Field Seminar in International Political Systems

Fall 2013

Preliminary Syllabus

This objective of this course is to introduce graduate students to the main theoretical approaches to the study of international relations and provide a solid basis for further study of international political economy, global security and international organization. The course is primarily designed for Political Science PhD students who intend to take major or minor comprehensive exams in international relations as well as masters students focusing on international relations. We will spend considerable time reading and evaluating contending theories of international relations, examining their underlying assumptions as well as substantive claims. The course begins with a synoptic overview of the field then primarily focuses on the debate between realists and liberals (as well as the Marxist critique), which has, historically, occupied a central place in the discipline. We then examine conceptual and methodological issues central to contemporary international relations, consider the challenge posed to rationalist approaches like realism and liberalism from non-rationalist theoretical approaches, such as constructivism and examine debates among realists, liberals and constructivists regarding war, change. The course then engages a reappraisal of realism and liberalism from a republican security perspective and examines alternative proposals for world order beyond the states system, the significance of non-state actors and the implications of globalization, changing technology and international terrorism for international relations.

Requirements:

25% Five short reaction papers (approx. 750 words each)
20% Paper (2,000 - 2,500 words) and presentation
35% Final exam (Take-home and oral)
20% Class participation

Short Reaction papers should briefly review an assigned reading (or readings) from one class session. The first half of the paper should briefly state the main arguments and second half should contain a few critical comments or questions that you would like to raise in class discussion. Reaction papers are due at the beginning of class. No late reaction papers will be accepted. The five reaction papers should be distributed as follows:
One for the class of Sept.12
Two for class sessions in part two of the course
One for a class session in part three of the course
One for a class session in part four of the course
(Students should not write a reaction paper for a week that contains the readings that they will review in the longer review paper).
**Review Paper:** Each student must select one of the main books assigned or a group of shorter articles and write a critical appraisal of between 2,000-2,500 words and then give a 10-minute presentation of the argument in class. These review papers should be far more detailed and critical than the short 750 word reaction papers. Strong papers and presentations often incorporate previous readings and class discussions. The review papers are due at the beginning of class that the reading is scheduled to be discussed and students should also bring a one-page outline of his or her presentation to help guide the rest of the class with the presentation. By September 12, students must submit to the instructor a rank ordering of three of the books (or article groupings) that he or she would like to write about. The instructor will assign books on a first come, first serve basis but distribute review papers across the course.

**Final Exam:** Students will be given a take-home exam on December 5th, the last day of class. The completed exam must be emailed to the instructor by 12:00 noon on Monday, December 9th. An oral exam of up to 1 hour will be scheduled with each student on December 11, 12, or 13.

**Class Participation:** 1) Students are expected to complete all assigned readings in advance of class each week and be prepared to discuss them. A large portion of one’s grade is based on class participation: if a student fails to do the readings or fails to speak up in class, he or she will do poorly. 2) **Submit every week at least four discussion questions based on the reading.** These questions should be posted on blackboard by 10AM on the day of class. 3) **Lead class discussion three times (perhaps more or less often depending on size of class).** Discussion leaders will begin class discussion with 5 minutes of prepared commentary addressing one or more of the questions he or she has proposed. Students will be asked at the beginning of the course to commit to leading discussion on given weeks. 4) Participation constitutes 20 per cent of the overall grade and is assessed as follows: The base line grade for class participation is a “D” (perfect attendance and no participation or spotty attendance with some contributions to discussion). Regular attendance with minimal participation will earn a “C.” Near perfect attendance and regular contributions to class discussion that are appropriate and draw on readings will earn a “B.” Students who are consistently well-prepared to discuss the assigned readings nearly every class and actively participate in discussions will receive an “A” for class participation.

**References:** Students must properly reference all sources, including assigned readings. References following the Harvard style are recommended but footnotes following the Chicago Manual of Style or reference systems of major international relations and political science journals are acceptable as well. Papers and exams without complete references to sources will be returned to students ungraded and, if resubmitted with proper references, will receive a late penalty.

**Late paper policy:** Late papers will be accepted provided that documentation of illness, death in the family, etc. is provided to the Dean of Students and to the instructor. Students should ask the instructor for an extension as soon as possible and must do so no later than 24 hours after the paper is due. In the case of unexcused late submissions, a penalty of one half letter grade will be assessed per day.

**Policy on academic integrity:** Students must properly reference all sources, including assigned readings. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Students should refer to the academic integrity policies in the Graduate Catalogue for details on examples, violations and corresponding penalties. Instructor may use automated tools available to detect plagiarism.

