Government 688
Political Economy and National Security

Jonathan Kirshner                     Spring 2007

This seminar considers the relationship between economics and national security. While considering a broad number of issue areas, the principal theme of the course is the way in which economic factors (and political economy) fundamentally influence the national security of states, and the way in which those factors shape and constrain the strategies chosen to pursue that security. This is a research seminar – that is, our focus is how to evaluate and conduct research related to questions of political economy and national security.

Some of the books have been made available at the Campus Store. All the readings are on reserve in Olin 405. You will find books on a shelf and articles in a box labeled "688". Many of the articles are in journals such as International Security and World Politics that are shelved in 405, and will not be in the box. (Others are readily available on-line – a label on each week’s folder will tell you what is where.) Please use the reserve readings only in 405 and put the photocopies back in the appropriate folders after you are finished with them.

This course has three principal requirements: 1)A short paper, due before Friday, March 16 (17%); 2)Class participation: Students are also expected to come to class prepared to discuss the required readings (33%); 3)A research paper, due at the end of the semester (50%)

Week 1: Introduction (January 24)

Week 2: The Economic Bases of National Power (January 31)
Week 3: Grand Strategy and the Budget Constraint (February 7)


Week 4: Economics and War (February 14)


Week 5: Interdependence and Rivalry (February 21)


Week 6: Economic Sanctions and Statecraft (February 28)


Week 7: The Political Economy of Influence and Dependence (March 7)


Week 8: Economic Interests and the National Interest (March 14)


Trubowitz, Defining the National Interest: Conflict and Change in American Foreign Policy (1998), pp. 1-95, 235-45.


Week 9: Globalization and National Security (March 26)


Week 10: Energy (April 4)


Week 12: Bringing It All Back Home (April 18)


Week 13: Student Presentations of Work in Progress I (April 25)

Week 14: Student Presentations of Work in Progress II (May 2)