

**POLITICS 192/801**  
**SEMINAR ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY**

Spring, 2006

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Mission of Politics Department

The Department of Politics and International Relations seeks to induct students into the community of liberally educated individuals who are capable of understanding government and politics in terms of the theories, concepts, and tools of sophisticated political analysis which characterize the discipline of political science. The liberal arts dimension of our mission stems from our belief that all people are embedded in a political environment which acts upon them in ways they must understand if they are to function effectively as active participants in a democratic society.

Our goal, therefore, is not to train professional political scientists, but rather to produce the liberally educated citizen who is fluent in the language of politics and political analysis and thereby has a foundation for both citizenship in a democratic society and successful training in a job, in a graduate school, or in a professional school. Such a person has the capacity to recognize and evaluate assumptions, implications, and causal relationships pertaining to government and politics and, by extension, to other realms of human experience.

Course Description:

World politics is messy, complex and often unpredictable. Certainly no one who regularly follows current international affairs can help but be impressed by the speed and diversity of events and the difficulty of digesting their meaning and significance. The job of international relations scholars is to make this messy world a little more comprehensible. They attempt to do so by searching beneath the headlines for those fundamental forces which drive the rise and decline of nations or determine the prevalence of cooperation or conflict in world politics.

When scholars arrive at a set of generalizations about the forces that shape world politics they often say that they have formulated a "theory". It may be a theory about why wars occur. Or a theory about why economic cooperation among states characterizes some periods in history while conflict and competition seem to prevail during others. There are three important things to remember about theories: 1) they attempt to explain something, 2) they are designed to simplify our understanding of the world, and 3) we all have them.

Theories simplify our understanding by abstracting away from the complexities of the real world. In other words, they leave out much of the detail of day to day events in an effort to locate the few essential factors that drive these events. We all have theories. When we speculate about why events occur, what their significance is, or what will happen next, we base our observations on some implicit theory which tells us which factors are most important in influencing events. The trouble is that most of us carry about theories that are often partial, inconsistent or contradictory. Moreover, we usually neglect to explicitly compare our theories with others or to test them against reality.

This course is designed to help us learn to think theoretically. We will do this by examining various theoretical approaches to the study of world politics. Each approach provides us with a very different image of world politics and the forces that drive it. Our principal activities will be to pick apart and critique the assumptions and values that underlie each of these theories or images.

Papers:

Each student will write six 3-4 page papers for this class. These assignments require that you comment on the readings for a specific week according to the guidelines given below. Papers are due the day that we discuss the readings in class. Each paper should be prepared according to the follow format:

Information at top of first page: your name, date, author(s) and title(s) of paper(s) discussed in paper, title of your paper

Your paper should examine one or more of the assigned readings. The central purpose of the paper will be to offer a critical evaluation of the author's thesis. You may focus on the author's overall argument, or, more narrowly, on a specific argument or sub-theme within the larger work. In any case, it is important that you make very clear just which set of ideas your paper intends to engage.

It is mandatory, however, that you do more than simply summarize the contents of an article. The bulk of your paper should comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the author's argument. There are a variety of ways to go about doing critical analysis. You may: (1) draw positive or negative comparisons between this article and others we have read, (2) suggest historical cases which either support or refute the author's thesis, (3) critique the assumptions underlying the thesis, (4) question the logic by which conclusions are drawn, (5) point out contradictions in the argument, or (6) consider policy implications which follow from the argument but are not spelled out by the author. Obviously, you will not have the space to do all of these things (or even several of them). Therefore it is important to clearly decide just what you want to say and stick to one or two well-developed points.

Peer Review

Part of each class will be spent in small group discussion. In groups of three (or four),

you will read and comment upon one another's papers. You should therefore bring three (or four) copies of your paper to class: one for each of the students in your group. Group members will rotate papers so that one (sometimes two) person will bring a paper each week. Group feedback will be both written (general comments and suggestion on a form I will provide and detailed comments written on the paper draft itself) and oral (the group will take time to discuss each paper). Using the group's feedback, you will have a chance to revise your papers. They will be due by 5:00 on the following Wednesday. In addition to the final draft, you should turn in the rough drafts containing written comments by your peers (final draft on top, rough drafts below). You may take the comments made in class discussion and the group meetings into account when you revise your paper. My only requirement is that the revised paper must clearly represent an evolution of the first draft and not constitute an entirely new project.

