Course Description

This seminar is a graduate-level introduction to the study of international relations. The goal of the course is to expose you to the core literatures of the field and to help you develop a foundation to serve you throughout your future coursework and research. As such, we will cover a large selection of readings in order to survey the field.

It is impossible, however, to engage in a comprehensive survey of the field in one semester. We will focus here on the theoretical contributions of the literature and the issues related to testing these theories. The readings strike a balance between the major traditional theoretical debates and contemporary developments.

No prior experience with international relations is required to take this course, although a basic familiarity with the subject at the undergraduate level would occasionally be helpful. Some of the materials covered herein are technical (using formal theories &/or econometrics). While I assume that you may not be familiar with these research tools, I do expect that you will become familiar with them in this course.

Requirements

Participation:

Students are expected to complete the assigned reading each week according to the topic covered. If participation is bountiful, class discussions will be informal. If the need arises, students may be asked to prepare and present a synthesis of the week’s readings to spark discussion. Class participation will count for 20% of the final grade.

Papers:

Each student will write six weekly papers that synthesize the readings. These papers should be roughly 3-5 pages in length, and should go beyond simply reviewing the materials. Students can choose which readings they wish to cover throughout the semester. These papers are each worth 5% of the final grade.

Exam:

There will be a final exam. The exam will be structured to resemble the comprehensive exams. The exam will be in a take-home format. The exam is worth 50% of the final grade.
Readings

All participants in the seminar are expected to do the required readings. The course is a seminar, so it is imperative that you do the readings before class begins and come prepared to discuss them. Come with questions, thoughts, criticisms, and ideas. This material will serve as the foundation for your initial work in the field. The goal is not to memorize, but to use the readings to start thinking about problems in world politics and the way it is studied.

Texts:


***The rest of the readings are in article format.***
Schedule of Readings

Week 1: Introduction: Thinking Theoretically about IR (8/19)

Required:


Recommended:


Mansbach, Richard and Y. Ferguson, *The Elusive Quest: Theory and International Politics*


Holsti, K. J. *The Dividing Discipline: Hegemony and Diversity in International Theory*.


**Week 2: Realism & Neo-Realism (8/26)**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**

*Origins, Extensions, and Critiques of Realism, Neo-Realism, and Balance of Power,*


Carr, E.H. *The Twenty Years’ Crisis*


Claude, Inis. *Power and International Relations.*


Keohane, Robert. *Neorealism and Its Critics.*


**Empirical Work:**


Alliances are often considered a key part of realist power politics.


There is also a large body of work on the Power Transition, an alternative thesis to Balance of Power

Week 3: Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism, and the Debate between Liberalism and Realism (9/2)

Required:

Baldwin, David A. Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate: Read chapters 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Recommended:


Week 4: Alternative Perspectives on the Study of IR (9/9)

Required:


Recommended:


**Week 5: The Strategic Choice Approach in IR: Foundations (9/16)**

**Required:**


Recommended:


Week 6: Rational Choice, continued (9/23)

Required:


**Recommended:**


**Week 7: Critiques of IR, and Individual & Psychological Approaches (9/30)**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


Barber, J. D.. The Presidential Character.

Bloom, W. Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations.

Week 8: Power (10/7)

Required:


Powell, Robert. In the Shadow of Power, Ch. 1-2


Recommended:


Week 9: Deterrence and Reputation (10/14)

Required:


Recommended:


Morrow, James D. Game Theory for Political Scientists. pp: 199-211.


**Week 10: Power, Bargaining, and War (10/21)**

**Required:**

Powell, Robert. In the Shadow of Power Chs 3-4


**Recommended:**

Week 11: Domestic Politics and IR: Part One (10/28)

Required:


Recommended:


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**Week 12: Domestic Politics and IR: Part Two (11/4)**


**Week 13: Conflict Management and Intervention (11/11)**

*Required:*


**Recommended:**


**Week 14: Terrorism and Civil War (11/18)**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**Week 15: Decision Making and Institutions (11/25)**

*Required:*


*Recommended:*


**Week 15: TBD (12/2)**

***Additional readings may be added during the course of the semester.***