

University at Albany, SUNY
Department of Political Science

RPOS 102X: Comparative and International Politics
Brian Greenhill
Spring 2019

Course Description

This course introduces students to the major issues and theoretical approaches in comparative and international politics. By the end of the course, students can be expected to have developed informed opinions on the following big questions:

- What explains patterns of conflict and cooperation in the international system?
- Are culture and ideology as important as military and economic power in explaining international political outcomes?
- What do international organizations such as the United Nations actually do, and can they be effective in managing today's global problems?
- What role do non-state actors (e.g., non-governmental organizations and multinational corporations) play in international politics?
- Why have some regions of the world experienced much faster economic development than others?
- Why has democracy flourished in some regions but not others?
- Are parliamentary systems of government better than presidential systems?

Instructor

Brian Greenhill

Department of Political Science

Email: bgreenhill@albany.edu

Office hours (in Humanities B16): Thursdays 3:30-5:00pm, and by appointment.

Teaching Assistants

Name	Section Numbers	Email	Office Hours (Humanities B-16)
Shikshya Adhikari	t.b.a.	sadhikari@albany.edu	t.b.a.
Huidong Peng	t.b.a.	hpeng3@albany.edu	t.b.a.
Jiacheng Ren	t.b.a.	jren7@albany.edu	t.b.a.

Meeting Times

All students are required to attend the lectures on Tuesdays and Thursdays (11:45-1:05 in LC 7) as well as one discussion section on a Friday. Please refer to your course schedule on MyUAlbany to find out which of the discussion sections you've been assigned to.

Class #	Type	Instructor	Meeting Times	Classroom
7480	Lectures	Brian Greenhill	Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:45am-1:05pm	LC 7
7481	Discussion Section	t.b.a.	Fridays, 9:20-10:15	BBB 002
7483	Discussion Section	t.b.a.	Fridays 10:25-11:20	SS 0116
7485	Discussion Section	t.b.a.	Fridays 11:30-12:25	BB 0217
7486	Discussion Section	t.b.a.	Fridays 9:20-10:15	SS 0116
7487	Discussion Section	t.b.a.	Fridays 10:25-11:20	ES 0144
7488	Discussion Section	t.b.a.	Fridays 11:30-12:25	PH 0123
7489	Discussion Section	t.b.a.	Fridays 9:20-10:15	SS 0131
7490	Discussion Section	t.b.a.	Fridays 10:25-11:20	LC 3A
7492	Discussion Section	t.b.a.	Fridays 11:30-12:25	FA 0114

Course Objectives

This course has been designed to fulfill the following course-specific learning objectives:

1. To acquire an understanding of the major theoretical approaches to the study of comparative and international politics;
2. To attempt to use these theories to explain current or historical events (or “puzzles”) in international politics;
3. To acquire an understanding of how hypotheses are tested in the study of the international politics.

This course fulfills the requirement for the SUNY-wide General Education requirement in the Social Sciences. The learning objectives associated with this requirement are as follows (see <https://www.albany.edu/generaleducation/social-sciences.php>):

1. an understanding that human conduct and behavior more generally are subject to scientific inquiry;
2. an understanding of the difference between rigorous and systematic thinking and uncritical thinking about social phenomena;
3. an understanding of the kinds of questions social scientists ask and the ways they go about answering these questions;
4. knowledge of the major concepts, models and issues of at least one discipline in the social sciences;
5. an understanding of the methods social scientists use to explore social phenomena, such as observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, employment of mathematical analysis, employment of interpretive analysis.

In addition, the course fulfills UAlbany's "Challenges for the 21st Century" requirement. The learning objectives associated with this requirement are as follows (see <https://www.albany.edu/generaleducation/ua-category-challenges.php>):

1. Knowledge and understanding of the historical roots, contemporary manifestations, and potential future courses of important challenges students may encounter as they move into the world beyond the university;
2. Familiarity with these challenges in areas such as cultural diversity and pluralism, science and technology, social interaction, ethics, global citizenship, and/or others;
3. An integrated understanding of how challenges often affect individuals and societies simultaneously in many of these areas;
4. An appreciation for interdisciplinary approaches to understanding contemporary and future challenges.

