

PLSC 345: THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Spring 2009

Instructor: Jeremy Grace

Office: Welles 3E

Office hours: W 10-12, Th 2-4, and by appt

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Description, Goals and Objectives

This course provides an overview of theoretical approaches to studying international relations. We will survey the classic and contemporary literature with special emphasis on theory, methodology, and practical application. Since IR theory is a huge and messy field encompassing many subsets of questions and problems, we will not be able to examine all the particular debates. The emphasis is on the major traditions that guide our understanding of international politics and diplomatic processes. Students should come away with an appreciation for the relative strengths and weaknesses of competing theoretical traditions and be able to interpret current policy debates in the context of theoretical perspectives.

There is no need to be scared of theory, but this is a demanding class. The reading load is heavy, especially during the first 11 weeks, and my expectations of your written and analytic work are very high. If you like classes where you simply memorize a bunch of facts, spit them out in an essay, and then forget them, you are probably better off taking a different class. On the other hand, if you get a kick out of the clash of competing ideas and appreciate the subtleties and beauty of a well-crafted argument (there's no accounting for weird tastes), you will do well. Your grade will be a reflection of your analytic and written skills, and your participation and effort in the class.

I do not have any particular theoretical orientation. Like most people, the more I learn, the more confused I get. I will never penalize you for what you argue or believe, as long as it is well-argued and grounded in solid facts and analysis. In addition, no comment or question in class is stupid. Some people get this stuff naturally; others struggle. But you can't learn if you don't speak up when confused. Please do not be afraid to contribute.

Required Texts

- Marc A. Genest, Conflict and Cooperation: Evolving Theories of International Relations, 2nd Ed. Thomson Wadsworth, 2004. Note: Readings from this text are indicated with (MAG)
- Additional Readings posted on MyCourses or available through Milne Library Databases

Course Requirements

- 1) **Mid-term and a final exam (40%)**: Probably in-class in the computer lab, but open for discussion.
- 2) **Debate or Review (20%)**: You will either review a non-required reading (listed in the course schedule as "Essay Review") or engage in a debate related to the week's theme. I will assign you a topic the first day of class. Your presentation should take about ten minutes. You will also write a 2 page, double spaced brief of your review or debate position that will be submitted to me by Monday morning, 9:00 a.m., of your assigned week.
- 3) **Class Participation (10%)**: Nuff Said
- 4) **Paper (30%)**: You will write a 4,000-4,500 word **max** (including notes and abstract, about 15 pages double spaced) paper that explains a historical or current event in IR using the course concepts and theories. Choose an event you wish to explain. Then address why the event came about and why it unfolded as it did. What does the event tell us about one or more of the major theories we have explored in the class? What does theory tell us about the event? You should develop a theoretically informed argument about the most powerful influences on the actors involved and why they behaved in a particular way during this event. Examples of events include -- but are not limited to -- the outbreak of a war or crisis, the development of an international treaty, institution or regime, international responses to ethnic or internal conflict, responding to global terror networks, competition for scarce resources, or a multilateral development initiative. I could go on for days. The only limiting criteria is that you must be able to work with an existing IR theoretical school in order to analyze the particular issue or event.

You must meet with me during office hours within the first three weeks of the class (no appointment needed) to discuss a topic. **A paper proposal (2 paras and a preliminary bibliography with 5 entries) is due on the date indicated on the syllabus and is required in order to obtain credit for the assignment.** Spend some time organizing the logic of your argument and gathering evidence. Think especially hard about what kind of evidence will best support your analysis. You will need to also consider the most prominent contending explanations and explain why yours is the most persuasive. Argue clearly, but do not be over-simplistic. Use facts. Avoid assertions. Avoid adjectives and adverbs. Write concisely. Proof-read extremely carefully. I typically write about twice as much material as any particular assignment calls for, and then spend a significant amount of time honing in on the key points and jettisoning the garbage. I suggest you do the same.

