Introduction to International Politics
Politics 120
Fall 2012

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Office Hours: Wed and Thurs 10:30-12:00
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Course Overview

The problem of order is the defining feature of international politics. Whereas the
domestic sphere can be conceptualized as one of hierarchy (with relatively well defined rules,
laws, and institutions), international politics are carried out under anarchy. While anarchy does
not necessarily mean chaos, the lack of a central authority to enforce international agreements
and shield states from aggression leaves states relatively uncertain about their own security and
the intentions of others. At the same time, we observe states engaged diplomatically – signing
treaties, bargaining over trade, sharing information, and exchanging social and cultural values
that provide a semblance of order even under anarchy. As Professor Louis Henkin famously
wrote, “Most nations follow international law most of the time.” This course directly confronts
the problem of order, addressing the most pressing international issues in order to shed light on
why these problems exist, what states can do about them, and why certain courses of action have
been taken rather than others.

The course unfolds in two halves. In the first half, you will be introduced to the major
theoretical paradigms of international relations (IR). These are the 'lenses' through which many
scholars and foreign policy practitioners view the international landscape and formulate
opinions, theories, and policies on particular issues. Equipped with a basic knowledge of IR
theories, we will then apply them to global issues and institutions that we as students, as citizens,
and as human beings must confront now and into the future. With an emphasis on the history
and current salience of these political institutions and issues, we will employ theoretical concepts
to predict the likely trajectory of future political outcomes and discuss what this means for
international politics in general, and to us in particular. Additionally, in the second half of the
course you will craft your own research question on an issue of international politics not covered
in class that you find interesting. With my guidance and the research and writing assistance
provided by Mudd Library and the Writing Center, you will independently pursue your own
research and present your findings in a final paper.
Goals and Expectations

The goals for this course are threefold. First, that you should leave this course with a basic understanding of international politics, including general theoretical frameworks for making sense of political debates as well as more particular information on the histories and future trajectories of current global problems. Second, that you learn to apply critical thinking skills to global problems, so when new issues emerge you are able to think, research, and write about them in a disciplined, theoretically grounded way. Third, that you develop a curiosity and lifetime interest in international politics – whether to help you in your future careers or to just make sense of the world around you.

Classes will be conducted as a hybrid of lecture and discussion, leaning toward one or the other depending on the day’s topic and your active engagement with the material. All assigned readings should be prepared prior to class and perfect attendance is expected except in cases of family or health emergencies. I would greatly appreciate if you would email me if you cannot attend class, will arrive late, or need to leave early.

While international politics may seem far removed from your everyday lives, I strongly encourage you to fully engage the material in this course. Beyond my love of the material, which I hope quickly becomes infectious, the affects of international politics reverberate back on each and every one of us in very important ways. Don't believe me? Just look at gas prices, or a list of fallen soldiers from Lorain County. Clichés are clichés for a reason, and none is truer than the notion that knowledge is power.

Disability Services

If you have a documented disability that needs academic accommodation, please speak with Jane Boomer, Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (G-27 Peters Hall) and with me as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential.

Academic Misconduct

It is your responsibility to have a clear understanding of the Honor Code and what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, and all other aspects of academic dishonesty. If you are unsure about the boundaries of fair use, citation, etc, please do not hesitate to contact me. Additionally, you will be required to write out and sign the Honor Pledge (“I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment”) on each assignment in the course.

Readings

All readings are posted on Blackboard. Please contact me if you are unfamiliar with the website.

It is strictly up to you, but I encourage you to print all readings early on in the course. This will safeguard against unexpected technical problems with Blackboard, which will not serve as an excuse for not completing the assigned readings. More importantly, most people absorb and comprehend written material much better when reading from paper rather than a screen, which also makes highlighting and note taking easier.
Assignments and Grading

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Theory Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>20% (5% each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper Outline</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
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**Theory Essay** – A 3-4 page (double spaced) essay critically evaluating the classical and neorealist variants of Realism, due in class on Thurs, Sept 20. A detailed assignment sheet will be distributed on the second day of class. The length and difficulty of the readings for Sept 18 and 20 have been tempered to account for the necessary writing time.

**Midterm** – The midterm will be given in class on Tues, Oct 16. It will cover everything – from class and the readings – up to that point in the course. A study sheet listing key concepts and exam structure will be distributed a week prior to the exam.

**Quizzes** – As there is no final exam for the course, there will be 4 unannounced quizzes during the second half of the course designed to test your comprehension of the day’s reading assignment. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of class, so be sure to arrive on time each day. No make ups will be given for tardiness or unexcused absences.

**Final Paper Outline** – On Tues, Dec 11 we will conduct an in-class paper outline workshop in which you will exchange an outline of your final paper and work one-on-one with other students to improve the structure and substance of your research paper. Peers will assign grades to those outlines they review, which I will take into account in assigning official outline grades. A detailed assignment sheet will be distributed in class immediately following the fall break.

