

## **POLS 237: Introduction to International Politics**

CLASS LOCATION: NICCOLLS BUILDING 006

CLASS TIME: MWF 02:30 pm – 03:20 pm

INSTRUCTOR: Chen Wang

OFFICE: Admin Building 205J

OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday 9:00 am – 10:00 am or by appointment

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DEPARTMENT PHONE: (208)885-6032

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces students to the scientific study of international politics. The course will provide students with the background and conceptual tools they need to understand a variety of issues in contemporary international relations, including but not limited to the causes of international conflict and violence, the role of international institutions/organizations, and international economic activities.

The course is broadly divided into four parts. We will commence with an overview of International Relations as a field of social science inquiry. This will be followed by a concise review of some major and classic theoretical approaches to the subject, as well as an outline of the analytical framework adopted in this course. Presently, the study of international relations encompasses two primary subfields: International Security (IS), which encompasses topics such as war, deterrence, alliances, terrorism, and nuclear proliferation, among others; and International Political Economy (IPE), which covers areas like trade, foreign direct investment (FDI), currency dynamics, development, and immigration. In the second and third parts of the course, we will delve into each subfield respectively. We will wrap up the course with a series of discussions of significant contemporary issues (e.g., how can IR theories aid our understanding of US-China competition?) and an exploration of the future landscape of international politics (e.g., how might the adoption of autonomous weapons systems impact warfare?).

This class functions as an introduction to the study of international politics. It is meant to prepare you for further study rather than answer every question or address every issue contained in these mammoth topics. Hopefully, our coverage of the material will spark your interest enough that you will study the topics in depth further on in your academic journey.

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### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the course, students are expected to:

- Know the development and scope of the field of international relations.
- Understand the common (but sometimes conflicting) perspectives on a variety of issues in international relations.

- Develop and cultivate interests in a subfield of international relations (or political science in general).
  - Learn to think critically, write convincingly, and communicate clearly.
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## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade in this course will be derived from your performance on the following components:

- **Attendance and Participation: 20%**

Attendance and participation are important. Each student is permitted *three unexcused absences*. Every other absence will lower your participation grade by 5 percent unless you have a valid excuse (medical, academic, family, etc.) backed by proper documentation. Please note: even if you use one of your “free” unexcused absences, you still have to take the reading quiz for that week (see below). The course will succeed only if students have completed all the required readings, and arrive prepared and ready to share thoughts and questions about the subject matter.

- **Online Reading Quizzes: 40%**

There will be twelve quizzes based on the readings and lectures across the semester (mostly multiple choice and true-or-false questions). These quizzes need to be completed on Canvas. **Each week’s quiz will be open after Friday’s lecture, and it will be closed by 02:30 PM the following Wednesday.** Your lowest two quiz grades will be dropped at the end of the semester.

There will be no quizzes for the 1st week (Introduction), the 8th week (Midterm), the 14th week (Fall Recess), and the 16th week (Conclusion).

- **Take-home Midterm Essay: 20%**

There will be a take-home midterm scheduled on **Monday, October 9<sup>th</sup>**. It will be an open-book exam that requires you to address one essay question (1,200 – 1,500 words). The exam will be distributed via Canvas (or email) at 10:00 AM on the exam day. You will have two days to complete the essay, which is **due by 2:30 PM of Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>**. Late submission will be penalized 5 percent for each day late except in the event of a documented medical or family emergency. Detailed instructions about the exam will be provided later in class.

A ChatGPT plagiarism check will be applied to each submission

- **Final Exam: 20%**

The final exam will be given during the period scheduled by the University (**December 11<sup>th</sup>, 3 – 5 pm**). This will be a timed, open-book exam (only notes and textbook are allowed). The exam will be cumulative but with a slightly heavier focus on topics after midterm, which will consist of multiple choice questions, true-or-false questions, short answer questions, and one essay.

