



PSCI 240: Introduction to International Relations

Spring 2009 (CRN 21126)
Humboldt State University
MWF, 10:00-10:50am, FH 125

Prof. Noah Zerbe
Office: FH 139
Office Hours: T 10:30-11:30 / W 11-12
and by appointment

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This is a required core course for the political science major. The course is intended to provide a broad overview of the contemporary political and economic interactions of states and non-state actors at the global level. To that end, the course examines the core concepts, processes and issues of international relations in order to provide the general knowledge and analytical tools necessary to understand, evaluate and respond to a complex array of problems in the field.

The course is divided into two sections. In the first half of the semester, we explore the major contending theoretical approaches to the study of international relations, namely (neo)realism, (neo)liberalism, (neo)Marxism, constructivism, and feminism. At the same time, we will examine the historical evolution of international relations in order to situate the theoretical approaches in their appropriate historical context. Our theoretical exploration sets the foundation for the second half of the course, where we analyze major events and developments on the global stage since the end of the Cold War.

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- Explain and critically evaluate the major theoretical approaches to international relations;
- Identify and explain significant events in the historical development of international relations;
- Apply contending theoretical approaches to analyze contemporary events and dynamics in international relations; and
- Recognize the increasing importance of transboundary issues in international politics, and critically assess the role of the state in the context of such transboundary issues;

There is an optional (but highly recommended) one credit hour discussion group (PSCI 280, Sec. 4; CRN# 23725). This semester, the discussion seminar will meet monthly to explore debates in international relations through the lens of popular film. This semester, we will screen four films: *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Thirteen Days*, *Hotel Rwanda*, and *Battle of Algiers*.

Required Book and Readings:

The following books are required and available at the HSU Bookstore:

- Joshua Goldstein and Jon Pevehouse. *International Relations, 8th edition*. (New York: Longman, 2008). Note: This textbook is accompanied by two outstanding online resources, MyPoliSciKit [www.mypoliscikit.com], which includes review tests, key concepts, and exercises designed to facilitate your understanding of the material, and the

author's website [www.internationalrealtions.com], which includes some additional interesting materials.

- Brock Tessman. *International Relations in Action*. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2006). This book provides the basis for the semester-long simulation we will run.

Additional required readings are available on electronic reserve through the course Moodle site.

Students are also strongly encouraged to keep up with current international events by reading a major national or international news source, many of which can be found on the web. Suggestions include:

The New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com>)
Christian Science Monitor (<http://www.csmonitor.com>)
The Economist (<http://www.economist.com>)
Financial Times (<http://news.ft.com>)
CNN (<http://www.cnn.com>)
BBC World Service (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice>)

Course Requirements:

- **Unit Exams (2 @ 25% each):** There will be two in-class exams in this course, each representing 25 percent of your overall grade. The exam questions will draw on lectures, class discussions, and course materials. A review sheet will be made available before the exams. Dates for the exams are as follows:
Monday, March 2 Exam 1: Theories of International Relations
Monday, May 11 Exam 2: Issues in International Relations
- **Map Quiz (5%):** The world is comprised of approximately 190 separate states, yet many of us are unfamiliar with even the most important of them. A study sheet consisting of a list of countries and a blank world map on which you should be able to locate those countries will be distributed via Moodle. On the quiz, you will be asked to identify the location of a set of these countries. This assignment is designed to introduce students to the basic geography of the world system. The map quiz will take place on Monday, February 9. If you miss the map quiz or if you are not satisfied with your score, you may take a make-up quiz during the final exam.
- **News Summary and Analysis (2 @ 5% each):** Twice during the semester you will be asked to submit a one-page (typed, single-spaced) news analysis and present your analysis to the class. The analysis must deal with a story from the previous seven days, and should illustrate a concept we have explored in class in the previous week. The analysis consists of two paragraphs. The first paragraph should provide the context or background to the story you are presenting, addressing questions such as: What events led up to the current story? Who are the major players? What are the contested positions? (Note that these questions are intended to provide an overview of the types of issues that should be addressed in the first paragraph. I do not expect that you will necessarily answer these specific questions.) In the second paragraph, you should provide a brief analysis of the story, answering questions such as: How does this event fit into the broader debates and themes of international politics? Why is the story so important? What are the likely implications of this story or event? I am looking for you to demonstrate your ability to apply the theoretical tools we are developing in the course to real world events. Please be sure to attach a copy of the original article to your analysis. Late analyses will not be accepted. A sign-up sheet will be passed around the class during the first week.
- **Politica Simulation (25%).** This semester, we will be running a simulation in which you will be divided into teams to represent the fictional countries of Politica. The simulation is intended to contextualize some of the broad, abstract ideas and theoretical issues we explore in lecture through a more hands-on medium. In general, Fridays will be reserved

for simulation-related activities. More information on the simulation will be made available during the semester through handouts and a weekly *Politica* news bulletin posted every Monday to the course Moodle site. Your grade for the *Politica* simulation will be based on the following assignments:

