
INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

POLS 237, Fall 2022

 : Chen Wang, Ph.D.

 : ENGINEERING/PHYSICS BLDG 209

 : TR 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

 : chenw@uidaho.edu

 : Administration Building 205J; Thursday 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM (or by appointment)

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 the causes of international conflict and violence, the role of international institutions/organizations, and international economic relations. Time permitting, we will also examine topics of particular current interest such as US-China Competition, climate change, and the impact of emerging technologies on international politics.

The course is broadly divided into FOUR parts. We will begin with an overview of what International Relations is as a field of study, followed by an outline of the analytical framework we adopt in this course and a quick review of major (and classic) theoretical approaches to the subject. The study of international relations today encompasses two major fields: International Security (IS: war, deterrence, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, etc.) and International Political Economy (IPE: trade, finance, development, immigration, etc.). The second and third part of the course will survey each field respectively. We will wrap up the course with a discussion of some important current issues (e.g., how can IR theories help us understand US-China competition?) and the future of international politics (e.g., how might the adoption of autonomous weapons systems affect the 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, so I guarantee you that some of the coverage of these topics will feel inadequate; some of my colleagues spend their entire careers studying topics we will cover in an hour. Hopefully, our coverage of the material will spark your interest enough that you will study the topics in depth further on in your academic career.

OBJECTIVES

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

1. Know the development and scope of the field of international relations;
 2. Understand the common (but sometimes conflicting) perspectives on a variety of issues in international relations;
 3. Develop and cultivate interests in a subfield of international relations (or political science in general);
 4. Learn to think critically, write convincingly, and communicate clearly.
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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and Participation — 20%

Attendance and participation are essentially 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 day. 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 the second lecture of that week (a.k.a. after Thursday’s lecture) and it will be due by 11:00 AM of next Tuesday (next week’s first lecture). 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 — 20%

There will be a take-home midterm scheduled on Tuesday, October 11th. It will be an open-book exam that requires you to address two essay questions (800 – 1,200 words each). The exam will be distributed via Canvas (or email) at 11:00 AM on the exam day. You will have 48 hours to complete the essays (turn in both hard and digital copies at the beginning of the class on October 13th). 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.

Final Exam — 20%

The final exam will be given during the period scheduled by the University. This will be a typical green/blue book exam that is cumulative (but with a slightly heavier focus on topics after midterm). It will involve multiple choice questions, true-or-false questions, short answer questions, and one essay.

Grade Scale

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

COURSE POLICIES**Academic Integrity:**

Cheating and plagiarism are taken very seriously in this course. All assignments must be solely the original work of the student. Violations include cheating on examinations and 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 exams or offering feedback on a draft of another student's essay 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>

Classroom Learning Civility:

In any environment 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, guests, and teaching assistants) 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 an essay or exam 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 attend every meeting, exceptions will of course be made for religious holidays. Students who know they will miss class owing to observance of a religious holiday need to notify the instructor during the first week of the semester.

Disabilities:

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have documented temporary or permanent disabilities. All accommodations must be approved through the Center for Disability Access and Resources located in the Bruce M. Pitman Center, Suite 127 in order to notify your instructor(s) as soon as possible regarding accommodation(s) needed for the course.

- Phone: 208-885-6307
- Email: cdar@uidaho.edu
- Website: www.uidaho.edu/current-students/cdar

COURSE MATERIALS

There is only one required text book 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 reading list.

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

The following books are optional:

- Pevehouse, Jon C. and Joshua S. Goldstein. *International Relations, 12th Edition*. New York: Pearson: <https://www.pearson.com/en-us/subject-catalog/p/international-relations/P200000003023/9780135229255>

- Snyder Jack L, Keren A Mingst, and Heather Elko McKibben. *Essential Readings in World Politics (8th Edition)*. W.W. Norton:
<https://wwnorton.com/books/9780393441710/about-the-book/table-of-contents>

In addition, I also recommend students 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.

COURSE SCHEDULE (This is only a tentative schedule for this course. Content may change)

***** Readings denoted by “•” are required; those denoted by “+” are recommended *****

PART I: Foundations		
Week 1: What is “International Relations”? (no quiz)		
	Aug. 23 (T)	• Course Introduction (read this syllabus)
	Aug. 25 (R)	+ FLS: Chapter 1
Week 2: The Analytical Framework: Interests, Interactions & Institutions		
	Aug. 30 (T)	• FLS: Chapter 2 (p.42 – p.70)
	Sep. 1 (R)	• FLS: Chapter 2 (p.70 – p.91)
Week 3: Old School Approaches (Realism, Liberalism & Constructivism)		
	Sep. 6 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pevehouse & Goldstein: p.43 – p.63 + Snyder, Glenn H. 2002. "Mearsheimer’s World – Offensive Realism and the Struggle for Security: A Review Essay." <i>International Security</i> 27, no. 1: 149–73. + Jervis, Robert. 1978. "Cooperation under the security dilemma." <i>World Politics</i> 30, no. 2 (1978): 167-214.
	Sep. 8 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pevehouse & Goldstein: p.85 – p.102 • FLS: Introduction (p. xxxiii – p. xxxviii) + Hopf, Ted. 1998. "The promise of constructivism in international relations theory." <i>International Security</i> 23, no. 1: 171-200.

