International Relations 101: Midterm Review

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Stuff People Messed Up Last Year

Advice on Quotes

- Do not rewrite the quote.
 - Tell me something I don't know instead.
- Bad: "Fearon argues that wars occur due to incomplete information, commitment problems, and issue indivisibility."
- Good: "Commitment problems cause wars because _____. Issue indivisibility causes wars because ____."

Quote #1: War's Inefficiency Puzzle

- Correct: A research question that asks why states choose to fight wars when there settlements which are mutually preferable to war.
- Incorrect: There exist mutually preferable settlements to war, so war should never happen.



Giacomo Chiozza

Essay #1: Issue Indivisibility

- Nuclear weapons are a means to an end.
 - The states negotiate over them because they know more power will lead to a different distribution of the good (territory, policy, whatever).
- Thus, nuclear weapons are not an indivisible issue.
 - Having nukes is indivisible, but they are not issues.

- 1. ATQ/ATFQ
- 2. Make your first paragraph one sentence, and make that sentence your thesis.
- 3. Be direct. Don't hide your answer. Don't make it hard for us to find your answer.
- 4. Use paragraphs.
- 5. Cite the readings.

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Fun Facts about Theses

- A thesis ATQ/ATFQ.
 - Tell me something I couldn't find out from reading the question.
- Examples of anti-theses:
 - War between Israel and Iran this year is very likely. This essay will explain why.
 - War has been an ongoing problem for humanity.
 We should all be interested in studying war. It is an important topic because people die.

A Template

- Here's an example of a good thesis:
 - Three rationalist explanations for war between Israel and Iran are ______, _____, and _____ due to ______.

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Be Direct

- Don't write sentences that don't ATQ/ATFQ.
- Bad ways to start an essay:
 - War has been an ongoing problem for humanity.
 - We should all be interested in studying war.
 - War is interesting because people die.
 - For centuries, mankind has pondered a vital question: War—what is it good for? Some say absolutely nothing, but I will challenge that assertion in this essay.

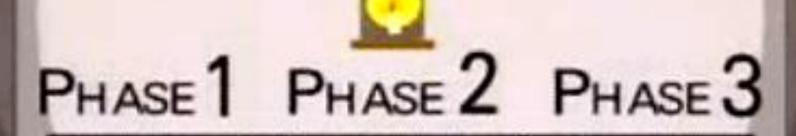
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The purpose of this slide is to explain why you should use paragraphs. Note that there are no run on sentences in this paragraph. I am only using short sentences. Each sentence has a straightforward meaning. Yet you will probably have a hard time finishing this paragraph. Are you still with me? Good. I hope you are having a wonderful day. I am so far. I enjoy teaching. I also enjoy corrupting the youth with my teaching. I guess I should not have typed that last sentence. Oh well. Anyway...where was I? Oh yes—the usefulness of paragraphs. While they are necessary organize your thoughts, they also have a more practical purpose. If you stopped reading this paragraph after the third sentence, you probably stopped reading this slide in general. That is normal. When a reader gets bored of a paragraph (or is skimming your paper), he skips to the next one. If the next paragraph is two pages away, your reader will miss a lot of information. Fortunately, I am A Good Teaching Assistant™, so I would not get bored or skim your material. But I heard you have an evil TA for psychology. So, to practice appeasing him, you might as well adopt this strategy in Introduction to International Relations as well.

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A Subtle Suggestion



Read "Rationalist Explanations for War"



Profit