

PSC1003: Introduction to International Politics (Spring 2017)

Professor Michelle Allendoerfer
Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:45am-
12:45pm/Thursdays 4-5pm, and by appointment
Office: ACAD 206A
mallendo@gwu.edu

Class: Tuesday/Thursday 2:30-3:45pm
Class location: Ames B201

Course Description:

As an introduction to international relations, this course will present the major theoretical concepts in international relations. We will tackle such questions as: why are there wars? Why do states trade? When and why do states cooperate? How do states use international law to tackle international issues such as the environment and human rights? In addition to understanding the theories and concepts used in international relations, we will also develop important analytical skills that will serve you well in this course, future courses, and in life.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast the assumptions, arguments, and theories of international politics.
- Summarize and critique scholarly work in both oral and written forms.
- Conduct research to address a research question of student's choosing; frame a research question in the broader context of international relations; identify existing scholarly work; develop own argument to apply international relations theories to real world case.
- Demonstrate written communication skills, including ability to write succinctly to advance argument.
- Communicate and teach your peers through both informal and formal class presentations.

Course Materials:

Frieden, Lake, and Schultz (hereafter FLS). *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions* (3rd edition). Other readings will be available on Blackboard.

Assignments (further details about each assignment will come in class):

Two Research Papers (35%): This semester you will write two main research papers: one on conflict and one on cooperation. You will submit a short proposal paper before each final paper and you will write a draft and conduct a peer review in discussion section (incomplete drafts or failure to do the peer review will reduce your final paper grade up to 1/3 letter grade). A detailed assignment sheet & schedule will be discussed in class.

Model Diplomacy Cases (10%): To experience how course concepts apply to current event cases, we will engage in four short case activities using the Council on Foreign Relations' Model Diplomacy cases. Roles will rotate, giving all students the opportunity to occupy one of the key roles. Your grade will reflect your preparation, participation, and reflection in the form of a debriefing memo. Dates are listed in the syllabus; more information will be discussed in class and posted to Blackboard.

Quizzes (15%): Studies show the best way to learn new material is to be tested on it frequently and repeatedly.¹ We will have a series of short quizzes throughout the semester. There will be five, as designated in the schedule, for a total of 15% of your grade. Besides doing the reading (and the chapter quizzes) and coming to class, I don't expect you to do much additional studying in advance of these quizzes. Of course, you can, and after the first you should have a better sense of how to effectively prepare for the rest. I will drop the lowest grade, leaving each remaining quiz 3.75% of your class grade. Make-ups are only permitted with an excused absence, which requires documentation of emergency.

Final Exam (20%): The final exam will be held on the date and time designated by the university.

Participation (10%): Your thoughtful, respectful, and consistent participation in class and discussion section. In addition, this component of your grade covers:

¹ Brown, Peter C., Henry L. Roediger III, and Mark A. McDaniel. 2014. *Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press; Cambridge.

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- See below for specific criteria: we will also conduct a mid-term assessment of participation to provide feedback. A self-assessment form will be available on BlackBoard.
- Short assignments intended to reinforce course concepts and ideas; may include worksheets, in-class activities, and textbook problems.

Nations Simulation (10%): We will engage in a summative 3-day simulation in April that integrates the entire semester's worth of work. Your grade will reflect your preparation, participation, and reflection (in the form of a debriefing memo). More details in class and on Blackboard.

Course Policies:

Special accommodations: Please see me or email me *during the first two weeks of the semester* if you require any special accommodations due to learning disabilities, religious practices, physical or medical needs, athletic commitments, or for any other reason.

Academic integrity: We do not tolerate any academic dishonesty. The university's Academic Integrity code can be found at: <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>. Students found in violation of the academic integrity code on any assignment will fail the course, not just the assignment. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating on exams, plagiarizing, forging or fabricating documents, or facilitating academic dishonesty. Ignorance is not an excuse. Please consult with the professor or TA if you are in doubt about what constitutes academic dishonesty, so that you can avoid it.

Participation: This includes being engaged, respectful, and refraining from any disruptive behavior (such as texting, arriving late, falling asleep, side-talking). To earn a high grade for participation, students need to make regular, substantive (rather than administrative and/or logistical, such as "what's the format of the exam?"), relevant, and critical contributions to class and discussion section. This includes comments, questions, and participation during group activities. Students do not have to contribute to every single discussion, but do have to consistently demonstrate that they are engaged with the material. This component of the grade also includes in-class activities, short assignments (such as worksheets) that may or may not have some take-home component. In order to facilitate discussion and limit distractions, laptops, tablets, smart phones, and cell phones are not to be used in class unless otherwise stated.