- Simulation Reaction Paper (10%). You must do five single-page reaction papers to the simulation activities. Reactions to a Friday simulation are due no later than the following Friday. You may select which five you write. Reactions should include a short summary of the most important lessons or insights developed from the simulation. Reaction papers are graded on a credit/no credit (✓ / 0) basis.
- Participation in the Simulation (10%). Regular participation in the weekly simulations is expected by all group members.
- Peer Evaluation (5%). Peer evaluation of individual group member contributions will provide five points of your overall grade.
- **Course Participation (10%):** Regular participation in class discussions is also expected. In order to facilitate class discussions, I expect that you have completed the required readings for a given class *before* that class.

A Note on Written Work: All written assignments submitted for this course should be properly formatted and cited. I expect that you will proofread your work before submitting it to me, and ideally you will have someone else proof it as well. Consequently, a maximum of two errors (grammatical, improper citation, etc.) per page will be accepted. One point will be deducted from your grade on the assignment for each error beyond the second on each page. All citations must be in APSA format. A style guide is available at

www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPSA.html

Moodle Site: Course information will regularly be posted to the course Moodle Site. If you are not familiar with Moodle, please let me know and I will provide a brief overview on accessing and using it. You can access the course site at: <http://learn.humboldt.edu>.

Contacting Me: The most effective way to contact me is through e-mail (noah.zerbe@humboldt.edu). Barring unusual circumstances (being out of town, ill, in a blackout, etc.) I will respond within 24 hours. If not, send me a followup. Please be sure your subject line includes “PSCI 240” and a general description of the topic so that the e-mail is not filtered out as spam. Also, be sure to sign your e-mail so that I know who sent it.

Late Assignments will be penalized at a rate of one-half letter grade per day. All assignments are due in class on the due date listed in the syllabus. Make up exams will not be scheduled without a valid medical excuse. If you have scheduling problems with any due dates, please contact me well before the assignment or exam is due.

Appeals: I am happy to speak with you about marks earned on a particular assignment. Before coming to discuss a grade, however, I request that you: (1) take 24 hours to read my comments before approaching me to discuss the mark; (2) write a detailed explanation of your question, including the specific reason(s) why you think your mark should be changed; and (3) submit your written response to me, and make an appointment with me (either during my office hours or at some other time) to discuss the grade. Under no circumstances will I discuss grades over e-mail or telephone.

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the representation of someone else’s work as your own, and includes but not limited to having someone else do your work or failing to properly attribute work to their sources. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense, and will result in an automatic zero for the assignment, failure of the course, and potentially more serious

sanctions from the University according to the Academic Honesty policy. Please contact me *before turning in your assignment* if you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism.

In consideration of your fellow students, please turn off mobile phones before entering the classroom. If you absolutely must arrive late or leave early, please enter or leave quietly and sit near the door to minimize the disruption to your colleagues.

Support: HSU offers excellent resources to help you succeed in your academic endeavors. These include the Library, Computer Labs, Computer Help Desk, Academic Support Center, Learning Center, and Writing Center. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of them!

Disability Resources: If you have a documented disability and would like to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible. Our campus Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) can assist you with the accommodation process and can be reached at (707) 826-4678 or (707) 826-5392 (TTD). The SDRC is located in House 71 (Little Apartments) off Library Circle.

Course Schedule

Part 1: Theoretical Approaches to International Relations

Week 1 (January 20-23)

Introduction: Key Concepts in International Relations

Like most academic disciplines, international relations has a vocabulary specific to the field. Concepts like state, nation and sovereignty carry specific meanings in the discipline. Others, like power, globalization and civil society remain contested. This lecture explores the basic concepts and themes at the heart IR, and provides the foundation for the more detailed theoretical and historical cases which follow.



