

PSCI 120
Introduction to International Relations: World Politics
Fall 2023

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Hopkins 002
MW 11:00am-12:15pm

Office Hours: Mondays 2:30pm-4:00pm, Fridays 10:30am-11:30am, & by appointment

Course Description

World politics is generally taken to be an arena of human interaction unto itself, where the concepts that 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; 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* – Does war build states or destroy them? How afraid should we be of nuclear war in Ukraine? Are drones changing the nature of warfare?
- *Peace* – Can nation-building work? Is international law an alternative to international politics? Are human rights really universal?
- *Globalization* – Can states control migration? Does international trade make countries rich? Is there a political solution to global 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-3pm.

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 learn and benefit from 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.

Although the class is organized in a lecture format, there is nonetheless opportunity for and expectation of vigorous discussion. The emphasis here is on quality, not quantity. Good participation in this class amounts to insightful questions, comments, and arguments rooted in a thoughtful engagement with the readings and my lectures. Good participation does not amount to a large volume of opinions expressed each class session.

Laptop policy

Use of laptop computers (and cell phones) is not permitted in class except [1] in cases of a documented accommodation approved by the Office of Accessible Education or [2] when expressly permitted/mandated by the instructor. Per the Student Handbook, both audio and visual recording of lectures or conversations in this class is strictly prohibited.

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.

Artificial intelligence

I strongly urge students not to use artificial intelligence (AI) to write their assignments for this class. I am not banning it as a matter of policy simply because I believe it is impossible to demonstrate that any particular student has used it. AI will indeed relieve you of work in this class, but it will not help you write or think well about our course material. Neither will it help you earn a respectable (B or higher) grade in this class. If you are looking for minimal work and an easy A–, this is not the class for you.

Honor Code

Students are free to consult with others during the semester, organize study groups, etc., but remember that all assigned work must be the product of a student's own individual efforts or, in the case of the podcast, one's own efforts combined with those of one's partner(s). 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). A prompt will be handed out in class 8 days before each paper is due. Choose one of the below options:
 1. realism v. liberalism, due Thursday, Oct. 5, 5:00pm
 2. historical materialism v. realism or liberalism, due Thursday Oct. 12, 5:00pm

Flexibility on these deadlines will be granted to those observing religious holidays.

- **Mid-term exam** – an in-class application of International Relations theory to a contemporary empirical topic of your choice. I will generate an AI answer to your topic question and you will critically engage it. This exam is open notes/internet, Monday, October 18.
- **Podcast** -- a podcast of 10-15 minutes created with a partner(s) on a topic related to one of the eleven themes in the empirical section of the course. Partner requests (if any) and topic preferences are due in class, Wednesday, Nov. 8. Story maps are due Tuesday, Nov. 21, 5:00pm. Final podcasts are due Tuesday, Dec. 5, 5:00pm. You will be provided with a detailed assignment in early November.
- **Final exam** – a comprehensive scheduled blue-book exam during finals week.
- **Class participation** – regular attendance and contributions to discussion are important, valued and expected.

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 5:00pm are beggars seeking undeserved mercy and will be dealt with at my discretion.

Work received after 11:59pm of 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.

Grades

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

Short response paper	20%
Mid-term exam	20%
Podcast	20%
Final exam	30%
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.

COURSE CALENDAR

Date Topic and Readings

INTRODUCTION

Friday
Sept. 8

First day

- No readings

Monday
Sept. 11

Thinking about world politics

- Joseph R. Biden, Jr., “Remarks by President Biden on America’s place in the world” (2021)
- Stephen M. Walt, “The relationship between theory and policy in international relations” (2005)
- Robert W. Cox, “On perspectives and purposes” (1981)

THEORIES OF WORLD POLITICS

Wednesday
Sept. 13

Classical realism

- Thucydides, “The talks at Melos” (early 400s BC)
- Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince, chs. 14 & 18 (1532)
- Thomas Hobbes, “Of the natural condition of mankind” (1651)
- Carl Schmitt, The Concept of the Political, pp. 25-37 (1932)
- Hans Morgenthau, “A realist theory of international politics” (1948)

Monday
Sept. 18

Contemporary realism

- Stephen M. Walt, “Alliances as a response to threat” (1987)
- John Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, excerpts (2001)
- Randall L. Schweller, Unanswered Threats, excerpts (2006)

Wednesday
Sept. 20

No class

Monday
Sept. 25

Classical liberalism

- Immanuel Kant, "Toward perpetual peace" (1795)
- Michael Howard, "War, peace and nationalism, 1789-1870" (1978)
- Woodrow Wilson, "War message" (1917)
- Woodrow Wilson, "Address on the fourteen points for peace" (1918)

Wednesday
Sept. 27

Contemporary liberalism

- Andrew Moravcsik, "Taking preferences seriously," excerpts (1997)
- Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "The nature and sources of liberal international order" (1999)
- Patrick Porter, "Iraq: A liberal war after all" (2018)