Attendance: To earn a high grade for participation, it goes without saying that one needs to be present. After all, it is difficult to make substantive contributions to class discussion without being there! In addition, I will take attendance on 3 unannounced days. If you are present in class when I take attendance, you will earn an extra credit point towards your participation grade. There will be no difference between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. Further, you are solely responsible for material on days you miss - if a homework assignment was distributed, you are responsible for getting a copy and completing it on time. There will be no make-ups for any reason of in-class activities for credit.

Discussion Section Attendance & Participation: Your participation component of your grade reflects your thoughtful, respectful, and consistent participation in discussion section as well as lecture and the completion of readings/assignments. Your GTA may assign additional short readings and assignments to build on the course material. Your attendance in discussion section is mandatory, with one unexcused absence allowed. Any additional unexcused absences will result in a full letter grade deduction from your discussion section grade. Absences are excused only in extraordinary circumstances and require documentation.

Communication: I **strongly** suggest you take advantage of office hours to ask clarification questions, get feedback, prepare for exams, or just to chat. Outside of office hours, email is the best way to reach me. Please give me a reasonable amount of time to respond; during the week, I will typically respond within 24 hours.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will receive a full grade deduction (e.g. B → C) for each 24-hour period after the due date. I do not offer make-up exams or extensions, except in cases of medical or family emergencies, which require documentation from person of authority.

Technology: To facilitate discussion and minimize distractions, the use of technology in class (including, but not limited to: laptops, smartphones, tablets) is prohibited unless otherwise noted. I will send an email or make an announcement in class in advance of class sessions when laptops, etc. will be needed for group work/activities. For example, you (or at least some of your group members) will need a laptop on all simulation days.

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Reading and Assignment Schedule²

Tuesday, January 17: Introduction to International Relations

Readings: Lake, David A. 2016. "White Man's IR: An Intellectual Confession" *Perspectives on Politics*.
Response: "Caging Confessions: My Womanhood in David Lake's White Man's IR"
<http://relationsinternational.com/caging-confessions-womanhood-david-lakes-white-mans-ir/>

Thursday, January 19: A Very Brief History of the World

Readings:

FLS chapter 1

- Today's reading and class are designed to give a very brief background of key historical events that IR scholars often refer to and use as context for theories. You will not be required to memorize minor details of the events, but should have a broad understanding of the significance of these historical events for IR scholarship.
- My suggestion for the reading is to focus on the big ideas (what are the key events? Why are they so important for IR?) and keep this chapter in mind as we move forward; you may need to refer back to it when we talk about IR theories in the context of these historical events.

Friday, January 20: No Discussion Section

Tuesday, January 24: Mainstream Approaches to IR

Readings (don't be overwhelmed: it's a lot of short readings today):

FLS pp.xxvii-xxxii (in Introduction: section titled "Integrating Insights from Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism")

Snyder, Jack (Nov/Dec 2005). "One World: Rival Theories" *World Politics*: 55-62.

Feminist IR 101 blog post: <http://duckofminerva.com/2010/12/feminist-ir-101-post-4-common-myths.html>

2003 Iraq War reading (BB)

- Consider Realism/Neorealism, Liberal/Neoliberal institutionalism, Marxism, and Constructivism as schools of thought, rather than theories: what are the shared assumptions within each school of thought? What are the differences across the schools of thoughts?
- How is the international system organized?
- How would each school of thought explain the 2003 Iraq War?
- As you read, pay particular attention to terminology and concepts and how they fit with the various approaches. Come to class prepared with any questions about the concepts and terminology. These chapters provide the foundation of the entire semester, so it is imperative to start with a solid understanding of the key concepts.

Thursday, January 26: Concepts: Power, Anarchy, and the State

Readings:

Selections from Mearsheimer "Anarchy and the Struggle for Power" (BB)

Wendt "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics" (BB)

<https://thedisorderofthings.com/2016/06/08/an-african-american-social-science-international-relations/>

- What is anarchy and why does it matter if the international system is inherently anarchic? How do the various schools of thought approach the concept of anarchy? (Today's readings mainly provide this insight for the Realist and Constructivist schools of thought)
- What is the state? What is the role of the state as a key actor in the international system?
- What is power? What are a state's sources of power? How and why would a state use power?
- The blog post references some critical discussions of the discipline of International Relations as it pertains to race: what are some of these criticisms and, in particular, how do they relate to what we've already been learning?

² Schedule is subject to change; changes will be announced in class and via email with as much notice as possible.

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- As with Tuesday's readings, these readings are terminology-heavy, but important. Continue to pay attention to the concepts and how they fit within the schools of thought and come to class with questions.
- The Wendt piece is particularly dense; focus on his main ideas and consider how his approach differs from the Realist and Liberal schools of thought.

