

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

Conflict in Ukraine
Ambassador (ret) Leslie Bassett
March 28-May 16, 2022
MW 4:00 pm – 5:20 pm
Rm 253 Kroc

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Overview

Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has decimated the foundations of international order established after World War II, creating global humanitarian, financial, and political crises and reviving the risk of nuclear conflict and chemical warfare. As this tragedy continues to unfold, we will analyze the relevant history, underlying causes, domestic considerations, national values and aspirations that lead to Russia's attack. We will also review efforts by the U.S., the E.U. and others to influence Russian President Vladimir Putin, as well as Ukrainian efforts to influence world opinion and garner support. We will assess the various tools and weapons – military and non-military – deployed by all interested parties (including non-governmental actors) in an effort to affect the outcome. As historic numbers of refugees flee Ukraine and civilian casualties mount due to Russian actions, we will assess the global response including possible prosecution of war crimes. We will analyze what this conflict and its eventual resolution mean for the international order, including NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), the European Union, and the United Nations. How will China, India, the DPRK and Iran reassess their global posture in light of this conflict? Finally, if time permits, we will look at secondary impacts on global commitments to climate change, support for democracy, renewable energy, pandemic response and other headline issues that have been eclipsed and perhaps sidelined by the Ukraine crisis.

This will be an in-person synchronous pass/fail course. It is therefore extremely important that students plan to attend all class sessions. Because the crisis is ongoing this syllabus is subject to frequent changes, please check blackboard and instructor emails consistently to receive updates.

All course directions, assignments, and updates will be posted on blackboard. Please check there regularly. If you have problems accessing blackboard, please contact the instructor.

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

Please offer constructive comments and suggestions at any time to make the experience better for you and your colleagues. I promise all suggestions will be carefully considered and adjustments made whenever possible.

Office hours are here for you! You will need to meet with the instructor outside of class as part of the participation grade process but please feel free to reach out anytime. Zoom meetings are available on almost any day of the week. In-person meetings can be scheduled at a mutually convenient time.

War is a devastating, horrific experience that is difficult to live, to witness, and to analyze. I respect the unique journey of all students, and with appropriate justification will happily adjust the syllabus to avoid topics or visuals that could make the course traumatic for you. Please contact me ASAP with any concerns you may have.

This class is extremely demanding. The secret to success is to keep up with the workload and come to class prepared.

Learning objectives:

- **Critical Thinking:** Students will become familiar with the full range of foreign policy actors and influences and their impact on global foreign policy challenges with specific reference to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and its implications for global order.
- **Operational Assessment:** Students will be able to identify current related challenges, opportunities or imperatives for action, and be able to identify key issues that must be addressed. They will also develop skills for effective team collaboration.
- **Social Responsibility:** Students will understand the roles non-governmental entities and/or individuals played in addressing the conflict and influencing outcomes, preparing themselves for a changemaking role in the future.
- **Personal Responsibility:** Students will form their own research agendas in foreign policy analysis related to the conflict; will participate in a constructive and respectful fashion in class; and will practice academic integrity in their assignments.
- **Communication:** Students will build their skills in effective communication to inform, engage, elicit information from and influence others.

Course Texts: All readings/reference materials will be available on-line or through the instructor.

Required readings/activities are listed for each class session and should be completed *prior* to the relevant session. Links are provided. **It is essential that you come to class prepared by having completed all preparatory materials.**

Students are required to keep up with the news before every class, as current events will be discussed at every session and an understanding of current dynamics will be

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

essential to your success in the course. Some appropriate resources include but are not limited to:

[Council on Foreign Relations](#)

[New York Times \(access through Copley Library via Proquest\)](#)

[BBC News](#)

[Chatham House](#)

[Brookings](#)

[Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#)

[Center for Strategic and International Studies](#)

[The Guardian](#)

[Der Spiegel International](#)

[France24 \(English\)](#)

[The Atlantic Council](#)

Grading and Assignments:

To receive a pass grade all students must complete the three following assignments and meet the “satisfactory” standard as defined in grading rubrics on blackboard.