Peer review is a critically important component of this course. You will learn from the constructive criticism of your classmates. More importantly, you will find the process of responding to the ideas and writing of others a useful means for practicing critical thinking skills. As a peer reviewer, you should go beyond simply pointing out spelling and grammar errors in your classmate's work. Use the peer review sessions as opportunities for substantive exchange. Compare your interpretation and evaluation of the readings with those of others. Examine the logic, evidence and conclusions of each paper for strengths and weaknesses. Also, help each author think about how to present her case more convincingly. Consider the strength of the intro and conclusion, the order that ideas are presented, the clarity of expression and the relevance of the examples cited.

### Web Forum Discussions

Each week that you do not write a full-length paper, you are required to participate in the web forum discussion for this class. The web forum discussion consists of a blackboard.com website where comments on the readings can be posted. During weeks when you are not submitting a paper, you are expected to visit the web forum to contribute a short (e.g., one paragraph) comment on a reading for that week in response to questions posed by the instructor. You may also use your contribution to respond to a comment previously left by another member of the class. All comments must be posted to the web forum discussion by Monday at 3pm. All members of the class are expected to read all comments posted to the web forum prior to our Monday night meetings. The web forum discussion will prepare the way for more interesting and substantive in-class exchanges. See the end of this syllabus for instructions on how to access the course website on blackboard.com. Further instructions on how to use the discussion forum will be provided in-class.

### Class Participation

This is a seminar. The success of a seminar-style class depends mainly upon the quality and quantity of class discussion. You are EXPECTED to actively participate in each and every class meeting. Aside from the initial meeting, do not expect long

lectures. It is primarily your job to extract the meaning of the texts we discuss and to raise questions. My role will be that of facilitator. It is critical that you come to class thoroughly prepared. For that reason, I have purposefully limited the total amount of reading this semester to a manageable level.

### Final Exam

The class will conclude with a take home final exam to be distributed at our last class meeting and due during finals week.

### Grading

The six papers and the final exam will account for a total of 70% of your overall grade (with each item weighted equally). My evaluation of the quality and quantity of your contributions to both the web forum discussion and in-class discussions will determine the remaining 30% of your grade.

### Required and Recommended Readings:

Required readings are listed for each class meeting. Recommended readings are also listed for many weeks. Although recommended readings will not serve as the direct focus on class discussions, students are strongly encouraged to explore these texts. Recommended readings offer deeper or differing perspectives on the topic at hand. Students who are considering attending graduate school in political science or international relations are strongly urged to do all readings, both required and recommended.

### Class Rules:

- Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be severely punished. All relevant sources must be cited and all direct quotation placed in quotation marks. Go to the end of the syllabus for guidelines on how to avoid plagiarism.
- You are expected to attend every class meeting and to arrive on time. An attendance sheet will be circulated at each class. Attendance will be factored into your participation grade.
- Please do not bring laptops to class (or keep the in a bag) and make sure that your cell phones are turned off.
- On the web discussion forums and in class, please express show respect for the viewpoints of others and express yourself in a civil fashion, even when you disagree.

### REQUIRED BOOK PURCHASES:

Paul Viotti and Mark Kauppi (eds.), *International Relations Theory: Realism, Pluralism and Globalism*, 3rd ed., 1999 (designated as IRT in reading schedule)

Michael Brown, et. al. (eds.), *Theories of War and Peace*, 1998 (designated as TWP in reading schedule)

Charles Kegley and Eugene Wittkopf (eds.), *The Global Agenda*, 6th ed., 2000 (designated as GA in reading schedule)

Some reading assignments will also be posted on the web.

