Basic Information

Meeting Time   TBA
Meeting Place  TBA
    My Office  322c North Hall
    My Phone   608-263-2024
    My Email   kydd@wisc.edu
Office Hours   TBA

Topic

The purpose of this course is to survey applications of game theory to international relations and further develop students’ game theoretic modeling skills. Students should have some familiarity with both game theory and international relations theory. We will cover cooperation, bargaining, the origins and termination of war, communication, multilateral politics, and the impact of domestic politics on international relations.

Textbook

The lectures will be based on chapters from my book.

Hereinafter this will be referred to as *IRT*.

**Requirements**

Students will be required to complete a research paper for the course. The paper should take a problem of interest to the student and develop a model of it. A good ideal to strive for is the kind of model paper found in *International Organization*, where the problem is well defined and grounded in the empirical and non-formal literature and the model is relatively simple and used to provide theoretical and substantive insights. The finished result can form the basis for a dissertation chapter or a stand alone article.

Students will turn in two preliminary items and then the final paper.

- First is a research proposal which will include a statement of the topic and question to be addressed, along with a brief literature review. This will eventually become the introduction to the paper.

- Second is the set up of the model. This will include the enumeration of players, description of the game tree or strategy space, utility functions for the players and information structure of the game.

- Third is the final paper. This will solve the model and discuss the results. Length is not crucial, but shoot for 8–10 thousand words.

The proposal and model setup may be resubmitted once after responding to my comments.

All written material must have a title page resembling that usually found on an article manuscript to be circulated at a conference. It must have your name, university affiliation, course identification, date, and a title that informs the reader of both the topic and what stage it is, for instance; Paper Proposal, Model Setup or Final Draft. The body must be double spaced with page numbers and citations using the author date system with a reference list at the back in the APSA style. Papers must be submitted via email, by noon on the date due. The file name must be your last name, followed by a 1 for the proposal, 2 for the model set up and 3 for the final paper. For instance,
Smith’s model setup would be smith2.pdf. Use of LaTeX is encouraged but optional.

In addition there are problems at the end of Chapters 2-11. Each problem set must be turned in in class the week after the material is covered in class. The grade will be determined as follows.

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Course Schedule: Spring 2018

TBA

Further Readings

In addition, for each week I list some readings that are a mixture of earlier material that you should have already read or should read now to catch up, and later material on the topic of the week. I strongly recommend that you read some of this literature each week, but don’t assign specific articles as required because each of you will have different ones that you have already read and different interests you want to pursue. After covering the lecture material we can discuss the readings if desired. At the end of the list of lectures I list additional topics and readings you may be interested in pursuing.

Helpful textbooks on game theory include


Some other readings may be useful to help familiarize yourself with the approach and debates surrounding it.


- Robert Powell. *In the Shadow of Power*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1999, is an exemplary application of game theory to international security questions, primarily relating to bargaining and war.


Ten years earlier, *World Politics* published a symposium on rational deterrence theory.

Lecture Topics and Additional Readings

Lecture 1 Introduction

• Kydd, *IRT*, Chapter 1.

Additional Readings


Lecture 2 What States Want

• Kydd, *IRT*, Chapter 2.

Additional Readings


Lecture 3 Varieties of Strategic Settings

• Kydd *IRT*, Chapter 3.

Additional Readings


Lecture 4 Bargaining

- Kydd *IRT*, Chapter 4.

Additional Readings


Lecture 5 Preventive War

- Kydd *IRT*, Chapter 5.

Additional Readings

- James D. Fearon. Bargaining over objects that influence future bargaining power. 1996

Lecture 6 Private Information and War

- Kydd *IRT*, Chapter 6.
Additional Readings


Lecture 7: Arms Competition and War

- Kydd *IRT* Chapter 7.

Additional Readings


Lecture 8: Cooperation Theory

• Kydd *IRT*, Chapter 8.

Additional Readings


Lecture 9 Diplomacy and Signaling

• Kydd *IRT*, Chapter 9.

Additional Readings


• Avidit R. Acharya and Kristopher W. Ramsay. The calculus of the security dilemma. 2011

Lecture 10 Multilateral Politics

• Kydd *IRT*, Chapter 10.

Additional Readings


Lecture 11 Domestic Politics and International Relations

• Kydd *IRT*, Chapter 11.

Additonal Readings


Additional Topics

1. War Termination

- James D. Fearon. Fighting rather than bargaining

2. Alliances and the Balance of Power


3. Democracy and War


4. Audience Costs


5. Mediation and Intervention


6. Empirical Implications of Theoretical Models


7. Reputation


8. International Institutions


• Fey, Jo and Kenkel Critique of Chapman 07.


References


