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 policy-relevant questions (due date in parentheses) listed below. 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. Cite all sources; include a bibliography, using the APSA Style Manual as your guide.

What is the impact the media on foreign policy? (Jan. 31) - Jonah Freedman, Fiona Schieve
3. ?

What is the impact of public opinion on foreign policy? (Jan. 31) - Abigail Beard
3. ?

Are economic sanctions effective? (Feb. 12) - Mafel Deleon
3. ?
What causes the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction? (Feb. 14) - Grace Hodges, Gordon Reeves
3. ?

Why do people fight in civil wars? (Feb. 21) - Ariel Medellin Perez, Jerry Yang
3. ?

How do civil wars end? (Feb. 21) - Ussama Mustafa
3. ?

Why do states slaughter their own people? (Feb. 21) - Tanner Burt
3. ?

What factors lead to state failure? (Feb. 21) - Tim Cotter, Colin Czubaruk
3. ?

Does terrorism work? (Feb. 26) - Pookar Chand
3. ?

What causes refugee flows and mass migration (Mar. 2)? - Sumiya Ganbaatar, Ryan Khazra
3. ?

Does trade lead to more conflict or cooperation? (Mar. 4) - Tristan Caffrey
3. ?
How does increased trade affect human rights? (Mar. 4)  
- Haley Huett, Carter Schmidt  
3. ?

How does foreign direct investment affect economic development? (Mar. 23)  
- Gabriel Melmed, Aimee Ouyang  
3. ?

(When) does aid lead to economic growth or development? (Apr. 3)  
- Joey Harris, Michael Thomas  
3. ?

Is the International Criminal Court effective? (Apr. 8)  
- Emma Swindell  
3. ?

Are human rights treaties effective? (Apr. 8)  
- Ethan Dasilva, Laureen Egyin  
3. ?

Does peacekeeping work? (Apr. 10)  
- Karolyina Padilla  
3. ?

How has climate change affected conflict? (Apr. 27)  
- MJ Boley, Dani Manzo  
3. ?