Syllabus

Coercion in International Relations: Deterrence Compellence and Coercive Diplomacy - 58895

Last update 10-08-2017

HU Credits: 4

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: international relations

Academic year: 0

Semester: Yearly

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Daniel Sobelman

Coordinator Email: Daniel.sobelman@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours:

Teaching Staff: Dr. Daniel Sobelman
**Course/Module description:**
In international relations, actors aspire to achieve desirable outcome and prevent undesirable outcome. Whether one is a superpower, a state, or a violent non-state actor—all actors want their capabilities to matter. It is thus counter-intuitive that sheer military strength and a favorable balance of power do not guarantee that actors will get their way in international affairs, let alone achieve decisive outcomes. International Relations literature tells us that the United States, for example, practices successful coercion less than half the time. Conversely, weak actors such as Hamas and Hezbollah often get their way at the expense of militarily superior states. What is coercion and what is it a function of? What determines whether it fails or succeeds? Tackling these questions, this course will discuss the manner in which coercion is being impacted by the ever-increasing availability of advanced technology, the advent of globalization, and the diffusion of military power.

**Course/Module aims:**
The course will provide students with the conceptual tools, as well as with a contemporary and historical knowledge to grasp the manner in which actors pursue coercive strategies to impact others’ behavior and shape their own strategic environment.

**Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:**
- Master the fundamental principles and scholarly vocabulary pertaining to coercion
- Differentiate among the various theoretical phenomena and strategies associated with coercive behavior and strategy
- Harness the knowledge acquired in the course in to analyze and explain crises and conflicts in the Israeli and global arenas
- Critically analyze the manner in which actors have pursued coercive strategies in a bid to achieve their interests

**Attendance requirements(%):**
- Up to three unexcused absences

**Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:** Seminar
Course/Module Content:
1. Introduction

2. Deterrence, Bargaining and Coercive Diplomacy: Structural and Strategic Elements

3. How does coercion work? What is military power good for?

4. Deterrence as a phenomenon before World War II

5. The age of the Absolute Weapon: The evolution of Deterrence Theory and Strategy after 1945

6. Credibility and Coercion: Why do actors struggle to establish and maintain credibility?

7. From Massive Retaliation to Mutually Assured Destruction: The evolution of the theoretical and strategic debate on deterrence in the early stages of the Cold War.

8. The Cuban Missile Crisis: Analyzing the most formative crisis in the Cold War. How did President Kennedy succeed at forcing the Soviet Union to withdraw its nuclear warheads from Cuba? Was it strategic success or mostly luck?

9. Film.

10. The Vietnam War: How and Why did the United States fail to coerce North Vietnam? Is airpower an effective coercive tool?

11. The coercive advantages and disadvantages of nuclear weapons: Are nukes good for anything besides strategic deterrence?

12. From Nuclear to Conventional Deterrence

13. Are the core prerequisites for successful deterrence realistic?


16. Cyber Coercion: Can Deterrence Work in Cyberspace?


18. Israel’s Deterrence Strategy.
19. Israel’s Deterrence Strategy (Continued).

20. Why Strong Actors Don’t Always Get Their Way and Vice Versa.

21. Asymmetrical Coercion: Can Israel Deter and Defeat its Enemies?


23. Israel-Hamas: Success and Failure in Israel’s Attempts to Deter Hamas

24. Deterrence and Compellence in Israel’s Efforts to Block Iran’s Path to the Bomb.

25. The Case of North Korea: Pyongyang Deters its Way to the Bomb.

26. Conclusion.

Required Reading:


Stephen J. Cimbala, Coercive Military Strategy (Austin: Texas A&M University Press,
1998), pp. 43-68.


" kısı_method_1 דמה אדמסקי, "ה 무슨ות המסה הישראלית להחרה ודיאן בקארת acumית התאצורות ימיות והפרקטיס" עשתונות, גיליון 8 (אוקטובר 2014), עמי' 43-7.

English URL


مونי חורב, מבצעי הרתעה: מה יוכו וולטר אישמה, מירב, רווחת, פונטנו, גבעות ביבשת המזרח התיכון, ספרה, מרכז בגין-סאדאת למחקרים אסטרטגיים, אוקטובר 2015.


Additional Reading Material:

Alexander L. George, Coercive Diplomacy, in in Robert J. Art and Kenneth N. Waltz (eds.) The Use of Force (Seventh Edition), pp. 72-78.


Herman Kahn, Thinking About the Unthinkable, (New York: Boulder, 1962).


Dianne Pfundstein Chamberlain, “It is Time to Drive a Stake Into the Heart of the American Credibility Myth,” War on the Rocks, September 27, 2016.


עמית שיניאק, התהוות המדינה במרחב הספר המקוון: השוואה תיאורטית והיסטורית, בין הקטבים, עילוי 3 (דצמבר, 2014), עמ 13-44.


גילה הנكة, "מה אם לא להתרענו את חיזבאללה?", צבא ואסטרטגיה, כור 6, Eylül 2014, דצמבר 3, גיליון 6, עמ 109-130.

רסן א, ניצחון מהאוויר: אסטרטגיה של מלחמות הרתעה, בק懑יבוס בさらに 12, עמ 65-78.

ראיות עם ראש המוסד לשעבר אפרים הלוי בעקבות מבצע צוק איתן (קישור).


Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 50%
Presentation 0%
Participation in Tutorials 0%
Project work 0%
Assignments 25%
Reports 25%
Research project 0%
Quizzes 0%
Other 0%

Additional information:
End of year written examination 50%

Mid-Year Assignment 25%
Reports throughout year 25%