
POLT 1050

Introduction to International Relations

Dr. Kyle Haynes

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Office: HSPC 105
Office Hours: Mon. 10 - 12:30 & by appt.

Fall 2013
Classroom: HSPC 104
Tues/Thurs: 8:30 - 9:50

1 Description

Catalog Description: This course examines how state and non-state actors confront contemporary global problems. It also introduces students to the subfields of international relations: international security, international political economy, foreign policy, international relations theory, international organizations, and international law.

My Description: Ongoing advancements in communication and transportation technologies continue to make the world both smaller and flatter. The world is now more interconnected, and interdependent, than at any time in human history. As such, the study of the political processes that decisively shape these interactions is more important than ever. This course provides students with the basic tools for engaging in the analytical study of international politics. It will teach you to think like a social scientist, assessing causal processes and analyzing the relationship between cause and effect. After all, policy debates are often fruitless without a basic analytic understanding of what causes a problem and the likely effects of its proposed remedies. This course also offers a brief overview of several substantive topics of immense importance, including the causes of war, international institutions, bargaining and negotiation, nuclear proliferation, trade, finance, environmental politics and human rights.

1.1 Organization

The course is broken up into four major parts:

- *Unit 1* provides the foundation for the class, as we will work as a group to learn how to read and write effectively in the course. Unit 1 also provides some background material on the field of IR and historical development of the international system.
- *Unit 2* covers numerous issues in international security, including the causes of war and peace, international bargaining and coercion, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and many others.

- *Unit 3* delves into international economics, with a particular emphasis on the political and institutional structures that govern cross-border flows of goods and money.
- *Unit 4* offers a brief look at several issues that have recently risen to prominence in the study of international relations, and whose impact will continue to grow.

1.2 Class Policies

- *Missing Class*: Students are allowed one [1] unexcused absence throughout the semester. Additional absences will *significantly* affect your grade. If missing class due to illness or family emergency, please let me know as promptly as possible and be prepared to provide documentation attesting to the reason for your absence. Repeated lateness will be treated as absence.
- *Missing Exams*: Students who plan to miss a scheduled exam for legitimate reasons (i.e. official athletic competition, school-related travel) must let me know *in writing* at least two weeks before the exam so alternative arrangements can be made. I will allow make up exams in the event of unplanned absences due to medical or family emergency. Documentation *must* be provided for a make-up exam to be given.
- *Cheating and Academic Dishonesty*: I take academic integrity *very* seriously. A student found cheating on an exam or assignment will be given a chance to explain the situation. In the event I find the explanation unsatisfactory, the student will be given absolutely no credit for the assignment. Depending on the magnitude of the assignment, this could be enough to guarantee an *F* in the course.
- *Grade Appeals*: I will accept grade appeals no sooner than 48 hours and no later than 5 days after students receive their graded assignments. I provide detailed comments on graded assignments. Take the time to read and consider these comments before lodging an appeal. Grade appeals must include a written statement that addresses my comments on the assignment and indicates specifically why the student feels the grade is inappropriate. If a grade appeal is made, I reserve the right to adjust the grade either upward or downward, so I strongly recommend that you not lodge grade appeals frivolously.
- *Special Needs*: I rely on the Academic Resource Center (Loretto Hall, Room 6, 314-246-7620) to document and coordinate the appropriate action for students requiring special accommodations as a result of a disability. If you have special needs, please come speak with me so we can determine the appropriate accommodations.

2 Requirements

In order to fulfill the course objectives and develop the skills necessary for the analytical study of international relations, students must remain actively engaged and fully committed throughout the semester. This includes close reading of the course material, class participation, and thorough preparation for assignments and exams.

2.1 Learning Outcomes

After taking this course, students will be able to:

1. ...demonstrate a basic understanding of the issues, actors, approaches, and institutions in international relations.
2. ...explain the connection between global problems and the theories, actors, and approaches that political scientists use to understand their causes, effects, and potential solutions.
3. ...identify the landscape and political geography of the world.
4. ...identify the central features of international relations, including the role of power, the structure of the international system, the meaning of security, and the importance of economic relations.
5. ...apply an analytical framework in the evaluation of international political processes, especially causal relationships underlying important political outcomes such as war, trade, coercion, protectionism, and nuclear proliferation.
6. ...explain ideas and arguments clearly and effectively.

