PSCI 421/441
The Liberal Project in Global Politics
Spring 2021

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Office Hrs.: Wednesday 11.30am-12.30pm, Friday 10.00-11.00am, and by appointment

Course Description

The most powerful actors in global politics are liberal ones, and a liberal project around democratic states, international law and organizations, and free trade dominates the global agenda. This course is an investigation into this global liberal project, engaging both theory and practice. We will discuss signature liberal theorists both classic and current as well as some of their most notable critics. We will also attend to empirical evaluations of signature liberal efforts around democratization, human rights, and development. The course ends with a discussion of the successes and failures of the European Union as the principal embodiment of the liberal project today.

Readings

As a 4xx-level senior seminar, this is a book-focused reading-intensive course. The level and amount of reading is challenging but certainly not beyond any student’s capabilities. All students will be expected to keep up with the readings during the semester and contribute constructively to class discussion.

This course is structured around 10 books and a course reader in two parts. The books are:


You may pick up Part I of the reader at the Faculty House now. Part II will be available later in the semester. All books are available for purchase at Water Street Books or from your favorite on-line retailer.
Course requirements and grades

This course demands active student participation. Your engagement with the material and with one another is the heart of any seminar, and for this one to succeed, your constant commitment is essential. For most of you, this is the senior seminar in your major. If you are tempted to cut back your academic effort, arrange your schedule so that you do so in some other class. Regular critical engagement with the ideas presented in class is the backbone of our work this semester. The assignments have been crafted with that goal in mind.

Every class session

For every class session, one student will write a 1700-2400 word review and reaction paper on that day’s assigned readings which will form the basis of class discussion. Roughly one-third of the paper should be dedicated to outlining the arguments of the author(s) and about two-thirds to a critical engagement with those arguments. Each student should endeavor to speak to me in my office before class about his/her paper. Each student also must distribute an electronic copy of that paper to me and to the student(s) offering a critical reply (described in the next paragraph) at least 24 hours before class. The student will present that paper orally in class to begin discussion. The presentation should last 9-10 minutes with a 10 minute maximum. I will time your presentation. It is preferable to speak from notes rather than read your paper verbatim—especially considering it is impossible to read a 2400-word paper aloud in 10 minutes without droning and gasping like a college debater!

Zero, one or two other students will offer a critical reply to each review and reaction paper. This is strictly an oral response presented in class. There is no need to hand in a typed paper to me. The presentation should last 4-5 minutes with a 5 minute maximum. I will time your presentation.

During the semester each student must complete one of the following three options:

[1] 5 review and reaction papers and 0 critical replies; or
[2] 4 review and reaction papers and 2 critical replies; or
[3] 3 review and reaction papers and 4 critical replies;

Students preparing neither a review and reaction paper nor a critical reply for a particular class will write 1-2 discussion questions relevant to the day’s readings. These questions should be thoughtful engagements with the main ideas from the text(s) and thus go beyond a simple one-sentence query. Possible questions might explore unclear passages in the readings, point out notable gaps in an author’s discussion, or offer critiques of an author’s argument. The best questions will be framed by a brief (< 300 words) discussion. I will use these questions to guide class discussion each day, including calling on you in class based on your remarks. Use our course Glow page to submit them. Questions are due by 12.00pm noon the day of class. Glow will lock automatically at that time and will not accept any questions submitted after the deadline. I will grade questions on a check-plus/check/check-minus scale.
Term paper

As this is a senior seminar, you will write a 4000-5000 word paper on a subject of your choice related to the topic of the liberal project in global politics. Students may incorporate review and reaction papers into this project as they see fit. I will meet with each student individually in early May to assist in formulating a topic and writing plan.

Class participation

Regular attendance and constructive participation is necessary for this course to be successful and is therefore expected; unexcused absences and a failure to engage the material in class will be noted. More than one unexcused absence will result in a grade penalty.

Honor Code

While you may consult with your friends, fellow classmates, professors, and printed sources on the ideas discussed in this class, all written work must ultimately be yours and yours alone. In particular, be scrupulous in avoiding plagiarism. Be sure to use quote marks when quoting directly and cite appropriately. This is your last year at Williams you do not want an Honor Code violation stopping you from graduating.

Grades

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review and reaction paper</td>
<td>12% ea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical reply</td>
<td>6% ea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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A NOTE ON DEADLINES

All review and reaction papers are due to me and to student repliers 24 hours before class. Critical replies are presented (and thus are due) at the beginning of class. **All such work that fails to meet these deadlines receives a score of zero.** There may be no opportunities to make up missed review and reaction papers in particular, so please plan accordingly.

Discussion questions are due to me by 12.00pm the day of class. There are no extensions or make-up opportunities for questions. If you miss the deadline, simply resolve to meet it next time.

The term paper is due at 5.00pm on May 27. Early papers are always welcome; **late term papers will be penalized one partial letter grade per day late** (e.g. from A to A-, B+ to B). I will accept no term papers after June 2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>no readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 17</td>
<td>Liberal foundations I</td>
<td>Immanuel Kant, <em>Toward Perpetual Peace</em> and Other Writings, 3-16, 17-23, 67-109, 139-149. [book]</td>
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<td>March 1</td>
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<td>Carl Schmitt, <em>Political Theology</em>. [book]</td>
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<td>March 4</td>
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| Monday     | Anti-liberal foundations III               | William T. Cavanaugh, “‘A fire strong enough to consume the house’: The wars of religion and the rise of the state,” *Modern Theology* 11 (1995), 397-420. [reader]  
| March 8    |                                             | Adrian Vermeule, “Liberalism and the invisible hand,” *American Affairs* 3 (Spring 2019), 172-197. [reader] |
| Thursday   | Anti-liberal foundations III               | Adrian Vermeule, “All human conflict is ultimately theological,” *Church Life Journal*, 26 July 2019. [reader]  
Monday  
March 15  
The liberal democratic peace I

- “Interpreting regression output (without all the statistics theory),” GraduateTutor.com [online]. [reader—optional]

Thursday  
March 18  
The liberal democratic peace II

- Bruce Russett and John Oneal, *Triangulating Peace*, chs. 4-5. [book]

Monday  
March 22  
Reading period

Thursday  
March 25  
The liberal democratic peace III

- Bruce Russett and John Oneal, *Triangulating Peace*, chs. 6 & 8. [book]

Monday  
March 29  
Realist critique of the liberal democratic peace


Thursday  
April 1  
Liberal democratic war

# INTERNATIONAL LAW

## Monday
### April 5

**Liberalism and international law**


## Thursday
### April 8

**Realism and international law**

- Hans Morgenthau, “The science of peace,” in *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* (1946), ch. 4. [reader]

## Monday
### April 12

**Responsibility to protect**


## Thursday
### April 15

**Human rights I**


## Monday
### April 19

**Human rights II**


## Thursday
### April 22

*Break*
## DEVELOPMENT

### Monday April 26

**Development as a liberal project**

- Jeffrey D. Sachs, *The End of Poverty* (2005), ch. 18. [reader]

### Thursday April 29

**A liberal explanation of poverty**


### Monday May 3

**A liberal agenda to end poverty**

- Nina Munk, *The Idealist*, parts 3-4. [book]

### Thursday May 6

**Jeff Sachs and the end of poverty**


### Monday May 10

**Critiquing liberal development economics**

The Future of the Liberal Project

Thursday
May 13

The European Union I


Monday
May 17

The European Union II