Assignments

Your overall score for the class will consist of five components:

1. Quizzes (25%). I'll be giving pop quizzes throughout the semester using the Top Hat Test software. These are intended to test your knowledge of the material covered in the lectures and in the assigned readings. The quizzes will also include questions about current events in international politics, so I strongly encourage you to keep up with major international stories in the news. The quizzes will usually be given at the start of each lecture so please make sure you turn up on time.
2. Midterm Exam (15%) The midterm exam will be held on Thursday March 14. This will be a traditional in-class written exam during the regular class period.
3. Final Exam (20%) The final exam will be held on Friday May 10 from 10:30-12:30.
4. Research Paper (30%) During the course of the semester, you'll be working towards completing a 10-page research paper on a topic of your choice. You can choose any topic relevant to the material covered in this course. You'll be asked to deliver this paper in three separate installments:
 - a. A 1-page proposal that does three things: (1) identifies the *topic* you're interested in; (2) identifies a *question* relevant to that topic; and (3) provides a list of at least 4 academic sources that you plan to read as you begin working on your research. This will be due on Blackboard by 10:00pm on Thursday February 14 and will be worth 5 points.
 - b. A 4-page introduction/literature review that summarizes the findings of the academic studies that are most relevant to the question you're interested in. This will be due on Blackboard by 10:00pm on Thursday March 7 and will be worth 25 points.
 - c. A 10-page final version of the paper that includes a revised version of your literature review as well as a more substantial hypothesis-testing exercise. This will be due on Blackboard by 10:00pm on Tuesday April 30 and will be worth 70 points.
5. Participation (10%). Your participation score will reflect your participation in class discussions, both in-person and online via the Discussion Board in Blackboard. There are no minimum or maximum number of posts required for the discussion board, but students

who are not so comfortable speaking up in class can still achieve a high participation score by making more frequent or substantive contributions to the online discussion board throughout the semester.

Required Materials

There are no required books for this course. However, all students will be required to subscribe to the Top Hat system (see below). The cost of a subscription is \$30.78 for the semester.

Top Hat Active Learning Technology

We will be using the Top Hat (www.tophat.com) classroom response and testing system in class. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message.

The cost of the subscription for UAlbany students is \$30.78 for the semester. This consists of two separate products: (1) Top Hat Classroom (\$20 + tax); and (2) Top Hat Test (\$8.50 + tax). If you have already paid to use the Top Hat Classroom and Test features for other courses you're taking this semester, you won't need to purchase an additional subscription for this course.

You should have received an email inviting you to register for the course, but if not, you can register by simply visiting our course website: <https://app.tophat.com/e/048512>. The "join code" for this course is **048512**.

Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time, please contact their Support Team directly by way of email (support@tophat.com), the in app support button, or by calling 1-888-663-5491.

Keeping up with World News

In order to succeed in this course, you'll need to stay up-to-date with major developments in international politics. I strongly recommend that you regularly read the world news section of a major international newspaper such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, or the *Wall Street Journal*. These papers are offering special student rates on digital subscriptions for as little as \$1 per week. (See <https://www.nytimes.com/subscriptions/edu/lp8LQFK.html>, <https://subscribe.washingtonpost.com/acqlite/edu-offer/>, or https://store.wsj.com/v2/JIE/verification/1100800005?intrackingCode=aaqp25my&icid=WSJ_ON_ALL_ACQ_NA&.)

Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, medical, cognitive, learning and mental health (psychiatric) disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Disability Resource Center (518-442-5490; drc@albany.edu). Upon verification and after the registration process is complete, the DRC will provide you with a letter that informs the course instructor that

you are a student with a disability registered with the DRC and list the recommended reasonable accommodations.

Academic Integrity:

All students are responsible for understanding and adhering to UAlbany's rules on academic integrity. The following website provides an overview of UAlbany's policies as well as links to resources that explain how to avoid allegations of plagiarism: https://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html. If you have any questions about appropriate citation practices, please do not hesitate to ask your instructor or your TA.

