Course Description

This course takes seriously the notion that internal political problems of states are important issues for the study of international security in the contemporary era. Traditional approaches to international relations often adopt a strong view of state sovereignty and downplay the significance of internal problems of states as vital to understanding international security. However, here it is contended that internal security issues can now also be seen as international security concerns. Traditional state-to-state security issues are still relevant, but the modern era also reflects that the domestic political structure and stability of states is an issue both for that state and potentially for others in the region and from around the world. Thus we will investigate the parameters by which internal issues contribute to international security problems, how the international community understands these problems as relevant to them, and what kinds of responses are viewed as appropriate and effective. Throughout, we will also consider the fact that we still live in a sovereign state system where most states seem to have or at least assert a strong degree of control over what goes on in their states and what others can do about it. Yet, we will look at ways in which sovereignty has been challenged and transformed given these security threats.

The course will utilize a variety of theoretical sources, as well as delve into a fair number of case studies (some examined a number of times in slightly different ways) in order to ground the conceptual (strategic, political, legal, and moral) arguments. The course begins with an examination of the meaning and development of the concepts of sovereignty, order, and security. Through the Cooper book, we will look at the evolution of sovereignty as an ordering concept in terms of structuring the nature of the international system. Kaldor’s book will enable us to examine the concept of human security and see the evolution of the security studies field. The second part of the course provides a compelling variation on the concept of international security through an examination of internal politics. The essays in the Rotberg volume ground our exploration in a series of detailed case studies of state weakness, collapse, and failure. Part III of the course shifts our focus from the nature of the problems to see how the “international community” understands these issues as being problematic (and thus of a concern to them). We do this through a conceptual understanding of the debate over the logic of humanitarian intervention and the related “responsibility to protect” (r2p) paradigm, as well as detailed case studies of UN interventions and international peace-building actions. To summarize: part I challenges traditional and universal definitions of sovereignty and security; part II shows the need to continue to reflect on the significance of sovereign states and the meaning of security by
examining how challenges within states influence internal and international security; and part III connects these sections by showing how the international community tries to reconcile the importance of upholding the fundamental norm of state sovereignty with the recognition that there might be many important reasons for getting involved in another state’s internal issues. This section also notes the difficulties in developing standards, procedures, and tactics that will effectively resolve those issues.

The United States’ goals of state-building in both Afghanistan and Iraq clearly demonstrate that international security today is more than just about whose armed forces dominate and that “reconstruction” is now considered part of the war effort. The theoretical and empirical goals of the course will allow us to understand those situations better, but the material we cover should also demonstrate the global nature of many of the issues. In addition to the substantive knowledge gained, I hope that this course helps to build other competencies. The reading assignments are designed to expose you to a range of theory and empirical evidence, and thus it will be important for us to think about how to differentiate among competing explanations. Because the causal explanations are often complex and multifaceted, we want to think about ways to reduce the complexity without sacrificing the context. The written assignments will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the course material (exams and paper), as well as to further develop your skills at writing a research paper in a multi-step process. Class discussions will help develop oral expression in a group setting.

**Required Readings** (all on reserve in the Main Library)
7. Daily reading of a periodical with good international coverage. *The New York Times* is typically the most complete (and easy for you to obtain in Case Hall *for free*), while the *Economist* also provides strong coverage. Knowledge of current developments is expected.
8. Any other readings as assigned. All would be available on-line or on reserve in the Madison Library. The copy of the syllabus posted on ANGEL will have direct links to the readings.

**Internet Resources**
Much material relevant to our course is available on-line. Some useful sites include:
2. Political Risk Yearbook (need to access through MSU library page)
3. Failed States Index: [www.fundforpeace.org](http://www.fundforpeace.org)
Evaluation (every assignment must be successfully completed to pass the course)
1. Midterm Exam. In class on Wednesday, March 2. **30% of grade**
2. Final Exam. During finals period: Tuesday, May 3. **30% of grade**
3. Research Paper. Further instructions with a detailed schedule (for the topic selection, draft, and revised copy) will be provided early in the semester. The proposal will be due on 2/18, the draft on 3/25, and the revised version on 4/15. **30% of grade**
4. Participation. Informed class participation is essential in this course. This course will be exciting and interesting provided you have read and thought about the material and have come prepared to talk about it. Your performance on exams will suffer if you don’t both attend class sessions and read the required material. **10% of grade**

For the exams, you are responsible for the lecture and discussion material and the assigned readings (even those not discussed in class). There will be no make-ups without prior permission based on an extremely good reason. Late papers will receive a deduction of .5 points per day (on a 4.0 scale).

