

POLS 330
Introduction to International Relations
FALL 2012

Instructor: Olga Chyzh,

Time and Location: T, Th 2:00-3:50pm, 146 Schaeffer Hall

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Overview and Objectives

This course provides students with the background and conceptual tools they need to understand contemporary international relations. We will begin with an exploration of the building blocks of international relations study: Who are the important actors in international relations? How does the structure of the international system facilitate or inhibit their actions? What factors explain events like World War II, the end of the Cold War or the recent collapse of international economic centers? The course then proceeds by engaging topics, including violent conflict, interstate cooperation and organization, political economy, and transnational issues of human rights and environmental politics.

Students will be introduced to the literature in a broad way, to make them familiar with the main theoretical traditions in the field. Students will be asked, as much as possible, to read original texts, rather than from a textbook. Together, we will create a working outline that links the core concepts in international relations to particular current interest such as the special global challenges like terrorism, the rise of China, nation-building and ongoing conflict(s) in the Middle East. By the end of the semester, students in this course should have a clearer comprehension of international relations and analytical approaches to studying political problems.

Requirements

Two Exams: 45%

There will be two non-cumulative midterm examinations for this class worth a total of 35% of the grade (20%, 25%). The exams will be based on the readings, lectures, and discussions in class and section. Students who wish to do well on these tests should read the assigned material and attend the lectures and discussion sections.

Research Paper: 25%

You will be asked to write a research paper that explains the occurrence or outcome of a current event in international relations using the theories we study in class to analyze the subject. This assignment will be completed in three stages:

1. Paper Topic Proposal (250 words): Provide a brief overview of the topic that you chose for your paper. The proposal should include your research question (e.g., Why did the protest movements in Egypt and Libya end so differently from one another?) and an initial answer in the form of a thesis statement (e.g., Though these governments of the two countries are similarly semi-authoritarian, the type of control that the different forms of government exert over the people allowed the protest in Egypt to end less violently than in Libya.). Additionally, you should explain what international relations theory is most appropriate to explain the event you have chosen.
2. Paper Outline and an Annotated Bibliography (3 pages): The outline should fill out more of the details of your paper, based on your topic proposal. The outline should identify the central sections of your paper, paying particular attention to explanation being explored. Additionally, include an annotated bibliography that, in 2 or 3 sentences, summarizes the source and why it is relevant for your project. You should have at least 5 sources, only 1 of which may be a website (e.g.,un.org).
3. An Analytical Paper (8-10 pages): The final paper should expand on the paper proposal and outline to present a complete explanation for the occurrence or outcome of a recent event in international relations. The paper should be double-spaced, use a 12-point standard serif font (e.g., Times), 1-inch margins, use conventional construction, grammar, spelling, and punctuation, and follow ASPA formatting and citation style.

More information about the paper will be distributed as the semester progresses.

Discussion Section: 30%

Besides attendance, your section grade will be based on weekly participation (20% of the grade) and an 6-7 minute oral presentation (10% of the grade), followed by a question and answer period. Topics for each presentation will be provided on ICON and you will sign up for your topic in section. These presentations will generally require students to explain an international event or process based on the readings. Presentations will be graded on the argument presented, the information they cover, and the quality of the presentation itself. Additional information and topics for each week will be posted on ICON.

Administrative Issues

Grade Complaints: Grade complaints will only be taken 24 hours after an assignment has been returned. Complaints should be submitted in writing and explain the particular discrepancy and recommend an appropriate recourse. The instructor maintains the right to add or subtract points on work that is submitted for reconsideration.

Academic Honesty: A copy of the University's policies on academic misconduct and complaint actions is attached and available on the the course website. Read and become familiar with these policies. Students caught violating conditions of academic honesty will fail this course and be reported to university authorities. It is recommended that you retain all notes and drafts of your coursework until two weeks after grades are received in order to protect your work.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities should notify the instructor as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of any student with a disability who requests a reasonable accommodation to contact Student Disability Services. Student Disability Services will arrange with the student and instructor a plan to ensure the student has the opportunities for full participation in the class.

Required Texts

Jeffrey A. Frieden, David A. Lake, and Kenneth A. Schultz (2009). *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. Norton. isbn: 9780393927092. url: <http://books.google.com/books?id=yh5dPQAACAAJ>

We also encourage you to keep up-to-date on current events by reading articles relating to foreign policy and international relations in a major news media source. Two good sources are the New York Times and the Washington Post. They have substantial coverage of international events, and you can subscribe to either at a very reasonable student rate. A major weekly news magazine, such as the Economist, will also provide strong coverage of international events. You will also find that many news organizations provide news on the World Wide Web, free of charge.

Course Outline

Introduction (Week 1)

Historical Overview (Week 2)

- FLS Introduction and Ch. 1.
- G. John Ikenberry. 2001. *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars*. Princeton: Princeton University Press: pp. 163-214 (Ch. 6).

Why Wars Occur (Week 3)

- FLS Ch. 3.
- James D. Fearon. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization*. 49 (3): pp. 379- 414.

War and Domestic Politics (Week 4)

- FLS Ch. 4.
- Giacomo Chiozza and Hein Goemans. 2003. "Peace through Insecurity: Tenure and International Conflict." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 47 (4): pp. 443-467.

International Institutions and War (Week 5)

- FLS Ch. 5.
- Virginia Page Fortna. 2004. "Interstate Peacekeeping: Causal Mechanisms and Empirical Effects". *World Politics*. 56(4): pp. 481-519.

Midterm 1 (October 9)

International Trade (Week 6)

- FLS Ch. 6.
- Ronald Rogowski. 1987. "Political Cleavages and Changing Exposure to Trade". *The American Political Science Review*. 81 (4): pp. 1121-1137

International Finance (Week 7)

- FLS Ch. 7.

International Monetary Relations (Week 8)

- FLS Ch. 8.

Development (Week 9)

- FLS Ch. 9.

Midterm 2 (November 10)

Transnational Actors in International Politics (Week 10)

- FLS Ch. 10.
- Robert A. Pape. 2003. "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *American Political Science Review*. 97 (03): pp. 343-361.

Human Rights (Week 11)

- FLS Ch. 11.
- Eric Neumayer. 2005. "Do International Human Rights Treaties Improve Respect for Human Rights?." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 49 (6): pp. 925-953.

The Global Environment (Week 12)

- FLS Ch. 12.

The Future of International Politics (Week 13)

- FLS Ch. 13.