Policy on Missed Quizzes and Exams, or Late Submission of Papers

If there are circumstances beyond your control that cause you to miss the midterm or final exam, or to submit an assignment after the due date, then please get in touch with your instructor or your TA as soon as possible. You will need to provide documentation regarding the reason for your absence in order to be allowed to take a makeup exam or to submit an assignment after the deadline. However, if you'd prefer to keep the details of your situation private from your instructor and/or TA, then you can stop by the Office of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education located in LC-30. They will be able to discuss your situation with you and, where appropriate, provide you with a letter confirming that you qualify for special accommodations.

If you submit an assignment after the deadline without approval, then we'll apply a lateness penalty of 10% of the total number points available for the assignment for each day that has passed since the deadline.

The policy for missing in-class quizzes is different. These are low-stakes assignments and while we won't be offering any makeup quizzes, everyone in the class will have their three lowest-scoring quizzes automatically excluded from the calculation of their average quiz score for the semester. This will ensure that missing occasional quizzes due to illness or coming to class late won't harm your overall quiz score. However, if there are special circumstances that cause you to miss more than three quizzes during the semester (e.g., a prolonged illness), then please get in touch with your instructor or TA as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations.

Policy on "I" (Incomplete) Grades

If circumstances arise that you will prevent you from being able to complete the required coursework by the end of the semester, then please get in touch with your instructor as soon as possible to discuss the possibility of taking the course for an "I" (Incomplete) grade. If I don't hear from you by the end of the semester, then I'll have to assume that you don't intend to complete the course and I'll enter a score of zero for any outstanding assignments. Please see the university's policy on incomplete grades at <https://www.albany.edu/undergraduateeducation/grading.php>.

Class Schedule & Required Readings

Please note that the reading schedule shown below may need to be updated to reflect the pace at which we manage to move through the material. You'll be notified each time the syllabus is updated.

Slide set	Date	Readings
1	Thursday January 24	Introduction No required reading.
2	Tuesday January 29	Applying Theories to International Relations • Walt, Stephen (1998) "International Relations: One World, Many Theories." <i>Foreign Policy</i> 110: 29-46.
3	Thursday January 31	Realist Approaches to IR • Mearsheimer, John (2001) "Anarchy and the Struggle for Power" in <i>The Tragedy of Great Power Politics</i> pp. 29-54.
4	Tuesday February 5	Institutionalist Approaches to IR • Paul K. Kerr and Kenneth Katzman (2018) "Iran Nuclear Agreement and US Exit." <i>Congressional Research Service</i> Report R43333 https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R43333
5	Thursday February 7	Constructivist Approaches to IR • Tannenwald, Nina (1999) "The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Normative Basis of Nuclear Non-Use." <i>International Organization</i> 53 (3): 433-468.
6	Tuesday February 12	Critical Approaches to IR • Cohn, Carol (1987) "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals" <i>Signs</i> 12 (4): 687-718. <i>Class visit with Jay Stokes, UAAlbany Center for International Education</i>
7	Thursday February 14	The Democratic Peace Theory • Owen, John (1994) "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace." <i>International Security</i> 19 (2): 87-125. *** 1-page paper proposal due on Blackboard by 10:00pm ***
8	Tuesday February 19	Writing Literature Reviews • Read the examples of previous students' papers posted on Blackboard

Slide set	Date	Readings
9	Thursday February 21	International Organizations, Part 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Charter of the United Nations • Sengupta, Somini (2018) "What is the United Nations? Explaining its Purpose, Power and Problems." <i>The New York Times</i> September 25, 2018. https://nyti.ms/2NBs0M5
10	Tuesday February 26	International Organizations, Part 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keck, Margaret and Kathryn Sikkink (1998) "Transnational Advocacy Networks in International Politics: Introduction" in <i>Activists Beyond Borders</i>, pp. 1-38
11	Thursday February 28	Economic Globalization, Part 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irwin, Douglas (2017) "The False Promise of Protectionism." <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 96: 45-56. • Blinder, Alan S. (2019) "The Free Trade Paradox: The Bad Politics of a Good Idea." <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 98 (1): 119-128.
12	Tuesday March 5	Economic Globalization, Part 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stiglitz, Joseph (2017) Introduction to <i>Globalization and its Discontents Revisited</i>, pp. xv-xlv. • Starbucks, Inc. (2017) <i>Global Social Impact: 2017 Performance Report</i>. https://globalassets.starbucks.com/assets/8c1f8c07efde407e9d48bfaf518c0b45.pdf
13	Thursday March 7	Governing the Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falkner, Robert (2016) "The Paris Agreement and the New Logic of International Climate Politics." <i>International Affairs</i> 92 (5): 1107-1125. • Sengupta, Somini (2018) "The Paris Accord Promised a Climate Solution. Here's Where We Are Now." <i>The New York Times</i>, December 14 2018. https://nyti.ms/2GjHS2v <p>*** First installment of the paper (4-page literature review) due on Blackboard by 10:00pm ***</p>
14	Tuesday March 12	Midterm Review Session
	Thursday March 14	Midterm Exam
	Tuesday March 19	Spring Break — no class.
	Thursday March 21	Spring Break — no class.

