

Zachary C. Shirkey
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Education:

Columbia University, PhD Political Science (Honors), 2006
University of Michigan, BA Political Science & Economics (High Honors & High Distinction), 1999

Appointments:

Hunter College, CUNY	2010 to present
Graduate Center, CUNY	2014 to present
St. John Fisher College	2006 to 2010

Publications:

Books:

- American Dove: US Foreign Policy and the Failure of Force*. 2020. University of Michigan Press.
- Reviewed in *Perspectives on Politics* 19(4).
- Ivan Savic and Zachary C. Shirkey. 2017. *Uncertainty, Threat, & International Security: Implications for Southeast Asia*. Routledge.
- Joining the Fray: Military Intervention in Civil Wars*. 2012. Ashgate.
- Reviewed in *Journal of Peace Research* 50(6).
- Is This a Private Fight or Can Anybody Join? The Spread of Interstate War*. 2009. Ashgate.
- Reviewed in *Études Internationales* 42(2).

Articles:

- "State-Formation, Warfare, and the Bronze Age State System," 2025. *Security Studies* 34(2): 197–227.
- "Courts and State-Building: The Welsh Marcher Lordships and the Somali Union of Islamic Courts," 2022. *Polity* 54(2): 197–224.
- "Which Wars Spread? Commitment Problems and Military Intervention," 2020. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 37(2): 133–51.
- "The Puzzle of War Duration," 2018. *Polity* 50(2): 162–67.

"The Challenges of Studying Long Wars," 2018. *Polity* 50(2): 225–37.

Michael Lee and Zachary C. Shirkey. 2017. "Going Beyond the Existing Consensus: The Use of Games in International Relations Education," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 50(2): 571–75.

"Uncertainty and War Duration," 2016. *International Studies Review* 18(2): 244–67.

"Joining By Number: Military Intervention in Civil Wars," 2016. *Civil Wars* 18(4): 417–38.

"When and How Many: The Effects of Third Party Joining on Casualties and Duration in Interstate Wars," 2012. *Journal of Peace Research* 49(2): 321–34.

Ivan Savic and Zachary C. Shirkey. 2009. "Trust in the Balance: The Role of Commitment Problems in Shaping External Balancing Behavior," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 21(4): 483–507.

Book Chapters:

"No: International Organizations are Limited in their Ability to Combat Terrorism," 2025. In *Debating Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, Stuart Gottlieb (ed.), 3rd ed. Rowman & Littlefield, 215–27.

"Military Intervention in Interstate and Civil Wars: A Unified Interpretation," 2018. In *Oxford Encyclopedia of Empirical International Relations Theory*, William R. Thompson (ed.), Oxford University Press, v. 2, 534–49.

"No: International Organizations are Limited in their Ability to Combat Terrorism," 2014. In *Debating Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, Stuart Gottlieb (ed.), 2nd ed. CQ Press, 279–91.

"No: The UN is Limited in its Ability to Play a Role," 2009. In *Debating Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, Stuart Gottlieb (ed.), 1st ed. CQ Press, 275–87.

Reviews:

"Review of John Mueller *The Stupidity of War: American Foreign Policy and the Case for Complacency*," 2021. *Perspectives on Politics* 19(4): 1285–86.

"Response to John Mueller's Review of *American Dove: US Foreign Policy and the Failure of Force*," 2021. *Perspectives on Politics* 19(4): 1289.

"Review of Stephen Huggins *America's Use of Terror: From Colonial Times to the A-Bomb*," 2020. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 51(2): 328–29.

"Review of Amitav Acharya *Constructing Global Order: Agency and Change in World Politics*," 2019. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 49(4): 653–54.

“Review of Marc Sageman *Turning to Political Violence: The Emergence of Terrorism*,” 2018. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 48(4): 546–47.

“Review of David Armitage *Civil Wars: A History in Ideas*,” 2018. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 48(3): 394–95.

“Review of William J. Brenner *Confounding Powers: Anarchy and International Society from the Assassins to Al Qaeda*,” 2017. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*. 47(3): 399–400.

“Review of Alexander Lanoszka and Michael Hunzeker’s ‘Rage of Honor: Entente Indignation and the Lost Chance for Peace in the First World War,’ *Security Studies* 24:4 Oct–Dec,” 2016. *H-Diplo/ISSF Article Review* 60: 1–4.

“Commitment Problems as a Cause of War Severity,” 2014. *International Studies Review* 16(1): 136–38.

“Review of Dan Reiter’s *How Wars End*,” 2012. *H-Diplo/ISSF Roundtable Reviews* 3(19): 15–19.