You are required to quote material from **at least two different articles in two different journals** selected from the following list:

- World Politics, Journal of Interdisciplinary History, International Security, International Organization, International Studies Quarterly, American Political Science Review, Global Environmental Politics, Journal of Peace Research, World Development

That list should contain articles on pretty much every IR event that ever happened or is happening. In addition, you need to quote at least **two additional peer-reviewed articles** from journals that are not on that list. Good possibilities include Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Global Governance, Journal of Democracy, Journal of [insert region here] studies, etc. This is the **basic** requirement, I expect you to consult and to cite significantly more articles, books, and newspapers/magazines. At a minimum, I would expect your bibliography to contain 12 unique entries. If you are unclear on how to effectively use the real world and online resources available through Milne, schedule a session with a research librarian very early in the semester. They are an amazing resource.

The paper should include a 200 word abstract. An abstract is different from an introduction. See me if unsure of the difference. During the final weeks of the class, students will present a 10 minute summary of their papers and respond to questions. There will be 3 presentations per day. One student will be tasked with responding to each presentation. The material covered in the presentations will be included on the comprehensive final exam. The presentation schedule will be established once I know the topics you are working on. As part of this assignment, you should select one theoretically oriented article that you cite in your paper and suggest it to me to share with the class in advance of your presentation. I will select one or two of these articles from among the six I receive each week, to forward to the entire class, which will constitute that week's required reading. I will also be releasing your paper abstracts to the entire class in advance of your presentation.

You will submit your paper to me via e-mail as an MS Word (not Works!) attachment. I will send details on how to name the file etc. The paper will require an abstract, 4,500 words maximum of text, then endnotes, and finally a bibliography. All text pages beyond 4,500 words will be ignored. It will harm your grade substantially if you exceed the limit and your conclusion is ignored. Do not cheat by plagiarizing, copying, or re-using old work. You agree that by remaining in the class, your work will be submitted to turnitin.com.

Policies

We are responsible grown-ups in this class. I expect you to do the readings, attend class (arriving on time and having showered and gotten out of your PJs), and make a serious contribution to class discussions. Late work is penalized one full grade per day that it is late. No exceptions, except in the event of a most extreme emergency.

Accommodations

SUNY Geneseo will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented physical, emotional or learning disabilities. Students should consult with the Office of Disability Services (Tabitha Buggie-Hunt, 105D Erwin, tbuggieh@geneseo.edu) regarding any needed accommodations early in the semester.

WEEK 1 (JAN 20): WHAT IS THEORY?

Thurs Waltz, "Man the State and War" (MAG)
Walt, "The Relationship between Theory and Policy in International Relations"
Van Evera, "Hypotheses, Laws, and Theories: A Users Guide"

WEEK 2 (JAN 27): WAR GIVES US MEANING

Tues MAG 1 – 11 and 41 -48
Machiavelli, "The Prince" (MAG); Aristotle, "The Politics (MAG); Hobbes, "Leviathan" (MAG); Freud, "Why War?" (MAG).
Morgenthau, "The Dilemma of Scientific Man"*
Carr, "The Realist Critique"*

- **Thurs: Either no class, library instruction, or a guest lecture (I am out of town from weds-sun)**

WEEK 3 (FEB 3): DERIVING STATE BEHAVIOR FROM THE CONDITION OF ANARCHY

- **Meet instructor to discuss paper topics by Friday**

Tues Thucydides, "The History of the Peloponnesian War" (MAG)
Waltz, "The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory"
Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma"
Desch, "It is Kind to be Cruel: The Humanity of American Realism"
• Essay Review, *Paul Schroeder, "Historical Reality versus Neo-Realist Theory"*

Thurs Debate 1) *Structural Realism explains nothing*
2) *Structural Realism explains everything*

WEEK 4 (FEB 10): POLARITIES AND IMPERIAL OVERSTRETCH

- **Paper Proposals Due Tuesday Feb 10**

Tues Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War" (MAG); Gilpin, "War and Change in World Politics" (MAG)
Brooks and Wohlforth, "American Primacy in Perspective"
Haass, "The Age of Nonpolarity"
Gewen, "Why Are We in Iraq: A Realpolitik Perspective"
Mearsheimer and Walt, "An Unnecessary War"
• Essay Review, *Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise"*

Thurs Debate 1) *A realist critique of the Iraq War*
2) *A realist case for the Iraq War*

WEEK 5 (FEB 17): COOPERATION IS POSSIBLE

Tues MAG, 123-132; Bull, "The Anarchical Society (MAG); Grotius, "On the Law of War and Peace" (MAG);
Wilson, "Fourteen Points" (MAG); Nye, "Interdependence and Power" (MAG)
• Essay Review, *Desch, "America's Liberal Illiberalism."*

