

International Relations

POLS 160, Spring 2014
LLS 102, T & Th 11:00–11:50 PM

Instructor: Nam Kyu Kim
Office: Oldfather Hall (OLDH) 528
E-mail: namkyu@unl.edu
Office Hours: T & Th 3:00 - 4:00 PM
and by appointment

Teaching Assistants:
Benjamin Sievert: OLDH 523
bsievert@huskers.unl.edu
Madeline Hoffer: OLDH 519
madelinemjhoffer@huskers.unl.edu

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to concepts and ideas in political science that are used to understand world politics. It focuses on theories used to explain international and domestic politics central to world politics in its full generality. The evidence for such theories lies in patterns of behavior over time, although extensive examples and cases will be presented both to illuminate the concepts of the theories and to help the student see how theories try to explain individual events. No prior background in international relations is assumed. Students will 1) learn the strategic logics of world politics, 2) acquire the basic analytic tools necessary to understand and explain a variety of international phenomena, and 3) develop the ability to apply concepts and theories learned in the course to real life examples.

The course begins with an introduction to world politics. The central concepts of actors and their power, preferences, and perceptions are explained in detail. The course uses these three concepts to explain why war occurs, how states prepare for the possibility of war, and the consequences of war afterwards. After this section on security and conflict, the course turns to analyze cooperation and conflict in the international political economy. Specific issues of trade and monetary affairs are discussed next. The final part of the course covers the environment, human rights, and why the state system dominates world politics.

Ace outcome, Assessment, and Opportunities

By passing this section of POLS 160 students fulfill ACE Learning Outcome #9: “Exhibit global awareness or knowledge of human diversity through analysis of an issue.” This learning objective is integral to the course materials. By engaging with the course material and completing the assignments (such as essays, exams and participation in lectures and recitation sections), students will explore the many facets of global awareness and human diversity. Throughout the semester, we will examine a variety of debates in international politics, taking care to consider various perspectives on these debates while

highlighting the role of human diversity. In completing this class, students should have a greater appreciation for human diversity as well as a heightened understanding of the importance of global awareness and should be able to apply these skills to the analysis of a given issue in international (or domestic) politics.

Reinforcement: Students will improve their global awareness and understanding of human diversity through a series of assignments, including exams and essays and participation in lecture and recitation.

Assessment: Your achievement of the ACE 9 goals will be assessed through a variety of tools, including, but not limited to: analytical essays, exams, writing exercises in recitation section and direct participation.

Requirements

The final grade will be composed as follows:

Midterm and Final Exam (25% each) There will be two in-class examinations. All students must take the midterm and final exams at the scheduled time. Alternate times for the midterm and final examinations are possible only for students who can demonstrate that taking the exam at the scheduled time would impose a serious hardship on them. Students who cannot take examinations at the scheduled times for medical reasons must produce a valid medical excuse. Students who will be out of town on the day of an exam on university business must provide documentation of the need to travel that day in advance.

Two paper assignment (15% each) Students are expected to submit their papers by the due dates. **Late papers will suffer a reduction of at least one letter grade.** The paper assignment will be explained in class.

Recitation (20%) Attendance in recitation sections, as in lecture, mandatory. Recitation sections will be run as seminars, and your contribution to discussion is crucial. This means coming to class having read and thought about the readings. Come prepared to participate actively.

Required Readings

There is one required textbook for the course.

Morrow, James D. 2013. *Understanding World Politics*. Pearson Learning Solutions.

It is available for purchase at the University Bookstore. Do not buy the previous version of the book.

I also suggest that you keep up with current events by reading the main international stories of the day/week in [the New York Times](#). We will frequently discuss current events in class; details about such events could also be useful on your exams, at least as an option.

Additional Information

Communication The best way to contact me is via email or during office hours. I also am available by appointment. I rarely check voicemail, so please do not leave me voice mail messages. *I would also like to remind you that you should first contact your TA regarding logistical, administrative or clarification questions.* I am happy to discuss course content and substance, but please address logistical and administration questions to your TA. I will be glad to weigh in when necessary, but they are your main point of contact for those issues, not to mention a great resource for when you need help with the substantive issues of the course.

