



## Understanding Global Conflict

Prof. Ray T. Hartman, Sungkyunkwan University

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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The study of history is, in a sense, the study of war. When students learn of the past, they will, of course, come to know of important peoples and events; the rise and falls of dynasties, empires, kingdoms, and governments; and of the all too frequent occurrence of war. However, in a world where war continues to be waged despite our advances as a civilization, the question arises: Under what conditions are states more or less likely to engage in violent conflict?

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the study of interstate war and conflict. The class will examine different levels of analysis, survey various theoretical frameworks for understanding the conditions necessary and/or sufficient for the onset war, and discuss empirical work that outlines what is currently known about war.

### READING MATERIALS

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Recommended readings:

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

Vasquez, John A., editor. What Do We Know about War? Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012.

All reading materials will be made available to students. While the readings are not mandatory, they are helpful for class preparation as well as reviewing what has already been covered. You will find them useful during your team projects.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

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This course is student-centered, not a teacher-centered, meaning lecturing will be kept to a minimum and you, the student, will become the focus of learning in the classroom through class discussion and team projects. Therefore, this course requires students regularly attend class, arrive on-time, and participate actively.

All ISS classes are pass/fail based on the student academic achievement evaluated by grades on a scale of 100 points (grade of 60 or above is Pass). **SKKU regulations require students attend at least 80% of all classes.**

You will be assessed according to:

Attendance	10%
Participation	15%
Team Project 1	25%
Team Project 2	25%
Team Project 3	25%

Please note being tardy twice will result in one absence, and failure to participate in class will result in a zero for that day.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

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### – WEEK I –

Monday (27 June)

**Empirical Theory and the Causes of War**

Tuesday (28 June)

**The Individual Level of Analysis, Part I: Human Aggression**

Is human nature really to blame for war?

Wednesday (29 June)

**The Individual Level of Analysis, Part II: Psychological Explanations for War**

To what extent do individuals and their decisions affect the onset of war?

Thursday (30 June)

**Using the Individual Level of Analysis to Explain World War I, the Korean War, and the U.S. War in Afghanistan (Part 1)**

### – WEEK II –

Monday (4 July)

**Using the Individual Level of Analysis to Explain World War I, the Korean War, and the U.S. War in Afghanistan (Part 2)**

Tuesday (5 July)

**The State Level of Analysis, Part I: Political, Economic, and Demographic Factors**

What role do states and society play in the onset of war?

Wednesday (6 July)

**The State Level of Analysis, Part II: Internal Conflicts, Nationalism, and War Weariness**

What role do states and society play in the onset of war?

Thursday (7 July)

**The Dyadic Level of Analysis, Part I: The Nature of Dyads**

What role do territorial disputes, shared ethnicity, and rivalries play in decisions to go to war?

### – WEEK III –

Monday (11 July)

**The Dyadic Level of Analysis, Part II: International Interactions**

What can trends between states over time tell us about war and conflict?

Tuesday (12 July)

**Using the State Level of Analysis to Explain World War I, the Korean War, and the U.S. War in Afghanistan (Part 1)**

Wednesday (13 July)

**Using the State Level of Analysis to Explain World War I, the Korean War, and the U.S. War in Afghanistan (Part 2)**

Thursday (14 July)

**The International System Level of Analysis, Part I: Realism, Anarchy, and the Balance of Power**

What are system level theories, and how can they help us understand when states are likely to go to war?

Friday (15 July)

**The International System Level of Analysis, Part II: Power Dynamics, Cyclical Theories, and Historical-Structural Theories of War**

What are system level theories, and how can they help us understand when states are likely to go to war?

– WEEK IV –

Monday (18 July)

**Using the International System Level of Analysis to Explain World War I, the Korean War, and the U.S. War in Afghanistan (Part 1)**

Tuesday (19 July)

**Using the International System Level of Analysis to Explain World War I, the Korean War, and the U.S. War in Afghanistan (Part 2)**