

**PSCI 202**  
**World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations**  
**Fall 2021**

Professor Darel E. Paul  
Schapiro 227  
597-2327  
dpaul@williams.edu

Griffin 6 / Peck Grandstand  
TR 9.55am-11:10am

Office Hours: W 2pm-3.30pm, F 10.30am-11.30am, & by appointment

### **Course Description**

World politics is often taken to be an arena of human interaction unto itself, where the concepts which serve us well in understanding domestic politics and our everyday public lives – democracy, law, morality, authority – are displaced by their opposites – rule by the strong, use of force, *raison d'état*, anarchy. In particular, the discipline of International Relations claims special responsibility for analysing and explaining this arena. But is world politics really so different? We now live in a world in which resolutions of the United Nations Security Council carry the aura of law and authority; human rights are held up as universal moral standards; international treaties regularly restrain supposedly sovereign states in regulating their domestic economies; and the majority of wars are now 'civil' ones.

This course is about politics at the world scale and the myriad ways in which scholars and practitioners interpret and explain it. Along the way we will cover four major themes:

- Theories of world politics – These are the essential building blocks of our thinking on the fundamental nature of the international system which allow us to explain and understand why states and other actors do what they do. What is power? How can we best achieve peace? Do ideas and culture matter?
- War – What is the difference between war and policing? How afraid should we be of a nuclear North Korea? Are drone strikes a good idea?
- Peace – Can nation-building work? Is international law the pathway to a better international system? Will we miss the *pax Americana*?
- Globalization – What are international borders for? Why do sovereign debt crises happen? Are we overreacting on climate change?

### **Readings**

There are no books assigned for this course. All the required readings are contained in a course reader divided into three parts. The first reader covers the theory section of the course and is available now; subsequent parts will be available later in the semester. You may pick up the first course reader in the packet room in the Class of '37 House (51 Park St.), M-F 9am-3.30pm.

All students are expected to faithfully keep up with the readings throughout the entire semester. Readings assigned for a particular class session will be the topic for that day's lecture and discussion, and therefore should be completed prior to class. Please come to each class prepared to listen, learn, and discuss.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Regular attendance and participation is valued, expected and essential for you to do well in this course. I will not take regular attendance, but I do reserve the right to 'spot check' attendance during the semester as I see fit. Please notify me (preferably by email) if you will be missing class.

In particular, please let me know if you are unable to attend class due to any of the College's imposed covid restrictions. I will work with you to develop a plan that allows you to continue making progress in the course during your time in isolation/quarantine.

### **Classroom culture**

I urge students to speak their minds, explore ideas and arguments, play devil's advocate, and engage in good-mannered but robust discussion. Students will do business in the proper currency of intellectual discourse – a currency consisting of reasons, evidence, and arguments – but no ideas or positions are out of bounds. There will be no thought-policing in this class, and language-policing will be kept to the minimum necessary for respectful exchange. If you have any concerns about classroom climate, please come to me to share your concern.

### **Honor Code**

You are free to consult with other students during the semester, organize study groups, etc., but remember that all written work must be the product of your own individual efforts. Please be especially vigorous in avoiding plagiarism. Use quotation marks where necessary and cite any sources clearly. Any system of citation is acceptable. I simply ask is that the system you use is clear and you use it consistently. The final exam is closed book. Remember, all work in this course must be completed in accordance with the Honor Code.

### **Course requirements**

- **Short reflection paper** – a short critical engagement with any two theories of International Relations, 1200-1500 words (double-spaced, 11-pt. font minimum). Choose one of the below options, but please note that only 10 students maximum will be allowed to write the constructivism paper:
  1. realism v. liberalism, due Oct. 5, 5.00pm
  2. historical materialism v. realism or liberalism, due Oct. 12, 5.00pm
  3. constructivism v. any other theory, due Oct. 21, 5.00pm

I will hand out the paper topics one week before they are due. Some flexibility on deadlines for those observing religious holidays this semester will be granted.

