

**International Relations Theory and Practice  
MSFS 510-05  
Fall 2015**

**Tuesdays, 2:00-4:30, Car Barn 202**

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**Office Hours: Tuesday 5-6pm**

### **Learning Goals**

This course is a graduate-level class on contemporary theories and issues in international relations. Students who complete this course will (a) gain deep knowledge of the dominant English- language theories of international relations; (b) be able to confidently assess the explanatory power of these theories in the study and practice of international politics; (c) engage in a sophisticated and effective way with the most pressing contemporary policy debates in international politics, and (d) develop the critical analysis, persuasion, and communication skills needed for professional success.

### **Learning Assessments**

To ensure that these learning goals are achieved, you will be assessed in four ways.

- 1) Class participation (25%). This is a seminar, not a lecture course. Your contribution is essential. You are expected to come to class and to be prepared to discuss the week's readings. Participation is graded on the thoughtfulness of contributions not just frequency or volume. Commenting on the class blog is also included in the participation grade.
- 2) Take-Home Exam (25%): The goal of this assessment is to test your understanding of international relations theories and their applications. The exam can be completed in a two hour window (of choice) via Blackboard during a three day period in the week of November 3. The exam is open book but no group work is allowed.
- 3) Blog posts and Presentation (25%): The goal of this assessment is to apply theories to policy debates and to develop your ability to concisely communicate an argument in written and spoken form. Each blog post should be between 500 and 1000 words (the shorter the better).
  - One blog post should concern a debate as identified on the syllabus. The post should defend a particular policy position that is derived from a theoretical

perspective as identified on the syllabus. This thesis should then be defended in a short 5 minute presentation, followed by questions from classmates and the professor. Generally, the presentations will take the form of a debate between two students. There will be a sign-up sheet. The post is by noon before class time. This assignment is worth half of the blog grade.

- The next two blog post should concern some aspect of a week's reading. You have a choice of weeks but the first blog post should be about Part I of the class and the second about part II. The post can be an argument about the reading or a contrast between different readings. Or, you can weigh in on the policy debate we discuss in that week, ideally applying theoretical insights. Or you can respond to an event in the news or something that falls within your range of expertise. Anything goes as long as you apply theoretical insights to real world event. You are of course allowed to use readings from multiple weeks as long as at least some aspect of your post concerns a reading that is on the calendar for that week. Humor is allowed. The blog posts are due by noon on the day the readings are on the syllabus.
- Students are expected to read the blog before class and to comment on each other's posts at least somewhat regularly. This is part of the attendance grade. "Somewhat regularly" does not mean every week but it means that your name show up now and then and that you contribute constructively to some debates,
- The blog is accessible to enrolled students only and can be found at the course's blackboard site.

4) One final paper (25%): The final paper is on a topic of your choice. The most important constraining factor is that the paper should display your mastery of international relations theories. This can take the form of a paper that compares various theoretical approaches to some policy or issue but several models are possible. You are allowed to write on something you blogged or presented on. The final paper should be around 15 pages double spaced (no less than 10 and no more than 20). You are required to meet with me to discuss your paper topic before Thanksgiving Break (the earlier the better). Between Thanksgiving break and the final day of class I will review and comment on outlines on a first-in-first-out basis. The paper is due Wednesday December 19 at 6pm. The papers are graded according to four criteria: 1) demonstrated mastery of the basic ideas of the course; 2) logical rigor and coherence of argument; 3) creativity, and 4) quality of writing (taking into account non-native English speakers).

**Final Grades:** Cumulative scores for each student will be calculated based on performance with the following weights: 10% for classroom participation, 60% for article reviews and memoranda, and 30% for the oral defense. These scores will be translated into final grades using the grading standard applied to all MSFS courses. The MSFS grading standard specifies that final grades will be distributed as follows: 20% A, 30% A-, 30% B+, 20% B and below. An (A) is Outstanding; (A-) is Excellent; (B+) is Very Good; (B) is Good; (B-) is Acceptable; and a (C) is Minimally Passing.

## **General Policies**

Class time is not for checking e-mail, Facebook, and so on. Laptops and tablets need to be put in airplane mode or wireless needs to be turned off. Phones need to be turned off and stored out of sight. I will punish violations of this policy through the attendance grade. If there is insufficient adherence, I will ban computers altogether.

