

POSC 170: International Relations and World Politics

Carleton College - Spring 2018

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Office hours: Monday and Wednesday: 11:00 am – 1:00pm. And by appointment.

Course Description

This course will attempt to provide a reasonably comprehensive survey of the study of world politics. Nonetheless, two things should be kept in mind. First, in one term, it is possible to only scratch the surface of what is a complex and extensive literature. Second, any introductory course on international relations inevitably will be structured by the instructor's biases. Some topics and levels of analysis will receive emphasis here that might well be slighted by other instructors. A number of topics, equally inevitably, will simply be ignored. Finally, an exposure to the nooks and crannies of a subfield should help sensitize students to the virtues and liabilities of various approaches and analyses. By the time the course is over, the hope is that students will have gained a theoretical understanding of the dynamics at play in world politics and sharp intellectual tools to approach these dynamics and make sense out of the apparent chaos of international relations.

Texts

Karen A. Mingst and Ivan M. Arreguin-Toft, *Essentials of International Relations*, New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2014.

Jack Levy and William Thompson. *Causes of War*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell. 2010.

Scott Burchill et.al. *Theories of International Relations*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan. 2016.

Course Requirements

Class attendance and participation (10 % of your final grade)

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each session. Each student starts the class with 10 attendance point. You will lose 1 point from your attendance grade every time you are absent. For instance, if you miss 4 classes you will receive 6 instead of 10 attendance points. Only documented absences will be accepted (e.g. doctor's note).

Students are expected to participate actively in the class. I will be asking you to contribute to class discussions and will invite you to offer your opinion on required readings or on related events unfolding as the course goes on.

Quizzes (10% of your final grade)

Throughout the term you will take two quizzes. They will have several components such as multiple choice questions, short answers, true/false questions and so forth. You will be tested to see whether you understood the general line of an argument, or the main events that shaped the outlook of a historical turning point.

Mid-term (30 % of your final grade)

The Mid-term will be divided into two parts: 1) A series of questions to which you will be expected to reply with short answers. The questions will cover all the material discussed in class from the first lecture to the last. 2) An essay you will be asked to write and which will test your ability to think critically on the material we covered. Reading the material is indispensable to do well in the exam, but it takes more than just that. You must demonstrate an ability to reflect analytically on the topic and express your own opinions and ideas.

Term paper (50% of your final grade)

(10% for the presentation in class and 40% for the paper itself)

What is expected of you as you do the readings?

As you read, you will be expected to think critically by asking yourselves the following questions:

- 1) What is the author's main argument?
- 2) Do I find that argument convincing or not? Why?
- 3) What alternative explanations can be thought of for the author's evidence?
- 4) What are the implications of the argument made by the author?

Academic Integrity

When you submit a paper with your name on it or take an exam in this course, you are signifying that the work contained therein is all yours, unless otherwise cited, referenced, or explained. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged. If you are unsure about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or exam, be sure to seek clarification beforehand. Sanctions for academic misconduct may include reduction in your final grade, a failing grade in the course, among other possibilities, and must include a report to the Office of the Dean.

The Grading Scale

I will be using the following grading scale for this course:

98 – 100 A+

94-97 A

91- 93 A-

88-90 B+

83-87 B

79 – 82 B-

76 – 78 C+

72 -75 C

68 – 71 C-

67/below D/ F

Reading assignments

Monday, 26: Introduction

John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, “The case for Offshore Balancing: A Superior US Grand Strategy”, *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2016.

We will read the Syllabus in class

Wednesday, 28: Theories of IR: Realism (1)

Mingst and Arreguin-Toft: Chapter 3 (pp79-86)

Daddow: Chapter 6 (pp80-92)

Friday, 30: Theories of IR: Realism (2)

Burchill et al: Chapter 2 (pp31-56)

Monday, 2: Theories of IR: Realism (3)

Levy and Thompson: Chapter 2 (pp28-54)

Wednesday, 4:

Documentary and class discussion

Friday, 6: Theories of IR: Liberalism (1)

Mingst and Arreguin-Toft: Chapter 3 (pp86-92)

Monday, 9: Theories of IR: Liberalism (2)

Burchill et al: Chapter 3 (pp57-85)

Wednesday, 11: Theories of IR: Constructivism (1)

Mingst and Arreguin-Toft: Chapter 3 (pp95-100)

Dunne et al: Chapter 9 (pp178-194)

Friday, 13: Theories of IR: Constructivism (2)

Burchill et al: Chapter 9 (pp212-236)

Dunne et al: Chapter 10 (pp195-212)

Monday, 16: The Radical Approaches + (QUIZZ1)

Mingst and Arreguin-Toft: Chapter 3 (pp92-95)

Dunne et al: Chapter 8 (pp157-174)

Wednesday, 18: Theory in Action – How can we use theories to explain the 2003 invasion of Iraq; or the Rise of China; or the War on Terror?

Mingst and Arreguin-Toft: Chapter 3 (pp100-104)

Dunne et al: Chapter 4 (pp89-91)

Dunne et al: Chapter 8 (pp170-173)

Friday, 20: Levels of Analysis 1: the Individual Level

Levy and Thompson: Chapter 5 (pp128-164)

Monday, 23 : Levels of Analysis 2: the Organizational Level

Levy and Thompson: Chapter 6 (pp162-185)

Wednesday, 25: Levels of Analysis 3: the State and Societal Level

Levy and Thompson: Chapter 4 (pp83-127)

Friday, 27:

In-class review session for the Mid-Term

Monday, 30:

Mid-Term Break

Wednesday, 2

Mid-Term

Friday, 4 : Civil Wars (1)

Kalyvas *in* Boix and Stokes (pp416-434)

Monday, 7: Civil Wars (2)

Levy and Thompson (pp 186-204)

Wednesday, 9: Civil Wars (3)

Midlarsky (pp 193-226)

Friday, 11:

Documentary and discussion

Monday 14.: Ethnic Conflict (1)

Kaufman (pp1-48)

Wednesday, 16: Ethnic Conflict (2)

Petersen (pp 17-84)

Friday, 18: Ethnic Conflicts (3) + (QUIZZ2)

Kaufman *in* Walter and Snyder (pp 221-260)

Monday, 21: Terrorism (1)

O'neil (pp 277 – 308)

Wednesday, 23: Terrorism (2)

Wilkinson *in* Cavelty and Mauer (pp 129-138)

Friday, 25:

Final paper in-class presentation

Monday, 28:

Final paper in-class presentation

Wednesday, 30:

Final paper in-class presentation