

RPOS 370: International Relations Theory

Professor: Bryan R. Early

Class Times: MWF 11:30-12:25

Room: Business Administration, Room 130

Email: bearly@albany.edu

Office Hours: Uptown, Humanities Building B16 – Mondays, 9:15-11:15AM
Downtown, Milne 300A – Wednesdays, 1:15-2:15 PM

Course Description

This course will explore the foundational assumptions employed within international relations theory, the major theoretical perspectives within the discipline, and several prominent issue areas within international relations. Students will read some of the major theoretical works within international relations and discuss them in interactive lectures. Students will also explore the strengths, weaknesses, similarities, and differences of these works in their writing assignments. The latter portion of the class will involve an intensive simulation of global politics in which students will be called upon to apply their theoretical knowledge to practical foreign policy situations.

Expectations

This is a reading intensive course and students will be expected to attend every class having read and prepared to discuss the assigned texts. Attendance is mandatory and will be especially important during the simulations. Students will be expected to turn in assigned work on time. Late work will face significant deductions.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Explain the major theories of international relations
- Describe the major similarities and differences between the major IR theories
- Identify leading authors in the IR field and the theories they are associated with
- Understand the historical evolution of IR theory over time
- Apply theoretical frameworks to understanding practical international relations issues
- Assess the behavior of actors in international politics in light of IR theories

Grading

Attendance – 10%

Attendance will be taken five times during the semester by the instructor. If a student is absent without excuse on one of those days, he or she will lose 2% of his or her final grade. Students should notify the instructor of absences due to illness, family emergencies, or religious observances, which will be excused on a case-by-case basis.

Theoretical Critiques – 15% and 25%

Students will write two critical analyses of individual theories covered within the class (e.g., classical realism, liberalism, hegemonic leadership, neo-realism, neo-liberalism, constructivism, post-classical realism). For each paper, students will be expected to provide a detailed description of a theory's core elements, identify and explain the contributions of various works of scholarship that have employed it, and discuss the theory's explanatory gaps and weaknesses. The papers' length should be between 6-10 pages long. The first paper will be worth 15% and the second paper will be worth 25% of students' final grades. The instructor will provide more details and a grading rubric.

- Theoretical Critique 1 is due 3/7/11
- Theoretical Critique 2 is due 4/6/11

Simulation Participation – 12.5%

Students will participate in a team-based learning simulation using the *International Relations in Action (IRA)* book. Attendance and full participation in the simulations is mandatory. Each unexcused absence during the simulation will result in 4% deduction from a student's simulation participation grade.

Simulation Write-Up – 7.5%

Students will write a brief 2-3 page paper describing how IR theory informed the choices their country made during the simulation or analyzing how an IR theory could explain countries' or leaders' behaviors in a particular case during the simulation.

- The Simulation Write-Up is due 5/2/11

Final Exam – 30%

This will be a cumulative exam that will cover the entire semester's course material. It will be almost *impossible* to pass for students that do not keep up with their weekly readings and attend lectures. Students should take detailed notes throughout the semester on their readings and during their lectures. Building a running study guide throughout the semester is also suggested.

Grading Policy

Tests and papers will be graded blind by the instructor and/or teaching assistant. If a student wishes to challenge how his or her exam or paper was graded, the student must submit a written statement describing what part of their assignment was improperly evaluated and why they think that was the case. This must be done within five days of having the assignment returned. Both the instructor and assistant will re-grade the entire project, compare their assessments, and mutually decide on a final grade. This grade may be higher or lower than the original grade given and will be final. Any clear mistakes or errors made by the instructor will be promptly corrected and need only be brought to the instructor's attention.

Policy on Academic Honesty

Please familiarize yourself with the undergraduate bulletin's descriptions of cheating and plagiarism. If you are involved in plagiarism or cheating on an exam or research paper, the penalty will be failure in the course and you will be reported to judicial affairs. If you are not sure if something violates standards – feel free to ask ahead of time. In general, it's always better to err on the side of citing too much than too little in your research papers. The university's official policy can be found at: <http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/2003-2004/regulations.html>. Lastly, never cite Wikipedia as source.

Accommodations

“Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (Campus Center 137, 442-5490). The office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations.” For the University's policy, see: <<http://www.albany.edu/studentlife/dss/Accommodation.html>>. If you wish to discuss academic accommodations for this class please inform the instructor as soon as possible.

