

IR Theory and Case Studies in East Asian Security

The University of Chicago
PLSC 20925
Winter 2022

Instructor: Joshua Byun

Time: MW 9:30-10:50 am

Room: Pick 506

Office Hours: W 4:00-5:00 pm

Course Description: This seminar introduces students to theory-driven research on the security affairs of the East Asian region, broadly defined. The goal is to expose students to the substantive and methodological knowledge needed to become sophisticated consumers of International Relations (IR) scholarship on East Asian security, as well as to design their own social scientific inquiries on related topics.

In the first part of the course, we discuss how IR scholars construct qualitative research designs to build and test theories. The second part examines studies that use these approaches to address puzzles in East Asia's modern military and diplomatic history, such as the onset of Sino-U.S. antagonism, the politics of U.S. troop deployments, and the conduct of the Vietnam War. A final set of readings delves into the security issues of 21st-century East Asia, such as the U.S.-China nuclear balance and regional crisis diplomacy.

Each session begins with a discussion of core theoretical arguments in the international security subfield, and proceeds to examine readings that apply, extend, or challenge these ideas with reference to East Asian cases. By the end of the course, we will acquire a better sense of (1) how IR theory can enhance our understanding of security dynamics in a key global region and (2) how regional knowledge can, in turn, aid the construction and testing of general theories.

Course Requirements: Every student is expected to do all assigned readings, attend every class, and actively participate in the discussions. The final grade will be based on classroom participation (33%) and two written assignments (33% each).

The written assignments consist of essays that review scholarly works assigned on a week of the student's choice. Each essay will engage closely with one week's topic by summarizing and comparatively evaluating that week's readings and, based on this investigation, propose ideas for future research. The essays may be up to 10 pages long (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.). The first essay will be due in week 5 and the second essay on finals week.

As an alternative to two review essays, students may—with the instructor's consent—write a full research paper (67% of grade) on a subject covered in the course. The length of the research paper may be anywhere between 20 to 35 pages (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.). This option may be appropriate for students seeking to fulfill writing requirements for the political science major. The research paper will be due during finals week.

Required Readings: The following books are assigned in their entirety, or close to it. I recommend purchasing them.

- Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).
- Jessica Chen Weiss, *Powerful Patriots: Nationalist Protest in China's Foreign Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

I will provide PDFs when discrete book chapters or unpublished manuscripts are assigned. All remaining material should be available through UChicago library resources.

Discussion: In each session, our central objective will be to thoroughly understand each reading and critically examine its argument and evidence. At minimum, students should come to class ready to share their views on the following questions:

- What is the research question or puzzle of each reading?
- What is the central argument?
- What kind of evidence is presented in support of this argument? Is it convincing?
- What are the major competing arguments? Is the author's research design able to properly adjudicate between these and the central argument?

A Note on Content: This syllabus is designed to avoid duplicating—as much as possible—content in other undergraduate IR courses offered at the University of Chicago. In addition to this seminar, students are encouraged to explore courses such as “Introduction to International Relations (PLSC 29000),” “War and the Nation-State (PLSC 27600),” and “International Political Economy (PLSC 23501)” to develop a broad-based understanding of the study of International Relations.

Students writing review essays are encouraged to engage with both the “required readings” and “additional readings” listed for the topic in question. Otherwise, additional readings are provided for the student's edification only; I do not expect you to have read these before coming to class, unlike the required readings.

Email Policy: Feel free to email me with questions or concerns that are not addressed during class. Note that I may not read or respond to student emails in the evenings or on weekends. Do not expect immediate replies.

Late Policy and Incompletes: All deadlines are strict. Papers/assignments received late will be dropped a full letter grade for each 24 hours past the deadline.

Academic Integrity: Any form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with, and following, [university policies](#) on this matter. Being found guilty of academic dishonesty is a serious offense and may result in a failing grade for the assignment in question, and possibly for the entire course.

Disability Accommodations: If you feel you may need accommodation based on the impact of a disability, please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs.

Course Outline:

Part 1: IR Theory and Case Studies

Session 1 (Monday, January 10). Introduction: From Area Studies to Social Science

Required Readings:

- David C. Kang and Alex Yu-Ting Lin, “U.S. Bias in the Study of Asian Security: Using Europe to Study Asia,” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4, no. 3 (July 2019): 393-401.
- Robert H. Bates, “From Case Studies to Social Science: A Strategy for Political Research,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, eds. Charles Boix and Susan C. Stokes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 173-185.