- **Mid-term paper** – an application of International Relations theory to a contemporary empirical topic of your choice, 2000-2500 words (double-spaced, 11-pt. font minimum). I will hand out the assignment in class on Oct. 14; it will be due Oct. 26, 5.00pm.
- **Podcast** -- a 10-15 minute podcast created with a partner on a topic related to one of the twelve themes in the empirical section of the course. Partner requests (if any) and topic preferences are due Nov. 2. Story maps are due Nov. 16, 5.00pm. Final podcasts are due Dec. 3, 5.00pm. You will be provided a detailed assignment in late October.
- **Final exam** –a comprehensive scheduled blue-book exam during finals week.
- **Class participation** – regular attendance and contributions to discussion are important, valued and expected.

### Grades

Your overall grade in this course will be determined according to the following formula:

Short response paper	15%
Mid-term paper	20%
Podcast	20%
Final exam	35%
Class participation	10%

I am always happy to talk over course topics, discuss a class assignment, or chat about current events – especially over coffee. Drop by during office hours or set up an appointment.

**Please note:** Due dates and times listed in the syllabus are firm. Please do not ask for extensions unless you face truly extraordinary circumstances. Work in other classes, athletic events, or a desire to ‘do your best work’ do not constitute extraordinary circumstances.

Early submissions are always welcome. Work received on the due date but after the time deadline are beggars seeking undeserved mercy and will be dealt with at my discretion.

Work received after 11.59pm on the due date are irredeemably late and will be penalized one partial letter grade (e.g. A to A-, B+ to B) per 24 hours after the original deadline. If you can only produce a poor product by the deadline, consider taking the grade penalty and the extra time to compose an excellent one.

## COURSE CALENDAR

Date                      Topic and Readings

### INTRODUCTION

Thursday  
Sept. 9

#### **First day**

- No readings

Tuesday  
Sept. 14

#### **Thinking about world politics**

- Joseph R. Biden, Jr., “Why America must lead again”
- Stephen M. Walt, “The relationship between theory and policy in international relations”
- Robert W. Cox, “On perspectives and purposes”

### THEORIES OF WORLD POLITICS

Thursday  
Sept. 16

#### **Classical realism**

- Thucydides, “The talks at Melos”
- Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince, chs. 14-15 & 18
- Thomas Hobbes, “Of the natural condition of mankind”
- Hans Morgenthau, “A realist theory of international politics”

Tuesday  
Sept. 21

#### **Contemporary realism**

- Stephen M. Walt, “Alliances as a response to threat”
- John Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics (excerpts)
- Randall L. Schweller, Unanswered Threats (excerpts)

Thursday  
Sept. 23

#### **Classical liberalism**

- Immanuel Kant, “To perpetual peace”
- Michael Howard, “War, peace and nationalism, 1789-1870”
- Woodrow Wilson, “War message” & “Address on the fourteen points for peace”

Tuesday  
Sept. 28

**Contemporary liberalism**

- Andrew Moravcsik, "Taking preferences seriously" (excerpts)
- Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "The nature and sources of liberal international order"
- Patrick Porter, "Iraq: A liberal war after all"

Thursday  
Sept. 30

**Classical historical materialism**

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party" (excerpt)
- Karl Marx, "The British rule in India," "The future results of British rule in India," "Illustrations of the general law of capitalist accumulation: Ireland," "Letter to Sigfrid Meyer and August Vogt, 9 April 1870," & The General Council of the First International (excerpt)

Tuesday  
Oct. 5

**Contemporary historical materialism**

- Kees van der Pijl, "The Lockean heartland in the international political economy"
- Matthew D. Stephen, "Rising powers, global capitalism and liberal global governance"
- G. John Ikenberry, "Why the liberal world order will survive"

Thursday  
Oct. 7

**Constructivism I: Social theory of IR**

- Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it"
- Martha Finnemore, "Defining state interests"

Tuesday  
Oct. 12

*Fall reading period*

Thursday  
Oct. 14

**Constructivism II: Cultural theory of IR**

- Richard Ned Lebow, "Thucydides the constructivist"
- Eva Herschinger, "'Hell is the Other': Conceptualizing hegemony and identity through discourse theory"
- Philip Cunliffe, "Make IR critical again"