Required Readings:

- Goldstein, ch. 1 (pp. 2-41).
- Tessman, chs. 1-6 (pp. 1-35).
- Marysia Zalewski. “‘All These Theories Yet the Bodies Keep Piling Up’: Theory, Theorists, Theorizing.” Ch. 18 (pp. 340-353) in Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski, eds. *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*. (NY: Cambridge UP, 1996).

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the basic concepts and themes in the study of international relations, including state, nation, sovereignty, power, globalization and civil society.
- Compare and contrast the uses and understandings of theory (theory as tool, theory as critique, theory as everyday practice).
- Explain the levels of analysis problem and assess its impact on the study of international relations.
- Explain the collective goods and evaluate potential solutions to the free rider problem in international relations.

Week 2 (January 26-30)

Liberalism and the Birth of International Relations

Although the study of international politics has a long tradition dating back thousands of years, the emergence modern academic discipline of international relations is usually located in the immediate aftermath of World War I. Between the two World Wars, scholars were primarily concerned with securing lasting international peace, and their studies focused largely on the role of international organizations in securing that peace. This lecture explores the main ideas of classic liberal (or “idealist”) theorists and situates the development of liberal thought in its historical context.



President

Required Readings:

- Goldstein, ch. 3 (pp. 42-93)
- SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 7 (pp. 39-46).

Woodrow Wilson

Learning Outcomes:

- Outline the central tenants of liberalism and explain how they relate to the historical context of the interwar era.
- Explain the concept of the “democratic peace” and understand the link between democracy and peace central to liberal thought.
- Understand the role of international organizations in securing the democratic peace.

Week 3 (February 2-6):

Realism and the World at War



Allied Landing at Normandy
D-Day, WWII

Since the end of World War II, realism has been the dominant approach to the study of international relations. Indeed, realism has often been presented as a “common sense” view of the world against which other perspectives are judged. This lecture introduces the main theoretical tenants of realism. It considers the intellectual and historical roots of realism, highlighting how and why it emerged to become the most well-established theoretical approach to IR.

Required Readings:

- Goldstein, ch. 2 (pp. 42-81)
- SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 8 (pp. 46-54).
- Hans Morgenthau. “A Realist Theory of International Politics” Ch. 1 (pp. 3-15) *Politics Among Nations*. (NY: Knopf, 1978).

Learning Outcomes:

- Explain the historical and political context in which realism emerged and came to be the dominant approach to the study of international relations.
- Recount the central ideas and theoretical claims of realism.
- Critically assess the realist approach to international relations.

Week 4 (February 9-13):

International Relations in a Post-Cold War Environment

Note: Map Quiz Monday, February 9

The end of the Cold War and the events of 9-11 have forced policy makers and academic theorists alike to reconsider the way they view the world. Traditional analyses no longer seem as persuasive as they once did, and new threats and policy goals like combating the spread of weapons of mass destruction, stopping ethnic conflict, and fighting terrorism have replaced superpower rivalry as the primary focus of security.

Required Readings:

- Michael Cox. 2002. “Paradigm Shifts and 9/11: International Relations After the Twin Towers.” *Security Dialogue*. 32(2).
- SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 9 (pp. 55-62)

Learning Outcomes:

- Explain how the world has changed since the end of the Cold War and 9-11, and how those changes have forced IR theorists to reconsider the concept of security and the nature of international relations.
- Contextualize current theoretical debates in contemporary international politics.

Week 5 (February 16-20):

Critical IR: Marxism, Neomarxism, and Structuralist Approaches

Although the political program of Communism was perceived by many to be discredited following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Marxist approaches to the study of international relations continue to have great currency, particularly in the subfield of international political economy. This week's lecture introduces the basic tenants of Marxist international relations and outlines the various theoretical approaches inspired by Marx's works.



Antonio Gramsci

Required Readings:

- Goldstein, Ch. 3 (pp. 93-105)
- Stephen Gill and David Law. "Global Hegemony and the Structural Power of Capital." *International Studies Quarterly*. 33(4) (Dec 1989): 475-499.
- SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 10 (pp. 63-70).

Learning Outcomes:

- Recount the basic principles and concepts of Marxist approaches to the study of international relations.
- Understand the similarities and differences between Marxist-inspired theories (World Systems, Gramscian, Critical Theory and Neo-Marxism).
- Explain the Marxist critique of globalization.

