

Northwestern University

Political Science 240: Introduction to International Relations

Fall 2015

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Office Hours: Friday 2:30-4:00, and anytime by appointment

Course Overview

This 200-level Introduction to International Relations course covers key debates in the study and practice of international politics. At its core, the study of international politics focuses on the interactions that take place among nation-states, that is, inter-state politics and economics, also increasingly with the involvement of non-state actors. But intra-state affairs or domestic politics have implications for the way states and non-state actors engage with each other at the regional and international levels, something that makes international politics somewhat an extension of domestic politics.

The course will approach international relations from both a historical and theoretical perspective. The first part of the course will take, as a key departure, the outbreak of the First World War and the series of developments through the Inter-War period to the Second World War. The second part will focus on post-World War developments, the formation of the UN and its functional agencies, the era of the Cold War, post-Cold War politics, and the current preeminence of global terrorism, among others. Theoretically, students will be introduced to the major theoretical frameworks in the study of IR: Liberalism/Neoliberalism, Realism/ Neoliberalism, and Constructivism.

Course Requirements and Weighting

Throughout the quarter, we shall read a combination of book chapters and journal articles along with some other shorter newspaper pieces. Students will be expected to complete the week's assigned readings and be prepared to actively engage in class discussions. Class participation is a key aspect of the course and will make a big difference in the final course grade. It will count towards **twenty (20) percent** of the final grade.

In addition to class participation, there will be two other assignments. First, submit **two (2) response papers**, each of **three (3) pages** maximum and double-spaced, on the readings for any two weeks of your choice. Each response paper will take **fifteen (15) percent**. The response papers will not be summaries of the readings but incisive critiques that underscore both the value and strength of the arguments in the readings but also the shortcomings. I will provide a sign-up sheet for response papers during our first class meeting. Response papers will be due to me by email before class for the week that you have signed up, that's before Wednesday 6pm of the respective week.

The second assignment will be a final paper not exceeding **ten (10) pages**, double-spaced (roughly a maximum of 3,000 words). The students will have the liberty to come up with a question or topic on which they want to write the final paper. The question/topic could be formulated from any of the debates and arguments that you may have found fascinating or provocative in the course material and class discussions.

For example, does the current global order conform to the liberal or realist school of thought? Is the world safe with or without nuclear weapons? What are the moral and theoretical arguments on either side of the debate? The paper question/topic could also be drawn from the key questions that currently animate debate in international media or policy circles. For example, is the UN Security Council an undemocratic institution that should be reformed? Is the International Criminal Court a judicial or political institution that “unfairly” targets African leaders, for example? Etc. The final paper will be sent to me by email by end of the day on **Friday December 4**.

Summary of requirements and grading weighting:

Class participation: 20%

Two response papers: 30% (15% each)

Final paper: 50%

Books: We shall read selected chapters from two main books Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World*, and Tim Dunne *et al.*, eds., *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*. Students should purchase these two. I will provide copies for the other assigned readings. Also, most of the articles, both from journals and newspapers, that I have assigned are easily accessible online.

The class will meet Wednesdays from **6:15-9:15 in Wiedboldt Hall room 511** at the downtown Chicago campus.

Topics and Readings

Week One, September 23: General introduction, clarification, and briefing

No readings.

Week Two, September 30: Introduction to the study of IR

What is at stake and what is the crux of the matter in the study of international politics? Why should we, in academia, care about the conduct and misconduct of inter-state politics?

Readings:

- Tim Dunne *et al*, Intro to IR Theories: read introduction chapter, pp.1-13
- Eric Hobsbawm, “The Century: A Bird’s Eye View,” pp.1-17
- Stephen M. Walt, “International Relations: One World, Many Theories,” *Foreign Policy*, No. 11 (Spring 1998)

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1149275.pdf?acceptTC=true>

- David Cole, "Must Counterterrorism Cancel Democracy?" New York Review of Books, 2015
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2015/jan/08/mustcounterterrorism-cancel-democracy/>

Week Three, October 7: The First World War and the Liberal School

Why did the "long peace," basically the period from around end of German Unification in 1871, finally end with the outbreak of WWI in 1914? What was thought to be the solution that would prevent the repeat of the "war to end wars?"

Readings:

- Hobsbawm, "The Age of Total War," read pages 21-36
- Immanuel Kant, "The Perpetual Peace," pp. 93-115 (to be uploaded on Canvas)
- Woodrow Wilson, "Address Before Congress Assembled in Joint Session, January 8, 1918"

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65405>

- Tim Dunne *et al*, Chapter 5 "Liberalism"

Week Four, October 14: Interwar Crisis, "the war to end injustice," and the Realist School

Why did the peace settlement in 1919 stumble so quickly? What explains the rise of Hitler and Mussolini in the 1920/30s and how did their rise destabilize world order, leading to another global catastrophe? How did the collapse of the League of Nations and the outbreak of World War Two cause a dramatic rethinking of inter-state politics?

