

**THE CAUSES OF WAR
Winter 2021**

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Lecture: Mondays/7pm – 10pm
Room: Online

Office Hours: Friday 11-12.30

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Course Description

This course will examine theoretical perspectives on the causes of war and conditions for peace between and within political communities and applies these theories in the critical analysis of case studies of violent conflicts and wars. The focus of this course will be on the implications that the understanding of the causes of war has for peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Explore the historical background of the study of the causes of war and condition for peace.
- Become familiar with major theoretical perspectives, ideas, and concepts on the causes of war and conditions of peace.
- Develop an ability to think critically about the study of war and peace and apply critical thinking in the analysis of war and peace.
- Evaluate unexplored questions about the causes of war and the ways they affect conflict between states.
- Identify potential solutions to overcome challenges presented by war.
- Acquire presentation skills, learn analytical writing skills, and develop effective strategies for writing argumentative essays about the controversial issues.

Required Materials and Texts

- Paul D. Williams – Security Studies_ An Introduction, (NY; Routledge), 2008.

Class Format

This course will be offered through remote/online delivery via Zoom platform, and there will be no in-person interactions or activities on campus.

Students are required to fully participate through video conferencing. They are required to have a computer with webcam and microphone.

Students shall note the following:

- Zoom is hosted on servers in the U.S. This includes recordings done through Zoom.
- If you have privacy concerns about your data, provide only your first name or a nickname when you join a session.
- The system is configured in a way that all participants are automatically notified when a session is being recorded. In other words, a session cannot be recorded without you knowing about it.

Organization of the course

This course will be offered synchronously with live sessions, and students are expected to attend the virtual classes on via Zoom platform.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Participation in lectures – 10%, ongoing
2. Mid-term exam – 20%
3. Submission of paper proposal, due date February 15
4. Submission of one critical analysis paper – 30%, due date March 29
5. Final Exam – 40%, written during April 2021 examination period

Course Evaluation – Details

Participation in lectures – 10%

Students are expected to attend weekly classes and actively participate in class discussions. Attendance is mandatory, and students will be marked on how well their comments reflect an engagement with the class topic and material.

Mid-term Exam – 20%

A mid-term exam will be held on Monday, March 8th. The exam will cover the themes, material and discussion topics introduced during the first part of the course. The mid-term exam will be held online/remote on March 8th, and the maximum time for the exam is 2-hours and 45 minutes.

The exam will consist of short-answer questions and one essay question related to the topics discussed during the first part of the course and students are required to explain what they have learned in class.

Submission of Paper Proposal

Students are expected to submit their paper proposal, due on February 15. The proposal for the final research paper should be one double-spaced page in length. There is no % associate with proposal, however, research proposal is essential in determining your final research paper topic. The proposal must include the following:

- Research Title
- A statement of research problem (No more than 60-70 words)
- Research question (No more than 25 words)
- research objective (No more than 25 words)

Critical Analysis Paper (30%), due March 29

Students shall be asked to write a paper (1200-1500 words) relevant to the Causes of War. Student can develop a topic of the final research paper relevant to one of the topics outlined in this document. The paper should include the following:

- A clear and concise research title, thesis statement, research question and objective(s).
- Definition of terms and explanation of how and why you have come to such a definition
- Theoretical framework, supporting your argument with a theory related to your topic.
- The bibliography should follow Chicago Manual of style
- The completed reflective essay is due on March 29.

Final Exam – 40%, written during April 2021 examination period

The final exam will be in April 2021. The exam will be held online/remote, and the maximum time for the exam will be 3 hours. The exam will include the weekly themes, topics and material covered in the second part of the course (after the midterm exam, March 8th). Similar to the mid-term exam, the final exam will consist of both short-answer questions as well as one essay question related to the topics discussed in the second part of the course, and students are required to explain what they have learned in class.

Academic Integrity

Throughout this course, we attempt to maintain academic integrity to the highest extent possible. Students are required to complete SPARK's Academic Integrity module at the beginning of the course in order to familiarize themselves with the meaning of academic integrity. Breaches of academic integrity range from cheating to plagiarism are extremely serious academic offences that will result in severe sanctions according to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty, and will be reported to the appropriate university authorities. Students are also encouraged to read the "*Beware! Says Who? Avoiding Plagiarism*" pamphlet.

