

**POLS 318/502**  
**Theories of International Relations**  
**Spring 2014**  
**Class Location: Allen 1015**  
**Class Meeting Time: TR 11:55-1:10**

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 3:00-4:30, and by appointment.

**Course Description & Learning Objectives**

This course offers an overview of international relations theory. It explores why and how countries interact with one another and analyzes the implications of these interactions. What are the major theories of international politics? Why do countries experience conflict and war? Why do countries cooperate? How do economics and security interact in the international arena? This course applies IR theories to key contemporary issues in including nuclear weapons, terrorism, and civil war.

By the end of this course, students are expected to (1) demonstrate their knowledge of international relations theory in course exams, (2) convey an ability to think critically about contemporary global affairs, (3) write a research paper that demonstrates an understanding of how theory and practice intersect in international politics.

**Student Responsibilities**

Students are expected to complete all required reading *prior* to class lecture. Doing so is necessary to succeed in this course. Students are also expected to participate in class discussions, complete written assignments on time, and take exams as scheduled. Those who do not attend class and complete the required readings are highly unlikely to pass this course.

**Course Policies**

**Academic Honesty:** Students must adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Those who fail to do so will face the greatest possible penalty. “An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.” See <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu>.

**Common Courtesies:** I expect that you will be attentive and engaged. Students should turn off cell phones and other electronic devices prior to class. The use of text messaging or other forms of electronic communication is not permitted during class time.

**Disability Services:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal statute that provides civil rights protection to persons with disabilities. The ADA requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that accommodates their disabilities, among other things. Students who believe that they have a disability that requires accommodation should

contact Disability Services in Cain Hall, Room B118 or call 845-1637. See <http://disability.tamu.edu> for additional information.

***Makeup Policy:*** I recognize that illness and other factors may cause you to miss classes throughout the semester. This is why you are permitted to drop your two lowest quiz grades, and to miss up to three classes and still receive the full amount of credit for class participation. Because quizzes are unannounced, allowing students to make them up would provide them with an unfair advantage. I therefore do not allow students to makeup quizzes. However, if you miss class on the day of a quiz because of dire circumstances (e.g., the death of an immediate family member), I will compute your quiz grade on the basis of one less quiz. In term of the midterm and final exams, makeups will not be given except in extreme circumstances. In such cases, students may be able to makeup exams if they provide written documentation.

***Re-grading Policy:*** Students may request that papers or exams be re-graded if they believe that they have been unfairly evaluated. Requests for such re-evaluations must be delivered to me in typewritten form (these requests cannot be e-mailed) along with the assignment within one week after assignments are returned. The written statement must include specific reasons why the student believes the assignment was graded unfairly as well as their assessment of what grade they deserve. I will then re-grade the assignment. Note that the new grade may be the same, higher, or lower than the original grade.

***Course Readings.*** Almost all of the course readings are available in the two required books for this class. In a few cases, students are required to read articles that may be downloaded from JSTOR or Google Scholar. It is the student's responsibility to obtain and read these articles, based on the information that is provided. If you have trouble locating one of these articles, please contact me.

***iClicker+.*** Students are required to purchase an iClicker+, which is available at the TAMU bookstore. The iClicker will be used to answer questions that are posed in class, and to record students' responses electronically. It is the student's responsibility to bring their clickers to class every day, and to ensure that it has working batteries.

### **Required Books**

- Stephen Van Evera (VE), *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).
- Phil Williams, Donald Goldstein, and Jay Shafritz, eds., (WGS) *Classic Readings of International Relations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (2005). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

## Course Grades

Students will be evaluated based on the following:

- Two Exams (25% each).**
- Research Paper (25%).** Guidelines for the research paper are included at the end of the syllabus.
- Quizzes (10%).** This will be based on 7 unannounced quizzes. The two lowest quiz grades will be dropped.
- Participation (15%).** Students' responses via iClicker will provide the basis for their participation grades. Every opportunity to respond to a question using iClicker will represent one possible participation point. The participation grade will be calculated by dividing the total number of recorded responses for each student but the total number of questions posed for the entire semester. However, before making this calculation, I will subtract 10 percent from the denominator. What this means is that students may miss up to three classes and still receive all of the points for participation. It is not possible to receive a grade of higher than 100% for participation, however.

## Course Schedule

**\*Tentative: Subject to change as the semester evolves**

Important dates:

Exam 1: February 20

Exam 2: April 24

Research paper due: April 22

Class Number & Date	Lecture Topic	Reading(s)
<b><i>Part I</i></b>	<b><i>Introduction to Theory</i></b>	
1/14	Course Overview	None
1/16	What is a Theory?	•VE, 7-17
1/21	Testing Theories	•VE, pp. 17-48, 50-66
<b><i>Part II</i></b>	<b><i>Security &amp; Conflict</i></b>	
1/23	The Origins of Realism I	•Thucydides, "The Peloponnesian War and the Melian Debate" (WGS) •Hobbes, "Relations among Sovereigns" (WGS)
1/28	The Origins of Realism II	•Morgenthau, "Six Principles of Political Realism" (WGS)
1/30	Anarchy & the Security Dilemma	•Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma" (WGS) •Herz, "The Security Dilemma in the Atomic Age" (WGS)
2/4	Alliances and Balancing	•Hans Morgenthau, "The Balance of Power" (WGS) •AFK Organiski, "Criticism of Balance of Power Theory" (WGS) •Inis Claude, "Collective Security as an Approach to Peace" (WGS)