Additional Readings:

- Evelyn Goh, “U.S. Dominance and American Bias in International Relations Scholarship: A View from the Outside,” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 4, no. 3 (July 2019): 402-410.
- Alastair Ian Johnston, “What (if Anything) does East Asia Tell Us about International Relations Theory?” *Annual Review of Political Science* 15 (June 2012): 53-78.
- David C. Kang, “Getting Asia Wrong: The Need for New Analytical Frameworks,” *International Security* 27, no. 4 (Spring 2003): 57-85.
- Amitav Acharya, “Will Asia’s Past be its Future?” *International Security* 28, no. 3 (Winter 2003-2004): 149-164.
- Matthew Charles Wilson and Carl Henrik Knutsen, “Geographical Coverage in Political Science Research,” *Perspectives on Politics* 2020 (First View): 1-16.

Session 2 (Wednesday, January 12). The Logic of Qualitative Causal Inference: Theory-testing and Historical Research

Required Readings:

- Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), chs. 1-2; 4.
- Matthew A. Kocher and Nuno P. Monteiro, “Lines of Demarcation: Causation, Design-based Inference, and Historical Research,” *Perspectives on Politics* 14, no. 4 (December 2016): 952-975.

Additional Readings:

- Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), ch. 7.
- Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), chs. 1-3.
- James D. Fearon, “Counterfactuals and Hypothesis Testing in Political Science,” *World Politics* 43, no. 2 (January 1991): 169-195.

*No class on Monday, January 17 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

Session 3 (Wednesday, January 19). The Practice of Qualitative Causal Inference: Case Selection, Congruence Analysis, and Process Tracing

Required Readings:

- Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 2003), ch. 3.
- Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005), chs. 6; 8-10.

Additional Readings:

- Harry Eckstein, “Case Study and Theory in Political Science,” in Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby, eds., *Handbook of Political Science, vol. 7* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975), pp. 79-138.
- Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), ch. 4.

- Dan Slater and Daniel Ziblatt, “The Enduring Indispensability of the Controlled Comparison,” *Comparative Political Studies* 46, no. 10 (October 2013): 1301-1327.
- Aaron Rapport, “Hard Thinking about Hard and Easy Cases in Security Studies,” *Security Studies* 24, no. 3 (2015): 431-465.
- Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1997).

Part 2: IR Theory and East Asian History

Session 4 (Monday, January 24). Realism and the Road to War in the Pacific

Required Readings:

- Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), chs. 1-2; 4.
- Dale C. Copeland, *Economic Interdependence and War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2015), introduction, chs. 1-2; 4.

Additional Readings:

- John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), ch. 6.

Session 5 (Wednesday, January 26). Structure, Domestic Politics, and the Origins of Sino-U.S. Antagonism

Required Readings:

- Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), chs. 1-4; 6.

Additional Readings:

- Deborah Welch Larson, *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989).
- Wooseon Choi, “Structure and Perceptions: Explaining American Policy Toward China (1949-50),” *Security Studies* 16, no. 4 (2007): 555-582.

Session 6 (Monday, January 31). Preventive War

Required Readings:

- Marc Trachtenberg, "Preventive War and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Security Studies* 16, no. 1 (January-March 2007): 1-31.
- Rachel Elizabeth Whitlark, "Nuclear Beliefs: A Leader-Focused Theory of Counterproliferation," *Security Studies* 26, no. 4 (2017): 545-574.
- M. Taylor Fravel, "Power Shifts and Escalation: Explaining China's Use of Force in Territorial Disputes," *International Security* 32, no. 3 (Winter 2007-2008): 44-83.

Additional Readings:

- James D. Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (Summer 1995): 379-414.
- Alex Weisiger, *Logics of War: Explanations for Limited and Unlimited Conflicts* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2013).
- William Burr and Jeffrey T. Richelson, "Whether to 'Strangle the Baby in the Cradle': The United States and the Chinese Nuclear Program, 1960-64," *International Security* 25, no. 3 (Winter 2000/2001): 54-91.

Session 7 (Wednesday, February 2). War Termination

Required Readings:

- Alex Weisiger, "Learning from the Battlefield: Information, Domestic Politics, and Interstate War Duration," *International Organization* 70, no. 2 (Spring 2016): 347-375.
- Elizabeth A. Stanley, "Ending the Korean War: The Role of Domestic Coalition Shifts in Overcoming Obstacles to Peace," *International Security* 34, no. 1 (Summer 2009): 42-82.