#### READING SCHEDULE:

1/16: Martin Luther King Day. No class.

1/23: Introduction to course: What is a theory?

IRT - Editor's commentary, 3-21

GA - Holsti, "Models of International Relations: Realist and Neoliberal Perspectives on Conflict and Cooperation," 107-118

IRT - Rosenau, "Thinking Theory Thoroughly," 29-37

#### PART I: REALISM

1/30: Classical Realist Roots

IRT - Editor's commentary, 55-87

IRT - Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogue," 100-104

IRT - Machiavelli, "Princes and the Security of Their States," 105-107

IRT - Hobbes, "Of the Natural Condition of Mankind," 108-110

#### Recommended:

IRT - Rousseau, "The State of War: Confederation as the Means to Peace in Europe," 111-126

IRT - Bull, "Does Order Exist in World Politics?," 127-129

2/6: Modern Realism I: Power, Anarchy, Balancing and Hegemony

IRT - Waltz, "Explaining War," 130-144

GA - Nye, "The Changing Nature of World Power," 94-106

IRT - Gilpin, "War and Change in World Politics," 145-152

GA - Levy, "War and Its Causes," 47-56

TWP - Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," 3-54

#### Recommended:

GA - Holsti, "Power, Capability and Influence in International Politics," 13-25

2/13: Modern Realism II: Arms, Technology and War

TWP - Van Evera, "Offense, Defense and the Causes of War," 55-72

GA - Betts, "The New Threat of Mass Destruction," 69-81

GA - Mueller, "The Obsolescence of Major War," 57-66

TWP - Kaysen, "Is War Obsolete?" 441-463

Recommended:

IRT - Keohane, "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond," 153-183

PART II: Liberalism

2/20: Liberalism I: Interdependence and Order

IRT - Editor's commentary, 199-204, 210-224

IRT - Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously," 246-256

GA - Keohane and Nye, "Power and Interdependence in the Information Age," 26-36

Recommended readings:

IRT - Krasner, "The Accomplishments of International Political Economy,"

GA - Gilpin, "Three Ideologies of Political Economy," 267-284

2/27: Liberalism III: International Institutions

TWP - Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," 329-383

TWP - Keohane and Martin, "The Promise of Institutional Theory," 384-396

TWP - Kupchan and Kupchan, "The Promise of Collective Security," 397-406

Recommended reading:

GA - Held, et. al., "Managing the Challenge of Globalization and Institutionalizing Cooperation Through Global Governance," 119-133

3/6: Liberalism III: The Democratic Peace

IRT - Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," 233-245

TWP - Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace," 137-175

TWP - Layne, "Kant or Cant: The Myth of the Democratic Peace," 176-220

TWP - Mansfield and Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War," 221-256

Recommended Reading:

GA - Russett, "How Democracy, Interdependence and International Organizations Create a System for Peace," 230-240

### PART III: Contending Social Orders

3/13: Social Orders and International Politics

Course Packet - Skidmore, "Rethinking Realist Interpretations of the Cold War and Beyond: Balance of Power or Competing Social Orders?"

click here: <http://www.drake.edu/artsci/PolSci/skidmore.html>

Course Packet - James Nolt, "Business Conflict and the Demise of Imperialism"

click here: <http://www.drake.edu/artsci/PolSci/nolt.html>

Recommended:

IRT - Gills and Palen, "The Neostructural Agenda in International Relations," 377-382

3/20: Spring Break

3/27: Theories of Imperialism and Dependency

IRT - Editor's commentary, 341-359

IRT - Hobson, "The Economic Taproots of Imperialism," 365-368

IRT - Wallerstein, "Patterns and Perspectives on the Capitalist World System," 369-376

Course Packet: Andre Gunder Frank, "The Development of Underdevelopment"

William Robinson, "Social Theory and Globalization: The Rise of a New Transnational State" click here: <http://www.drake.edu/artsci/PolSci/robinson.pdf>

Recommended reading:

IRT: Murphy, "International Organization and Industrial Change," 383-396

### Part IV: Norms, Culture, Ideas and Institutions

4/3: Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict

TWP - Van Evera, "Hypotheses on Nationalism and War," 257-292

TWP - Lake and Rothchild, "Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict," 292-328

GA - Gurr, "Managing Conflict in Ethnically Divided Societies: A New Regime Emerges," 173-186

Recommended reading:

GA - Falk, "The New Interventionism and the Third World," 187-196

#### 4/10: Political Terrorism

David Lake, "Rational Extremism: Understanding Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century" click here: <http://www.drake.edu/artsci/PolSci/lake.pdf>

Ronald Deibert and Janice Gross Stein, "Hacking Networks of Terror" click here: <http://www.drake.edu/artsci/PolSci/deibert.pdf>

#### 4/17: Constructivism

IRT: Goldstein and Keohane, "Ideas and Foreign Policy," 297-306

IRT - Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It," 434-458

TWP - Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," 416-426

Martha Finnemore, "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention"

#### 4/24: Feminist Perspectives

Franke Wilmer, "Women, the State and War: Feminist Incursions into World Politics" Charlie Carpenter...

Valerie Hudson and Andrea Den Boer, "A Surplus of Men, A Deficit of Peace" click here: <http://www.drake.edu/artsci/PolSci/>

#### Recommended:

IRT: Haas, "Multilateralism, Knowledge and Power," 319-330

IRT: Ruggie, "Multilateralism: Anatomy of an Institution," 331-340

#### Part V: Change and International Politics

##### 5/1: Looking toward the Future

IRT: Editor's commentary, 427-431

IRT: Rosenau, "Turbulent Change," 459-468

GA: Starr, "The Institutional Maintenance of Twenty-First Century World Order," 216-229

Fukayama, "The End of History?"

on the web at: <http://www.wku.edu/~sullib/history.htm>

Skidmore, "Fukuyama's Dream, Huntington's Nightmare and a Grassroots Reverie;" on the web at: <http://www.drake.edu/artsci/PolSci/personalwebpage/stalnaker.html>

#### PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the action of using without due acknowledgment the thoughts, writing, scholarship, inventions of another. It is often the result of carelessness or ignorance: a person does not fully understand the importance of the issue or does not know the appropriate procedures for acknowledging sources. But sometimes a person in full awareness submits as his own the ideas or work of someone else: this is cheating and/or theft. The University considers plagiarism a serious moral issue. It is up to you to know how to avoid it.

Here is the general rule: Provide enough information so that a reader can identify and refer to all the sources you have used in writing a particular work.

Guidelines for applying the general rule

1. Word-for-word quotation: When you incorporate into your work sentences or paragraphs or apt phrases from the work of another, you must use quotation marks around the borrowed words and you must identify the source, either in the text or in a footnote.

2. Paraphrase: If you have relied on another person's ideas or train of thought but changed the actual words used or the order of the ideas you still must acknowledge your source.

3. Borrowed ideas: When your ideas or opinions have been shaped by what you have read or lectures you have heard, you must acknowledge your source.

4. Material and organization: If you rely on factual material gathered by another person, you must acknowledge. If you have relied on another person's way of organizing common material, you must acknowledge. If you have relied on another person's method of analyzing material, you must acknowledge.

5. How to acknowledge: Depending on the context, your acknowledgment may be an informal side reference ("According to Blank. . ." or "In Blank's apposite phrase. . .") or it may be a formal footnote at the bottom of the page or on a final sheet of paper (showing author, title, city and date or publication, and page number where the material can be found).

6. Exceptions to the rule: You need not footnote information that is common knowledge ("Columbus discovered America in 1492") or an opinion or idea expressed by many people ("Hamlet is one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies") or dictionary definitions.

7. Err on the side or over-acknowledgment: Be generous and open in giving credit for any source of help.

The discussion of plagiarism in Stone and Bell, Prose Style (New York, 1977), pp. 252-258 will be helpful, as an earlier edition of the same book helped in the preparation of this statement.