Friday, January 27: Discussion Section: Bring questions from the first two weeks of class

Tuesday, January 31: Structural Explanations of Conflict

Quiz 1

Readings:

Thucydides "Melian Dialogue" (BB): pp 11-12

Waltz, 1988 "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory" (on BB): only pp. 615-624

Kugler and Organski: on pp 172-182

- Today starts the first of a number of class periods focusing on the question: What explains war? We will begin with structural explanations for war.
- As perhaps the great-great-great grandfather of Realism, how does Thucydides' "Melian Dialogue" describe the explanations for war?
- For Waltz, what structure of the international system is most conducive to war? To peace? And why? What does he assume about international relations in making this claim? (In context, why was the Cold War "peaceful"?)
- How do Kugler and Organski differ from Waltz in their explanation for war? (Note: both Waltz and K&O are focusing on "great power war")

Thursday, February 2: Bargaining Theory

Readings:

FLS chapter 3

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2013/11/24/bargaining-theory-and-the-iran-deal/>

- According to this chapter, what is the real puzzle about war? How does this differ from prior literature on war?
- We will spend time in class unpacking the main ideas of Fearon, the theory from which this chapter draws heavily; as you read, try your best to understand these main ideas:
 - o What is a bargaining range and why does Fearon claim one always (or nearly always) exists?
 - o If a bargaining range (nearly) always exists, why does war happen? In other words, why does "prewar bargaining" sometimes fail?
 - o What is a commitment problem and how does this explain war?

Friday, February 3: No Discussion Section

Paper Proposals are due

Tuesday, February 7: Democratic Peace

Readings:

FLS chapter 4 (skim): focus on pages 144-153 ("Do Politicians Spark Wars Abroad in Order to Hold On to Power at Home?") and pp. 166-181 ("Why Don't Democracies Fight One Another?")

Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999. "An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace" *APSR* 93(4): 791-807. (on BB) * Skim the "formal game" parts (pp. 794-802) – skip the formal mathematical modeling and read the prose for the intuition of the model.

Owen, John IV. 2005. "Iraq and the Democratic Peace." *Foreign Affairs* November/December 2005 Issue (BB).

- Today, we shift from the international level of analysis to the state level of analysis.
- In what ways can regime type matter for international peace/conflict? What are the various explanations for the so-called democratic peace? Are democracies inherently more peaceful than non-democracies?
- How do Bueno de Mesquita and his co-authors explain the democratic peace?
- If you believe in the democratic peace, should we encourage democratization globally? Why or why not?

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Thursday, February 9: Alliances

Quiz 2

Readings:

FLS chapter 5 (focus on first half, skim from page 203-end “Collective Security: When Can the UN Keep the Peace?”)

Leeds, Brett Ashley. 2003. “Do Alliances Deter Aggression?” *AJPS* 47(3): 427-39 (BB)

- Consider the Leeds piece using the scientific method steps: What is her RQ and why is it puzzling? What is her explanation/theory? How does she test it (what are her hypotheses? What empirical evidence does she use)? How does the empirical evidence support or not support her hypotheses?

Friday, February 10: Discussion Section: Prep for Model Diplomacy

Reading: TBD

Tuesday, February 14: Model Diplomacy: Dispute in the East China Sea

Thursday, February 16: Deterrence

Readings:

Waltz, 1988 “The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory” (on BB): only pp. 624-627

Waltz “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb: Nuclear Balancing Would Mean Stability” (BB).

- What is deterrence? What is role of nuclear weapons in deterrence (also consider the Waltz reading from January 26)?
- Given these discussions of deterrence, should Iran be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon? Why or why not?

Friday, February 17: No Discussion Section

Tuesday, February 21: Model Diplomacy: North Korea Nuclear Threat

Thursday, February 23: Terrorism

Readings:

FLS chapter 6, pp 264-287 (sections on Terrorism)

Pape, Robert. 2003. “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism.” *American Political Science Review*, 97(3), 343–361.

- What is terrorism? Who uses terrorism? Why?
- What is the benefit of considering terrorism from a strategic or rationalist perspective?
- FLS draw heavily on Kydd & Walter in the section called “How Can Terrorists Hope to Win? Strategies of Violence”: be able to define each strategy, identify the conditions favorable to each strategy, and the best responses to the strategy.

Consider Pape’s piece using the scientific method steps: What is his RQ? In particular, why does he focus on suicide terrorism as a subset of terrorism? What is his explanation (i.e. what is the “strategic logic of suicide terrorism”)? What are his hypotheses and how does he test them? What does he conclude?

Friday, February 24: **Discussion Section:** Terrorism

Readings: TBD

Tuesday, February 28: International Institutions and Cooperation: An Overview

Quiz 3

Readings:

FLS chapter 2, including PD

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- Today, we shift from explaining conflict to explaining cooperation. Today's readings provide an overview of cooperation and then we will focus on cooperation in three issue areas: economics, human rights, and environment.
- Key questions: Why is cooperation difficult in international relations? How do the different schools of thought consider the prospect of cooperation? Under what conditions is cooperation possible?
- We will re-visit game theory here as a key tool for understanding cooperation in international relations. These readings and discussions serve as the basis for explaining cooperation (and its challenges) in each of the issue areas we'll discuss for the rest of the semester. Unlike last semester, understanding the game theory will be more integral now – so do ask questions if you don't understand.