Thurs Debate 1) *Interdependence produces peace*
2) *Interdependence is an illusion*

WEEK 6 (FEB 24): COOPERATION CAN BE INSTITUTIONALIZED

- Tues Keohane, "Cooperation and International Regimes" (MAG)
Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions"
Keohane and Martin, "The Promise of Institutional Theory"
Kupchan, "The Promise of Collective Security"
- Essay Review: Vogler, "Taking Institutions Seriously: How Regime Analysis can be Relevant to Multilevel Environmental Governance," **Global Environmental Politics** 3(2)*
- Thurs Debate 1) *Build More Institutions*
2) *Institution-building is for Losers*

WEEK 7 (MAR 3): DIFFERENT STATES DO DIFFERENT THINGS

- Tues MAG 373 – 381
Russett, "Controlling the Sword" (MAG)
Owen, "How Liberalism Produces the Democratic Peace"
Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace"
Gause, "Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?"
- Essay Review: Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War,"**
- Thurs Debate 1) *Want peace and stability? Promote democracy*
2) *Want war and turmoil? Promote democracy.*

WEEK 8 (MAR 10): MID-TERM EXAM AND PAPER MEETINGS

- **Mid-Term, Tuesday**
- You must meet with me, with a rough first draft or very detailed outline in hand, at some point this week.

WEEK OF MARCH 17: SPRING BREAK

- Reading: Trashy beach novel of your choice.

WEEK 9 (MAR 24): CONSTRUCTIVIST AND POST-MODERN APPROACHES – NORMS, IDEAS, AND SYSTEMS

- Tues MAG 257-263; Lapid, "On the Prospects of International Theory in the Post-Positivist Era" (MAG);
Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It" (MAG)
Price and Tannenwald, "Norms and Deterrence: The Nuclear and Chemical Weapons Taboos"*
Finnemore, "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention"*
- Essay Review: Der Derian, "Post-Theory: The Eternal Return of Ethics in International Relations"*
- Thurs Debate, 1) *There is a science of IR*
2) *Beware the hegemony of Behavioralism*

WEEK 10 (MAR 31): ENGENDERING EXPLANATIONS

- Tues Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements" (MAG); Keohane, "Beyond Dichotomy: Conversations" (MAG); Locher & Prugl, "Feminism and Constructivism: World's Apart?" (MAG); Gul Khattak, "The U.S. Bombing of Afghanistan: A Women-Centered Perspective" (MAG);
Fukuyama, "Women and the Evolution of World Politics"
Ehrenreich, "Fukuyama's Follies: So What if Women Ruled the World?"
- Thurs Debate 1) *There is little basis for locating the wellspring of war in aggressive male instincts*
2) *Hegemonic masculinity breeds war*

WEEK 11 (APR 7): THEORIES OF BUREAUCRATIC AND INDIVIDUAL DECISION-MAKING

- Papers Due April 7, ergo, light reading and no presentation/review this week

Tues MAG, 444-449 and 508-512; Snyder et. al., "Foreign Policy Decision-Making" (MAG); Allison, "Essence of Decision" (MAG); Jervis, "Perception and Misperception in World Politics" (MAG)

WEEK 12 (APR 14): PRESENTATIONS

- Reading TBA

Tues Pres 1 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 2 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 3 _____ Respondant _____

Thurs Pres 4 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 5 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 6 _____ Respondant _____

WEEK 13 (APR 21): PRESENTATIONS

- Reading TBA

Tues Pres 7 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 8 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 9 _____ Respondant _____

Thurs Pres 10 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 11 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 12 _____ Respondant _____

WEEK 14 (APR 28): PRESENTATIONS

- Reading TBA

Tues Pres 13 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 14 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 15 _____ Respondant _____

Thurs Pres 16 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 17 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 18 _____ Respondant _____

WEEK 15 (MAY 5) TUESDAY ONLY: PRESENTATIONS

- Reading TBA

Tues Pres 19 _____ Respondant _____
Pres 20 _____ Respondant _____

FINAL EXAM: SECTION 01 WEDS MAY 13; 8:00 – 11:00
SECTION 02 FRI MAY 8; 8:00 – 11:00