- 1) Situation report (sitrep): Each student will present one update to the class summarizing events since the last class related to the attack on Ukraine including: status of military engagement; war crimes; assistance from outside entities; status of financial sanctions and their impacts; public discussion of intelligence; refugee flows and impacts; other humanitarian concerns; decisions or actions by regional entities including NATO, EU, World Court, UN, others; propaganda developments; status of disinvestment/reinvestment; nuclear concerns; leadership statements; outsider interventions (i.e. Anonymous hacks, Tesla satellite access, etc.)

OR

Reading summary: Each student will offer one 5-minute summary of the assigned readings related to the topic of discussion, and offer a brief analysis of possible future impacts of the issue on Russia, Ukraine, U.S. interests, regional organizations and/or global organizations.

- 2) Final paper: Each student will choose one consequence of Russia’s attack on Ukraine as it affects the regional or international dynamic. Define the issue; its status prior to the attack; how the attack impacted understandings, commitments or alignments; the situation as it has evolved through May 1, 2022, and your policy recommendations on how the US should respond. Possible topics could

include: NATO enlargement, deployment of financial sanctions, disinformation campaigns, using intelligence as a deterrent, the future of the UN Security Council and Russia's place on it; Ukraine as a precedent for Taiwan; the relevance of no-fly zones. Template provided on blackboard as well as grading rubric; paper should be 6-8 pages double-spaced, Times New Roman 12.

- a) Paper proposals: Prepare a two-three paragraph description for instructor approval. This proposal and its timely submission are required for a pass grade. It is due **April 20, 2022**.
- b) Final paper: The final paper will take into account instructor guidance, classmate commentary and your own research and analytical effort. The instructor will provide format guidelines and a template on blackboard. The final paper will count for 20 percent of your final grade. It is due **by 6:00 p.m. on Monday, May 23** via email to the instructor (and takes the place of the final exam).
- 3) **Participation: This is the most important component of your score.** Students are expected to have completed the preparatory assignments, attend every class, and actively contribute to class discussions. Unexcused absences can result in a failing grade. **Every student is expected to meet with the instructor at least once during (in person or virtual) office hours as part of the participation score.** Completion of the end of year course evaluation will also contribute to your participation score.

Late Assignment Policy: Out of respect to those who meet deadlines, extensions will be granted only in case of emergency. Late submissions without prior approval by the instructor can result in a failing grade.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Please familiarize yourself with the [University's policy on cheating, plagiarism and documentation](#). Any cases of suspected plagiarism will be reported directly to the appropriate dean.

Course Outline

Week One: Competing Maps and National Myths

Monday, March 28, 2022 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

4:00 pm-4:20 pm	Course introduction
4:20 pm-4:30 pm	Sitrep (instructor)
4:30 pm-5:20 pm	The changing alignments of Ukraine-Russia-Soviet Union-NATO-EU

Territorial boundaries and ethnic identities form part of the foundation for this crisis, so we will review the changing maps, ethnic populations and strategic alliances that are relevant to the current conflict.

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

Assigned Materials:

[“Yes He Would; Fiona Hill on Putin and Nukes,”](#) by Maura Reynolds, Politico, 02/28/2022

[“The 20th Century History Behind Putin’s Invasion of Ukraine,”](#) by Katya Cengel, Smithsonian Magazine, March 4, 2022.

[“Why NATO has Become a Flashpoint with Ukraine”](#), by Jonathan Masters, Council on Foreign Relations, January 22, 2022.

[“Crimea: Six Years After Illegal Annexation,”](#) by Steven Pifer, the Brookings Institute, Tuesday, March 17, 2020.

Wednesday, March 30, 2022 4:00 pm -5:20 pm

4:00-4:30 pm Reading summary

4:30-5:20 pm Competing Realities, Contradictory Values

We will read and compare leadership statements from Ukraine, Russia, the United States and the EU to identify the key narrative of each, the values they identify as relevant to the crisis, where there is conflict among them, and what that might mean for eventual resolution of the conflict.

