Poverty. Inequality. Scarce resources. Ethnic identity. Territorial ambitions. Ideology. Political aspirations. As we enter a new millennium, nearly every area of the world is beset by violent conflict arising from these and many other sources. This introductory-level course will provide you with basic conceptual tools and information to help you understand some of the major problems in world politics in recent decades and think critically about possible solutions to those problems. The primary focus will be on the causes of conflict and war; the advantages and disadvantages of and alternatives to force for achieving foreign policy goals; and ways of preventing or reducing the likelihood, severity and duration of war. The course will include a simulation of the United Nations General Assembly in which all students will participate as delegates.

Prerequisites: none, but background or interest in world politics or history will help.

Key words: international, war, conflict, force, UN, diplomacy