

Politics and International Relations Theory

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Purpose of the Course:

This course is an introductory course, surveying major issues in international politics. The first section of the course provides an overview of some central concepts and main theoretical approaches to understand international politics. The second section of the course applies these theories to various issues pertaining to international relations. Topics will include international security, the causes of war, international political economy, the role of international law and international institutions in international relations, prospects for international cooperation to resolve environmental problems, and nuclear proliferation. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the field of international relations, so no prerequisite course is required.

Course Assignments:

The assignments for this course are:

- (1) reading international news on a daily basis
- (2) active participation in class discussion and making one in-class presentation. You are expected not only to attend class, but also to do all of the assigned readings in advance and to come to class prepared to participate actively in discussion. In addition, each student is required once during the semester to bring to section a newspaper or magazine article that is relevant to the issues covered in that week's lectures or readings. You should be prepared to discuss briefly the ways in which the event or issue raised in the article relates to the theoretical arguments or other topics for that week.
- (3) one group project (**Scheduled DECEMBER 12**). You are required to do a group project on globalization or regionalism and present your findings on that week.
- (4) one in-class open book midterm (**Scheduled OCTOBER 24**)
- (5) a comprehensive final exam. The exams will cover material presented in lectures and the readings for this course. The lectures and readings will take up many of the same issues, but the lectures often will cover material that is not addressed in the readings.

Course Requirements

Lectures, Course Website, and WeChat Group

The Canvas website: I will post topics to be covered in each lecture, course announcements, readings not in the books available for purchase, supplemental materials, and links to other relevant resources online.

The Course WeChat group will be used to send out announcements. Please be sure that you are receiving these messages. If you are not, tell us and we will add you to the list.

Readings

Required readings are listed below each topic on the lecture and reading schedule.

Grades:

Your performance on the exams and during class will determine your final grade. They will be weighted as follows:

Attendance and Participation: 10%
Group Project: 10%
Presentation: 20%
Midterm Exam: 20%
Final Exam: 40%

NOTE: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism, use of another person's work, misconduct during an examination, prior possession of an examination, and submission of work used in another course are examples of violations of the academic code of integrity.

Any student who violates the code will receive a failing grade for the work in question.

Lecture Topics

- 1. Introduction, Concepts, and Methods**
- 2. Realism**
- 3. Liberalism and Neoliberal Institutionalism**
- 4. Constructivism**
- 5. Integration and Reflection on Mainstream IR Theories**

MIDTERM

- 6. Foreign Policy Decision-Making**
- 7. International Security and War**
- 8. Coercion and Bargaining**
- 9. Civil War and Domestic Violence**
- 10. International Law and International Intervention**
- 11. International Political Economy**
- 12. Globalization and Regionalism**

GROUP PROJECT PRESENTATION

- 13. International Cooperation and Global Governance**
- 14. Great Power Relations**
- 15. The Future of International Relations**

FINAL