Assigned Materials:

(note: this looks like a lot but they are mostly short speeches or remarks, don’t panic! All remarks are posted on blackboard)

Remarks by Russian President Vladimir :Putin, February 21, 2022
(provides lengthy justification for his as-yet pending attack)

Remarks by Russian President Putin February 24, 2022
(announcing the invasion, notice the very pointed references to NATO)

Read-outs of phone calls between Chinese President XiJinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin 2-25-2022 (note the slight but important differences between the two read-outs)

Remarks by President Biden in response to Russia’s invasion, February 24, 2022.

Remarks by French President Emanuel Macron, 2-25, 2022

Remarks by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, 2-27-2022

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

Remarks by Ukraine President Zelensky 2-24-2022

Week Two: The Gathering Storm

Monday, April 4, 2022 4:00-5:20 pm

4:00-4:20 pm Sitrep: Francesca Sparaco

4:20 pm-4:30 pm Reading Summary:

4:30 pm-5:20 pm Russia's recent history of military attack and global reactions

Russia's previous assaults in regions that formerly were part of the Soviet Union (including parts of Ukraine) have followed a pattern discernible in the current crisis, as have global reactions. It is relevant to review these quickly, assess whether reactions are different in this case and why, and what it might mean for Ukraine in the coming weeks as well as for Russia's further territorial ambitions.

Assigned Materials:

[Before Navalny: A Long History of Russian Poisonings](#), "ABC news, August 26, 2020 (this is relevant given allegations that Ukrainian negotiators with Russia allegedly suffered symptoms associated with possible poisoning)

(blackboard): A History of the Tensions Between Ukraine and Russia, compiled by Matthew Mpoke Bigg, The New York Times, March 26, 2022.

(blackboard) A Brutal Russian Playbook Reapplied in Ukraine, by Carlota Gall, The New York Times, March 29, 2022.

(blackboard) Re-examining Putin's Military Adventures in the Middle East, by Isaac Chotiner, The New Yorker, March 9, 2022.

Wednesday, April 6, 2022 4:00 pm – 5:20 pm

4:00 pm -4:30 pm Guest speaker: Kimberly Scrivener, Foreign Service Officer

Kimberly Scrivener currently serves as the Public Affairs Officer at the US Consulate in Tijuana, Mexico. Prior to August, 2021 Kimberly worked in the public affairs office of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, and can speak to the challenge of accessing and sharing information inside Russia.

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

4:30 pm – 4:45 pm Reading summary: Emilie McClellan

4:45 pm-5:20 pm Efforts at Deterrence

In a highly unusual move the United States revealed intelligence related to Russian intentions in an effort to pre-empt Russian disinformation, deter Russian aggression, and create urgency inside both Ukraine and the global community. We will discuss this strategy and how well it worked, as well as the impact of eroded confidence in U.S. intelligence post-Iraq, and whether that stigma has a continuing impact on U.S. warnings about Russian intentions. We will also review European, Israeli and other efforts to deter Putin's attack.

Assigned Materials:

[“The Two Sides of Deterrence in Ukraine,”](#) by Benjamin Jensen, Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 30, 2022.

[“Nuclear Deterrence After Ukraine”](#), by Joseph Nye, Project Syndicate, March 1, 2022.

(blackboard) “The Case for a Ukrainian Nuclear Deterrent”, by John Mearsheimer, Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993

please note the date on this article! Mearsheimer is one of the biggest critics of NATO expansion as a provocation for Russia and is frequently cited regarding the current situation. In this article he suggests the best deterrent to Russia-Ukraine tensions would have been to let Ukraine keep its arsenal of 4000 nuclear weapons, which in the end were removed). What do you think?

[“Congressman argues US deterrence strategy failed to protect Ukraine and could fail Taiwan too,”](#) by Megan Eckstein, Defense News, March 3, 2022.