Resources

This course will be very reading intensive. The readings come from a mixture of required texts, course reserve chapter and articles, and articles that students will be required to look up themselves. The instructor will indicate where the readings can be found in advance of their due dates.

Required Books

Robert Keohane. 1984. *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (AH)

Robert Keohane, ed. 1986. *Neo-Realism and Its Critics*. New York: Columbia University

Press. (NIC)

John Mearsheimer. 2001. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W.W. Norton Company. (TGPP)

Brock Tessman. 2007. *International Relations in Action*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers. (IRA)

Required Articles and Chapters

All course readings that are not in the books or linked to a website will be posted on the class Blackboard Page in the “Course Readings” Folder.

Class Schedule

First Day

Day 1: (1/19)

- Discuss Syllabus, Course Organization, Grading, and Class Policies

Introduction to International Relations Theory

Day 2: (1/21)

- Stephen Walt. 2005. “The Relationship between Theory and Policy in International Relations.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 8: 23-48.
- James Rosenau. 2009. “Thinking Theory Thoroughly.” In Paul Viotti and Mark Kauppi’s *International Relations Theory*. New York: Longman, 17-24.

Day 3: (1/24)

- Stephen Walt. 1998. “One World, Many Theories.” *Foreign Policy* (Spring): 25-35.
- Jack Snyder. 2004. “One World, Rival Theories.” *Foreign Policy* (November/December): 52-61.

Levels of Analysis

Day 4: (1/26)

- Kenneth Waltz. 2001. Excerpt. *Man, the State, and War*. New York, Columbia University Press.
- David Lake. 2003. “The New Sovereignty in International Relations.” *International Studies Review* 5: 303-323.

Decision-Making Theories

Day 5: (1/28)

- Miles Kahler. 1998. "Rationality in International Relations," *International Organization* 52(4): 919-941.
- James Morrow. 1997. "Rational Choice Approach to International Conflict." In Nehemia Geva and Alex Mintz's, eds., *Decisionmaking on War and Peace: the Cognitive-Rational Debate*. New York: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Day 6: (1/31)

- Robert Jervis. 1968. "Hypotheses on Misperception," *World Politics* 20(3): 454-479.
- Stephen Walt. 1999. "Rigor or Rigor Mortis? Rational Choice and Security Studies." *International Security* 23(4): 5-48.

Classical Realism

Day 7: (2/2)

- Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogue" *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Access at: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/melian.htm>
- Michael Doyle. 1997. "Complex Realism: Thucydides." *Ways of War and Peace*. New York: W.W. Norton, pp. 49-93. Access at Blackboard Electronic Reserve.

Day 8: (2/4)

- Thomas Hobbes. 1660. "Chapter XIII: Of the Natural Condition of Mankind as Concerning Their Felicity and Misery." *The Leviathan*. Access at: <http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/hobbes/leviathan-c.html#CHAPTERXIII>
- Michael Williams. 1996. "Hobbes and International Relations: A Reconsideration." *International Organization* 50(2): 123-236.

Day 9: (2/7)

- Hans Morgenthau. 1978. "Six Principles of Political Realism." *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, pp. 4-15. Access at: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/morg6.htm>
- Hans Morgenthau and Kenneth Thompson. 1985. "Political Power." *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: Alfred A Knopf, pp. 31-51. Access at Blackboard Electronic Reserve.

Day 10: (2/9)

- David Baldwin. 2002. "Power in International Relations." In Carlsnaes, Risse, and Simmons', eds., *Handbook of International Relations*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Press.
- Robert Art. 2005. "Four Functions of Force." In Robert Art and Robert Jervis's *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*. New York: Pearson Longman.
- Joseph Nye. 1990. "Soft Power." *Foreign Policy* 80(Autumn): 153-171.

Liberalism

Day 11: (2/11)

- Immanuel Kant. 1795. *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*. Access at: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/kant/kant1.htm>
- Michael W. Doyle. 2005. "Three Pillars of the Liberal Peace." *The American Political Science Review* 99(3): 463-466.

Day 12: (2/14)

- Andrew Moravcsik. 1997. "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Relations," *International Organization* 51(4): 513-53. Access at Blackboard Electronic Reserve.

Day 13: (2/16)

- Brian Rathbun. 2010. "Is Anybody Not an (International Relations) Liberal?" *Security Studies* 19(1): 2-25.