You need to provide adequate citations for the articles/books/internet resources you use in an essay. Your citations should be in a consistent style. If you are uncertain about exactly how to do this, there are many online guides that may help (e.g.: <http://www.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/workshop/citation.htm>). It is time well spent to learn how to properly reference secondary literature and primary sources as it increases the professional appearance of your essays.

Please familiarize yourself with Georgetown's honor system ([http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/honor\\_system.html](http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/honor_system.html)). Write in your own words! Plagiarism includes cutting and pasting chunks of text from internet sources. Even if you change a few words, it's still plagiarism. For more detailed information, see <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/plagiarism.html>

No extensions are given for the assignments unless there are highly unusual circumstances. I reserve the right to deduct points for work that is turned in late.

## **Readings**

### **Required:**

Robert Art and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 12<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: Pearson, 2015.

All other readings will be available online, on the course's Blackboard site, or both.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

### **Class 1 (September 8): Introduction**

Jack Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," *Foreign Policy*, No. 145 (November/December 2004), pp. 53-62.

## **THEORETICAL DEBATES**

### **\*Session 2 (September 15) – Realism**

Thucydides, “The Melian Dialogue.”

Hans Morgenthau, “Six Principles of Political Realism.”

Kenneth Waltz, “Anarchy and the Structure of World Politics.”

Robert Jervis, “Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma.”

Stephen Walt, “Alliances: Balancing and Bandwagoning.”

Application: U.S. Intervention in Syria

- Stephen Walt [Do No \(More\) Harm](#) *Foreign Policy* August 7, 2014.
- Henry Kissinger [Syrian Intervention Risks Upsetting Global Order](#). *Washington Post*.

**Session 3 (September 22) – Liberalism**

Andrew Moravcsik, “[The New Liberalism](#),” in Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations* (2008)

Kenneth Oye, “The Conditions for Cooperation in World Politics.”

Michael Doyle, “Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs.”

Robert Keohane, “International Institutions: Can Interdependence work?”

Application: U.S. Intervention in Syria

Anne-Marie Slaughter: [“Syrian Intervention is Justifiable and Just”](#)

Timothy Hildebrandt, Courtney Hillebrecht and Jon Pevehouse [Sorry, Syria. In U.S., humanitarian intervention is just 'politics as usual'](#) CNN

**Session 4 (September 29) – Constructivism and Sociological Approaches**

Jeffrey Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory,” *World Politics* 50:1 2 (January 1998).

Alex Wendt, “Anarchy is what States Make of it.”

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, “Transnational Activist Networks.”

Ian Hurd, “Legitimacy in International Politics.”

Application: U.S. Intervention in Syria

Charli Carpenter [“Responsibility to Protect Or to Punish. Morality and Intervention in Syria.”](#) *Foreign Affairs*.

Gareth Evans, [“After Syria: The Future of the Responsibility to Protect”](#)

**Session 5 (October 6) – Contemporary International Relations Theory**

Thomas C. Schelling, “The Diplomacy of Violence.”

James Fearon, “Rationalist Explanation for War.”

Fearon, James. “Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (February 1997): 68-90.

Snyder, Jack and Erica D. Borghard. “The Cost of Empty Threats: A Penny, Not a Pound.” *American Political Science Review* (August 2011): 437-456.

Application: U.S. Intervention in Syria

James Fearon: [“Obstacles to ending Syria’s Civil War”](#) *Foreign Policy*

Daniel Drezner [“Syria, Iran and the Credibility Fairy”](#) *Foreign Policy*

James Fearon [“Credibility is not everything but it’s not nothing either”](#) *The Monkey Cage*

**Session 6 (October 13) – The Rise of China**

Aaron Friedberg: [“The Future of U.S. China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?”](#) *International Security* 1995.

Arvind Subramanian, “The Inevitable Superpower.”

Matthew Kroenig, “Why Democracies Dominate: America’s Edge over China,” *The National Interest*, July/August 2015.

Alastair Iain Johnstone: [“How New and Assertive Is China's New Assertiveness?”](#) *International Security* 2013. [Debating China's Assertiveness Dingding Chen, Xiaoyu](#)

[Pu, Alastair Iain Johnston](#) *International Security* Winter 2013/14, Vol. 38, No. 3: 176–183.

