POSC 170-03
International Relations & World Politics

Syllabus

Monday and Wednesday: 3:10p.m - 4:20p.m
Friday: 3:30 – 4:30p.m
Winter 2008: January 3 – March 16
Willis 211
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Course Goals

This course will introduce students to the practices of international relations and theories that explain and predict the origin, dynamics, and the future of world politics. The mainstream view of international relations (IR) and world politics center on the explanation and prediction of the politics among states. The subject of IR and world politics, therefore, has been the relationship among states. While the dominant theories of IR are powerful in explaining the origin and dynamics of state to state relationship, they are insufficient in predicting both state-to-state relationship and certainly predicting the future of world politics.

In this course, we will consider the subject of international relations and world politics beyond the dominant statecentric theories. To understand comprehensively and to advance the scholarship of the world politics and international relations, it is necessary to examine beyond statecentric views. With this premise, the course’s goals are to equip students: (1) to understand historical background of mainstream academic theories of IR; (2) to analyze the validity and insufficiencies of the mainstream scholarship; and (3) to prepare for the challenges in the practice of world politics and to advance the scholarship of theory building on changing world politics and international relations. To achieve these goals, the course will follow the following outline.

Course Outline

Week 1: Where Are We?
Week 2: Theoretical Lens
Week 3: Epistemic Challenges
Week 4: Structures and Processes
Week 5: International and Global Security
Week 6: Poverty and Development
Week 7: Non-State Actors
Week 8: Democracy and World Politics
Week 9: Polytectric Governance
Week 10: Conclusion
There are four components of course assignments. These four components will be used to evaluate your performance in this course. The percentage of each assignment for your final grade is in parentheses. The details are as follow:

(1) **Participation (10%)**: Your participation in this class begins with reading assigned materials *before* the day of class for which readings are assigned. Raising questions, reflecting on lectures and your colleagues’ discussion in class are all counted as participation. This course will be conducted mostly in interactive lecture style. There will also be group-led and group-based discussion sessions. What this means is that you will have many opportunities to participate during the lecture. For group-led discussion sessions, I will assign a group of students to prepare a list of questions and ideas that are related to the readings and current world politics prior to the class discussion session. This assigned group is responsible for leading discussion with puzzles and questions. For group-based discussion sessions, I will assign problems related to the readings to each group during the class. To be an effective participant, you will be better off paying attention to current day world affairs and thinking about them along with readings of this course. Needless to say, this requires you to read news in hard and soft media. Visiting international news websites regularly and seeking news on world politics will be helpful.

(2) **Two critical thinking memos (30%)**: Each student is required to complete two memos during the term. The due dates for these memos are to be self-selected on January 7 when I will have a sign-up sheet. You will sign up for one due date before and after the mid-term break (i.e. before and after February 4) respectively. The aim of these memos is to give you the opportunity to scrutinize readings and to connect theories and concepts from readings, lectures, and discussion to the current world politics. This is the opportunity for you to develop your raw ideas into written and organized format. These ideas can be the ones you gained from above participation component and you desire to develop further in written and organized format. I encourage you to be specific in arguments and illustrations with examples including those from your life experiences and worldviews. Your memo can take in one of two formats. **First**, it can be a thoughtful piece articulating on one concrete idea relating to readings and class discussion. This idea can be the one you raised in class as a part of the above “participation” component or another one you consider important but the class did not address. You desire to develop this idea further in written and organized format. **Second**, the memo can be a critical review of assigned readings. You are encouraged, but not required, to review the assigned readings that are due right after the due date of your memo. This memo should **NOT** summarize what the readings say, but jump directly to your critical responses in light of what you learn from the readings and lectures. These memos should be 3 double-spaced pages. In these memos, I am looking for your quality of higher order thinking rather than quantity of words. The entries should be sent to the listserv of the class on your self-selected due date. The entire class is entitled to analyze, comment, and respond to your memos in a respectful manner in the listserv. While
it is encouraged, it is not required for readers to respond. I may also use your memos for illustrations and discussion in class.

(3) **Two take-home assignments (30%)**: There will be two take-home assignments. You will be given two questions for the assignment. You will choose one question out of the two. Your assignment is to respond to the selected question directly and answer the question. These questions are related to the course readings, lectures, and class discussion preceding this assignment. Your answers should be between **5 and 7 double-spaced pages**. You are not allowed to discuss your selected question or answer with your classmates. You may consult reading materials and your class notes. While you consider readings, lectures, class discussion, and your notes as appropriate bases for your answer, what I am looking for is your own ingenuity in answering the question. This is an honor system. I expect you to be a conscientious citizen and honor this rule. You will have five days in total to answer the selected question beginning from the end of class in which the questions are distributed. If you desire, you may turn in your answer anytime within five days from the time you receive the question. The first take home exam will be distributed on January 25 and the answer is **due on January 30**. The second take home exam will be distributed on February 15 and **due on February 20**.

(4) **One group paper and presentation (30%)**: A group of four students will select one of four case studies that will be analyzed in this course. There are three components to this assignment. First, each group will identify key **issues, interests, and actors** involved in the case. Second, discuss how key issues, interests, and actors interplay at the center of the case. Third, analyze what theories we learned from the class explain the case, how they are powerful in explaining the interplay of issues, interests, and actors, and what actors are influential and why so. The group paper should be between 15 and 20 double spaced pages. More details about the process of this group project will be distributed on January 14. The final group paper is **due on March 3**.

NOTE: All written assignments should be double-spaced pages with 12 point Times New Roman fonts and with page numbers. With the exception of critical thinking memos, your take home exam and final group papers have to be submitted to me in hard copy in addition to pdf electronic files for the record.