Neo-Realism

Day 14: (2/18)

- Robert Keohane. 1986. "Realism, Neorealism and the Study of World Politics." in *NIC*
- Kenneth Waltz. 1986. "Laws and Theories." in *NIC*

* *February Break* *

Day 15: (2/28)

- Kenneth Waltz. 1986. "Reductionist and Systemic Theories." in *NIC*
- Kenneth Waltz. 1986. "Political Structures." in *NIC*

Day 16: (3/2)

- Kenneth Waltz. 1986. "Anarchic Orders and Balances of Power." in *NIC*
- Helen Milner. 1991. "The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations: A Critique." *Review of International Studies* 17(1): 67-85. Access at Blackboard Electronic Reserve.

Day 17: (3/4)

- Writing Day (No Class)

International Leadership and Hegemony

Day 18: (3/7)

- Robert Keohane. 1984. "Hegemony in the World Political Economy." in *AH*, 31-46.
- Robert Keohane. 1984. "Hegemonic Cooperation in the Post-War Era." in *AH*, 135-181.

Day 19: (3/9)

- John Ikenberry. 1996. "The Future of International Leadership." *Political Science Quarterly* 111(3): 385-402.
- Joseph Nye. 2004. "The Decline of America's Soft Power." *Foreign Affairs* (May/June).

Neo-Liberalism

Day 20: (3/11)

- Robert Keohane. 1984. "Politics, Economics, and the International System." in *AH*, 18-30.
- Robert Keohane. 1984. "Cooperation and International Regimes." in *AH*, 49-64.

Day 21: (3/14)

- Robert Keohane. 1984. "Rational Choice and Functional Explanations." in *AH*, 65-84.
- Robert Keohane. 1984. "A Functional Theory of International Regimes." in *AH*, 85-109.

Day 23: (3/16)

- Robert Axelrod and Robert Keohane. 1985. "Achieving Cooperation under Anarchy: Strategies and Institutions," *World Politics* 38 (October): 226-254.
- Robert Powell. 1994. "Anarchy in International Relations Theory: The Neorealist-Neoliberal Debate." *International Organization* 48(2): 313-344.

Constructivism

Day 24: (3/18)

- Alexander Wendt. 1992. "Anarchy Is What Stats Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics." *International Organization* 46(2): 391-425.
- Ted Hopf. 1998. "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory." *International Security* 23(1): 170-200.

Day 25: (3/21)

- James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders," *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Autumn 1998), pp. 943-969.

Day 26: (3/23)

- Jeffrey Legro. 1997. "Which Norms Matter? Revisiting the 'Failure' of Internationalism." *International Organization* 51(1): 31-63.
- Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change." *International Organization*. 54(4): 887-917.

Day 27: (3/25)

- Alexander Wendt. 2003. "Why a World State Is Inevitable." *European Journal of International Relations* 9(4): 491-542. Access at Blackboard Electronic Reserve.

Post-Classical Realism

Day 28: (3/28)

- John Mearsheimer. 2001. "Chapters 1 and 2." in *TGGP*

Day 29: (3/30)

- John Mearsheimer. 2001. "Chapters 3 and 4." in *TGGP*

Day 31: (4/1)

- John Mearsheimer. 2001. "Chapters 5 and 8." in *TGGP*

Domestic Politics

Day 32: (4/4)

- Graham Allison and Morton Halperin. 1972. "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications." *World Politics* 24: 40-79.
- Robert Putnam. 1988. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two Level Games." *International Organization* 42(3): 427-460.

Day 33: (4/6) Simulation Set-Up

- James Fearon. 1994. "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes." *American Political Science Review* 88(3): 577-592.

IRA Simulation

Day 34: (4/8) Simulation Set-Up

- Brock Tessman. 2007. "Introduction." in *IRA*
- Brock Tessman. 2007. "Part 1." in *IRA*
- Brock Tessman. 2007. "Part 2." in *IRA*

Day 35: (4/11) Alliances

- Brock Tessman. 2007. "Alliance Politics." in *IRA*

Day 36: (4/13) International Conflicts

- Brock Tessman. 2007. "Territorial Disputes." in *IRA*

Day 36: (4/15) Nonproliferation

- Brock Tessman. 2007. "Nuclear Proliferation." in *IRA*

* *Spring Break* *

Day 37: (4/27) Security Organizations

- Brock Tessman. 2007. "Global Security Organizations." in *IRA*

Day 38: (4/29) Free Trade

- Brock Tessman. 2007. "Free Trade vs. Protectionism." in *IRA*

Day 39: Wrap Up (5/2)