**Course Learning Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:
1. Categorize basic theories of international relations
2. Compare and contrast the major theories in international politics
3. Evaluate theories by marshaling empirical evidence
4. Evaluate theoretical strengths and weaknesses of arguments in International Relations literature
Required Texts:


Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959)

**Recommended background readings:** The discipline of international relations initially emerged out of the study of diplomatic history and international law. A solid understanding of the history of the development of the European state system and expansion across the world between 1500 and 1914 and the history of WWI and WWII is fundamental and often taken for granted by international relations theorists. Useful background works include:


**Major International Relations Journals:**

*European Journal of International Relations EJIR*  
*Foreign Affairs FA*  
*Foreign Policy FP*  
*International Organization IO*  
*International Security IS*  
*International Studies Quarterly ISQ*  
*International Studies Review ISR*  
*International Theory IT*  
*Journal of Conflict Resolution JCR*  
*Millennium*  
*Review of International Studies RIS*  
*Security Studies SS*  
*World Politics WP*
Schedule of Seminar Meetings:

Part 1: Introduction
August 29    Studying International Relations
September 5  (No class: Rosh Hashanah)
September 12 Levels of Analysis and the State as Unitary Actor

Part 2: Realism, Liberalism and Marxism
September 19 Classical Realism
September 26 International Anarchy
October 3    Liberalism, the “Democratic Peace” and International Law
October 10   International Regimes and Neoliberal Institutionalism
October 17   Marxism, Neo-Marxism and World System Theory

Part 3: Contemporary approaches and debates
October 24   Conceptual and Methodological Approaches
October 31   Great Powers, War and International System Change
November 7   Constructivism

Part 4: Alternative approaches and emerging issues
November 14  Republican Security Theory: Realism and Liberalism Reconsidered
November 21  Alternatives to a System of States: Supranational and Transnational
November 28  (no class: Thanksgiving)
December 5   International Relations Theory and the Problem of Change:
             Globalization, Technology and Terrorism

Schedule of readings and assignments:

Part 1 Introduction

8/29 Studying International Relations

Required:


Recommended:
Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal, “Between utopia and reality: the practical discourses of international relations” in Oxford Handbook

9/5 No class

9/12 Levels of Analysis and the State as Unitary Actor

Required:

Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State, and War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959)


David A. Lake, “The state and international relations,” in *Oxford Handbook*.

Recommended:


Part 2: Realism, Liberalism and Marxism

9/19 Classical Realism

Required:

Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace* (NY: Norton, 1997), Part I. (pp. 41-201)

E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years’ Crisis* Chs 1-6 (pp, 1-91); skim rest.


Recommended:


9/26 International Anarchy

Required:

Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, chs. 4-6 (reprinted in Keohane, ed. 1986).
**Neorealism and Its Critics**, chs. 3-5).


**Recommended:**


**10/3 Liberalism, the Democratic Peace and International Law**

**Required:**


Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, Part II. (pp. 205-311); Part IV 383-453


**Recommended:**


Michael Byers “International law,” in *Oxford Handbook*.

**10/10 International Regimes and Neo-liberal Institutionalism**

**Required:**


Arthur A. Stein, “Neoliberal institutionalism,” in *Oxford Handbook*

Andrew Moravcsik, The new liberalism, in *Oxford Handbook*


Recommended:


James L. Richardson, “The ethics of neoliberal institutionalism,” in *Oxford Handbook*

Gerry Simpson, “The ethics of the new liberalism,” in *Oxford Handbook*

10/17 Marxism, Neo-Marxism and World System Theory

Required:

Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, Part II. (pp. 315-380)


Recommended:


Nicholas Rengger: The ethics of Marxism

Part 3: Approaches and debates

10/24 Conceptual and Methodological Approaches
Required:


Peter Katzenstein and Rudra Sil, “Eclectic theorizing in the study and practice of international relations,” in *Oxford Handbook*


Friedrich Kratochwil, “Sociological approaches,” in *Oxford Handbook*


Recommended:


Terry Nardin, “International ethics,” in *Oxford Handbook*

10/31 Great Powers, War and International System Change

Required:


Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1983), selections TBA

John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Intro, 1,2, 5, 10 (skim rest).


Recommended:

11/7 Constructivism

Required:


(Political Science PhD IR majors or minors should read: Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1999).


Recommended:

Ian Hurd, “Constructivism,” in *Oxford Handbook*


Part 4: Alternative approaches and emerging issues

11/14 Republican Security Theory: Realism and Liberalism Reconsidered

Required:


Recommended:

11/21 Alternatives to a System of States: Supranational and Transnational

Required:
Deudney, *Bounding Power*, 8,9 conclusion.

Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, Chs. 10-14

Karl Deutsch, etc. al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area* (1957), selections TBA


**Recommended:**

R. Lipschutz, “Reconstructing World Politics: The Emergence of Global Civil Society,” *Millennium* vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 389-420

**12/5 International Relations Theory and the Problem of Change: Globalization, Technology and Terrorism**

**Required:**

Richard Rosecrance, “The failure of static and the need for dynamic approaches to international relations,” in *Oxford Handbook*.


Michael Barnett and Kathryn Sikkink, “From international relations to global society,” in *Oxford Handbook*.

**Recommended:**