Week Three: Humanity and War

Monday, April 11 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

4:00 pm-4:20 pm Sitrep: Miguel Cruz

4:20 pm – 4:30 pm Reading summary: Hannah Kildow

5:20 pm Can War Really Have Rules – and If So, Who Enforces Them?

We will discuss the human consequences of Russia's attack on Ukraine and its neighbors, as well as what constitutes a legitimate target in an unprovoked war; who

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

regulates humanitarian corridors and civilian protections in a time of war, and what the consequences might be for violating the rules of war in Ukraine.

Assigned Materials:

[The Laws of War in a Nutshell](#), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), October 19, 2016 (watch the video too).

[The Rules of War Are Being Broken – What Exactly Are They?](#), by Joanne Lu, National Public Radio, June 28, 2018 (you can watch the referenced video too but warning it is sad)

[Report on Preliminary Examination Activities 2020](#), Office of the Prosecutor, International Criminal Court, 14 December 2020, pp. 68-72 (Ukraine Chapter).

[Statement of ICC Prosecutor on the Situation in Ukraine](#), 28 February 2022.

Wednesday, April 13 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

**4:00-4:30 pm Guest Speaker: Shelby Magid, The Atlantic Council

4:30-4:45 pm Reading summary: Daniela Velarde

4:45-5:20 pm Information Warfare

We'll review weapons and tactics introduced by Russia and rebuffed with some success by Ukraine, as well as information censorship, partisan narratives, the proliferation of drone videos and other means to controlling or driving public reactions to military operations. We'll also look at weapons shipments to Ukraine and no-fly zones; and discuss whether either or both constitute an act of war. Finally, we will discuss what if any conventional military tactics by Russia would prompt NATO engagement.

Assigned Materials:

***Who is Behind #IStandwithPutin?* by Carl Miller, The Atlantic Monthly, April 5, 2022. (blackboard)**

[Putin's Information Warfare in Ukraine: Soviet Origins of Russia's Hybrid Warfare](#), by Maria Snegovaya,, Institute for the Study of War, September, 2015. (just read the executive summary as it appears on the landing page; you don't have to read the full report!)

[Fact vs Fiction: Russian Disinformation on Ukraine](#), U.S. Department of State, January 20, 2022.

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

[The Russian “Firehose of Falsehood” Propaganda Model](#), by Christopher Paul and Miriam Matthews, the Rand Corporation, 2016.

Week Four: Financial Warfare

Monday April 18 NO CLASS – EASTER BREAK

Wednesday, April 20 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

*** paper proposals are due to the instructor before the end of class

4:00 pm-4:20 pm Sitrep: Jonas Bimshas

4:20 pm – 4:30 pm Reading summary:

4:30-5:20 pm Detonating Financial Sanctions

We’ll discuss the full array of unprecedented financial sanctions imposed on Russia for its attack and debate whether the composite of actions constitutes an act of war or not. We will also review individual business decisions linked to the sanctions, as well as effects on food and energy markets. Finally, we’ll look at unintended consequences and whether sanctions of this magnitude might prompt a worldwide recession.

Assigned Materials:

[Russia’s War on Ukraine: A Sanctions Timeline](#), Peterson Institute on International Economics, April 12, 2022

As your read through this, note which countries refuse to impose sanctions, and the absence of multilateral action outside of the EU

[“What Do Sanctions Help Achieve? An Expert Explains”](#), World Economic Forum, Jonathan Hackenbroich and Abhinav Chugh, 22 March 2022.

[Economic Sanctions: Too Much of a Bad Thing](#), by Richard Haas, Brookings Institute, June 1, 1991

As you read this, consider how effective sanctions have been in the past, and assess how likely they are to have the desired impact in Russia today

[“With Sanctions, U.S. and Europe Aim to Punish Putin and Fuel Russian Unrest”](#), by Edward Wong and Michael Crowley, The New York Times, March 4, 2022 (blackboard)

As you read this consider what the goals of sanctions are now, and how they have evolved over the past few weeks

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

Week Five: Redlines and Threats of Non-Conventional Warfare

Monday, April 25, 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

4:00 pm-4:20 pm Sitrep:

4:20 pm-4:30 pm Reading Summary: Collin Hackett

4:20 pm-5:20 pm Cyber, Chemical or Nuclear – What Might Putin Choose and Why?