Monday
Oct. 2

Classical historical materialism

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," excerpt (1848)
- Karl Marx, "The British rule in India" (1853)
- Karl Marx, "The future results of British rule in India" (1853)
- Karl Marx, "Illustrations of the general law of capitalist accumulation: Ireland" (1867)
- Karl Marx, "Letter to Sigfrid Meyer and August Vogt, 9 April 1870" (1870)
- Karl Marx, The General Council of the First International. 1868-1870. Minutes, excerpt (1870)

Wednesday
Oct. 4

Contemporary historical materialism

- Kees van der Pijl, "The Lockean heartland in the international political economy" (1998)
- Andreas Bieler and Adam David Morton, "Global war and the new imperialism" (2018)
- G. John Ikenberry, "Why American power endures" (2022)

Monday
Oct. 9

No class—Fall reading period

Wednesday
Oct. 11

Constructivism I: Social theory of IR

- Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it" (1992)
- Martha Finnemore, "Defining state interests" (1996)

Monday
Oct. 16

Constructivism II: Cultural theory of IR

- Richard Ned Lebow, "Thucydides the constructivist" (2001)
- Charlotte Epstein, "The making of a dominant global discourse" (2008)
- Philip Cunliffe, "Make IR critical again" (2020)

Wednesday
Oct. 18

MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS

WAR

Monday
Oct. 23

Symmetric wars

- Carl von Clausewitz, "What is war?" (1832)
- Herfried Münkler, "The statization of war" (2005)
- Mary Kaldor, "Old wars" (2012)

Wednesday
Oct. 25

Nuclear wars

- Scott D. Sagan, "The causes of nuclear proliferation" (1997)
- Scott D. Sagan, "The causes of nuclear weapons proliferation" (2011)
- Nina Tannenwald, "The bomb in the background" (2023)
- Martin N. Stanton, "The Ukrainian nuclear war of 2023 and its aftermath" (2023)

Monday
Oct. 30

Asymmetric wars

- Mary Kaldor, "In defence of new wars" (2013)
- Patrick A. Mello, "In search of new wars" (2010)
- Paul W. Kahn, "Imagining warfare" (2013)

Wednesday
Nov. 1

Robot wars

- Michael J. Boyle, "The drone age" (2020)
- Samuel Moyn, "Drones and imagination: A response to Paul Kahn" (2013)
- Seth G. Jones et al., "Nagorno-Karabakh war" (2022)
- Isabelle Khurshudyan et al., "Russia and Ukraine are fighting the first full-scale drone war" (2022)
- Stuart Russell, "AI weapons: Russia's war in Ukraine shows why the world must enact a ban" (2023)

PEACE

Monday
Nov. 6

Peacekeeping

- Anke Hoeffler, “Can international interventions secure the peace?” (2014)
- James D. Fearon, “Civil war & the current international system” (2017)

Wednesday
Nov. 8

Nation (state) building

- Roland Paris, “International peacebuilding and the ‘*mission civilisatrice*’” (2002)
- Paul Collier, “Better dead than fed?” (2009)
- Christof Hartmann, “ECOWAS and the restoration of democracy in the Gambia” (2017)
- The Economist, “Africa’s broken politics” (2023)

Monday
Nov. 13

International law

- Anne-Marie Slaughter and William Burke-White, “The future of international law is domestic (or, The European way of law)” (2006)
- Ian Hurd, “The international rule of law: Law and the limit of politics” (2014)
- Martin Koskeniemi, “International law and hegemony: A reconfiguration” (2004)

Wednesday
Nov. 15

Human rights

- Jack Donnelly, “Human rights: A new standard of civilization?” (1998)
- Stephen Hopgood, “Human rights on the road to nowhere” (2017)
- Jeremy Waldron, “Rule-of-law rights and populist impatience” (2020)

GLOBALIZATION

Monday
Nov. 20

Migration

- Richard B. Freeman, “People flows in globalization” (2006)
- David B. Carter and Paul Poast, “Why do states build walls? Political economy, security, and border stability” (2017)
- Parusel Bernd, “The external dimension of EU migration policy—new proposals, possibilities, and risks” (2023)
- Congressional Research Service, “Mexico’s immigration control efforts” (2023)
- Kelsey P. Norman, “Rich countries cannot outsource their migration dilemmas” (2022)

Wednesday *No class – Thanksgiving break*
Nov. 22

Monday **The trade game I**
Nov. 27

- No readings

Wednesday **The trade game II**
Nov. 29

- Douglas A. Irwin, “The case for free trade since David Ricardo” (2018)
- Ha-Joon Chang, “Kicking away the ladder: Infant industry promotion in historical perspective” (2003)

Monday **Climate change**
Dec. 4

- Robert Falkner, “The Paris Agreement and the new logic of international climate politics” (2016)
- Tatjana Stankovic et al., “The Paris Agreement’s inherent tension between ambition and compliance” (2023)
- Bjørn Lomborg, *False Alarm*, chs. 1 & 8 (2020)
- David Luhnnow and Bojan Pancevski, “Europeans love green policies—until the bill comes due” (2023)

CONCLUSION

Wednesday **International Relations: Stranger than fiction?**
Dec. 6

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