, Small and Light Weapons (SALW).** Nov. 11, 13, 15.

For 11/11, read: Feinstein, TSW, ch. 19 “Cry, the Beloved Continent” 435-465.

For 11/13: Feinstein, TSW, ch. 19, “Cry, the Beloved Continent” 465-497.


Class 27 11/11: Is the arms trade just another business?

28 11/13: Can SALW be controlled?

29 11/15: Inspection, monitoring, unilateralism and multilateralism


11. **Discriminating weapons and humanitarian law.** Nov. 18, 20, 22.


For 11/20: P.J. Singer, ch. 9-10, “Revolutionary Technologies” and “Advanced Warfare” 179-236 [Blackboard].


Class 30 11/18: Advantages and disadvantages of discriminating weapons

Class 31 11/20: RPVs and precision strike

Class 32 11/22: Targeted killing and law
12. **Civil society and arms control.** Nov. 25, 27.

For 11/25, read: Landmines treaty


[http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Docherty_Bonnie_Lynn.pdf?issn=1085794x&issue=v31i0004&article=934_bngtcoteoihl](http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Docherty_Bonnie_Lynn.pdf?issn=1085794x&issue=v31i0004&article=934_bngtcoteoihl) [also on Blackboard].

Class 33 11/28: Civil society arms control efforts

Class 34 11/30: Reciprocity as motive


For 12/4: Richard Clarke, *Cyber War* ch. 1, “Trial Runs” 1-32 [Blackboard].


Class 35 12/2: Total war and the 4th generation

36 12/4: Cyber war

37 12/6: Cyber arms control?

14. **Wrap up.** Dec. 9, 11.

Class 38 12/9: Course review

Class 39 12/11: Final comments, course evaluations distributed.