Learning Assistance Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472–3787 voice or TTY.

Academic Honesty Cheating is very serious offense that will not be tolerated in the course. You will receive a failing grade for the class. The examinations are closed book; you are not allowed to use any notes or books when taking them. You should bring several pens to the exams in case one fails. You may write the examinations in pencil, but if you do so you forfeit your right to contest your grade. Please refer to the Student Handbook, the University’s Code of Conduct and the Office of Undergraduate Studies’ document on academic integrity for the University’s policies on plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty.

Emergencies If an emergency should arise during the course of the semester that prevents you from attending class or completing your work, please be in touch with your TA as soon as possible.

Lecture notes Lecture slides will be posted on our Blackboard page, as they are available, usually the night before the class.

Important Dates

| | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| First Paper | February 11 |
| Midterm Exam | February 27 |
| Second Paper | April 29 |
| Final Exam | May 6 |

Course Outline

January 14. Introductory Meeting and What is World Politics?

- Chapter 1. What is World Politics

Part I: Conflict and Security

January 16. Actors and Preferences

- Chapter 2, Actors in World Politics
- Chapter 3, Preferences

January 21. The Logic of Threats and Promises 1

- Chapter 4, The Logic of Threats and the Problem of Credibility
- Chapter 5, The Logic of Promises and the Problem of Commitment

January 23. The Logic of Threats and Promises 2

- Chapter 5, The Logic of Promises and the Problem of Commitment
- Cuban Missile Crisis
- **First Paper Assignment out**

January 28. Power

- Chapter 6, Military Power and Its Limits

January 30. Perceptions

- Chapter 7, Perceptions and How They Matter in Decisions
- Chapter 8, Persuasion and How Perceptions Change

February 4. Strategic Theories of War: Bargaining

- Chapter 9, War and the Problem of Bargaining

February 6. Strategic Theories of War: Commitment

- Chapter 10, Commitment Problems and War

February 11. The Domestic Politics of War

- Chapter 14, The Fate of Leaders
- Chapter 15, The Enemy Outside
- The First Paper is due at the end of lecture on February 11.

February 13. The Democratic Peace

- Chapter 16, The Democratic Peace

February 18. Security Policy: Arms and Alliances

- Chapter 12, Arms and Alliances: The Elements of Security Policy

February 20. In-class Review for Midterm Examination

February 25. Midterm Examination

February 27. Current event example: Afghanistan war

- *Obama's War*: PBS documentary on Afghanistan war

March 4. Structural Theories of War

- Chapter 13, Structural Theories of War: Balance of Power and Power Transition

March 6. Bureaucratic Politics

- Chapter 11, Bureaucratic Politics

March 11. Civil War

- Chapter 17, The Problem of Civil Wars

March 13. Civil War 2

- *Syria: Behind the Lines* PBS Frontline on Syrian civil war

March 18. Terrorism

- Chapter 18, Terrorism

Part II: International Political Economy

March 20. The Politics of International Trade

- Chapter 21, The Politics of Trade

March 25-27. Spring semester break

April 1. Monetary Affairs

- Chapter 22, The Politics of Monetary Affairs

April 3. MPSA Annual Conference: No class

April 8. The Problems of Cooperation and The Politics of International Finance

- Chapter 23, Globalization: Trade, Money, and Finance in a Globalized World
- **Second Paper Assignment out**

Part III: Transnational Challenges

April 10. The Problems of International Cooperation

- Chapter 19, International Cooperation and the Problem of Enforcement
- Chapter 20, The Problems of Cooperation: Distribution and Information

April 15. The Environment and International Cooperation

- Chapter 24, Cooperation on International Environmental Issues

April 17. Aid and development

- No assigned reading

April 22. International Law and Human Rights

- Chapter 25, International Law and Norms

April 24. International Law and Human Rights 2

- *On Our Watch*. PBS documentary on Dafur.

April 29. Why a System of Sovereign States?

- Chapter 26, Sovereignty

- The Second Paper is due at the end of lecture on April 29.

May 1. In-class Review for Final Examination

May 6. Final Exam: 3:30 to 5:30 p.m

This syllabus is subject to modification by the instructor in order to better meet the needs of the class.