- **Grade Scale**

There will be no curving in this class. Final letter grades will be calculated as follows:

[90, 100]	A
[80, 90)	B
[70, 80)	C
[60, 70)	D
[0, 60)	F

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## COURSE POLICIES

- **Academic Integrity**

Cheating and plagiarism are taken very seriously in this course. All assignments must be solely original work of the student. Violations include quoting or paraphrasing another author without attribution on written assignments. Avoid plagiarism by using footnotes (with page numbers) whenever you quote, paraphrase, or otherwise borrow someone else's ideas. If you are unsure whether you are committing plagiarism, do not hesitate to ask me for guidance (before you submit your work). Note that forming a group to study for homework assignments or offering feedback on a draft of another student's paper are not considered violations of academic integrity. On the other hand, writing portions of a classmate's paper or copying a paragraph from a book or website without attribution are very serious violations. It is the policy of our department to refer instances of suspected academic dishonesty to the Student Judicial Council. For the Dean of Students' Academic Integrity site, see <https://www.uidaho.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students/student-conduct/academic-integrity>.

- **Learning Environment Civility**

In any environment (including online) in which people gather to learn, it is essential that all members feel as free and safe as possible in their participation. To this end, it is expected that everyone in this course will be treated with mutual respect and civility, with an understanding that all of us (students, instructors, and guests) will be respectful and civil to one another in discussion, in action, in teaching, and in learning. Should you feel our classroom interactions do not reflect an environment of civility and respect, you are encouraged to meet with your instructor during office hours to discuss your concern. Additional resources for expression of concern or requesting support include the Dean of Students office and staff (5-6757), the UI Counseling & Testing Center's confidential services (5-6716), or the UI Office of Human Rights, Access, & Inclusion (5- 4285).

- **Grade Appeals**

Hopefully there will be no reason to contest a grade. However, a student who believes strongly that a homework assignment or the paper has been graded incorrectly may appeal by writing a one-page, typed memo explaining why the grade was inappropriate. No sooner than 72 hours and no later than 10 days after the original grade was issued, the memo must be submitted along with the original graded assignment to me for re-grading.

- **Religious Holidays**

Although students are expected to meet every due/deadline, exceptions will of course be made for religious holidays. Students who know they will miss any deadline owing to observance of a religious holiday need to notify the instructor during the first week of the semester.

- **Accommodations**

University of Idaho is committed to ensuring an accessible learning environment where course or instructional content are usable by all students and faculty. If you believe that you require disability-related academic adjustments for this class (including pregnancy-related disabilities), please contact Center for Disability Access and Resources (CDAR) to discuss eligibility. A current accommodation letter from CDAR is required before any modifications, above and beyond what is otherwise available for all other students in this class will be provided. Please be advised that disability-related academic adjustments are not retroactive. CDAR is located at the Bruce Pitman Building, Suite 127. Phone is 208-885-6307 and e-mail is [cdar@uidaho.edu](mailto:cdar@uidaho.edu). For a complete listing of services and current business hours visit <https://www.uidaho.edu/cdar>.

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## COURSE MATERIALS

There is **only one required textbook** (eBook) for this course:

Frieden, Jeffrey A, David A Lake, and Kenneth A Schultz. *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions (5th Edition)*. W.W. Norton: <https://wwnorton.com/books/World-Politics/>

- This book will be referred as FLS in the weekly schedule below.

All other required readings will be provided by the instructor and available on Canvas.

The following books are recommended (optional):

- Pevehouse, Jon C. and Joshua S. Goldstein. *International Relations*, 12th Edition. New York: Pearson
- Snyder Jack L, Keren A Mingst, and Heather Elko McKibben. *Essential Readings in World Politics (8th Edition)*. W.W. Norton

In addition, students are also encouraged to read one of the following newspapers: the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Financial Times, or a comparable international paper. It is likely that questions on the mid-term and the final will require you to be up-to-date on current events.

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## COURSE SCHEDULE

The subsequent weekly schedule in this course are tentative and subject to change. Required readings are denoted by “★”, while recommended ones are marked by “○”.