Week 6 (February 23-27):

Critical IR: Gender, Identity, and Feminist Approaches



Memphis Belle

Feminist theories raise important questions and powerful critiques of the study of international relations. Feminist theorists have highlighted the gendered assumptions which underlie concepts at the heart of IR: power, state, and security, and the way in which women have been excluded from international politics.

Required Readings:

- Goldstein, ch. 3 (pp. 105-121)
- Carol Cohn, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 12(4) (1987): 687-718.

Learning Outcomes:

- Explain how the study of international relations is gendered.
- Understand the similarities and differences in contending feminist theories (liberal feminism, radical feminism, socialist feminism and post-modern feminism).

Part 2: Contemporary Issues in International Relations

Week 7 (March 2-6):

Security and Foreign Policy

Note: Exam 1 is scheduled for Monday, March 2

As Secretary of Defense under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, Robert McNamara played a central role in developing American foreign policy during the Vietnam War. This week, we reflect on the relationship between security and foreign policy through Robert McNamara's ten lessons developed in the film *Fog of War*.



Robert McNamara

Required Readings:

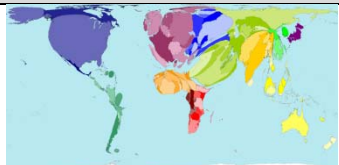
- Goldstein Ch. 4-6 (pp. 122-229).
- Film (In Class): *Fog of War*.

Learning Outcomes:

- Assess McNamara's ten lessons outlined in the film Fog of War and evaluate their relevance for contemporary international politics.
- Analyze the process by which foreign policy is made, paying particular attention to the debates around security and terrorism in the post-911 environment.

Week 8 (March 9-13):

Globalization and Trade



World Map
Weighted for FDI

Global political economy increasingly occupies a central position in the study of international relations, displacing the field's historical focus on issues of security and foreign policy. This week, we explore the major international institutions which define the global political economy, and examine some of the key concepts and debates in IPE.

Required Readings:

- Goldstein Ch. 8-9 (pp. 276-315)
- Benjamin Barber, "Jihad vs. McWorld," *Atlantic Monthly*. 269 (Mar 1992): 53-65.
- SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 11 (pp. 71-78).

Learning Outcomes:

- Compare and contrast theoretical perspectives on global trade and finance (liberal, mercantile, Marxist, feminist).
- Explain the nature and structure of the global political economy.
- Identify the international institutions which define the structure of the global political economy.

Week 9 (March 16-20):

No Class: Happy Spring Break!

Week 10 (March 23-27):

Global Finance

Since the 1980s, global financial flows have become increasingly liberalized, culminating in massive flows of capital from one location to another with the simple click of a mouse. This week, we consider the implications of financial liberalization and the current status of the global financial crisis.

Required Readings:

- Goldstein, Ch. 9 (pp. 316-350).
- Joseph Stiglitz. "The East Asia Crisis: How IMF Policies Brought the World to the Verge of a Global Meltdown." Ch. 4 (pp. 89-133) in *Globalization and Its Discontents*. (NY: Penguin, 2002).
- SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 13 (pp. 87-94).



Logo of the IMF

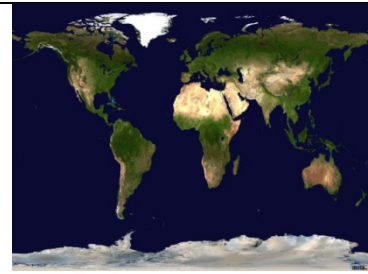
Learning Outcomes:

- Evaluate the causes and consequences of the current global financial crisis.
- Critically assess the causes and consequences of financial liberalization and currency crises.

Week 11 (March 30-April 3):

Globalization and the Future of the Nation State

Globalization has been one of the key themes of this course and, more generally, has been the single most significant analytical concept in IR since the end of World War II. Yet globalization remains one of the most contested concepts in IR. This week we return to the questions raised throughout the course—and especially in the first week—as we try to assess precisely what is meant by the term globalization and how accurately it captures the reality of the international relations at the beginning of the twenty-first century.



The Earth from Space

Required Readings:

- Leo Panitch. “Rethinking the Role of the State.” Ch. 5 (pp. 83-113) in James Mittelman, ed. *Globalization: Critical Reflections*. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996).
- William Tabb (Debate). “Globalization is *an* Issue; the Power of Capital is *the* Issue.” *Monthly Review*. 49(2) (June 1997): 20pgs.
- SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 16 (pp. 111-118).

