

SEMINAR IN WORLD POLITICS

PLSC 650

Spring 2021

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Office Hours by appointment via Zoom

This course is a graduate-level introduction to the study of world politics (or international relations, if you prefer) within the discipline of political science. The course is organized around two broad and related questions that have preoccupied scholars in this field. First, what are the causes of war? This question had a special significance in the aftermath of the two world wars, when the field was taking shape. Second, what are the conditions for peaceful international cooperation? This question reaches beyond concerns about war and peace, encompassing efforts to achieve a variety of other purposes, such as the removal of barriers to international trade.

Two warnings are in order at the outset of a course like this one. First, there is a difference between the field of "World Politics" and the phenomenon of "world politics." This course is mostly about the former. The phenomena grouped together under the rubric of world politics, including war, trade, and cooperation across international borders, have been important features of human life for millennia. By contrast, even though many of the ideas debated and tested by contemporary scholars are very old, the subfield of World Politics is a product of the twentieth century. We will spend much of our time discussing the theoretical issues that define the field rather than the substantive events that have shaped the contemporary world politics. Future generations of scholars (including you) may well decide that these issues are not as important for the substance of world politics as their prominence in the field suggests. Indeed, most scholars currently working in the field (including me) have concerns about what it emphasizes and what it overlooks. Nevertheless, an awareness of the major issues that have defined the field is critically important even for those who are interested in steering it in new directions.

The second caveat is that the reading for this course barely scratches the surface of the scholarly literature on the topics we will consider. I have intentionally chosen to limit the volume of reading for most weeks. Those of you continuing graduate studies in the field will have an opportunity to pursue some of these topics in much greater detail in subsequent research seminars and in your own research. The purpose of this course is to provide you with an introduction to the central issues in the field, not an exhaustive examination of the literature. Indeed, there are some important issues in the field that we will not discuss at all. The content of the course reflects the interests and biases of the instructor as well as those of the field. Although I strongly doubt that many scholars in the field would argue that any of the issues we will cover are unimportant, many of them would certainly teach this course quite differently.

Course Materials

We will be reading at least half of the following five books this semester. All are available for purchase at the campus bookstore.

Fazal, Tanisha. 2018. *Wars of Law*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Ikenberry, G. John. 2011. *Liberal Leviathan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Keohane, Robert O. 1984. *After Hegemony*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Lupton, Danielle L. 2020. *Reputation for Resolve*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Waltz, Kenneth N. 1979. *A Theory of International Politics*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

In addition to these books, we will be reading a number of articles and book chapters. Most of these are available through databases the library maintains. In the few instances where this is not true, I will make PDF versions of these readings available through the myCourses page for this course.

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation. Attendance and participation are critically important. Everyone should complete the assigned reading and be prepared to discuss it when we meet. Graduate seminars simply do not work if the participants are not prepared. Attendance and participation will count for 30% of your final grade.

Reaction papers. Over the course of the semester, each participant will write three papers assessing one or more of the readings assigned for that week. Your paper need not cover all the reading for the week you choose. The paper should first identify the major research question the work (or works) addresses, then assess the argument and evidence offered to answer this question. If there are possibilities for future research on the topic, your paper could also discuss them. Each paper will count for 10% of your final grade, for a total of 30%. These papers are due by noon on the day before the class meeting discussing the reading to which your paper pertains.

Research design. Each student will write and revise a paper outlining a research design for a project related to world politics. It is in your best interest to choose a project you might actually want to pursue. The paper should do the following: (1) set out a research question, explaining why it is important; (2) briefly discuss at least one theoretical argument that might help answer this question; (3) draw one or more observable implications from the theoretical argument(s); (4) explain how you could test these implications; and (5) explain how you could gather the data needed for these empirical tests. Although the precise length of these papers is not particularly important, 5-8 pages is a good target. The first draft of this paper is due by April 14th. I will return it with comments and suggestions as soon as I can. The final draft is due at the last class meeting, May 12th. The research design will account for 20% of your final grade.

Final Essay. Each seminar participant will write a take-home final essay. The questions on which you can choose to write your essay will be given after class on May 12th, and will be due by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 19th. They will ask you to integrate what you have learned in different parts of the course. The essay will account for 20% of your final course grade.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

The readings are listed below in the order I recommend you read them. This is usually chronological but I have made some exceptions to this rule in order to group them by topic. The

reading list is subject to change during the semester. You will be provided with at least one week's notice if that happens.

February 17. The Realist Tradition

Niebuhr, Reinhold. 1960 [1932]. *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Introduction and chapter 4.

Carr, Edward Hallett. 1964 [1939]. *The Twenty Years' Crisis*. Boston: Perennial. Chapters 4-6.

Morgenthau, Hans. 1993 [1948]. *Politics Among Nations*, Brief Edition. New York: McGraw Hill. Chapter 1.

Walzer, Michael. 1977. *Just and Unjust Wars*. New York: Basic Books. Chapter 1.

February 24. Neorealism

Waltz, Kenneth. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*. New York: McGraw-Hill. Chapters 1-6.

Rose, Gideon. 1998. "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy." *World Politics* 51(1): 144-72.

