

**ASSIGNMENT #1:  
BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE (“LITERATURE REVIEW”) PAPER  
ON A POLICY-RELEVANT ISSUE**

**NOTES:** Each student is responsible for one short (3-6 page) *background knowledge paper* over the course of the semester. Each opportunity to write background or “literature review” papers will be associated with a set of in-class discussions about a theme or policy problem or issue. Students will be the primary instigators of discussion and debate over these issues during the associated class session. The background knowledge paper is due at the beginning of the class session with which it is associated.

**TASK:** You have been asked to prepare a background knowledge paper that summarizes what the research in the academic community tells us about ONE of the following sets of policy-relevant questions (due date in parentheses):

1. *What is the impact the media on foreign policy? (Sept. 11)*
2. *What is the impact of public opinion on foreign policy? (Sept. 11)*
3. *When is diplomacy by third party mediators effective? (Sept. 21)*
4. *Are economic sanctions effective? (Sept. 21)*
5. *What causes arms races between countries? (Sept. 28)*
6. *What causes the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction? (Sept. 28)*
7. *Why do people fight in civil wars? (Oct. 7)*
8. *How do civil wars end? (Oct. 7)*
9. *Why do states slaughter their own people? (Oct. 7)*
10. *What factors lead to state failure? (Oct. 7)*
11. *Does terrorism work? (Oct. 19)*
12. *When do countries respond to terrorism with torture? (Oct. 19)*
13. *What causes refugee flows and mass migration (Oct. 26)?*
14. *Does trade lead to more conflict or cooperation? (Oct. 30)*
15. *How does increased trade affect human rights? (Oct. 30)*
16. *How does foreign direct investment affect economic development? (Oct. 4)*
17. *Is foreign aid allocation determined by recipient need or donor interest? (Nov. 11)*
18. *(When) does aid lead to economic growth or development? (Nov. 11)*
19. *Is the International Criminal Court effective? (Nov. 16)*
20. *Are human rights treaties effective? (Nov. 16)*
21. *Does peacekeeping work? (Nov. 18)*
22. *Do non-governmental organizations lead countries to change their human rights behavior? (Nov. 20)*
23. *How has climate change affected conflict (Dec. 9)?*

A background paper addresses what we (as an academic community) “know” about a specific question of interest. Students will be assigned a policy-relevant question of interest, and be given leads as to two sources of academic research that address that question. Students can then review what we know about that topic via those two papers, and will also branch out to include one or two more academic sources.

Each paper should identify the question of interest, identify the possible answers that have been examined in current research, evaluate what we know about the question, and using that knowledge suggest (and explain) the best policy options available when faced with these situations.

Be sure to cite all sources and include a bibliography, using the APSA Style Manual as your guide.

**PAPER TOPIC CHOICE SHEET FOR ASSIGNMENT #1:  
POLICY PAPER ON ISSUES RAISED IN READINGS AND IN CLASS**

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Identify which topics you would rather write on for Paper #1, in order of preference. Identify first preference with the number **1**, second preference with the number **2**, etc. Identify at least **FIVE** choices.

- \_\_\_\_\_ *What is the impact the media on foreign policy? (Sept. 11)*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *What is the impact of public opinion on foreign policy? (Sept. 11)*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *When is diplomacy by third party mediators effective? (Sept. 21)*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Are economic sanctions effective? (Sept. 21)*
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- \_\_\_\_\_ *Does peacekeeping work? (Nov. 18)*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *Do non-governmental organizations lead countries to change their human rights behavior? (Nov. 20)*
- \_\_\_\_\_ *How has climate change affected conflict (Dec. 9)?*

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_