**Honors Option:** For those interested in an Honors Option, please see me by the end of the first week of classes to make arrangements. There will be extra meetings and assignments (reading and written), and a 3.5 must be maintained in order to receive Honors credit.

The sessions will look at critical perspectives on humanitarian actions. Two books will guide our discussions:


**Academic Honesty:** Of course, no form of academic misconduct (on papers and exams) will be tolerated. All violations will face the harshest penalties allowed under MSU policy. That said, virtually all violations can be avoided if you speak to me first. Not waiting until the last minute to finish assignments helps to avoid most problems.
Schedule
Some adjustment can be made to the course schedule based on our progression through the material. I’ll announce any changes in class. I may also send out email to the class – be sure to check your accounts regularly. Feel free to come see me at any point if you wish to talk more about the course. I am generally around and available outside of office hours. I will answer email questions, but I will also ask to talk with you in person for subjects that cannot be treated appropriately electronically. I expect that I will meet with you regularly outside of class as you work through the material and as you prepare your papers. It is important to continue the conversation on the material among yourselves and with me outside of scheduled class time. Many of the issues addressed this semester can be linked to current events. I hope we have an opportunity inside and outside of class to discuss the connections.

Part I: Sovereignty, Order, and Security in Contemporary International Relations

Monday, January 10 – Introductions and overview of the course

Wednesday, January 12 – Competing Views of Order in the International System
   Reading: Cooper, part one

Wednesday, January 19 – Bringing the World Together
   Reading: Cooper, part two

Monday, January 24 – Understanding the multiple dimensions of sovereignty

Wednesday, January 26 – “Old” and “New” Wars
   Reading: Kaldor, introduction and chapter 2

Monday, January 31 – Globalization, Nationalism, and Global Civil Society
   Reading: Kaldor, chapters 3 and 5

Wednesday, February 2 – The Human Security Framework
   Reading: Kaldor, chapters 6-7

Part II: Stateness and Security

Monday, February 7 – Internal/External Security and the “Third World”
Wednesday, February 9 – Conceptual Understandings of State Weakness, Collapse, and Failure
Reading: Rotberg, chapter 1
“Failed States.” 2010. Foreign Policy, July/August. 74-79.

Monday, February 14 – Cases of Failure and Collapse I (DRC and Sierra Leone)
Reading: Rotberg, chapters 2-3

Wednesday, February 16 – Cases of Failure and Collapse II (Sudan and Somalia)
Reading: Rotberg, chapters 4-5

Monday, February 21 – Cases of Weakness I (Colombia and Indonesia)
Reading: Rotberg, chapters 6-7

Wednesday, February 23 – Cases of Weakness II (Sri Lanka and Tajikistan)
Reading: Rotberg, chapters 8-9

Monday, February 28 – Cases of Weakness III (Fiji, Haiti, and Lebanon)
Reading: Rotberg, chapters 10-12

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Wednesday, March 2: Midterm Exam
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Spring Break – March 7 – 11 – No Classes

Part III: International Responses to Internal Security Situations

a. Evolving Debates over the Scope of International Intervention
Monday, March 14 – How are mass atrocities an international problem?
Reading: Evans, chapter 1
Kaldor, chapter 1

Wednesday, March 16 – From “Intervening” to “Protecting”
Reading: Evans, chapters 2-3

Monday, March 21 – The Process of Acting: Before, During, and After
Reading: Evans, chapters 4-7

Wednesday, March 23 – Building the Capability and Will to Act
Reading: Evans, chapters 8-10

b. United Nations Interventionism
Monday, March 28 – Intervention in Cambodia
Reading: Berdal and Economides, chapter 2
Wednesday, March 30 – Interventions in the Balkans  
Reading: Berdal and Economides, chapters 3 and 8  
Kaldor, chapter 4

Monday, April 4 – Interventions in Somalia and Rwanda  
Reading: Berdal and Economides, chapters 4-5

Wednesday, April 6 – Interventions in Haiti and East Timor  
Reading: Berdal and Economides, chapters 6-7

c. International Peace-building  
Monday, April 11 – Security and Peace-building  
Reading: Call, chapters 1-2

Wednesday, April 13 – Building the State  
Reading: Call, chapters 3, 6, and 8

Monday, April 18 – Building the Economic Dimension  
Reading: Call, chapters 4, 5, and 7

Wednesday, April 20 – The cases of Somalia, Palestine, and Bosnia  
Reading: Call, chapters 9-11

Monday, April 25 – The cases of East Timor, Afghanistan, and Liberia  
Reading: Call, chapters 12-14

Wednesday, April 27 – Conclusions and Review

**Final Exam: Tuesday, May 3, 7:45-9:45am**