

PSC/IR 106: Introduction to International Relations

Syllabus – 2019 Semester

*University of Rochester
Political Science Department*

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Office Hours: by Appointment

Class Meeting: XX
Classroom: XX
Final Exam: XX, 1:00PM-3:00PM

Course Description

This introductory course is designed to provide students with the history, background and analytical tools to understand and analyze contemporary international issues among states. The course will cover the wide range of issues involved in the field of international relations including the modern theoretical debates such as neorealism and neoliberalism, the causes and effects of international conflicts, and economic development and globalization. In addition, we will also explore important topics in the 21st century such as transnational terrorism, international law and human rights, global warming, financial crises, and the rise of China. The ultimate goal of this course is to develop critical thinking concerning issues in world politics.

Course Objectives

This course has the following objectives:

- To provide analytic frameworks with which students understand why actors in international politics interact in certain ways and analyze current issues in world politics.
- To develop the ability to apply the concepts and theories discussed in the course to analyze current issues in world politics in paper assignments.
- To improve the student's ability to develop their own thoughts about global affairs and write effective short essays to convince readers.

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Newspaper Summary: 30% (5 summaries, each 6%)

2. Presentation: 10%
3. Short Essays: 20%
4. Final Exam: 30%
5. Participation and Discussion: 10%

1. Newspaper article summary (30%)

Students are required to submit one-page **five** newspaper summaries (font: Times New Roman, size: 12, double-spaced). Make sure you include (1) source link (address); (2) brief summary; and (3) your review by using IR theories. Newspaper article sources are available from followings:

- New York Times (<https://www.nytimes.com/>)
- Financial Times (<https://www.ft.com/>)
- The Economist (<http://www.economist.com/>)
- China Daily (<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/>)
- Al Jazeera (<http://www.aljazeera.com/>)
- le Monde diplomatique (<http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/>)

2. Presentation (10%)

All students are required to have one presentation after reading one academic article. Students should prepare a maximum of 20 minutes presentation composed of (1) summary of the article; (2) your critique; and (3) discussion questions. Following a presentation, we will have a brief discussion session. Students can use either power point slides or hand-outs, and send me sides/hand-outs before presentation.

3. Short Essays (10 X 2)

Each student is required to write two short essays during the semester. Each will account for 10% of the final course grade. The first short essay should be submitted by **Month XX, 11:59pm** and the second short essay should be submitted by **Month XX, 11:59pm**. Late papers will lose a third of a letter grade for every day they are late (A to A-, for example). Here are some nuts and bolts of the short essays.

- Short essays must be between **1,200 and 1,500** words total (including in-text citation and footnotes but excluding bibliography), and be double spaced. Please include a word count on the front of your paper (MS Word has the word count function). A shorter or longer paper will result in a deduction from your essay grades.
- In their short essays, students are required to address one of the discussion questions listed below. Students are free to choose any questions from the lists, but they should choose one from the list #1 for the first essay and the other from the list #2 for the second essay. Please indicate which question you are addressing in your short essay before you start your essay.
- Students are expected to **develop their own thoughts** and present them in an effective way through the short essays. Students can summarize and engage

materials from lectures or readings to buttress their arguments, but a mere summary of reading material is not sufficient.

- Students are required to engage **at least one case study** to support their arguments. This will serve as an opportunity for students to link the theories with real life examples and to better understand current or past events. The case could be the one mentioned in the textbook, but students are more than encouraged to use cases from other sources (news articles, other reading materials, or documentary) and discuss contemporary issues. In either case, students should provide citations.
- Plagiarism is not tolerated. Students can engage other readings and borrow other's ideas or arguments, but only with appropriate attribution. Use **footnotes** to provide a citation with author's name, publication year, a page number (if relevant), or URL. A separate bibliography is not necessary.

- Short Essay Question List # 1
 - Throughout the course, we discussed a number of factors that might reduce the likelihood of war. Which of these factors could powerful states such as the United States influence to reduce the likelihood of war? What barriers might prevent the United States from taking these steps?
 - Given the claims of the "democratic peace" argument, should US foreign policy focus on democracy promotion abroad? Can we expect a world without a war if democracy continues to spread? Why or why not?
 - To what extent international institutions, like UN, influence world peace? What are the constraints and limitations these international institutions have as an actor in international politics? If international institutions still matter despite their constraints, why do we need them and what can we expect from them?