2/6	War & Commitment Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clausewitz, “War as an Instrument of Policy” (WGS)</li> <li>• Robert Jervis, “War and Misperception” (WGS)</li> </ul>
2/11	Deterrence and Nuclear Weapons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Albert Wohlstetter, “The Delicate Balance of Terror” (WGS)</li> <li>• John Lewis Gaddis, “The Long Peace” (WGS)</li> </ul>
2/13	Military Coercion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thomas Schelling, “The Manipulation of Risk” (WGS)</li> <li>• Alexander George et. al, “The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy” (WGS)</li> </ul>
2/18	Case: The Cuban Missile Crisis	• Graham Allison, “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis” (WGS)
2/20	Exam 1	
<b>Part III</b>	<b>International Cooperation</b>	
2/25	Liberalism Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilson, “The Fourteen Points” (WGS)</li> <li>• Grotius, “The Rights of War and Peace” (WGS)</li> </ul>
2/27	Democratic Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doyle, “Kant’s Perpetual Peace” (WGS)</li> <li>• Tomz and Weeks, “An Experimental Investigation of the Democratic Peace.” Available here: <a href="http://www.stanford.edu/~tomz/working/TomzWeeks-DemPeace-2012-02-12b.pdf">http://www.stanford.edu/~tomz/working/TomzWeeks-DemPeace-2012-02-12b.pdf</a>.</li> </ul>
3/4	Perspectives on Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Keohane, “Cooperation and International Regimes” (WGS)</li> <li>• Robert Axelrod, “The Evolution of Cooperation” (WGS)</li> </ul>
3/6	International Law	• William Coplin, “International Law and Assumptions about the State System” (WGS)
3/10 – 3/14	SPRING BREAK	
3/18	International Institutions	• Michael Barnett and Martha Finnemore, “The Politics, Power and Pathologies of International Organizations” (WGS)
3/20	NGOs	• Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, “Advocacy Networks in International Politics” (WGS)
<b>Part IV</b>	<b>Other Approaches &amp; Emerging Topics</b>	
3/25	Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Byman and Pollack. 2001. “Let Us Now Praise Great Men,” <i>International Security</i> 25 (4): 107-146. (JSTOR)</li> <li>• Chiozza and Goemans. 2004. “International Conflict and the Tenure of Leaders” <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 48 (3): 604-619. (JSTOR)</li> </ul>
3/27	Reading Day – NO FORMAL CLASS MEETING	*** <i>Work on your research papers</i> ***
4/1	Constructivism	• Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of It” (WGS)
4/3	Preventive War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elaine Bunn, “Preemptive Action: When, How, and to What Effect” (WGS)</li> <li>• John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, “An Unnecessary War” (WGS)</li> </ul>
4/8	Terrorism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruce Hoffman, “Terrorism Today and Tomorrow” (WGS)</li> <li>• Robert Keohane, “The Globalization of Informal Violence” (WGS)</li> </ul>

4/10	Civil Wars and Failed States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Robert Rotberg, “Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators.” Available here:  <a href="http://wilsoncenter.net/sites/default/files/Failed%20States%2C%20Collapsed%20States%2C%20Weak%20States-%20Causes%20and%20Indicators.pdf">http://wilsoncenter.net/sites/default/files/Failed%20States%2C%20Collapsed%20States%2C%20Weak%20States-%20Causes%20and%20Indicators.pdf</a></li> <li>•Chaim Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars.” <i>International Security</i> (JSTOR)</li> </ul>
4/15	IPE & the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•David Held, “The Globalization Debate” (WGS)</li> <li>•Garrett Hardin. 1968. “The Tragedy of the Commons.” <i>Science</i> 162 (JSTOR).</li> </ul>
4/17	America’s Role in the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth, “American Primacy in Perspective” (WGS)</li> <li>•Joseph Nye, “Limits of American Power” (WGS)</li> </ul>
4/22	Conclusions and Review	
4/24	Exam 2	

## **Guidelines for Research Paper**

### **Select a Research Question**

Choose a research question relating to international relations. The question should be theoretically interesting and substantively important. Your question should be cast broadly – you should not focus on a single case (but your evidence can come from more specific cases). There are countless possible questions to analyze and students are encouraged to contact me if they have questions on what is appropriate. Some examples include:

- Why do countries go to war?
- Are bipolar international systems more stable than multipolar or unipolar systems?
- What restrains international cooperation in world politics?
- Does international law restrain state behavior? If so, how?
- Why do countries join international institutions?

### **Theory Development**

Develop a theoretical argument to explain your research question.

### **Theory Testing**

Test your theory using social science research methods that are appropriate to the question at hand. You are encouraged to use quantitative analysis if you have had the requisite courses already; if not, you may use qualitative analysis.

Analyze the event using insights from the major theories of international relations. You must explain why that theory (or the insights from that theory) best explains the event you are analyzing. A convincing paper will show that the event is explained less well by competing theories.

### **Grading**

You will be graded based on five criteria: objectivity, quality of research, quality of analysis, organization, and style.

### **Other Guidelines**

- The length should be 15 pages, double spaced, standard margins, times new roman 12 point font.
- Use 12-point Times New Roman font
- Double space the article
- Include a title page with your name, the title of the paper, course number, and date (the title page does not count towards the page limit)
- Use section headings where appropriate
- Use clear, succinct prose and avoid passive voice
- Use the Chicago Style for references, as explained here: <http://uncg.libguides.com/apsr>.