**Final Paper** – An 8-10 page independent research paper, due via Blackboard by Noon on Wed, Dec 19. Paper topics will be finalized, in consultation with me, during the first week following the fall break. Additionally, during the second half of the course, you will be required to make at least one appointment with both the Mudd Library Research Associates and the Writing Center’s Writing Associates for assistance in the researching and writing of your paper. An assignment sheet carefully detailing the expectations and requirements for the final paper will be distributed immediately after the fall break.

Missed/Late Assignment Policy – Make up exams and quizzes will only be given in cases in which you 1) have contacted me prior to class notifying me of your absence (if feasible), and 2) provide documentation of a health or family emergency. Just as most Americans – and most people around the world – must get to work even when they are not feeling well, I expect you to make every effort to make it to class. Late papers will be penalized 20% per day, unless prior notice and documentation of an emergency are provided.
Class Schedule

Tues, Sept 4:  Course Introduction

Thurs, Sep 6:  Change and Continuity in International History

* No Reading

Understanding International Politics

Tues, Sep 11:  Realism: The classical roots of power politics

* Thucydides, “Melian Dialogue”
* Morgenthau, Politics among Nations, Chaps 1 & 11

Thurs, Sep 13:  Realism: Structural imperatives of power politics

* Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, Chaps 1 & 2

Tues, Sep 18:  Neoliberalism: Cooperation despite anarchy?

* Axelrod, The Evolution of Cooperation, Chaps 1 & 4

Thurs, Sep 20:  Neoliberalism: Effecting cooperation

* Oye, “Explaining Cooperation under Anarchy”

*** Theory Essay Due ***

Tues, Sep 25:  Hegemonic Stability Theory and its Successors

* Ikenberry, After Victory, Chaps 1 & 2
Thurs, Sep 27: Constructivism: Reconsidering anarchy
* Wendt, “Anarchy is what states make of it”

Tues, Oct 2: Constructivism: Norms and nonstate actors in int’l politics
* Crawford, “Decolonization as an International Norm”
* Keck and Sikkink, “Transational advocacy networks in international and regional politics”

Thurs, Oct 4: Liberalism: Domestic influences in int’l politics
* Doyle, “Liberalism and World Politics”

Tues, Oct 9: Liberalism: Democratic Peace?
* Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace*, Chaps 1 & 2

Thurs, Oct 11: Bureaucratic Politics and Perception in Int’l Politics
* Allison and Halperin, “Bureaucratic Politics”
* Jervis, “Hypotheses on Perception”

Tues, Oct 16: Midterm Exam

Thurs, Oct 18: Introduction to Library Research
* Brainstorm final paper topics over the fall break

FALL BREAK

Tues, Oct 30: The Basics of Writing in the Social Sciences
* Receive final paper outline and final paper assignment sheets
* Schedule appts with Mudd Library and the Writing Center
Global Institutions and Issues

Thurs, Nov 1:    International Law and the United Nations
* United Nations Charter (available online)

*** Final Paper Topic Deadline ***

Tues, Nov 6:    Election Day Discussion on US Foreign Policy
* Read the Rep and Dem platforms on foreign policy (available online)
* Watch the Oct 22 Presidential Debate (available on youtube)

Thurs, Nov 8:    International Political Economy and the WTO
* Milner, “Globalization, Development, and International Institutions”

Tues, Nov 13:    International Economic inequality
* Wade, “Should We Worry about Income Inequality?”
* Pogge, “Why Inequality Matters”

Thurs, Nov 15:    NATO and Military Alliances
* NATO Charter (available online)

Tues, Nov 20:    Nuclear Proliferation
* Tannenwald, “The Nuclear Taboo”
* Allison, “Nuclear Disorder”

Thurs, Nov 22:    Thanksgiving
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*** Separate students into 4 debate ‘teams’ for Dec 6 debate ***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues, Dec 4</td>
<td>National Disintegration: Failed states and intervention</td>
<td>* Jackson, “Juridical Statehood in Sub-Saharan Africa”</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Finnemore, <em>The Purpose of Intervention</em>, Chap 3</td>
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<td>Thurs, Dec 6</td>
<td>In-Class Debate: Intervention in Syria and Sudan</td>
<td>* Student ‘teams’ will present arguments and evidence in support of their position in a moderated debate (‘teams’ selected on Nov 29)</td>
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<td>Tues, Dec 11</td>
<td>Final Paper Outline Workshop</td>
<td>* Bring 5 hardcopies to class</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>* Huntington, “Clash of Civilizations?”</td>
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<td>Wed, Dec 19</td>
<td>Final Paper Due via Blackboard by Noon</td>
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