2.2 Assignments and Evaluation

Final course grades will depend upon four main factors:

- *Class Participation (20%)*: This course will be largely run as a seminar, with student participation an absolutely vital component. Simply absorbing information in class is not sufficient if one seeks to gain a true understanding of international relations. Effective participation also requires thorough and critical reading of all assigned materials. Students are *strongly* encouraged to come to my office hours if they feel they do not understand any portion of the readings.
- *Midterm Exam (25%)*: An in-class examination will be given **in class on October 17**, covering material in Units 1 and 2. All material covered in class and in the readings (even if not brought up in class) is fair game for the exam.
- *Response Questions (20%)*: The syllabus below includes assigned reading that must be completed prior to each class, as well as a “Response Question” related to that

reading. Students must write up a *brief* (5-7 sentences) answer/response to the question given and bring it with them to class. I will collect response questions at random throughout the semester. They will be graded pass/fail and returned the following class. The primary purpose of these questions is to ensure that all students have completed and put some measure of thought into the assigned reading. Anyone caught cheating or copying response question answers will automatically receive a zero for $\frac{1}{2}$ of their response questions grade (i.e. 10% of your overall course grade). In short, if you are unable to complete the reading, do not risk copying an answer from a classmate. Just admit that you haven't done the reading. I assure you, the costs of cheating are not worth any potential benefits.

- *Final Exam (35%)*: A cumulative final examination will be given on **Thursday, December 19 from 8 - 10 am**. Mark your calendars!

2.3 Assignments and Assessing Learning Outcomes

“++” = Key Tool; “+” = Secondary Tool; “X” = Not Used

| Learning Outcome | Class Participation | Midterm | Response Questions | Final Exam |
|------------------|---------------------|---------|--------------------|------------|
| Outcome 1 | + | ++ | ++ | ++ |
| Outcome 2 | + | ++ | + | ++ |
| Outcome 3 | + | + | + | + |
| Outcome 4 | X | ++ | X | ++ |
| Outcome 5 | ++ | ++ | + | ++ |
| Outcome 6 | + | ++ | ++ | ++ |

2.4 Required Reading

Frieden, Lake & Schultz's *World Politics* (denoted **FLS** below) is the main text for this course. Other readings will be made available on the class website, and all readings listed in the syllabus are mandatory. Students are encouraged to meet with me during office hours to discuss both the assigned readings and opportunities/materials for further exploration of particular topics.

Unit 1: Foundations of International Relations

Day 1/Aug 27 - Introduction to the Course

- No Reading

Day 2/Aug 29 - What is IR?

- FLS pp: xix-xxxii; 40-73

Day 3/Sep 3 - How to Read and Write in IR

- Gerring, Yesnowitz, and Bird (Handout)

Day 4/Sep 5 - Some History

- FLS pp: 2-37

Unit 2: Topics in International Security

Day 5/Sep 10 - The Security Dilemma

- FLS pp: 74-79
- Jervis - *Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma* (Excerpt)
- **Response Question:** Why can't states protect themselves without threatening others?

Day 6/Sep 12: Alliances and Balancing

- Walt - *Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power* pp: 3-26
- **Response Question:** Do states with similar ideologies always become allies? Why or why not?

Day 7/Sep 17: Coercion and Credibility

- Thucydides - *The Melian Dialogue*
- Schelling - *The Diplomacy of Violence*
- **Response Question:** What is the "power to hurt?" How was it used by the Athenians against the Melians? Did it work?

Day 8/Sep 19: Bargaining and War

- **FLS** pp: 80-122
- **Response Question:** Why is war an “inefficient” means of settling disputes between states?