**Required Texts:**


NOTE: In addition to some chapters of these texts, there will be e-reserve readings at the library. I may also use visual materials such as movies and documentary videos that will serve as illustration to the theories, concepts, and puzzles we struggle with in the course.

IMPORTANT: This is a provisional syllabus and subject to change depending on the ebb and flow of the course and surrounding worlds.

Course Conducts

In terms of how we conduct in this course, the most important thing for you to be successful as a student and for me as a teacher is timely and effective communication between you and me.

a. Attendance: Attendance is required for this course. If you need to be absent from the class, it is your responsibility to notify me in advance. When you are absent, it is in your benefit to borrow notes from your classmate or ask your classmates to learn what you missed. If you wish, I will be available during office hours or by appointment at your request to meet with you and go over what you missed while you were absent. For the record, I will have attendance markup-sheet for every class.

b. Plagiarism: There is zero tolerance for plagiarism. A summary of the College’s policy on plagiarism states: “At Carleton College, an act of academic dishonesty is therefore regarded as conflicting with the work and purpose of the entire College and not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor; all cases involving such dishonesty are referred for appropriate action to the Academic Standing Committee (ASC) via the Associate Dean of Students or the Associate Dean of the College.” For more information on Carleton’s policy on academic honesty, please consult http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/dos/handbook/academic_regs/?policy_id=21359

c. Late assignments: Assignments are due on the dates specified in this syllabus or in the assignment sheet. There will be one point reduction per late day for late work. If you are unable to complete an assignment on time due to illness or personal emergency, you can request an extension with the supporting documents such as a medical note from a doctor or the Wellness Center. The request for extension has to be made no later than two days before the due date i.e. 48 hours in advance.

d. Special needs: If you require special accommodation due to a documented physical or medically classified different learning capacity, please come see me or inform The Wellness Center during the first week of class or any time throughout the semester to discuss how I might best assist you in meeting the objectives and requirements of this course.

IMPORTANT: The key for you to be successful as a student and for me as a teacher in this course is timely and efficient communication between you and me. In addition, Carleton offers numerous resources for you to excel your learning. If you do not know them, do not be shy to ask. Make good use of resources on campus!
Schedule of Readings

WEEK 1: WHERE ARE WE?

January 4: Introduction to the Course

This syllabus

January 7: Evolution of International Society

Richard Crockatt, “The end of the cold war” in *Globalization of World Politics*, pp. 112-128.


January 9: The End of Cold War

Michael Cox, “From the cold war to the war on terror,” in *Globalization of World Politics*, pp 131-156


January 11: Globalization and World Politics


WEEK 2: THEORETICAL LENS

January 14: Realism and Liberalism


Scott Burchill, “Liberalism,” in *Theories of International Relations*, pp. 55-83

January 16: Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism
Steven Lamy, “Contemporary mainstream approaches: neo-realism and neo-liberalism” in The Globalization of World Politics, pp. 205-224


**January 18: Constructivism and Systemic Views**


**Case study:** The rise of China and balance of power

*Suggested Readings for Group Project*


**WEEK 3: EPISTEMIC CHALLENGES**

**January 21: Academics and Practitioners**


**January 23: Linking and De-linking Theories and Practices**

Maliniak, Daniel; Oakes, Amy; Peterson, Susan; Tierney, Michael J. “Inside The Ivory Tour,” Foreign Policy, Mar/Apr 2007, 159: p62-68.

Fonseca, Gelson, “Can academic study and research contribute to the conduct of international relations,” UN Chronicle, 36(4): 71-75.

http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1309/is_4_36/ai_61693396

**January 25: Evaluating theories and assessing challenges**


**WEEK 4: STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES**

**January 28: The United Nations and Reform Challenges**


**Case study:** UN-Interventions: The Case of Burma

*Suggested Readings for Group Project:*


**January 30: International Law**


**February 1: International Regimes**


**WEEK 5: INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBAL SECURITY**

**February 6:** What is security and for whom?


**Case Study:** Crisis in Darfur

*Suggested readings for group project:*

CBCNews, “The crisis in Darfur, a timeline”  


Gwen Thompkins, “Sudan Faces Difficult Road to Democracy,”  

**February 8: National Security and Human Security**


**WEEK 6: POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT**

**February 11: Understanding “Poverty” and “Development” in World Politics**

Caroline Thomas, “Poverty, development, and hunger,” in *The Globalization of World Politics*, pp. 645-668.

**February 13: Aids and Incentives in World Politics?**


**February 15: Global Regulatory Regimes?**


**Case Study:** Nam Theun 2 Dam Lao P.D.R.

See: [www.namtheun2.com](http://www.namtheun2.com), more group project readings will be distributed.
WEEK 7 NON-STATE ACTORS

February 18: The Power of Non-State Actors


Case study: The International Water Tribunal in the Rhine [no readings].

February 20: The Limits of Diplomacy and International Treaties


February 22: Democracy and Globalization


WEEK 8 DEMOCRACY AND WORLD POLITICS

February 25: Democratic Peace: Statecentric View


Also see: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/discussion/2006/02/24/DI2006022401403.html

Case Study: International aid and actors in governance reform in Liberia

February 27: Regional Integration and Democracy


February 29: Is Democracy a Universal Value?

WEEK 9: POLYCENTRIC GOVERNANCE

[Group papers are due]

March 3: Group Presentation
March 5: Group Presentation
March 7: Group Presentation

WEEK 10: CONCLUSION

March 10: Group Presentation and Wrap-Up.