Additional Readings:

- Oriana Skylar Mastro, *The Costs of Conversation: Obstacles to Peace Talks in Wartime* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2019).
- H.E. Goemans, *War and Punishment: The Causes of War Termination and the First World War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996).

Session 8 (Monday, February 7). Military Deployments

Required Readings:

- Paul C. Avey, Jonathan N. Markowitz, and Robert J. Reardon, “Do U.S. Troop Withdrawals Cause Instability? Evidence from Two Exogenous Shocks on the Korean Peninsula,” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 3, no. 1 (January 2018): 72-92.
- Do Young Lee, “Strategies of Extended Deterrence: How States Provide a Security Umbrella,” *Security Studies* 2021

Additional Readings:

- Alexander Cooley, *Base Politics: Democratic Change and the U.S. Military Overseas* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2008).
- Sebastian Schmidt, “Foreign Military Presence and the Changing Practice of Sovereignty: A Pragmatist Explanation of Norm Change,” *American Political Science Review* 108, no. 4 (November 2014): 817-829.
- Katherine H.S. Moon, *Sex among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

Session 9 (Wednesday, February 9). Military Effectiveness

Required Readings:

- Caitlin Talmadge, *The Dictator’s Army: Battlefield Effectiveness in Authoritarian Regimes* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2015), Introduction; chs. 1-3.

Additional Readings:

- Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004).
- Risa A. Brooks and Elizabeth A. Stanley, eds., *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007).

*FIRST REVIEW ESSAY DUE IN CLASS (WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9)

Session 10 (Monday, February 14). Nuclear Proliferation: The “Demand Side”

Required Readings:

- Avery Goldstein, “Discounting the Free Ride: Alliances and Security in the Postwar World,” *International Organization* 49, no. 1 (Winter 1995): 39-71.
- Etel Solingen, “The Political Economy of Nuclear Restraint,” *International Security* 19, no. 2 (Fall 1994): 126-169.

Additional Readings:

- Jacques E.C. Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation: Identity, Emotions and Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
- Llewelyn Hughes, “Why Japan will not Go Nuclear (Yet): International and Domestic Constraints on the Nuclearization of Japan,” *International Security* 31, no. 4 (Spring 2007): 67-96.

Session 11 (Wednesday, February 16). Nuclear Proliferation: The “Supply Side”

Required Readings:

- Francis J. Gavin, “Strategies of Inhibition: U.S. Grand Strategy, the Nuclear Revolution, and Nonproliferation,” *International Security* 40, no. 1 (Summer 2015): 9-46.
- Nicholas L. Miller, “The Secret Success of Nonproliferation Sanctions,” *International Organization* 68, no. 4 (Fall 2014): 913-944.

Additional Readings:

- Alexandre Debs and Nuno P. Monteiro, “Conflict and Cooperation on Nuclear Nonproliferation,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 20 (May 2017): 331-349.
- Lisa Langdon Koch, “Frustration and Delay: The Secondary Effects of Supply-Side Proliferation Controls,” *Security Studies* 28, no. 4 (2019): 773-806.

Part 3: IR Theory and Contemporary Security Issues in East Asia

Session 12 (Monday, February 21). Grand Strategy

Required Readings:

- Nina Silove, “The Pivot before the Pivot: U.S. Strategy to Preserve the Power Balance in Asia,” *International Security* 40, no. 4 (Spring 2016): 45-88.
- Nuno P. Monteiro, “Unrest Assured: Why Unipolarity is Not Peaceful,” *International Security* 36, no. 3 (Winter 2011-12): 9-40.
- Joshua Byun, “The Wicked Problem of Grand Strategy: Why Great Powers Fail to Achieve Strategic Coherence in their Military Alliances,” unpublished manuscript.

Additional Readings:

- Nina Silove, “Beyond the Buzzword: The Three Meanings of ‘Grand Strategy’,” *Security Studies* 27, no. 1 (2018): 27-57.

- Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, “Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy,” *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1996-1997): 5-53.

Session 13 (Wednesday, February 23). Security Competition

Required Readings:

- David Shambaugh, “China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order,” *International Security* 29, no. 3 (Winter 2004-2005): 64-99.
- Adam P. Liff, “Wither the Balancers? The Case for a Methodological Reset,” *Security Studies* 25, no. 3 (2016): 420-459.
- Jennifer Lind, “Pacifism or Passing the Buck? Testing Theories of Japanese Security Policy,” *International Security* 29, no. 1 (Summer 2004): 92-121.