Learning Outcomes:

- Define globalization and assess its impact on the study of international relations.
- Differentiate between aspects of globalization and define the links between areas of globalization (economic, political, communications, technology, etc.)
- Explain the role of the state and assess how globalization is changing that role.

Week 12 (April 6-10):

International Organizations



UN Logo

Although state sovereignty remains the guiding principle of international relations, non-state actors play an increasingly important role in international fora. Since the 1980s in particular, the role and scope of activity by international governmental and non-governmental organizations has expanded dramatically, subsuming many of the functions traditionally performed by the nation-state at both the domestic and international levels. This week, we explore the increasing role of IOs through a consideration of one of its key organizations: the United Nations.

Required Readings:

- Goldstein, Ch. 7 (pp. 230-275).
- Madeline Albright. “United Nations.” *Foreign Policy*. 138 (Sept. 2003): 6pgs.
- SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 15 (pp. 103-110).

Learning Outcomes:

- Assess the role of international organizations and explain how their roles have changed since the end of the Cold War.
- Explain the structure and functions of the United Nations.
- Assess the effectiveness of international organizations in international relations.
- Outline the key proposals for Security Council reform and assess their likelihood for implementation.

Week 13 (April 13-17):

Regional Integration: The Case of the European Union

From its earliest form as the European Coal and Steel Community created after World War II, the European Union has evolved into the most advanced form of regional integration in the world. Today, the EU serves as a model for other regions’ aspirations towards similar structures. Yet the EU faces many challenges. This week, we explore the historical evolution and current structures of the European Union.




Required Readings:

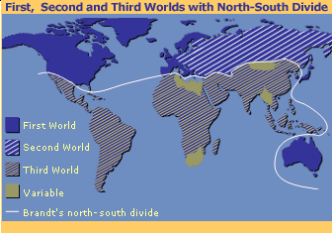
- Goldstein, Ch. 10 (pp. 351-381)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephen Gill. “European Governance and New Constitutionalism: Economic and Monetary Union and Alternatives to Disciplinary Neoliberalism in Europe.” <i>New Political Economy</i>. 3(1) (1998): 5-26. • SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 12 (pp. 79-86). 	Members of the European Union
Learning Outcomes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the historical evolution and contemporary structure of the European Union. • Assess the contemporary challenges facing the EU, paying particular attention to the debates surrounding widening vs. deepening of Union. 	

**Week 14 (April 20-24):
The Environment**

	<p>Although state sovereignty remains the guiding principle of international relations, non-state actors play an increasingly important role in international fora. Since the 1980s in particular, the role and scope of activity by international governmental and non-governmental organizations has expanded dramatically, subsuming many of the functions traditionally performed by the nation-state at both the domestic and international levels. This week, we explore the increasing role of IOs through a consideration of one of its key organizations: the United Nations.</p>
Required Readings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goldstein, Ch. 11 (pp. 382-421) • Jon Barnett. “Climate Change, Insecurity and Injustice.” Ch. 6 (pp. 115-129) in W. Neil Adger, et al., eds., <i>Fairness in Adaption to Climate Change</i>. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006). • SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 18 (pp. 125-132). 	
Learning Outcomes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the nature, extent and implications of environmental degradation for human well-being and security. • Assess the different ways that the environment has come to be identified as a problem or issue for IR. • Outline the main environmental “regimes” and be able to recount their roles and functions. • Assess the status of global environmental politics from a race, class, and gender perspective. 	

**Week 15 (April 27-May 1):
Development**

<p>Perhaps more than any other issue, the question of development has become the focal point of debate between the various approaches to IR and (especially) IPE. Indeed, the concept of development has become so loaded that some have gone so far as to assert that “development can be conceived only within an ideological framework.” This week, we examine the competing understandings of development and assess why (to date, at least) development has failed.</p>	
The North-South Divide	
Required Readings:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goldstein, Ch. 12-13 (pp. 422-501). • SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 14 (pp. 95-101). 	
Learning Outcomes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline both orthodox and critical understandings of the concept and content of development. • Assess the relationship between globalization and development. 	

**Week 16 (May 4-7):
Wrapping Up**

Required Readings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIMULATION: Tessman, ch. 17 (pp. 119-124).

Week 17 (May 11-15)

Final Exams

The final exam is scheduled for Monday, May 11 from 10:20-12:10.