Publicly released U.S. intel assesses Russia has all three capabilities, and Russian leader Putin is believed to have threatened to resort to a nuclear capability if pressed. We will look at what Russia has previously deployed, what has been identified so far in the Ukraine attack, and what might prompt Russia to escalate to these capabilities.

Assigned Materials

[Russian Cyber Units](#), Congressional Research Service, February 2, 2022

[Tracking Cyber Operations and Actors in the Russia-Ukraine War](#), Council on Foreign Relations, Kyle Fendorf and Jessie Miller, March 24, 2022

Note that Russia is not the only one using cyber weapons, and hacker “volunteers” are also engaged!

“Why deterring Russian use of chemical weapons is a challenge”, by Hannah Notte, The Washington Post, April 18, 2022 (blackboard)

“The risk that the war in Ukraine escalates past the nuclear threshold,” The Economist, March 22, 2022. (blackboard)

Wednesday, April 27, 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

4:00 pm-4:20 pm Reading Summary: Kevin Klein

4:20 pm-5:20 pm (T) guest speaker: Ambassador (retired) John Heffern: Where are NATO’s Redlines Regarding Non-Conventional Weapons?

Would NATO respond to the use of non-conventional weapons in Ukraine, and if so, how?

Assigned Materials:

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

[“NATO Deputy: Putin Can’t Win His “Unprovoked, Illogical” War”, AP News Service, March xx, 2022.](#)

[How NATO Can Curb Russia’s Chemical Weapons Threat](#), by *Natasha Lander Finche*, *The Atlantic Council*, April 8, 2022.

[Putin May Ramp Up His War in Ukraine – Here is How NATO Should Respond](#), by *Ivo Daalder*, *The Guardian*, March 24, 2022.

**[NATO’s Nuclear Deterrence Policy and Forces](#), NATO website, February 23, 2022.
Please read all sections and watch the Jessica Cox video**

Week Six: NATO, EU and Regional Implications of the Ukraine Crisis

Monday, May 2, 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

4:00 pm-4:20 pm Sitrep: Nick Segovia

4:20 pm-4:30 pm Reading Summary: Alyanna Jalbuena

4:30 pm-5:20 pm Chilling Effect or Driving Force: How the Ukraine Conflict will Affect EU/NATO Expansion

Changing course, Ukraine has indicated it will no longer seek NATO membership. There is speculation that Nordic countries which long sought neutrality may now seek NATO membership. We will look at the current status of membership in NATO and the EU, and assess how Russia’s focus on their respective membership may affect membership in each organization.

Assigned Materials:

[Joining the EU](#), European Union website accessed April 28, 2022.

[Ukraine’s EU Membership and the Geostrategy of Democratic Self-Preservation](#), Richard Young, Carnegie Europe, April 1, 2022.

[Enlargement](#), North Atlantic Treaty Organization website accessed April 28, 2022.

[Press point with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola](#), April 28, 2022, NATO website.

Wednesday, May 4, 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

4:00 pm-4:30 pm NEW and in PERSON! Special guest David Miramontes, former Peace Corps Ukraine and current advocate for Ukrainian refugees.

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

4:30-4:45 pm Reading Summary: Alexa Sandberg

4:45 pm-5:20 pm After Ukraine, Where Will Russia Go Next?

Putin has often talked about uniting territories occupied by ethnic Russians and restoring the Soviet Union under Russian leadership. Experts suggest should he prevail in Ukraine Putin will be emboldened to proceed with further integration efforts by persuasion, intimidation or force. We will discuss whether this assessment is accurate, where Putin might go next, and whether the West has any credible deterrence tools to impede his ambitions.