Additional Readings:

- Aaron L. Friedberg, “Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia,” *International Security* 18, no. 3 (Winter 1993-1994): 5-33.
- Evelyn Goh, “Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia: Analyzing Regional Security Strategies,” *International Security* 32, no. 3 (Winter 2007-2008): 113-157.
- David C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).
- Darren J. Lim and Zack Cooper, “Reassessing Hedging: The Logic of Alignment in East Asia,” *Security Studies* 24, no. 4 (2015): 696-727.

Session 14 (Monday, February 28). Security Cooperation

Required Readings:

- Christopher Hemmer and Peter J. Katzenstein, “Why is there no NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism,” *International Organization* 53, no. 3 (Summer 2002): 575-607.
- Victor D. Cha, “Abandonment, Entrapment, and Neoclassical Realism in Asia: The United States, Japan, and Korea,” *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (June 2000): 261-291.
- Jennifer Lind, “Apologies in International Politics,” *Security Studies* 18, no. 3 (2009): 517-556.

Additional Readings:

- Joshua Byun and Austin Carson, “More than a Number: Perception and Misperception of Aging Leaders in International Politics,” unpublished manuscript.

- Victor D. Cha, *Powerplay: The Origins of the American Alliance System in Asia* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2016).

Session 15 (Wednesday, March 2). Deterrence I: The Military Balance

Required Readings:

- Michael Beckley, “The Emerging Military Balance in East Asia: How China’s Neighbors can Check Chinese Naval Expansion,” *International Security* 42, no. 2 (Fall 2017): 78-119.
- Fiona S. Cunningham and M. Taylor Fravel, “Dangerous Confidence? Chinese Views on Nuclear Escalation,” *International Security* 44, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 61-109.
- Joshua Byun and Do Young Lee, “The Case Against Nuclear Sharing in East Asia,” *The Washington Quarterly* (forthcoming)

Additional Readings:

- John J. Mearsheimer, *Conventional Deterrence* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983).
- Rachel Tecott and Andrew Halterman, “The Case for Campaign Analysis: A Method for Studying Military Operations,” *International Security* 45, no. 4 (Spring 2021): 44-83.
- Eric Heginbotham and Richard Samuels, “Active Denial: Redesigning Japan’s Response to China’s Military Challenge,” *International Security* 42, no. 4 (Spring 2018): 128-169.
- Keir A. Lieber and Daryl Press, “The New Era of Counterforce: Technological Change and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence,” *International Security* 41, no. 4 (Spring 2017): 9-49.

Session 16 (Monday, March 7). Deterrence II: Reputation and Credibility

Required Readings:

- Ronald R. Krebs and Jennifer Spindel, “Divided Priorities: Why and When Allies Differ Over Military Intervention,” *Security Studies* 27, no. 4 (2018): 575-606.
- Tongfi Kim and Luis Simon, “A Reputation versus Prioritization Trade-Off: Unpacking Allied Perceptions of U.S. Extended Deterrence in Distant Regions,” *Security Studies* (2021).
- Alex Weisiger and Keren Yarhi-Milo, “Revisiting Reputation: How Past Actions Matter in International Politics,” *International Organization* 69, no. 2 (Spring 2015): 473-495.

Additional Readings:

- Jonathan Mercer, *Reputation and International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996).
- Daryl G. Press, *Calculating Credibility: How Leaders Assess Military Threats* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2005).
- Joshua D. Kertzer, Jonathan Renshon, and Keren Yarhi-Milo, “How do Observers Assess Resolve?” *British Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 1 (January 2021): 308-330.
- Danielle L. Lupton, *Reputation for Resolve: How Leaders Signal Determination in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2020).

Session 17 (Wednesday, March 9). Crisis Diplomacy

Required Readings:

- Jessica Chen Weiss, *Powerful Patriots: Nationalist Protest in China’s Foreign Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), chs. 1-3; 6-8.

Additional Readings:

- James D. Fearon, “Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes,” *American Political Science Review* 88, no. 3 (September 1994): 577-592.
- Ketian Vivian Zhang, “Cautious Bully: Reputation, Resolve, and Beijing’s Use of Coercion in the South China Sea,” *International Security* 44, no. 1 (Summer 2019): 117-159.
- Avery Goldstein, “First Things First: The Pressing Danger of Crisis Instability in U.S.-China Relations,” *International Security* 37, no. 4 (Spring 2013): 49-89.

*SECOND REVIEW ESSAY / RESEARCH PAPER DUE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16.