

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 489**  
**SENIOR CAPSTONE: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN A DIVIDED WORLD**

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Spring 2008  
W 3-550PM, 209 Harrison Hall

Professor Patrick J. Haney  
220 Harrison Hall  
529-4321  
haneypj@muohio.edu  
Office Hours: W 10-12, R 11-1230, and by appointment

**ABSTRACT**

This course is designed as a senior Capstone experience and will focus primary attention on explaining and understanding the theory and practice of managing conflict after the Cold War. Toward this end we will come to focus attention on the use of diplomacy and force by the United States in the post Cold-War period, the promise and problems of global diplomacy, institutions, and peacekeeping. Our "divided" world is rife with conflict and cooperation, forces of fragmentation and of integration. The U.S. is both leader and follower in this world. Our goal will be for students to develop an understanding of the ways that conflict may be managed and how the U.S. and others have tried to use diplomacy and force in this regard. In order to facilitate the movement of the students from being consumers of knowledge to being producers of knowledge, the Capstone will take the form of an analytic study group that will be further organized into task forces that will independently pursue subtopics of interest and report back to the full group. Students in the course will also take responsibility to lead learning in the course; learning in this Capstone will be largely student-driven, while the professor will facilitate this ongoing process.

**BOOKS**

- Gabriella Blum, *Islands of Agreement: Managing Enduring Armed Rivalries* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2007)
- Jean-Marc Coicaud, *Beyond the National Interest: The Future of UN Peacekeeping and Multilateralism in an Era of U.S. Primacy* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 2007)
- Chester A. Crocker, et al., eds., *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 2007)
- Alexander L. George, *Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice in Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 1994)

**POLITICAL SCIENCE AND THE MIAMI LIBERAL EDUCATION PLAN**

Students in the Capstone would be well served to have taken POL 141 (American Politics), POL 271 (World Politics), POL 373 (American Foreign Policy), POL 376 (U.S. National Security Policy), and/or the Thematic Sequence in the Comparative Analysis of Foreign Policy.

All Miami University Students must take a senior Capstone as part of the Miami Plan for Liberal Education. This course is designed to provide an opportunity to synthesize and integrate the academic programs of majors in Political Science and Diplomacy and Foreign Affairs as well as students who have taken the Thematic Sequence in foreign policy analysis, allowing students to apply concepts to "real world" settings and problems. The course promotes the goals of developing a critical analytic mind and the ability to reflect and act by developing in the students the ability to place themselves into a stream of political events and see the world from a variety of (often competing) perspectives. Students must interpret the historical background of ongoing conflicts and the competing visions and strategies that are involved. Ultimately, the students must make some choices or recommendations about policy options and weigh the possible consequences of different actions (or inaction). The course provides a variety of mechanisms for students to engage with other learners, in particular through the use of the task forces that work independently of each other but then report back to the whole and entertain questions and discussion. The role of the professor in the course is to facilitate this range of student activity and to lead the discussions of the whole study group concerning the readings that have been assigned. At the end of the semester all students will be given a questionnaire that allows them to evaluate the course against the stated goals of the Capstone. The results of the survey will be shared with the appropriate committee of the Department of Political Science that oversees the Capstone courses and their development.

#### **ACADEMIC HONESTY AND ATTENDANCE**

Students in the class are governed by the university rules pertaining to academic misconduct and class attendance (see Parts V and VII, Undergraduate Academic Regulations, *The Student Handbook*). Students are expected to attend all class sessions; see consistent with university rules there will be no penalty for absences on religious holidays (notify me in the first two weeks of the term if you will miss a class for religious observance). These and all other university rules are hereby incorporated by reference.

#### **CLASS ENVIRONMENT**

The professor is committed to the department's policy of supporting the learning of all students, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, race, age, religion, handicapping condition, or sexual preference. Students should be able to expect that their learning environments are free from any form of prejudice. If prejudicial behavior occurs, you should talk to the professor and identify the specific offense or disparaging behavior. If you are not content with the resolution of your complaint you are encouraged to consult with the Department Chair. The university exists for learning and the free and open pursuit of ideas. Anything that impedes this mission is antithetical to the role of a university and will not be tolerated.

#### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The course will proceed along two interrelated streams. In one stream, the course will rely on a standard seminar discussion format highlighted with some presentations by the professor. Here we will focus on developing an understanding of some basic concepts of conflict management, diplomacy, peacekeeping, and peace enforcement. In this stream we will rely heavily on student-led discussion, facilitated by the instructor. In the second stream, students will work independently and in task forces to pursue extensions of these concepts in a real world context

(current or historical). While the task forces will be fully responsible for the final three sessions of the capstone, they will be called upon throughout to report on developments in their domains. The students will organize themselves into the task forces (e.g., Task Force Middle East; Task Force India-Pakistan, etc.) during our first meeting.

Grades will be based on the following components: (a) a closed book final exam that will be a reflective and integrative assignment based mostly on the readings we share in common (25%); (b) participation in and contribution to the capstone and a student's task force which will include a peer review component carried out by fellow members of a student's task force, and a review of other students in the class of the session led by the task force (25% = 15% by the instructor, plus 5% by the other members of the task force plus 5% by the others in the class based on the session led by the student's task force). The task forces will be giving short reports and updates throughout the term, and then lead a major session toward the end of the term; (c) a major research paper that should be about 20 typed, double spaced pages in length and integrated into a single Task Force report (50% = 40% for the student's contribution and 10% reflecting the grade for the task force's overall report). All Task Force reports are due on Wednesday April 16. A hard copy should be submitted to the professor and include a guide to the students' contributions to that report, and a copy of the report will be submitted electronically to the Turnitin anti-plagiarism software via the course BlackBoard site.

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site. I use a ten-point grade scale with pluses and minuses.

Students' presence in class and ability to begin a dialogue about issues in the course is expected. *Students will be called upon to begin or extend our class discussion.* There will be no extra credit assignments. Late papers will not be accepted. There will be no make-up exams except under extraordinary circumstances, of which the professor should be informed before the exam. As for the final examination, the university rules stipulate that no student shall be required to take more than three (3) exams on any given day. If a student has four (4) exams scheduled for the same day, the professor may move an exam to a later time. The exam may be moved to an earlier time only with the permission of the professor and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. According to university rules, for those students with four or more exams in one day, the department whose course is nearest the beginning of the alphabet needs to make the adjustment. Finally, students who require special accommodations should consult with the Rinella Learning Assistance Center immediately so we can best meet your needs; directions from the Center about necessary accommodations must be presented during the first two weeks of the semester.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

**JAN 16:** Introduction. Task force formation.

**JAN 23:** Knowledge and action: *George, chapters 1-2.*

**JAN 30:** Knowledge and action: *George, chapters 3-end.*

**FEB 6:** Sources of conflict: *Crocker, parts 1 & 2.*

**FEB 13:** Force and conflict management: *Crocker, part 3.*

**FEB 20:** Conflict management: *Crocker, part 4.*

**FEB 27:** Institutions and conflict management: *Crocker, part 5.*

**MAR 5:** Limits of Governance? *Crocker, part 6.*

**MAR 12:** Peace Operations: *Coicaud, intro-chapter 3*

**MAR 26:** National interest & international interest, *Coicaud, chapters 4-end.*

**APR 2:** Managing enduring rivalries: *Blum, intro-chapter 3.*

**APR 9:** Managing enduring rivalries: *Blum, chapters 4-end.*

**APR 16:** *Task Force Reports*

**APR 23:** *Task Force Reports*

**APR 30:** *Task Force Reports*

**FINAL EXAM TUESDAY MAY 6 @ 530PM**