- Short Essay Question List # 2
 - Today, many people who otherwise favor freer international movement of goods and capital oppose relaxing controls on immigration. Is it contradictory to favor the free flow of goods and investment across borders yet advocate for increased government intervention to prevent migration? What are the different costs and benefits of controls on labor (migration) and capital (trade or FDI)?
 - Trade openness has made the lives of billions of people better, but states continue to work to restrict trade in favor of narrow interests. In a world where democratic states are theoretically working to the benefit of their citizenries, why is there so little effort put forth to promote more open trade? What is it about the melding of interests, interactions, and institutions in trade that work to reduce general economic growth in favor of narrow interests?
 - To what extent, and in what ways, should developed nations assist poor nations in their efforts at economic development? To what extent and how does foreign aid help poor nations develop their economies?

4. Final Exam (30%)

The format of the final exam will consist of a combination of multiple choices, short answers, and longer essays.

5. Participation and Discussion (10%)

Attendance will be taken for each session. You can only be excused for missing class if you have an official reason approved by the instructor at least 2 weeks prior to the date. Those students who observe a religious holiday on a class day should contact the instructor within the first two weeks in order to receive an excused absence. Absences due to illness or family emergency will be excused with appropriate documentation (i.e. doctor's note, flight/train/bus ticket, etc). Each subsequent unexcused absence will reduce their grades by 0.5 points.

Students are highly encouraged to ask and answer questions and participate in class discussion as well. Participation points come from critical comments during class, active engagement in small group works, and coming to office hours.

Course Materials

Required Textbook:

Jeffrey A. Frieden, David A. Lake, and Kenneth A. Schultz. 2015. *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. Third Edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. (hereafter: FLS)

For some lectures, I may assign topical news articles or journal articles. I will choose them during the term and distribute them electronically.

Academic Integrity

The College is an academic community whose mission is to promote scholarship through the acquisition, preservation and transmission of knowledge. Fundamental to this goal is the institution's dedication to academic integrity. Providing an atmosphere that promotes honesty and the free exchange of ideas is the essence of academic integrity. In this setting all members of the institution have an obligation to uphold high intellectual and ethical standards.

It is the responsibility of the faculty to impart not only knowledge but also respect for knowledge. It is also the professional responsibility of all faculty members to explain the importance of honesty and respect for knowledge in order to ensure an academic environment that encourages integrity. To establish such an environment, students must recognize that their role in their education is active; they are responsible for their own learning. Specifically, it is the responsibility of students to protect their own work from inappropriate use by others and to protect the work of other people by providing proper citation of ideas and research findings to the appropriate source. This includes the obligation to preserve all educational resources, thereby permitting full and equal access to knowledge.

This academic community takes seriously its responsibilities regarding academic honesty. Academic integrity is absolutely essential to ensure the validity of the grading system and maintain high standards of academic excellence. In addition, all members of the academic community must exhibit behavior exemplifying academic honesty and encourage such behavior in others.

Accommodation of Disabilities Statement

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at least two weeks prior to the time when the accommodation will be needed. Also, please hand me a form issued by Disability Resources Office notifying you of the disability and the accommodation that is expected of you. (If you do not have this paperwork, I may not provide relevant accommodation.) Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. Common accommodations are: a distraction-free testing environment (provided by Disability Resources Office), extra time for exams, note-taking by another student in the class. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

Course Outline

1. Month Date (Week 1): Course Introduction

- Intro
- Preliminary background knowledge
- Level of analysis
- Sovereignty
- Anarchy

- ❖ Discussion questions:
 - Who are the main actors in international politics?
 - To what extent does the concept of “state sovereignty” remain useful in analyzing international politics?

2. Month Date (Week 2): Theories of International Relations I

- Classical realism/Neo-realism
- Liberalism/Neo-liberalism

- ❖ Discussion questions:
 - What’s the major debates among theories of international politics?

- Readings:
 - FLS Introduction pp. 27-32.

3. Month Date (Week 3): Theories of International Relations II

- Constructivism
- Marxist approach
- ❖ Discussion questions:
 - How's these approaches are different from major theories in international relations?

4. Month Date (Week 4): War and Peace

- Purpose of war
- Incomplete information
- Bargaining and war
- Readings:
 - FLS chapter 3
 - Enterline, A. J. and Michael Greig, J. 2008. The History of Imposed Democracy and the Future of Iraq and Afghanistan. *Foreign Policy Analysis* 4: 321-347.
- ✓ **Student presentation 1**
- ✓ **1st newspaper article summary due at midnight (11:59PM)**
- ❖ **Discussion questions:**
 - How is war different from MIDs?
 - How do we measure wars?
 - Why do states fight rather than solving the problems through bargaining?

5. Month Date (Week 5): Domestic Politics, Nuclear Weapons, and War

- Democracies and war
- Nuclear weapons and institutions
- Readings:
 - FLS chapter 4, 5
 - Fuhrmann, Matthew. Spreading Temptation: Proliferation and Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreements. *International Security* 34.1: 7-41.
- ✓ **Student presentation 2**
- ❖ **Discussion questions:**
 - What political interests do domestic political leaders pursue by initiating a war?
 - Whose interests count in matters of war and peace?
 - How do power change and first strike advantage shrink the bargaining range?