Annotated Bibliography:

Zachary C. Shirkey and Alex Weisiger. 2007. “An Annotated Bibliography for the Correlates of War Interstate Wars.” *CUNY Academic Works*. (Originally published on the *Correlates of War* website).

Policy Pieces:

“Trump’s Foreign Policy and the Purpose of the MAGA State,” 2025. *Duck of Minerva*, 22 September.

“Trump’s Randian Foreign Policy,” 2017. *Duck of Minerva*. 15 February.

“A Better Way to Combat Terrorism,” 2014. *National Interest*. 21 August.
- Reprinted by *Murr Television* (Lebanon).

“America Can’t Escape the Middle East,” 2013. *National Interest*. 29 July.
- Reprinted by *al Jarida* (Kuwait).

Professional Activities:

Conference Presentations:

“The Mysterious Absence of Military Intervention in Extra-Systemic Wars,” 2024. Paper presented at the *Northeastern Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.

“Why International Organizations are Ill-Suited to Combat Terrorism,” 2024. Paper presented at the *New England Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.

- “Building Order(s): How Internal State Structures and the Interstate System Shape Each Other,” 2023. Paper presented at the *New England Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.
- “Primary versus Secondary States: Ancient States, State Formation, and the State System,” 2022 and 2021. Paper presented at the *Northeastern Political Science Association* Annual Meeting and the *New England Political Science Association* Annual Meeting; Poster Presented at the *American Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.
- “The Role of Courts in State-Building: The Cases of the Welsh Marcher Lordships and the Somalia Union of Islamic Courts,” 2019. Paper presented at the *Northeastern Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.
- “Commitment Problems, Alliance Formation, and Military Intervention,” 2018. Poster presented at the *American Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.
- “Doves as Optimists: How the United States Can Succeed without Waging War,” 2018. Paper presented at the *New England Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.
- “Doves as Pessimists: The Ineffectiveness of Military Force,” 2017. Paper presented at the *International Studies Association—Northeast* Annual Meeting.
- “Commitment Problems, War Initiation, and the Spread of Interstate War,” 2015. Paper presented at the *American Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.
- Michael Lee and Zachary C. Shirkey. 2015. “Graduating from the Electoral College: Gamifying American Presidential Elections,” Project presented at the *CUNY Games Festival 2.0*.
- “Uncertainty and War Duration,” 2014 and 2013. Paper presented at the *International Studies Association* Annual Meeting and the *International Studies Association—Northeast* Annual Meeting.
- “Joining by Number: A Statistical Analysis of Revealed Information and Military Intervention in Civil Wars,” 2014 and 2013. Paper presented at the *Roosevelt House Seminar Series*; Poster presented at the *American Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.
- “Commitment Problems and the Expansion of Civil Wars: The Hungarian Revolution (1848–49),” 2012. Paper presented at the *Midwest Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.
- “Third Parties and the Expansion of Civil War: The Case of the Second Congo War,” 2011. Paper presented at the *International Studies Association* Annual Meeting and the *Midwest Political Science Association* Annual Meeting.
- Ivan Savic and Zachary C. Shirkey. 2011 and 2010. “Walking the Balance Beam: Balancing in Response to Asymmetric Information and Commitment Problems,” Paper presented at the *Midwest Political Science Association* Annual Meeting and the *International Studies Association* Annual Meeting.

“Why and When to Join: The Effects of Motivation and Timing on Casualties and Duration in Interstate Wars,” 2009. Paper presented at the *International Studies Association Annual Meeting* and the *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*.

“Balancing, Bandwagoning, and the Changing Nature of Spoils: The Spread of Interstate War since 1945,” 2008. Paper presented at the *International Studies Association Annual Meeting* and the *New England Political Science Association Annual Meeting*.

Ivan Savic and Zachary C. Shirkey. 2008. “Trust in the Balance: The Role of Commitment Problems in Shaping External Balancing Behavior,” Paper presented at the *International Studies Association Annual Meeting*.

“Leaving the Fray: Why States Exit Wars,” 2007. Paper presented at the *New York State Political Science Association Annual Meeting*.

Zachary C. Shirkey and Ivan Savic. 2006. “Commitment Problems and Deterrence,” Paper presented at the *Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting* and the *Columbia University International Politics Seminars*.

“Unexpected Events and War Termination,” 2005. Paper presented at the *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting*.

“Statistical Analysis of Unexpected Events and Interventions in Interstate Wars, 1816–1995,” 2004. Paper presented at the *Northeastern Political Science Association Annual Meeting*.