*Debate: Short articles on U.S. policy toward China (to be announced later)*

### **Session 7 (October 20): Nuclear Weapons**

Scott Sagan [Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb](#)  
*International Security* 21(3) 54-86.

Kenneth Waltz, “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb.”

Matthew Kroenig “The History of Proliferation Optimism: Does it Have a Future?”  
*Journal of Strategic Studies*

Nina Tannenwald. “A Taboo Subject” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*

*Debate : Short articles on the Iran deal (to be announced later)*

### **Session 8 (October 27): Issues in International Political Economy**

Robert Gilpin, “The Nature of Political Economy.”

Michael Hiscox, “The Domestic Sources of Foreign Economic Policies.”

Dani Rodrik, “Why Doesn’t Everyone Get the Case for Free Trade?”

Jeffrey Frankel, “Globalization of the Economy.”

*Debate: Short articles on the Financial Crisis (to be announced later)*

### **Session 9 (November 3): Do International Legal Rules Matter: International Law and International Politics**

Guest Lecture by Dr. Antony Arend in the ICC Auditorium

Bio: <http://explore.georgetown.edu/people/arenda/>

Readings

Anthony Arend, *Legal Rules and International Society*, chapters 2, 4.

Anthony Arend, "The evolution of international law," Chapter 11 in John McNeill, ed., Cambridge World History, Volume 7 (Cambridge University Press, 2015).

## **Session 10 (November 10): COP 21 and the Future of International Climate Change Diplomacy**

**Guest Lecture by Dr. Joanna Lewis** in the ICC Auditorium

Bio: <http://explore.georgetown.edu/people/jil9/>

### Readings

Fiona Harvey. "Everything you need to know about the Paris climate summit and UN talks." The Guardian, June 2, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/jun/02/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-paris-climate-summit-and-un-talks>

Lewis, Joanna I. "China's Environmental Diplomacy: Climate Change, Domestic Politics and International Engagement." In *China Across the Divide: The Domestic and Global in Politics and Society*, edited by Rosemary Foot. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2014. "Summary for Policymakers," in *Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Core Writing Team, R.K. Pachauri and L.A. Meyer (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 151 pp. [http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/AR5\\_SYR\\_FINAL\\_SPM.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/AR5_SYR_FINAL_SPM.pdf)

## **Session 11 (November 17): Aid and Crisis Management**

Guest Lecture by Dr. Joel Helman in the ICC Auditorium

bio: [http://www.georgetown.edu/news/joel-hellman-appointed-sfs-dean.html#\\_ga=1.84074333.511316980.1433688186](http://www.georgetown.edu/news/joel-hellman-appointed-sfs-dean.html#_ga=1.84074333.511316980.1433688186)

### Readings

TBA

## **Session 12 (November 24): Session 12 (November 24): The Global Struggle for Freedom and Human Rights**

Guest Lecture by Dr. Mark Lagon, in the ICC Auditorium

Bio: <https://freedomhouse.org/expert/mark-p-lagon-president#.VdjFqyW6fRY>

### Readings:

Freedom in the World 2015 executive summary, Freedom House report (January 2015),

found at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2015#.VdkFEvIViko>

Supporting Democracy Abroad executive summary, Freedom House report (November 2014),  
found [https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/GSD\\_Overview\\_and\\_Country\\_Reports.pdf](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/GSD_Overview_and_Country_Reports.pdf)

Mark P. Lagon and Sarah Grebowski, “Power to the People: Taking Diplomacy to the Streets,” *The National Interest* (March-April 2015), found at <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/power-the-people-taking-diplomacy-the-streets-12323>

### **Session 13 (December 1): Issues in U.S. Foreign Policy**

Barack Obama, “Renewing American Leadership,” *Foreign Affairs*

Marco Rubio, “Restoring America’s Strength,” *Foreign Affairs*

Gideon Rose, “What Obama Gets Right,” *Foreign Affairs*

Bret Stephens, “What Obama Gets Wrong,” *Foreign Affairs*

*Debate on Obama’s foreign policy*

### **Session 14 (December 8): The Future of International Relations**

The U.S. National Intelligence Council, “Individual Empowerment and Demographic Patterns.”

Barry Pozen, “Emerging Multipolarity: Why Should we Care?”

Michael Cox, “Power Shifts, Economic Change, and the Decline of the West?”

Thomas Schelling, “A World without Nuclear Weapons?”