Thursday, March 2: International Institutions and Cooperation, Day 2

Readings:

Keohane, "After Hegemony" (BB)

Jervis "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma" (BB)

- Why is international cooperation difficult?
- What do international institutions do to help states overcome the challenges to cooperation?
- While listening to the podcast, consider how the production of the t-shirt illustrates our economic concepts from Tuesday (such as comparative advantage, free trade, protectionism, tariffs, winners/losers from trade, etc). If you were making a shirt, would you make it in Colombia or Bangladesh? Why?

Friday, March 3: Discussion Section: Peer Review of Paper One

Tuesday, March 7: Trade, Day 1

Readings:

FLS chapter 6

Listen to: "Planet Money Makes a T-shirt" podcast (link on BB)

- Today we will spend some time introducing some basic economic concepts in order to understand the politics of international economics (also known as international political economy). Much of the concepts for this will come in class, with the readings providing some background.
- We will focus on the following key questions:
 - o Why (and what) do states trade? Who benefits and who loses from free trade? What do the "losers" do?
 - o What is the role of international (global and regional) institutions in encouraging free trade?

Thursday, March 9: Trade, Day 2

PAPER 1 DUE

Readings: TBD

- See Thursday 2/25 for an overview.
- What is the relationship between international institutions and development? In what ways do developing states benefit from the international economic system and existing institutions? In what ways do they not benefit?

Friday, March 10: No Discussion Section

MARCH 13-17: SPRING BREAK

Tuesday, March 21: International Monetary Relations

Readings:

FLS Chapter 9

- As with trade, the focus will be on the political aspects, but a basic understanding of the economics is necessary to understand the political debates.

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- A key question will be: Who wins and who loses from various exchange rate policies? (To understand this, we will discuss something called the Mundell-Fleming condition).

Thursday, March 23: Model Diplomacy: Economic Crisis in Europe

Friday, March 24: Discussion Section: International Development

Reading: Reading: Ha-Joon Chang, "Kicking Away the Ladder: Neoliberals Rewrite History," *Monthly Review*, vol. 54, no. 8 (January 2003), pp. 10-15. (on BB)

- How does Chang challenge the conventional wisdom about the international economic order? Is the international economic order "good" for developing countries? Why or why not?

Tuesday, March 28: International law

Quiz 4

Readings:

FLS chapter 11

- What is international law? How does it differ from domestic law?
- What types of problems does international law attempt to address?
- Why do states commit to international law? Do they comply?

Thursday, March 30: Human Rights

FLS chapter 12

- What are human rights? Are human rights a matter for international affairs? Why or why not?
- Are international law and institutions effective ways to improve human rights?

Friday, March 31: Discussion Section: Human Rights, International Law, and Counter-Terrorism
Proposals for paper 2 Due

Readings: TBD

Tuesday, April 4: Humanitarian Intervention

Readings:

Power, "Bystanders to Genocide: Why the United States Let the Rwandan Tragedy Happen" (BB).

Kuperman, Alan. 2000. Rwanda in Retrospect. *Foreign Affairs* 79 (1): 94-118. (on BB)

- What is humanitarian intervention? Under what conditions do we expect states to intervene to prevent genocide?
- What arguments challenge the lack of intervention in Rwanda (in other words, what arguments could have been made to support an intervention in 1994)? What arguments support the lack of intervention?

Thursday, April 6: Environmental Politics

Readings:

FLS chapter 13

Hardin "The Tragedy of the Commons" (BB)

Black, Richard. "Canada to Withdraw from Kyoto Protocol" *BBC News*. 13 Dec 2011. Access:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-16151310>

- In what ways are environmental issues international?
- How do environmental issues illustrate the challenges of international cooperation? What is the role for international institutions in overcoming these challenges? How successful are these efforts?

Friday, April 7: No Discussion Section

Tuesday, April 11: Model Diplomacy: Global Climate Change Policy (OR HI in South Sudan?)

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Thursday, April 13: Nations Simulation Prep

Quiz 5

Reading:

Nations Simulation article (BB)

Friday, April 14: Discussion Section

Readings: TBD

Tuesday, April 18: Nations Simulation, Day 1

Thursday, April 20: Nations Simulation, Day 2

Tuesday, April 25: Nations Simulation, Day 3

Thursday, April 27: Debrief Nations Simulation and End of term wrap-up/catch-up

Friday, April 28: Discussion Section: Peer review of Paper 2

PAPER 2 DUE FRIDAY, MAY 5

FINAL EXAM: TBD (to be held at the university-designated date & time)