Invited Talks/Media appearances:

“Q & A: 6 + 1 Questions on *American Dove: US Foreign Policy and the Failure of Force*,”—*Duck of Minerva*, 22 July 2021.

“*American Dove*: A Discussion with Stuart Gottlieb and Peter Liberman,”—CUNY Graduate Center, 18 February 2021.

“*American Dove*: A Conversation with Gideon Rose,”—Roosevelt House, Hunter College, CUNY, 19 November 2020.

“The American and Russian Interventions—The Syrian Civil War,” Baruch College, CUNY, 15 February 2017.

“*JustLove*—Just War Doctrine,” *SiriusXM*, 18 August 2016.

“Prayer Vigil in East Brunswick,” *Columbia News Tonight*, 23 February 2015.

“*Richard French Live*: Boston Manhunt—How People Become Radicalized,” *RNN News*, 19 April 2013.

Grants Received:

CUNY Research Foundation Department Chair Research Grant (2020–2025)

Hunter College Presidential Travel Grant (2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017)

Stefan Bernard Baumrim CUNY Academy Associate Professors’ Travel Award (2017)

Hunter College Roosevelt House Faculty Fellow Research and Travel Grant (2013, 2015)

PSC-CUNY Grant:

Traditional B #65525-00 43 (2012–13)

Traditional A #64029-00 42 (2011–12)
St. John Fisher College Faculty Development Travel Grant (2008, 2009)
Columbia University Faculty Fellow, Columbia University (2000–2006)
American Political Science Association Travel Grant (2005)
Conflict Resolution Interdisciplinary Research Award, Columbia University (2004)
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Summer Fellow, Columbia University (2004)

Professional Honors:

Polity Exceptional Reviewer Award (2024)
Feliks Gross Award for Outstanding Research by a CUNY Assistant Professor (2012)

Membership in Professional Societies:

American Political Science Association
International Studies Association
New England Political Science Association

Service to the Discipline:

Polity editorial board (2016–present)

Outside Program Reviewer:

Mercy College International Relations & Diplomacy Program (2017)

Conference Panel Chair and/or Discussant: APSA (2010, 2013, 2015); ISA (2011); ISA-NE (2013, 2017); ISSS-ISAC (2015); MPSA (2011, 2012); NEPSA (2018, 2022, 2023, 2024); NPSA (2019, 2021, 2024)

Peer Review: *African Security Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, Anthem Press, Bloomsbury Press; Cambridge University Press, *Civil Wars*, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, CQ Press, *Defence Studies*, *Democracy and Security*, *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, *Human Rights Review*, *International History Review*, *International Interactions*, *International Security*, *International Studies Perspectives*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Journal of Global Security Studies*, *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Journal of Politics*, New York University Press, *Online International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, Oxford University Press, Palgrave, Pearson Longman, *Polity*, Prentice Hall, Routledge, *Sage Open*, *Security Studies*, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *Turkish Journal of History*, Wiley-Blackwell, University of Michigan Press, Yale University Press

Service to CUNY:

CUNY-wide:

University Committee on Research Awards—PSC-CUNY Research Grants: Economics and Political Science Panel, Chair (2017–2019), Member (2020)

Hunter College-wide:

Middle States and Assessment

Middle States Steering Committee (2024–present)

Mission and Goals Working Group, Co-Chair (2024–present)

Assessment Advisory Board (2013–2019)

Arts and Sciences Teaching Observation Template Committee (2017–2018)

Middle States PRR: Arts & Sciences Assessment Sub-Committee (2013–2014)

Senate and Faculty Delegate Assembly

Senate Committee on the Calendar, Chair (2023–present)

Senate Committee on Academic Assessment & Evaluation (2014–2015, 2019–2020)

Alternate Senator, Hunter College Senate (2012–2014)

Faculty Delegate Assembly (2019–2020)

College Governance

Faculty Personnel and Budget Committee (2020–present)

Research Fellowship Leave Sub-Committee, Chair (2025)

Calendar Sub-Committee (2020–2021)

Arts & Sciences Executive Committee (2020–present)

Steering Committee (2022–2023)

Professional Evaluation Form Sub-Committee (2022–2023)

Arts & Sciences Council of Chairs, Co-Chair (2022–2023), Member (2020–present)

Other College Service

Macaulay Honors College Admissions Committee (2026)

Social Science Computing Lab Committee (2011–2013)

Hunter College Political Science Department:

Governance

Department Chair (2020–present)

Department Personnel and Budget Committee (2014–present)