Legro, Jeffrey W., and Andrew Moravcsik. 1999. "Is Anybody Still a Realist?" *International Security* 24(2): 5-55.

February 26. No class meeting

March 3. Bargaining Models of War and Their Implications

Fearon, James D. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization* 49(3): 379-414.

Tomz, Michael. 2007. "Domestic audience costs in international relations: an experimental approach." *International Organization* 61(4): 821-40.

Snyder, Jack, and Erica D. Borghard. 2011. "The Cost of Empty Threats: A Penny, Not a Pound." *American Political Science Review* 105(3): 437-56.

Downes, Alexander B., and Todd S. Sechser. 2012. "The Illusion of Democratic Credibility." *International Organization* 66, 457-89.

Kertzer, Joshua D., Jonathan Renshon, and Keren Yarhi-Milo. 2021. "How Do Observers Assess Resolve?" *British Journal of Political Science* 51: 308-30.

March 10. Recent Work Informed by the Bargaining Model

Lupton Danielle L. 2020. *Reputation for Resolve*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

March 17. No class meeting--campus rejuvenation day

March 24. Liberalism and the Democratic Peace

Oneal, John R., and Bruce Russett. 1999. "The Kantian Peace: The Pacific Benefits of Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations, 1885-1992." *World Politics*, 52(1): 1-37.

- Gartzke, Erik, and Alex Weisiger. 2013. "Permanent Friends? Dynamic Difference and the Democratic Peace." *International Studies Quarterly* 71(1): 171-185.
- Mousseau, Michael. 2013. "The Democratic Peace Unraveled: It's the Economy." *International Studies Quarterly* 57(1): 186-97.
- DaFoe, Allan, James R. Oneal, and Bruce Russett. 2013. "The Democratic Peace: Weighing the Evidence and Cautious Inference." *International Studies Quarterly* 57(1): 201-14.
- McDonald, Patrick J. 2015. "Great Powers, Hierarchy, and Endogenous Regimes: Rethinking the Domestic Causes of Peace." *International Organization* 69(3): 557-88.

March 31. Domestic Politics and International Conflict

- Moravcsik, Andrew. 1997. "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics." *International Organization* 51(4): 513-53.
- Colaresi, Michael. 2004. "When Doves Cry: International Rivalry, Unreciprocated Cooperation, and Leadership Turnover." *American Journal of Political Science* 48(3): 555-70.
- Colgan, Jeff D., and Jessica L. P. Weeks. 2015. "Revolution, Personalist Dictatorships, and International Conflict." *International Organization* 69(4): 163-94.
- Fordham, Benjamin O. 2018. "More than Mixed Results: What We Have Learned from Quantitative Research on the Diversionary Hypothesis." *Oxford Encyclopedia of Empirical International Relations Theory*, vol. 2. New York: Oxford University Press. 549-64.

April 7. Civil Wars

- Sambanis, Nicholas. 2004. "What Is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48(6): 814-58.
- Walter, Barbara F. 1997. "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement." *International Organization* 51(3): 335-64.
- Thyne, Clayton L. 2006. "Cheap Signals with Costly Consequences: The Effect of Interstate Relations on Civil War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50(6): 937-61.
- Humphries, Macartan, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2008. "Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(2): 436-455.

April 14. Hierarchy and Empire

- Lake, David A. 1996. "Anarchy, Hierarchy, and the Variety of International Relations." *International Organization* 50(1): 1-33.
- Afoaku, Osita G. 2000. "U.S. Foreign Policy and Authoritarian Regimes: Change and Continuity in International Clientelism." *Journal of Third World Studies* 17(2): 13-40.
- Robinson, Ronald. 1972. "Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration." In E. R. J. Owen and R. B. Sutcliffe, eds., *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism*. London: Longman. 117-41.
- Alexander B. Downes, and Jonathan Monten. 2013. "Forced to Be Free? Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization." *International Security* 37(4): 90-131.

April 21. Hegemony and International Order

Ikenberry, G. John. 2011. *Liberal Leviathan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

April 28. Cooperation with and without Hegemony

Keohane, Robert O. 1984. *After Hegemony*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Part I.

Krasner, Stephen D. 1976. "State Power and the Structure of International Trade." *World Politics* 28(3): 317-347.

McKeown Timothy J. 1983. "Hegemonic Stability Theory and 19th Century Tariff Levels in Europe." *International Organization* 37(1): 73-91.

May 5. Institutions as Constraints on State Behavior

Wendt, Alexander. 1992. "Anarchy is What States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics." *International Organization* 46(2): 391-425.

Downes, George W., David M. Rocke, and Peter N. Barsoom. 1996. "Is the Good News about Compliance Good News about Cooperation?" *International Organization* 50(3): 379-406.

Fearon, James D. 1998. "Bargaining, Enforcement, and International Cooperation." *International Organization* 52(2): 269-305.

Leeds, Brett Ashley, Michaela Mattes, and Jeremy S. Vogel. 2009. "Interests, Institutions, and the Reliability of International Commitments." *American Journal of Political Science* 53(2): 461-76.

May 12. International Law and Institutions

Fazal, Tanisha. 2018. *Wars of Law*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.