Readings:

- Eric Hobsbawm, chapter Two "The World Revolution"
- Hans Morgenthau, *Power Among Nations*, chapter One "Political Power" (to be uploaded on Canvas)
- Tim Dunne *et al*, Chapter Three "Classical Realism"

Week Five, October 21: The Cold War and Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD)

The end of the Second World War left in its wake a silent war between the US and the Soviet Union. This though was not a passive war; there was active fighting by the two superpowers through proxy wars in Central America, Asia, and Africa. But why was the US not able to use nuclear weapons against its adversaries including the Soviet Union even when the latter did not have capability to effectively retaliate? Did nuclear weapons protect the world from another global war?

Readings

- Eric Hobsbawm, Chapter Eight "Cold War"
- Robert McNamara, "Mutual Deterrence"
- Nina Tannenwald, "Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Basis of Nuclear Non-Use" *International Organization*, Volume 53, No. 3 (Summer 1999)

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayFulltext?type=1&fid=172960&jid=INO&volumeId=53&issueId=03&aid=172959&bodyId=&membershipNumber=&societyETOCSession=>

Week Six, October 28: The American Age: Hegemony and the “new” Liberal Order

The rise of American economic and military capabilities after the Second World War placed the US at the helm of global politics for many decades. How did the US use its economic and military power to dominate the rest of the world? Did the US’s spread of democracy bring about global stability?

Readings

- Eric Hobsbawm, Chapter Nine “The Golden Years”
- Tim Dunne et al, chapter Six “Neoliberalism”
- Robert Gilpin, *US Power and the Multinational Corporation*, Chapter Six (to be uploaded on Canvas)

Week Seven, November 4: IR in the Global Periphery I: Decolonization

The end of Second World War brought among other major developments the phenomenon of decolonization, from Asia to Africa. Why did mass decolonization happen after World War Two, or put another way, what was the impact of the World Wars on colonialism? What was the US’s strategic interest in pushing for decolonization?

Readings:

- Eric Hobsbawm, Chapter Twelve “The Third World”
- Tim Dunne, Chapter Twelve “Postcolonialism”
- Rudolf von Albetini, “The Impact of Two World Wars on the Decline of Colonialism,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol 4, No. 1 (January 1969)

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/259789.pdf>

Week Eight, November 11: IR in the Global Periphery II: Independence and Integration in Africa

The biggest addition to the global community of nation-states came in the post Second World War era, mostly in the 1960s. This was mainly in Africa. How did this reconfigure international politics? What has been the place of Africa in global politics and the nature of inter-continental African international relations? Why did independent African leaders inherit artificial colonial borders, which they never attempted to alter?

Readings:

- Frederick Cooper, “Possibility and Constraint: African Independence in Historical Perspective,” *The Journal of African History* Vol. 49, No. 2 (2008), pp. 167-196
- Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival*, chapter one “Fragile States and the International System” (to be posted on Canvas)
- Tandeka C. Nkiwane, “Africa and International Relations: Regional Lessons for a Global,” *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (Summer 2001)

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1601487.pdf>

- Martin Welz, *Integrating Africa: Decolonization's Legacies, Sovereignty, and the African Union*, "Introduction" pp. 1-15 (to be uploaded on Canvas)

Week Nine, November 18: IR in the 21st Century: The End of History and the Clash of Civilizations?

The end of the Cold War attracted as all sorts of pronouncements, including Francis Fukuyama's "the end of history?" What is it that changed about world order with the end of the Cold War that heralded a new era? Is it true, as Samuel Huntington claimed in 1993, that the post-Cold War global relations would not be ideological but cultural?

Readings:

- Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History," *The National Interest* (Summer 1989)

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/24027184.pdf>

- Timothy Stanley and Alexander Lee, "It's Still Not the End of History," *The Atlantic* (Sept 1, 2014)

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/09/its-still-not-the-end-of-history-francis-fukuyama/379394/>

- Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993)

http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Acrobat/Huntington_Clash.pdf

- Edward Said, "The Clash of Ignorance," *The Nation* (October 22, 2001)

<http://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance/>

Week Ten, December 2: Reflections on the Future of World Order

Scholars of international politics announced the decline of the US in the early 1990s. The decline didn't happen. Is it happening now with the seemingly unstoppable rise of China and other emerging powers? What is the future of global order without American hegemony? And what is the future of multilateral institutions like the WTO?

Readings:

- G. John Ikenberry, "The Future of Liberal World Order: Internationalism After America" *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2011)

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2011-05-01/future-liberal-world-order>

- Michael Beckley, "China's Century? Why America's Edge Will Endure," *International Security* 36, 3 (Winter 2011/12)

http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/ISEC_a_00066

- Nitsan Chorev and Sarah Babb, "The Crisis of Neoliberalism and the Future of International Institutions: A Comparison of the IMF and the WTO," *Theory and Society*, Volume 38, Issue 5 (September 2009), pp 459-484

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11186-009-9093-5#page-1>