Slide set	Date	Readings
15	Tuesday March 26	Human Rights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Universal Declaration of Human Rights • “Room for Debate: Have Human Rights Treaties Failed?” <i>The New York Times</i>, December 28, 2014. http://goo.gl/W6827w <p><i>Class visit with Joan Marso, Undergraduate Internship and Career Coordinator</i></p>
16	Thursday March 28	Introduction to Comparative Politics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lankford, Adam (2016) “Are America’s Public Mass Shooters Unique? A Comparative Analysis of Offenders in the United States and Other Countries.” <i>International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice</i> 40 (2): 171-183.
17	Tuesday April 2	Theories of Comparative Politics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lim, Timothy (2016) “Thinking Theoretically in Comparative Politics” in <i>Doing Comparative Politics: An Introduction to Approaches & Issues</i> pp. 61-99.
18	Thursday April 4	Political Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linz, Juan (1990) “The Perils of Presidentialism.” <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 1 (1): 51-69. • Mainwairing, Scott and Matthew Shugart (1997) “Juan Linz, Presidentialism, and Democracy: A Critical Appraisal.” <i>Comparative Politics</i>, 29 (4): 449-471.
19	Tuesday April 9	Development and Underdevelopment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peet, Richard and Elaine Hartwick (2015) <i>Theories of Development: Contentions, Arguments, Alternatives</i>, pp. 151-159 & 188-221.
20	Thursday April 11	Democratization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inglehart, Ronald, and Christian Welzel (2009) “How Development Leads to Democracy: What We Know About Modernization.” <i>Foreign Affairs</i>, vol. 88, no. 2, 2009, pp. 33–48. • Qin, Amy and Javier Hernandez (2018) “How China’s Rulers Control Society: Opportunity, Nationalism, Fear.” <i>The New York Times</i> November 25, 2018. https://nyti.ms/2zpaHEO
21	Tuesday April 16	Nationalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Francis Fukuyama (2018) “Against Identity Politics: The New Tribalism and the Crisis of Democracy.” <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 97 (5): 90-114.

Slide set	Date	Readings
22	Thursday April 18	Democratic Backsliding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mounk, Yascha and Roberto Stefan Foa (2018) “The End of the Democratic Century: Autocracy’s Global Ascendance” <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 97 (3): 29-38. • Inglehart, Ronald (2018) “The Age of Insecurity: Can Democracy Save Itself?” <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 97 (3): 20-28.
23	Tuesday April 23	The European Union and Brexit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webber, Douglas (2014) “How Likely is it that the European Union will Disintegrate? A Critical Analysis of Competing Theoretical Perspectives.” <i>European Journal of International Relations</i> 20 (2): 341-365.
24	Thursday April 25	Migration and Refugees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betts, Alexander and Paul Collier (2017) “The Time-Warp” in <i>Refuge: Rethinking Refugee Policy in a Changing World</i>, pp. 34-61.
25	Tuesday April 30	The Rise of China <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ryan, Missy and Paul Sonne (2019) “China’s Advances Seen to Pose Increasing Threat to American Military Dominance.” <i>The Washington Post</i> January 15, 2019. • Brooks, Stephen G., and William C. Wohlforth (2016) “The Once and Future Superpower: Why China Won’t Overtake the United States.” <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 95 (3): 91-104. <p>*** Final Paper due on Blackboard by 10:00pm ***</p>
26	Thursday May 2	Catch-up day — readings t.b.a.
27	Tuesday May 7	Review Session
	Friday May 10	Final Exam, 10:30am (location t.b.a.)