### PART I: Foundations

#### Week 1 (Aug 21-25): What is “International Relations”?

- ★ Read this syllabus
- ★ FLS: Chapter 1

#### Week 2 (Aug 28-Sep 1): The Classics (Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism)

##### No Class on Friday, Sep 1: Instructor will be away for conferences

- ★ FLS: Introduction (p. xxxiii – p. xxxviii)
- ★ Pevehouse & Goldstein: p.43 – p.63, p.85 – p.102
- Jervis, Robert. 1978. “Cooperation under the security dilemma.” *World Politics* 30, no. 2: 167-214.
- Snyder, Glenn H. 2002. “Mearsheimer’s World – Offensive Realism and the Struggle for Security: A Review Essay.” *International Security* 27, no. 1: 149–73.
- Owen, John M. 1994. “How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace.” *International Security* 19, no. 2: 87–125.
- Hopf, Ted. 1998. “The promise of constructivism in international relations theory.” *International Security* 23, no. 1: 171-200.

#### Week 3 (Sep 4-Sep 8): Analytical Framework: Interests, Interactions & Institutions

##### No Class on Monday, Sep 4: Labor Day

- ★ FLS: Chapter 2

### PART 2: International Security

#### Week 4 (Sep 11-Sep 15): War as a Bargaining Failure

- ★ FLS: Chapter 3
- ★ Fearon, James D. 1995. “Rationalist explanations for war.” *International Organization* 49, no. 3: 379-414.
- Reiter, Dan. 2003. “Exploring the bargaining model of war.” *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 1: 27-43.

- Powell, Robert. 2006. "War as a commitment problem." *International Organization* 60, no. 1: 169-203.
- Levy, Jack S. 2011. "Preventive war: Concept and propositions." *International Interactions* 37, no. 1: 87-96.

### **Week 5 (Sep 18-Sep 22): Domestic Politics and War**

- ★ FLS: Chapter 4
- ★ Weeks, Jessica L. 2012. "Strongmen and straw men: Authoritarian regimes and the initiation of international conflict." *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 2: 326- 347.
- Myrick, Rachel. 2021. "Do external threats unite or divide? Security crises, rivalries, and polarization in American foreign policy." *International Organization* 75, no. 4: 921-958.
- Snyder, Jack. 1991. *Myths of empire: Domestic politics and international ambition*. Cornell University Press (Chapter 4).
- Gartzke, Erik. 2007. "The capitalist peace." *American Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 1: 166-191.

### **Week 6 (Sep 25-Sep 29): International Institutions and War**

- ★ FLS: Chapter 5
- Walt, Stephen M. 1985. "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power." *International Security* 9, no. 4: 3-43.
- Gibler, Douglas M., and Scott Wolford. 2006. "Alliances, then democracy: An examination of the relationship between regime type and alliance formation." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 1: 129-153.
- Kupchan, Charles A., and Clifford A. Kupchan. 1995. "The promise of collective security." *International Security* 20, no. 1: 52-61.
- Fortna, Virginia Page. 2004. "Interstate peacekeeping: Causal mechanisms and empirical effects." *World Politics* 56, no. 4: 481-519.

### **Week 7 (Oct 2-Oct 6): Terrorism and Civil War**

#### **No Class on Friday, Oct 6: Instructor will be away for conferences**

- ★ FLS: Chapter 6
- Walter, Barbara F. 2009. "Bargaining failures and civil war." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12, no. 1: 243-261.
- Ying, Luwei. 2021. "How State Presence Leads to Civil Conflict." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 65, no. 2-3: 506-533.
- Chenoweth, Erica. 2013 "Terrorism and democracy." *Annual Review of Political Science* 16, no. 1: 355-378.

- Abrahms, Max, and Philip BK Potter. 2015. "Explaining terrorism: Leadership deficits and militant group tactics." *International Organization* 69, no. 2: 311-342.

### **Week 8 (Oct 9-Oct 13): Nuclear Weapons**

#### **No Class on Monday, Oct 9: Take-home Midterm Essay**

- ★ FLS: Chapter 14 (p.619 – p.633)
- Sechser, Todd S., and Matthew Fuhrmann. 2013. "Crisis bargaining and nuclear blackmail." *International Organization* 67, no. 1: 173-195.
- Tannenwald, Nina. 1999. "The nuclear taboo: The United States and the normative basis of nuclear non-use." *International organization* 53, no. 3: 433-468.