Turnitin

Students will be required to submit their papers to Turnitin (via the Avenue to Learn) for a review of textual similarity and the detection of possible plagiarism.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (January 11)

War and Warfare: What is War?

This session examines the concept of war - as a considerable source of insecurity - and the major trends in armed conflict in the period since 1945.

We will outline three different philosophies of war:

Rational Outcome of Competition over Resources and Power – Von Clausewitz
Eschatological
Cataclysmic

We will also discuss the changing nature of warfare, will analyze current debates about total wars, and will examine how globalization has produced a novel form of armed conflict known as 'new wars.'

Readings:

- Paul D. Williams - Security Studies_ An Introduction, (2008, Routledge), Chapter 11, 151-169

Week 2 (January 18)

Causes of War (Part 1)

This session is about the causes of inter-state conflicts. More specifically, it's about large-scale organized violence between the armed forces of states and civil wars, to the exclusion of other forms of warfare.

We will review the complex factors lead to armed conflicts within States (a case study of Iran-Iraq war) and will examine the major paradigms in international relations about the causes of wars and armed conflicts.

Readings:

- Jack S. Levy, The Causes of War and the Conditions of Peace, Annual Review of Political Science Vol. 1:139-165 (Volume publication date June 1998).
- Patrick James, Structural Realism and the Causes of War, Mershon International Studies Review, Vol. 39, No. 2 (Oct. 1995), pp. 181-208

Week 3 (January 25)

Causes of War (Part II)

Perception and Misperception of Leaders

In this session we will discuss the causes and consequences of the ways in which decision-makers draw inferences from the international environment. We will analyze the process of decision-making by statesmen and will examine the significant of the perception of decision-makers.

Reading:

- Robert Jarvis, Perceptions and Misperception in the international politics, Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford, pp 13-28.

Week 4 (Feb. 1)

Conventional and Unconventional Warfare: A Case Study of Conflicts in the Middle East

In this session we will explore conventional and unconventional conflicts and will examine how are conventional and unconventional warfare different.

We will highlight three major themes: the relationship between armed forces and the societies, the impact of technology on warfare, and the relationship between conventional and unconventional operations.

We will discuss the evolution of unconventional warfare, including Nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological warfare, counterinsurgency, the War on Terror, and the conflicts in the Middle East.

Readings:

- Sean Monaghan, Countering Hybrid Warfare, PRISM , Vol. 8, No. 2 (2019), Institute for National Strategic Security, National Defense University, pp. 82-99.
- Max Boot, The Evolution of Irregular War, Insurgents and Guerrillas From Akkadia to Afghanistan, Foreign Affairs, MARCH / APRIL 2013, Vol 92, No. 2

Week 5 (Feb. 8)

Civil Wars and Ethnic Conflicts (Case Studies, Iraq & Syria).

Civil wars are more common than international wars although they were overshadowed by the two World Wars and the Cold War.

Similarly, ethnic wars, as one of the major sources of insecurity in the world, represent a sizeable fraction of all wars in multiethnic countries, especially where government is weak. In this session, we will discuss the causes of civil wars and violent ethnic conflicts, its international dimensions, and the effect of civil and ethnic conflicts on creating global challenges such as large flows of refugees.

We will review three case studies of civil and ethnic wars in Sudan, Yugoslavia and Syria.

Readings:

- Paul D. Williams - Security Studies_ An Introduction, (2008, Routledge), Chapter 14, 200-215.
- Levy, Jack and William R. Thompson. (2010) "Civil War" in Causes of War. 186-204.
- Cashman, "Chapter 6: The State Level of Analysis: Internal Conflicts, Nationalism and War Weariness." 199- 236.
- Ross, Michael. (2006) "A Closer Look at Oil, Diamonds, and Civil War." Annual Review of Political Science. 265-300.

Week 6 (Feb.15-21)

Reading Week

Week 7 (Feb. 22)

Terrorism and Counterterrorism

This session will provide an overview of the debates about the concept of terrorism. We will discuss the different types of terrorism other more substantive threats to security of the world and will highlight the difference between state terrorism and sub-state terrorism. We will examine the global responses to the phenomenon of terrorism (known as the 'Global War on Terror') and will assess success and failure of counter-terrorism measures.