## WAR

Tuesday  
Oct. 19

### **Symmetric wars**

- Carl von Clausewitz, "What is war?"
- Herfried Münkler, "The statization of war"
- Mary Kaldor, "Old wars"

Thursday  
Oct. 21

### **Nuclear proliferation**

- Scott Sagan, "The causes of nuclear proliferation"
- Nicholas L. Miller and Vipin Narang, "North Korea defied the theoretical odds"
- Timothy W. Martin, "North Korea's missiles and nuclear weapons"
- Edward Luttwak, "It's time to bomb North Korea"
- Doug Bandow, "Why North Korea needs its nukes"

Tuesday  
Oct. 26

*No class*

Thursday  
Oct. 28

### **Asymmetric wars**

- Patrick A. Mello, "In search of new wars"
- Mary Kaldor, "In defence of new wars"
- Paul W. Kahn, "Imagining warfare"

Tuesday  
Nov. 2

### **Robot wars**

- Michael J. Boyle, "The drone age"
- Samuel Moyn, "Drones and imagination: A response to Paul Kahn"
- Mark Neocleous, "Air power as police power"
- Ian Cameron, "I killed Taliban fighters from an air-conditioned room. Did it even help?"

## PEACE

Thursday  
Nov. 4

### Peacekeeping and nation building

- Roland Paris, “International peacebuilding and the ‘*mission civilisatrice*’”
- Anke Hoeffler, “Can international interventions secure the peace?”
- James D. Fearon, “Civil war & the current international system”
- Will Lloyd, “The man who lost Afghanistan”

Tuesday  
Nov. 9

### Human rights

- Jack Donnelly, “Human rights: A new standard of civilization?”
- Stephen Hopgood, “Human rights on the road to nowhere”
- The New Yorker, “Inside Xinjiang’s secret detention camps” [video]

Thursday  
Nov. 11

### International Law

- Anne-Marie Slaughter and William Burke-White, “The future of international law is domestic (or, The European way of law)”
- Martin Koskeniemi, “International law and hegemony: A reconfiguration”

Tuesday  
Nov. 16

### International liberal order

- Robert O. Keohane, “Twenty years of institutional liberalism”
- G. John Ikenberry, “Why the liberal world order will survive”
- Charles A. Kupchan, “The normative foundation of hegemony and the coming challenge to pax americana”

## GLOBALIZATION

Thursday  
Nov. 18

### Debt

- Carmen M. Reinhart and Kenneth S. Rogoff, “A digression on the theoretical underpinnings of debt crises”
- Jeffry Frieden and Stefanie Walter, “Understanding the political economy of the Eurozone crisis”
- Tal Sadeh, “How did the euro area survive the crisis?”

Tuesday  
Nov. 23

### **Migration**

- Peter Dwyer, “Citizenship and welfare: Introduction”
- David B. Carter and Paul Poast, “Why do states build walls? Political economy, security, and border stability”
- Amelia Cheatham, “Central America’s turbulent Northern Triangle”
- Dan Restrepo, “Central Americans are fleeing bad governments”
- Natalie Kitroeff and Michael D. Shear, “U.S. aid to Central America hasn’t slowed migration. Can Kamala Harris?”

Thursday  
Nov. 25

*Thanksgiving break*

Tuesday  
Nov. 30

### **The trade game**

- No readings

Thursday  
Dec. 2

### **The trade game**

- Douglas A. Irwin, “The case for free trade since David Ricardo”
- Ha-Joon Chang, “Kicking away the ladder: Infant industry promotion in historical perspective”

Tuesday  
Dec. 7

### **Climate change**

- Robert Falkner, “The Paris Agreement and the new logic of international climate politics”
- Joshua Busby, “Why climate change matters more than anything else”
- Bjørn Lomborg, *False Alarm*, chs. 1 & 8
- Joseph E. Stiglitz, “Are we overreacting on climate change?”
- Benjamin Zycher, “Joe Stiglitz reviews Bjorn Lomborg’s new book”
- University of Leeds, “Securing decent living standards for all while reducing global energy use”

## **CONCLUSION**

Thursday  
Dec. 9

### **International Relations: Stranger than fiction?**

- Bruce Franklin, “Fatal fiction: A weapon to end all wars”