6. Month Date (Week 6): Terrorism

- History
- Causes and effects of Terrorist attacks

- Readings:
 - FLS chapter 6
 - Collard-Wexler, Simon, Pischedda, Constantino, and Michael G. Smith. 2013. Do Foreign Occupation Cause Suicide Attacks? *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58(4)
 - Kydd, Andrew H. and Barbara F. Walter. The Strategies of Terrorism. 2006. *International Security* 31(1): 49-80.

- ✓ **Student presentation 3**

- ❖ **Discussion questions:**
 - Are terrorists irrational?
 - Can terrorism be prevented?

7. Month Date (Week 7): Alliance Dilemma

- Readings: FLS Chapter 5 pp. 189-213

- ❖ **Discussion questions:**
 - Can UN play a third-party role effectively?
 - Why can't the UN keep the peace?
 - Are poor police better than none?

- ✓ **2nd newspaper article summary due at midnight (11:59PM)**

8. Month Date (Week 8): International Political Economy I

- International trade
- Trade and domestic politics
- WTO and PTAs

- Readings:
 - FLS chapter 7
 - Rogowski, Ronald. 1987. Political Cleavages and Changing Exposure to Trade. *American Political Science Review* 81(4): 1121-1137.

- ✓ **Student presentation 4**
- ✓ **3rd newspaper article summary due at midnight (11:59PM)**

- ❖ **Discussion questions:**

- Why do states trade?
- Why do some governments restrict trade?
- What is comparative advantage?

9. Month Date (Week 9): International Political Economy II

- IMF and financial relations
- Investment and FDI

➤ Readings:

- FLS chapter 8, 9
- Hankla, C. R. and Kuthy, D. 2012. Economic Liberalism in Illiberal Regimes: Authoritarian Variation and the Political Economy of Trade. *International Studies Quarterly* 57(3): 492-504.

✓ Student presentation 5

❖ Discussion questions:

- Why do corporations go multinational?
- Why does government debt affect the value of a currency? What does this mean for the value of the US dollar as the total debt of the US grows steadily in the next decade? What will be the impact on America as a whole? Who will benefit? Who will lose?

10. Month Date (Week 10): Economic Sanctions

- Effects of economic sanctions
- Economic sanctions and the UN

➤ Readings:

- Pape, Robert A. 1997. Why Economic Sanctions Do Not Work. *International Security* 22(2): 90-136.
- Lektzian, David and Glen Biglaiser. 2013. Investment, Opportunity, and Risk: Do U.S. Sanctions Deter or Encourage Global Investment? *International Studies Quarterly* 57(1): 65-78.

✓ Student presentation 6

✓ 4th newspaper article summary due at midnight (11:59PM)

❖ Discussion questions:

- Are economic sanctions effective policy tools?
- Why economic sanctions sometimes fail?

11. Month Date (Week 11): Global Environment

- Tragedy of commons
- Kyoto protocol
- Collective action problem

- Readings:
 - FLS chapter 13
 - Busby, Joshua W. Who Cares about the Weather?: Climate Change and U.S. National Security. *Security Studies* 17(3): 468-504.

- ✓ **Student presentation 7**
- ✓ **5th newspaper article summary due at midnight (11:59PM)**

- ❖ **Discussion questions:**
 - Under what conditions will international efforts to address climate change be successful?
 - How can institutions promote international environmental cooperation?

12. Month Date (Week 12): International Law and Human Rights

- What is international law?
- Sovereignty and human rights

- Readings:
 - FLS chapter 11, 12
 - Hafner-Burton, Emilie M. and Kiyoteru Tsutsui. 2007. Justice Lost! The Failure of International Human Rights Law to Matter Where Needed Most. *Journal of Peace Research* 44(4) 407-425.

- ✓ **Student presentation 8**

- ❖ **Discussion questions:**
 - Why do states obey international laws?
 - Why do individuals and states care about the human rights of others?

13. Month Date (Week 13): Economic Development in a Globalized World

- Development policies

- Readings:
 - FLS chapter 10

- ❖ **Discussion questions:**

- Is foreign aid and colonialism good for economic development in the third world, developing countries?
- To what extent, and in what ways, should developed nations assist poor nations in their efforts at economic development?

14. Month Date (Week 14): International Migration

- Causes and effects of migration
- Readings:
 - FLS Chapter 7 pp. 288-292
- ❖ Discussion questions:
 - When do states prohibit migration?
 - What happens when people, rather than capital, move across borders?

15. Month Date (Week 15): Final Exam