

**Political Science 13181 Sec 6:  
Debating Great Articles in Security Studies and U.S. Foreign Policy**  
DeBartolo Hall 240, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 09:30-10:45 F17

**Syllabus**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:00-12:30pm and Thursdays 12:30-2:00pm

In this course, students will present articles and critique them. This course has several goals:

1. To help you learn to present and critique orally before an audience.
2. To help you learn how to respond on your feet to criticism.
3. To think aggressively and critically when reading, writing, and during public interactions.

Our articles will be drawn principally from the journals *International Security* and *Security Studies*. *IS* is the leading journal in security studies, and its articles are well known for substance and clarity. Examples of such articles are given below.

I will send the articles in pdf via email well in advance of each class. Once I get a sense of what the class wants to read about, I can compile a list of readings and put them on reserve.

Here is a good place to find collections of *IS* articles and see what kinds of themes you wish to explore: <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/series/international-security-readers> Or just google: MIT press international security readers. I have also pasted below some good examples.

### **Readings**

For each class session, we will read one or two articles. A two student team will present the article as if they had written it. This will last 10-20 minutes. A second two student team will act as discussants and critique the article. This will last 10-20 minutes. The presenters will then respond for a few minutes. All other students in the class will write down four or more critiques, and I will randomly call on these students to offer their critiques. All presentation, discussant, and critiques notes will be handed in to me at the end of class to be checked off and assure compliance.

### **Talks**

Students must attend at least three IR/FP related talks each semester. This topic is widely

defined and good talks can be found sponsored by the Notre Dame International Security Center, the Keough School, and related centers and institutes. Please write up and submit very short summaries and critiques of the talks you attend.

### **Papers**

Students will first write an 8 page paper critiquing in depth one or two of the articles we've read. This will be due about a week after Fall break. Second, students will write a 15 page paper on a topic relevant to the course materials modeled on the articles we read. It will be due about 10 days before classes end. The aim is write a mini-*IS* article. These tend to critique other scholars while also adding original arguments, develop new theories, and/or discuss policy problems in detail. These papers will be distributed, presented, and critiqued in the final class sessions. Do not forget this is a USEM with a required emphasis on writing.

### **Grading**

Presentations and participation: 40%

Talks: 5%

Papers: 15%; 25%

Discretion: ~15% Not all students are great participants *and* writers. So long as the student really tries at both, I reserve the right to weight the grade to the student's strengths.

### **Additional Comments**

Note that the presentations and critiques are similar to the format used in political science conferences, and that the paper mimics some of the best articles in political science. Hence, the course should be good training for anyone contemplating a life in academe. Of course, learning how to make presentations, make arguments, give and take criticism are skills for almost any profession.

Students may wish to use this guide on how to read to focus their presentations and critiques: <http://www.nd.edu/~dlindley/handouts/howtoread.html>

More information on political science conferences is here:  
<http://www.nd.edu/~dlindley/handouts/LindleyAdviceonAttendingAcademicConferences.htm>

Typically, the Notre Dame political science department sends a few undergraduates to conferences every year. This could be you!!! You will be well prepared.

### **Cheating**

Do not cheat. Your work must be your own. In writing for political science courses, cheating is most likely to take the form of plagiarism. Plagiarism is when writers use other people's words or ideas and do not give them credit. Use footnotes or endnotes to give credit for direct quotes, paraphrased quotes, or borrowed ideas. I will explain how to use footnotes and endnotes in class,

in section, and in handouts. If you don't know what footnotes or endnotes are...Ask! Do not copy other people's old papers. Do not use your own old papers or use work done for another course. Do not copy or buy papers or sections of papers from the web or other sources. Do not quote or paraphrase without giving credit in footnotes or endnotes. This is true regardless of source from Wikipedia to online articles to books and other print sources.

**Your ideas, your arguments, and the vast majority of your text must be your own.**

**Everything which is not your own must be noted.** Penalties for cheating range include redoing work, lowered grades, course failure, letters on your permanent record, and expulsion. Every year, a number of students are not allowed to graduate because they cheated. That is a ~\$30,000 mistake. I will be furious and feel personally betrayed if anyone cheats in my class. As you may know, the University acquired an institutional license for Turnitin.com, the leading plagiarism detection service on the internet. If papers are suspected of having been plagiarized, I will use Turnitin.com as per the guidance provided by the University Honor Code Committee. For more information on cheating and its consequences, please consult the University Honor Code. Let me repeat: if you have any questions about how to use citations or about plagiarism, please ask!

You **MUST** use foot/endnotes when:

- you use other people's words or ideas in any way from direct quotes to paraphrasing to borrowed ideas.
- you include a fact that is not commonly known. Anything you had to look up must be cited.

There are several links that explain citations and how to use them, via this link, under Writing: <http://www.nd.edu/~dlindley/handouts/handoutlinks.html>

Despite all this tough talk, which is most sincere, there are three other reasons not to cheat. First, it may alter grading curves and injure others by lowering the grades of students who did not cheat. While I do not have strict curves, that effect is nonetheless a possibility. Second, as student scholars, you are aspiring to learn how to be scholars. Scholars in the social sciences and far beyond use citations so that others can see how and how well they built their arguments and discovered new thought. Do not shortchange yourself. My writing assignments require you - believe it or not (!!)- to do independent research. If you view this as an invitation, you will flourish. And this is a serious business, so please use citations. Finally, you are paying a lot of money to learn critical reading, writing, and above all thinking and argumentational skills. Do you really want to short-change yourself? Do you not want to learn what original thinking is? To come up with ideas that are your own, and develop arguments and deploy evidence to support them? I've worked hard to provide assignments that aim to improve writing and allow you to

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<sup>1</sup> Stanley Fish, "The Ontology of Plagiarism: Part Two," *The New York Times*, August 16, 2010 at <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/08/16/the-ontology-of-plagiarism-part-two/?hp>

explore your interests. If you are here to learn, do not cheat.

### **Unprofessional Behavior**

Arriving late without good reason or making distracting noise in class (whispering, beepers, cell phones, etc.) is unprofessional and selfish. Such behavior bothers others who have paid money to concentrate and learn something in class.

Please do not play computer games, surf the web, check email, or do anything other than take notes with your computers and other electronic devices. If you must do these rude and distracting activities, please sit in the back row so as not to disturb the more serious consumers. If you are observed using electronic devices for purposes other than taking notes, I will be made grumpy by the sign of disrespect, I will wonder why you bothered to show up for class, and you will have to worry for the rest of the semester about unspecified retribution (read Arthur Clarke's *Childhood's End*; that's a threat that brought down governments). Note that papers and tests are graded without regard to personal histories, favorable or unfavorable. Fairness first and above all.

If you use the words 'like' and 'you know' (or other language ticks) excessively and when they add no meaning to what you are saying, you should know that many people consider those ticks unprofessional, casual, and sloppy. Literally. Take this opportunity to think about what you are saying and to refrain from excess use of such language.

I encourage you to be fairly formal in your interactions with me and the TAs. Unfortunately, I once had a hard time writing a stellar letter of recommendation for an otherwise good student because he/she was in the habit of starting his/her emails with "Hey Prof!" I had to mention this in the letter as a reservation because of the risk of sending this student before an interview board and having him/her come across as informal and flip. I take this business seriously and will reserve my maximum respect for those who share that sense of purpose (regardless of your feelings for me or the course).

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