

FWIS xxx: Managing and Resolving International Conflicts  
Professor Ashley Leeds  
Political Science

This course will require students to read, write, and think about why some international disputes result in militarized conflict and how such militarized conflicts can be managed and resolved. The assigned readings will be scholarly journal articles representing state-of-the-art knowledge about the general factors that affect conflict emergence, recurrence, and resolution. Because these articles can be somewhat technical for first year students with little background, the reading load will be light enough that we can discuss the arguments in detail in class. I provide a list of example readings below.

At the beginning of the semester, each student will select one of a set of ongoing international conflicts (for example, India v. Pakistan). I expect the class as a whole will consider a total of five different conflicts, meaning that approximately three students will work on each one. The first assignment will be for each student to write a brief history of his or her conflict detailing the issues under dispute, past militarized actions, and past management and resolution attempts. The students who are studying the same conflict will introduce the conflict to the class in a group oral presentation. Then, each essay assignment will require each student to apply the general theoretical literature we read to his or her case. For example, one assignment might be to recommend who might be the most effective mediator for the dispute and what would be the most effective mediation technique. Another might be to write a proposed peace treaty for the dispute, along with a memo explaining why the proposed treaty is designed as it is. The semester will culminate with each student writing a policy memo to the leader of a state, group, or international organization recommending some action that this person should take in regards to the ongoing conflict. This memo should be heavily informed by each of the individual assignments that came before, but should not merely summarize past work. Instead, the student must decide which strategies (mediation, treaty design, peacekeeping forces, economic sanctions, etc.) should be prioritized by these actors at this point in the dispute history. Each student will present his or her policy proposal to the class in an oral presentation.

My hope is that while the writing assignments will not be particularly long (probably approximately four five page essays plus a ten page final paper), they will build on one another in a way that will require students to rethink their past work. A series of short assignments also has the benefit of providing students with frequent feedback about their writing and many opportunities to improve. The written assignments will all require students to make a convincing argument using evidence in a small amount of space; key to success will be learning to organize a written argument well. In addition to the written assignments, students will be required to give two oral presentations, one as part of a group and one individually, which will help students to develop communication skills beyond writing.

Possible Readings (in alphabetical order):

Akhavan, Payam. 2009. Are International Criminal Tribunals a Disincentive to Peace?: Reconciling Judicial Romanticism with Political Realism. *Human Rights Quarterly* 31 (3): 624-654.

- Fearon, James D. 1995. Rationalist Explanations for War. *International Organization* 49: 379-414.
- Fortna, Virginia Page. 2004. Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace After Civil War. *International Studies Quarterly* 48 (2): 269-292.
- Fortna, Virginia Page. 2003. Scraps of Paper? Agreements and the Durability of Peace. *International Organization* 57: 337-372.
- Hartzell, Caroline A. 1999. Explaining the Stability of Negotiated Settlements to Intrastate Wars. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43: 3-22.
- Hartzell, Caroline and Matthew Hoddie. 2003. Institutionalizing Peace: Power Sharing and Post-Civil War Conflict Management. *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (2): 318-332.
- Kydd, Andrew H. 2006. When Can Mediators Build Trust? *American Political Science Review* 100: 449-462.
- Kydd, Andrew. 2003. Which Side Are You On? Bias, Credibility, and Mediation. *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (4): 497-611.
- Schultz, Kenneth A. 2005. The Politics of Risking Peace: Do Hawks or Doves Deliver the Olive Branch? *International Organization* 59 (1): 1-38.
- Snyder, Jack and Leslie Vinjamuri. 2003/04. Trials and Errors: Principles and Pragmatism in Strategies of International Justice. *International Security* 28 (3): 5-44.
- Walter, Barbara F. 1997. The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement. *International Organization* 51: 335-364.
- Werner, Suzanne. 1999. The Precarious Nature of Peace: Resolving the Issues, Enforcing the Settlement, and Renegotiating the Terms. *American Journal of Political Science* 43: 912-934.
- Werner, Suzanne and Amy Yuen. 2005. Making and Keeping Peace. *International Organization* 59: 261-292.

The incentive I prefer is the research fund. I prefer to teach the course in the spring semester. Because two colleagues in my subfield are on leave in the fall, I cannot teach it in the fall. I prefer to teach it on Tuesday/Thursday meeting twice per week for one hour and fifteen minutes. My time slot choices are ranked as follows: (1) 2:30-3:45, (2) 1:00-2:15, (3) 10:50-12:05, (4) 9:25-10:40.

Department Chair's Approval:

  
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Mark Jones, Political Science