Policy Committee (2014–2015, 2019–present)

Honors Committee (2011–2014)

Assessment

Assessment Coordinator (2014–2019)

Self-Study Committee (2016–2017)

Writing Assessment, Department Mission, and Course Map Committee (2013)

Other Departmental Service

Faculty Search Committees (2012, 2015, 2023)
Department Academic Advisor: Major (2017, 2020–present); IR Minor (2013–2016)
Webmaster (2010–2013, 2020–2025)
Junior Faculty Mentor (2013–2020)
Grade Appeals Committee (2013)
Department Meeting Minute-Taker (2010–2011)

Peer Teaching Observations:

Christiani (2025); Bacher (2025; 2011); Hoeft (2025); Monda (2025; 2024); Madsen (2024); Crandall (2024); Feldman (2024); Davidovic (2023); Kindervater (2023); Mejia (2023); Demir (2022); Fueederer (2022); Joliet (2022); Finkelstein (2022); Pysker (2022); Brown (2021; 2018); Faradj (2021; 2019); Parks (2021); Firester (2020); Himes (2020); Atuk (2019); Gounardes (2019); McCallion (2019); Newton (2019); Motaghedi (2018); Russo (2018); Harpaz (2017); Mazzaro (2017); Thomas (2017); Baer (2016); Squillacote (2016); Braoche (2015); Gripp (2015); Mahlbacher (2015); McMahan (2015); Kornacki (2014); Lee (2014); Marasco (2013); Zamalin (2013); Byun (2012); Riedl (2011); Hewitt (2010); Tan (2010)

Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute (Hunter College):

Faculty Associate (2013–present)
Public Policy Faculty Curriculum Committee (2012–2013)

CUNY Graduate Center-wide:

Dissertation Fellowship Committee (2017)

CUNY Graduate Center Political Science Department:

Executive Committee (2023–present)
Admissions Committee (2016, 2026)
Curriculum Committee (2018, 2021–2022)
International Relations First Exam Committee:
Chair (2017–2018), Member (2016–2020, 2023)

Service at Prior Institutions:

St. John Fisher College:

College Freshman Writing Assessment Committee (2008–2010)
College Learning Communities Assessment Committee (2007–2010)
Faculty Assembly Delegate (2006–2010)
Elections Committee (2008–2010)
Department Library Liaison (2007–2010)
Department Academic Advisor (2006–2010)
Faculty Search Committees (2007, 2008, 2010)
Political Science Club Faculty Advisor (2006–2010)
Academic Copyright Law Learning Circle (2007)

Supervised Students:

Dissertation Committees (CUNY Graduate Center unless noted): Chelsea Joliet (present); Ferhat Zabun (present); Sarah Shah (2025); Giovanna Kuele (2024); David Firester (2023—chair); Yu Aoki (2022); Harry Blain (2022); Jenna Russo (2022); Angela Borozna (2020); Nick Micinski (2018); David Rasmussen (2018); Mohammed Kabir (2016); Bann Seng Tan (2013); Dianne Pfundstein, Columbia (2012)

Masters Theses: Sabera Azizi, CUNY (2018); Uchenna Nwokocha, SJFC (2009); Jason Ruedin, SJFC (2008)

Honors Theses (Hunter): Waugh (2024); Dostova (2022); Matone (2022); Radulov (2022); Dougherty (2021); Eisenberg (2021); Shilla (2021); Ebenezer (2020); Malonda (2020); Munir (2020); Dikler (2019); David (2018); Fermin-Robbins (2018); Taylor (2016); Pereyra (2015); Bias (2014); Silberstein (2014); Mays (2014); Lee (2014); Tachibana (2013); Dana (2013); Harden (2013); Goldfideb (2012); Steinblatt (2011)

PUPOL Capstone Theses (Hunter): Konstanelos (2022); Radulov (2021); Terzioglu (2018); Enam (2017); Bright (2013); Stetson (2013)

Internships (Hunter): LeCroy (2025); Mouldi (2024); Tammisetti (2022); Compton (2021); Perez (2020); Anderson (2019); Munir (2017); Gonzalez (2017); Tovar (2016); Guzman (2016); Steinbach (2013); Brady (2012); Stimmer (2012); Freeman (2012); Caesar (2011)

Independent Study (Hunter): Juwara (2024); Waugh (2024); King (2021); Prashad (2019); Beydili (2017); Guzman (2017); Kula (2017); Freeman (2011)

CUNY BA (Hunter): Sabeh (2018); Shitrit (2014); Samoylova (2014)