Readings:

- Paul D. Williams - Security Studies_ An Introduction, (2008, Routledge), Chapter 12 (TERRORISM), pp. 171-184.

Week 8 (March 1)

Nuclear Proliferation (Case study of Iran and North Korea)

This session will be an overview of the challenges related to the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War world. Challenges posed by states which are already members of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), challenges posed by non-members of the NPT and challenges comes from non-state actors who seek to obtain nuclear weapons. We will also examine different approaches by the international community to counter these threats.

Three particular cases studies will be examined: North Korea, Iran and nonstate actors such as al Qaeda and ISIS.

Readings:

- Paul D. Williams - Security Studies_ An Introduction, (2008, Routledge), Chapter 24, pp. 361-375.
- Stephen Van Evera, Causes of war, power and the roots of conflict, Chapter 8

Week 9 (March 8): Mid-term exam

Week 10 (March 15)

Cyberwarfare (Case Study of Iran, Israel and the United States)

The nascent internet has fundamentally transformed the nature of warfare, heralding a new era of violent conflict. States and non-state actors have been engaged in offensive

and defensive cyberwar operations such as cyberattacks, cyber-sabotage and cyber-espionage.

In this session we will focus on the militarization of cyberspace and will discuss how the cyber dimension will play a substantial role in future conflicts and insecurity and tension in the international system.

Readings:

- Jarno Limnéll, Thomas Rid, Is Cyberwar Real? Gauging the Threats, Foreign Affairs, Vol 93, No. 2, March/April 2014.
- Thomas Rid, Cyberwar and Peace Hacking Can Reduce Real-World Violence, Foreign Affairs, Vol 92. No. 6, November/December 2013.
- Andrew Byers and Tara Mooney, [Winning the Cyberwar Against ISIS Why the West Should Rethink Its Strategy](#), May 5, 2017

Week 11 (March 22)

Contemporary Challenges: War on Poverty, Hunger and Disease (Part I)

Poverty and human insecurity are in many respects synonymous. In this session, we will discuss the causes of poverty and will argue how poverty, hunger, disease and climate change result in violence and war and destabilization.

Readings:

- Paul D. Williams - Security Studies_ An Introduction, (2008, Routledge), Chapter 17, pp. 244-260.

Week 12 (March 29)

Contemporary Challenges: War on Poverty, Hunger and Disease (Part II)

In this session, we will discuss the consequences of poverty such as migration and how it creates destabilization including South-North migration. We will also cover different approaches to development to tackling the poverty.

Readings:

- Paul D. Williams - Security Studies_ An Introduction, (2008, Routledge), Chapter 17, pp. 244-260.

Week 13 (April 5)

Turning War into Peace: Peace Research

In this session, we will discuss the peace research approach in international relations, centered on confidence building measures. We will define the positive and negative aspects of the concept of peace and will assess the value of Peace Studies as a response to the challenges to international security.

Readings:

- Félix E. Martín, Critical Analysis of the Concept of Peace in International Relations, Peace Research, Vol. 37, No. 2 (November 2005), pp. 45-59

Week 14 (April 12)

Regional Organization and Peace Building

Creating a dense system of organizations has proven to be a good investment in cutting down conflict and promoting peace. The idea is self-explanatory: the more countries interact with each other, the less likely they are to engage in conflict. Virtually all organizations at the regional or global level offer procedures and mechanisms for mitigating conflict, including international laws, international conventions, negotiations and mediation.

Readings:

- Paul D. Williams - Security Studies_ An Introduction, (2008, Routledge), Chapter 21, pp. 307-324.

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

The final research paper should be 5-7 pages in length. That's excluding cover page, citations and bibliography. The final research paper should be relevant to the Causes of War. Student can develop a topic of the final research paper relevant to one of the topics outlined in this document. However, the same topic cannot be used for both presentation and the final research paper.

Assignments must be received on the due date specified for the assignment (March 20, 2021). Student's full information including full name, student number and e-mail address should be clearly indicated on the assignment.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-

MARK	GRADE
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Assignments should be submitted before the specified due date. Late submission will incur a penalty, unless for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which can only be accepted with supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor's note).

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work".

Courses with an On-Line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The

Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on

online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.