Day 9/Sep 24: International Cooperation

- Oye - *Explaining Cooperation Under Anarchy*
- **Response Question:** What does it mean to “iterate” a Prisoner’s Dilemma? What does this accomplish?

Day 10/Sep 26: International Law and Institutions

- **FLS** pp: 188-213
- **Response Question:** Name a case where the United Nations failed as a collective security organization. Why did it fail?

Day 11/Oct 1: Domestic Politics

- **FLS** pp: 124-154
- **Response Question:** How can leaders “insulate” themselves from the costs of war? Are all leaders equally able to do this?

Day 12/Oct 3: Democratic Peace

- **FLS** pp: 154-167
- **Response Question:** In one sentence, explain the historical/empirical “fact” that constitutes the democratic peace.

Day 13/Oct 8: Terrorism

- **FLS** pp: 242-263
- **Response Question:** What distinguishes terrorism from other types of political violence?

Day 14/Oct 10: Civil War and Ethnic Conflict

- **FLS** pp: 213-242
- **Response Question:** In what ways is there a “commitment problem” at work when governments are negotiating with rebel groups?

Day 15/Oct 15: The Clash of Civilizations

- Huntington - *The Clash of Civilizations?*
- **Response Question:** Does the “war on terror” since 9/11 validate the clash of civilizations argument?

Day 16/Oct 17: MIDTERM EXAM

- Bring a Blue Book for the exam!!

Oct 22, 24: FALL BREAK

Unit 3: Topics in International Political Economy

Day 17/Oct 29: International Trade, Part I

- **FLS** pp: 264-287
- **Response Question:** What is “comparative advantage?” What determines a country’s comparative advantage?

Day 18/Oct 31: International Trade, Part II

- **FLS** pp: 287-305
- **Response Question:** In your own words, explain the concept of “Most Favored Nation” trade status.

Day 19/Nov 5: Globalization

- Haass and Litan - *Globalization and its Discontents*
- Dollar and Kraay - *Spreading the Wealth*
- **Response Question:** What is “contagion?” Give a recent example and explain and explain why it constitutes an instance of contagion.

Day 20/Nov 7: International Finance

- **FLS** pp:312-349
- **Response Question:** What does it mean to say that IMF loans are often “conditional?” What types of conditions are often imposed?

Day 21/Nov 12: International Monetary Relations

- **FLS** pp: 350-385
- **Response Question:** What are the costs and benefits of having a *fixed* exchange rate?

Day 22/Nov 14: Interdependence and Conflict

- Katz - *Mutual Assured Production*
- **Response Question:** Does trade always promote peace? Can economic interdependence ever have harmful effects?

Unit 4: International Relations in the 21st Century

Day 22/Nov 19: Environmental Politics

- **FLS** pp: 492-533
- **Response Question:** What is a “collective action problem?”

Day 23/Nov 21: Human Rights

- **FLS** pp: 452-480
- **Response Question:** What is “R2P?” Is it compatible with the well-established norm of state sovereignty?

Day 24/Nov 26: The Rise of China

- **FLS** pp: 548-557
- Friedberg - *Bucking Beijing*
- **Response Question:** Does Friedberg predict conflict between the U.S. and China? Briefly, why does he think this?

Nov 28: No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

Day 25/Dec 3: WMD Proliferation

- **FLS** pp: 538-548
- **Response Question:** Elaborate upon one of the major risks the U.S. would face in launching air strikes against Iranian nuclear facilities.

Day 26/Dec 5: War in the 21st Century

- Singer - *The Robotics Revolution*
- Lynn - *Defending a New Domain*
- **Response Question:** Elaborate upon one way in which drones differ from other types of air power. Is this an important difference?

Day 28/Dec 10: The “Arab Spring”

- Berman - *The Promise of the Arab Spring*
- Jones - *Mirage of the Arab Spring*
- **Response Question:** In what countries has the Arab Spring “succeeded?” How do you define “success?”

Day 29/Dec 12: Review for Final

- Come prepared with questions!!

Final Exam

- Thursday, December 19. 8-10 am in HSPC 104.
- Bring a Blue Book!!