Assigned Materials:

[**28 Years After Restoring Independence the Shadow of the Russian Bear is Still Swirling Over Estonia**](#), Hani Zaitoun, *The Pulitzer Center*, November 20, 2019.

[**After Ukraine, Europe Wonders Who's Russia's Next Target**](#), Dusan Stojanovic, *Associated Press*, published by ABC News, March 9, 2022.

[**"With Eyes on Russia, the U.S. Military Prepares for an Arctic Future**](#), by Mike Baker, *The New York Times*, March 27, 2022. (blackboard)

Week Seven: Is This the End of the Rules Based International Order?

Monday, May 9, 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

4:00 pm – 4:20 pm Sitrep: Kaiya Mitchell

4:20 pm-4:30 pm Reading summary: Erin Dwyer

4:30 pm-5:20 pm Russia Vetoes the UN

The UNSC served as a platform for criticism of Russian actions, but was otherwise powerless to sanction or deter Russian aggressions. Diplomats at multilateral gatherings shunned Russian counterparts by walking out of meetings, but otherwise response to Russian aggression has been organized and implemented outside the UN. We will discuss whether the UN can recover from its irrelevance, and what it would take to restore its role.

Assigned Materials:

[**"Ukraine, the UN and History's Greatest Broken Promise,"**](#) by Fergal Keane, *BBC News*, 9 April 2022

[**Antonio Guterres Urged to Take Lead in Securing Peace in Ukraine or Risk Future of UN**](#), by Patrick Wintour, *The Guardian*, April 19, 2022.

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

[“The UN and the War in Ukraine: Key Information,” UN Regional Information Center \(Western Europe\), updated 3 May 2022](#)

Please note the plethora of UN agencies active in Ukraine and consider whether the UN as a whole is responding effectively to the crisis, or whether the UN Security Council’s paralysis undermines the entire UN effort.

[The UN Takes a Step to Put Veto Users Under the Spotlight](#), The Associated Press published on NPR, April 27, 2022.

Wednesday, May 11, 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

4:00 pm-4:30 pm

Guest Speaker: Ambassador (retired) Susan Elliott, President and CEO, National Committee on American Foreign Policy: “Broader Impacts of the Ukraine Conflict”

4:40-5:00 pm Reading Summary

Will China use Russia’s rationale for annexing Taiwan? Will a possible Iran nuclear deal fall due to Russian intransigence? Will the U.S. sacrifice principle for access to oil in the Middle East and Latin America? What lessons will the DPRK take from the Ukraine conflict? Based in part on student selections for final papers, we will discuss the broader implications of the Ukraine conflict on the international system.

Assigned Materials:

“Chinese Ambassador: Where We Stand on Ukraine,” by Qin Gang, The Washington Post, March 15, 2022 (blackboard)

“Ukraine War and Pandemic Force Nations to Retreat From Globalization,” by Edward Wong and Ana Swanson, The New York Times, March 22, 2022. (blackboard)

[How Tehran is Connecting the Ukraine Invasion to the Iran Deal](#), Karim Sadjadpour, The Carnegie Endowment for Peace, March 22, 2022

[Ukraine War’s Impact on Trade and Development](#); UNCTAD rapid assessment, 16 March 2022.

Monday, May 16 (LAST CLASS!) 4:00 pm-5:20 pm

Simulation: Addressing the conflict in Ukraine

Using knowledge earned throughout the course, students will simulate a UN-led effort to halt military confrontation in Ukraine through a brief but intense negotiation process.

Updated 5-9-2022 to reflect simulation

Each student will receive shared background information and a UN proposal as well as personalized role instructions and goals. In class teams will meet briefly to establish their objectives and approaches, then participate in UN-led discussions in the hopes of achieving some kind of agreement within the time available.

MAY 23, 2022: FINAL EXAM

Final papers must be submitted by email to the instructor by 5 pm.