PART II: International Security		
Week 4: Bargaining and War		
	Sep. 13 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 3 (p.92 – p.120) + Fearon, James D. 1995. "Rationalist explanations for war." <i>International organization</i> 49, no. 3: 379-414.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Reiter, Dan. 2003. "Exploring the bargaining model of war." <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 1, no. 1: 27-43.
	Sep. 15 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 3 (p.121 – p.141) + Powell, Robert. 2006. "War as a commitment problem." <i>International organization</i> 60, no. 1: 169-203. + Levy, Jack S. 2011. "Preventive war: Concept and propositions." <i>International Interactions</i> 37, no. 1: 87-96.
Week 5: Domestic Politics and War		
	Sep. 20 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 4 (p.144 – p.175) + Tir, Jaroslav. 2010. "Territorial diversion: Diversionary theory of war and territorial conflict." <i>The Journal of Politics</i> 72, no. 2: 413-425. + Snyder, Jack. 1991. <i>Myths of empire: Domestic politics and international ambition</i>. Cornell University Press (Chapter 4).
	Sep. 22 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 4 (p.176 – p.192) + Gartzke, Erik. 2007. "The capitalist peace." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 51, no. 1: 166-191. + Weeks, Jessica L. 2012. "Strongmen and straw men: Authoritarian regimes and the initiation of international conflict." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 106, no. 2: 326-347.
Week 6: International Institutions and War		
	Sep. 27 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 5 (p.194 – p.215) + Walt, Stephen M. 1985. "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power." <i>International Security</i> 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." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 50, no. 1: 129-153.
	Sep. 29 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 5 (p.216 – p.242)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Kupchan, Charles A., and Clifford A. Kupchan. 1995. "The promise of collective security." <i>International security</i> 20, no. 1: 52-61. + Fortna, Virginia Page. 2004. "Interstate peacekeeping: Causal mechanisms and empirical effects." <i>World Politics</i> 56, no. 4: 481-519.
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Week 7: Terrorism and Political Violence

Oct. 4 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 6 (p.245 – p.278) + Walter, Barbara F. 2009. "Bargaining failures and civil war." <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i> 12, no. 1: 243-261. + Ying, Luwei. 2021. "How State Presence Leads to Civil Conflict." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 65, no. 2-3: 506-533.
Oct. 6 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 6 (p.279 – p.301) + Abrahms, Max, and Philip BK Potter. 2015. "Explaining terrorism: Leadership deficits and militant group tactics." <i>International Organization</i> 69, no. 2: 311-342. + Chenoweth, Erica. 2013 "Terrorism and democracy." <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i> 16, no. 1: 355-378.

Week 8: Nuclear Weapons (no quiz)

Oct. 11 (T)	No Class (Take-home Midterm: due in 48 hours)
Oct. 13 (R)	<p>I understand that exam can be stressful. All readings for this meeting are optional/recommended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + FLS: Chapter 14 (p.619 – p.633) + Sechser, Todd S., and Matthew Fuhrmann. 2013. "Crisis bargaining and nuclear blackmail." <i>International organization</i> 67, no. 1: 173-195. + Tannenwald, Nina. 1999. "The nuclear taboo: The United States and the normative basis of nuclear non-use." <i>International organization</i> 53, no. 3: 433-468.

PART III: International Political Economy

Week 9: International Trade

Oct. 18 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 7 (p.305 – p.336)
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		+ Rogowski, Ronald. 1987. "Political cleavages and changing exposure to trade." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 81, no. 4: 1121-1137.
	Oct. 20 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 7 (p.337 – p.363) + 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." <i>International organization</i> 61, no. 1: 37-67.

Week 10: International Finance

	Oct. 25 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 8 (p.364 – p.389) + Pandya, Sonal S. 2010. "Labor markets and the demand for foreign direct investment." <i>International Organization</i> 64, no. 3: 389-409.
	Oct. 27 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 8 (p.390 – p.403) • Leblang, David. 2010. "Familiarity breeds investment: Diaspora networks and international investment." <i>American political science review</i> 104, no. 3: 584-600.

Week 11: International Monetary Relations

	Nov. 1 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 9
	Nov. 3 (R)	No Class (instructor is away for conference)

Week 12: International Development & International Law

	Nov. 8 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 10
	Nov. 10 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 11

PART IV: Pressing Concerns

Week 13: US-China Competition

	Nov. 15 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 14 (p.634 – p.648)
	Nov.17 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBA

Week 14 (no quiz): No Class (Fall Recess)

Week 15: Climate Change & Emerging Technologies		
	Nov. 29 (T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLS: Chapter 13
	Dec. 1 (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horowitz, Michael. 2018. "Artificial Intelligence, International Competition, and the Balance of Power." <i>Texas National Security Review</i>: https://tnsr.org/2018/05/artificial-intelligence-international-competition-and-the-balance-of-power/
Week 16: The Future of International Politics (no quiz)		
	Dec. 6 (T)	FLS: Chapter 14 (p.649 – p.665)
	Dec. 8 (R)	Catch-up Day
Week 17		
	Finals Week TBA (scheduled by the University)	