

PLSC 140 INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Jeremy Grace

Office Hours Weds 10:00 – 12:30; Thurs 2:00 – 4:00 or by appointment.

TA: Rebecca Cogan (rrc3@geneseo)

Hours: Tues 10:25-11:25

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Description, Goals and Objectives

This course explores the major actors, issues and approaches to understanding contemporary world politics. There are no pre-requisites other than an interest in the topic and willingness to read, think, and critically discuss your ideas and impressions. We will examine the tools political scientists use to explain matters of international conflict and cooperation. Emphasis is placed on discovering the important actors in international politics, the contexts in which these actors make strategic decisions, and the major theories used in explaining international events.

Political science is not like mathematics; there are no definitive “right” answers to the problems we engage. Rather, different analysts adopt wildly divergent and often competing perspectives to explain world events. My goal is to organize the material in such a way that you are able to evaluate and make sense of the complicated choices facing foreign policy-makers. The course is also designed to acquaint students with the basic concepts and principles necessary for more advanced study of international relations.

The course can be divided into three broad sections. First we address core theoretical approaches to understanding international relations: realism, liberalism, and alternative approaches. We then shift to an examination of issues of war and peace. How can we explain the dismal recurrence of state-organized violence in international life? What do we know about the causes of war? Have we developed tools to avoid it? The final section examines issues of international political economy. What legal instruments and organizational mechanisms do states use to facilitate cooperation? How does power interact with economics in the international system? What are the rules built into issues of international monetary and trade relations?

Texts & Readings

- Joshua Goldstein and Jon Pevehouse, “International Relations: 2008-2009 Update, Brief 4th Ed.” (Pearson Longman)
- Supplementary readings are posted on mycourses.

The newspaper of record for international affairs in the United States is the *New York Times*. Copies are available in the Milne Library reading room/coffee shop and in the dorms. Some of the quiz questions will be based on international articles that appear in the *Times*; you are responsible for reading it daily. Other great sources include the *Financial Times* and the *Economist*.

Course Requirements

- 1) Two in-class Exams
- 2) 2 Literature Reviews (750 words each): You will select one article from the assigned readings on mycourses and find one related article from among the following journals: Foreign Affairs, World

Policy Journal, International Security, the National Interest, or Global Governance. The articles should be relevant to a common theme (i.e., variants of realism, international organizations, trade and economics, war and peace, human rights, etc). The review should briefly sketch the main argument in each reading, apply them to current events, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each.

- 3) 10 unannounced quizzes. No make-ups will be given unless you provide **advance written notice** (e-mail OK, provided I respond with approval prior to the absence) that you cannot attend class on a certain day or if you produce a written medical excuse that some horrible tragedy has befallen you.

Grading Criteria

Mid-term Exam	20 Points
Final Exam	30 Points
2 Literature Reviews (15 points each)	30 Points
10 Quizzes (2 points each)	20 Points
TOTAL POINTS	100

Academic Honesty

Almost every semester at least one student in this course gets into trouble regarding plagiarism. The rule is pretty straightforward; when you use someone else's words, you must place them in quotes and provide a reference. The same goes for the ideas of another person, even if you change the language. For more information, consult the university bulletin or schedule a meeting with the college Writing Center. I have zero tolerance for academic dishonesty. I will flunk the paper, flunk you for the course, and refer the matter to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

The PLSC department has a subscription to turnitin.com. This technology allows us to compare your work to: a) everything on the internet; b) publications and books that are not on the internet but are available through the service; and c) other undergraduate and graduate papers submitted throughout the country. By remaining in the course, you agree that your work will be submitted to turnitin.com.

Accommodations

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

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS SCHEDULE

Week 1 (9/1): Introduction to the Study of International Politics

Required Goldstein, ch.1
Walt, "International Relations: One World Many Theories."

Week 2 (9/8): Realism

Required Goldstein, ch.2
Morgenthau, "Six Principles of Political Realism."
Mearsheimer, "Anarchy and the Struggle for Power."

Week 3 (9/15): Liberalism

Required Goldstein 66-90
Gelb & Rosenthal, "The Rise of Ethics in Foreign Policy."

Week 4 (9/22): Diverse Approaches

Required Goldstein 91—111
Wendt, "Constructing International Politics."
Tickner, "Troubled Encounters: Feminism Meets IR."

Week 5 (9/29): War & Other Unpleasantries

Required Goldstein, Ch.4
Muller, "The Clash of peoples: Why Ethnic Nationalism Will Drive Global Politics for Generations."

Week 6 (10/6): Hegemony and Terror

Required Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations"
Ajamaj, "The Summoning."
Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism."
Abrahms, "Why Terrorism Does not Work."

Week 7 (10/15): Mid-Term Exam Thursday, Review 1 due, Fall Break Tues

Week 8 (10/20): International Organization

Required Goldstein, pp. 216—248
Brooks & Wohlforth, "Reshaping the World Order."
Glennon, "Why the Security Council Failed."

Week 9 (10/27): International Law

Required Goldstein, pp. 249 – 267
Ratner, "International Law: The Trials of Global Norms."
Krauthammer, "The Curse of Legalism."

Week 10 (11/3): Human Rights & Intl. Humanitarian Law

Required Howard & Donnelly, "Human Rights in World Politics."
ICRC, "International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law."
Kissinger, "The Pitfalls of Universal Jurisdiction."

Week 11 (11/10): International Political Economy I: Trade

Required Goldstein pp. 168 – 195
Mattoo & Subramanian, "From Doha to the Next Bretton Woods."

Week 12 (11/17): International Political Economy II: Money

Required Goldstein 195 – 215
Hale & Hale, "Reconsidering Revaluation."
Kapur, "The IMF: A Cure or a Curse."

Week 13 (11/24): Thanksgiving (Thurs): Continue discussion of IPE

Week 14 (12/1): International Political Economy III: Development

Required Goldstein Ch. 7
Sachs, "The Development Challenge."
Easterly, "The Cartel of Good Intentions."

Week 15 (12/8): Globalization

Required Frankel, "Globalization of the Economy."
Altman, "Globalization in Retreat: Geopolitical Consequences of the Financial Crisis."

FINAL EXAM: Block B2, Thursday, Dec 17 12:00 – 3:00