## **PART III: International Political Economy**

### **Week 9 (Oct 16-Oct 20): International Trade**

- ★ FLS: Chapter 7
- ★ Milner, Helen V. 1999. "The political economy of international trade." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (1999): 91-114.
- Copeland, Dale C. 1996. "Economic interdependence and war: A theory of trade expectations." *International security* 20, no. 4 (1996): 5-41.
- Rogowski, Ronald. 1987. "Political cleavages and changing exposure to trade." *American Political Science Review* 81, no. 4: 1121-1137.
- Goldstein, Judith L., Douglas Rivers, and Michael Tomz. 2007. "Institutions in International Relations: Understanding the Effects of the GATT and the WTO on World Trade." *International organization* 61, no. 1: 37-67.

### **Week 10 (Oct 23-Oct 27): International Finance**

- ★ FLS: Chapter 8
- ★ Leblang, David. 2010. "Familiarity breeds investment: Diaspora networks and international investment." *American Political Science Review* 104, no. 3: 584-600.
- DiGiuseppe, Matthew R., Colin M. Barry, and Richard W. Frank. 2012. "Good for the money: International finance, state capacity, and internal armed conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 49, no. 3: 391-405.
- Williams, David. 2000. "Aid and sovereignty: quasi-states and the international financial institutions." *Review of International studies* 26, no. 4: 557-573.
- Pandya, Sonal S. 2010. "Labor markets and the demand for foreign direct investment." *International Organization* 64, no. 3: 389-409.

**Week 11 (Oct 30-Nov 3): International Monetary Relations**

- ★ FLS: Chapter 9
- ★ Frieden, Jeffrey, David Leblang, and Neven Valev. 2010. "The political economy of exchange rate regimes in transition economies." *The Review of International Organizations* 5: 1-25.
- Bernhard, William, and David Leblang. 1999. "Democratic institutions and exchange-rate commitments." *International Organization* 53, no. 1: 71-97.
- Bacchetta, Philippe, and Eric Van Wincoop. 2000. "Does exchange-rate stability increase trade and welfare?." *American Economic Review* 90, no. 5: 1093-1109.

**Week 12 (Nov 6-Nov 10): International Development & International Law**

- ★ FLS: Chapter 10 & 11
- Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson. 2001. "The colonial origins of comparative development: An empirical investigation." *American economic review* 91, no. 5: 1369-1401.
- Von Stein, Jana. 2005. "Do treaties constrain or screen? Selection bias and treaty compliance." *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 4 (2005): 611-622.
- Simmons, Beth A. 2000. "International law and state behavior: Commitment and compliance in international monetary affairs." *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 4 (2000): 819-835.

**PART IV: Pressing Concerns****Week 13 (Nov 13-Nov 17): Ukraine War**

- ★ TBD

**Week 14: No Class (Fall Recess)****Week 15 (Nov 27-Dec 1): US-China Competition**

- ★ FLS: Chapter 14 (p.634 – p.648)
- ★ Weiss, Jessica Chen. 2022. "The China Trap: US foreign policy and the perilous logic of zero-sum competition." *Foreign Affairs*. 101: 40.
- Wang, Jisi. 2021. "The Plot Against China?: How Beijing Sees the New Washington Consensus." *Foreign Affairs*. 100: 48.
- Doshi, Rush. 2021. *The long game: China's grand strategy to displace American order*. Oxford University Press. Introduction & Chapter 1 & Chapter 12
- Hass, Ryan. 2018. "Principles for managing US-China competition." *Brookings*.



**Week 16 (Dec 4-Dec 8): Emerging Technologies and Climate Change**

- ★ FLS: Chapter 13
- ★ Horowitz, Michael. 2018. “Artificial Intelligence, International Competition, and the Balance of Power.” *Texas National Security Review* (available online at: <https://tnsr.org/2018/05/artificial-intelligence-international-competition-and-the-balance-of-power/>)
- Lin-Greenberg, Erik. 2023. “Evaluating Escalation: Conceptualizing Escalation in an Era of Emerging Military Technologies.” *The Journal of Politics* 85, no. 3.
- Underdal, Arild. 2017. “Climate change and international relations (after Kyoto).” *Annual Review of Political Science* 20: 169-188.