Unprecedented human mobility across international boundaries at the rate of over 2 billion international travelers per year increased humanity’s vulnerability to contagious diseases with security consequences that have major ramifications for International Relations. Air travel that now connects all populations made the rapid worldwide spread of the novel coronavirus possible and renders humanity vulnerable to COVID-19 until a vaccine is given to as much of the world’s population as is necessary to contain the disease through global herd immunity. This course examines: the security consequences of human mobility and disease in world history; the role of isolation and quarantine to control disease transmission within a broader discussion of state controls over borders, the relationship between epidemics and national security as well as international political economy; and, finally, international cooperation on global mobility and public health.

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for the course.

Course Objectives
By the end of the course, all students should:
1. Understand the historical evolution of human mobility and contagious diseases
2. Understand how major theories of international relations address (or fail to address) the subjects of disease and mobility
3. Understand the implications of global mobility and pandemics for international relations
4. Identify key concepts in readings and describe the steps of an argument
5. Critically evaluate common readings in discussions with instructor and fellow students
6. Ask incisive questions of texts as well as of fellow seminar participants
7. Be able to speak and write effectively about course topics in formats appropriate to career goals.

Teaching mode: Fully remote synchronous distance learning using Zoom. This means that even though we all won’t be meeting in a physical classroom, we’re going to try to create a classroom experience on Zoom that’s as close as possible to being in a regular classroom. To help achieve that goal, I would like all students who take this course to do the following when joining via Zoom:
• Situate yourself in a place that’s suitable for learning—ideally in a quiet room where you can sit upright in a chair and place your laptop or mobile device on a stable surface for capturing your Zoom video;
• Join the Zoom meeting right at the start of each class and remain in the meeting until the class is dismissed;
• Keep your camera turned on throughout the class and keep your face in the picture;
• Keep your microphone turned off when other people are speaking, but be ready to turn it on when you’re asked to speak; and
• Ensure that your Zoom window displays the name you would like me to refer to you by.

*If you think you may have difficulty with any of these items, please don’t hesitate to get in touch with me so that we can discuss suitable accommodations.

We may also have guest lecturers join class from remote locations using Zoom. Groups of students should also use Zoom to work together on their team projects. All students will give presentations to the class and use Zoom to do so, simply by using the screen share feature of Zoom to give power point presentations. Students aspiring to professional in political science, public policy and international affairs careers should be able to express themselves and communicate in a range of formats and modes from email exchanges and informal dialogues with co-workers to formal written reports and oral presentations to the leadership of their organizations and the leadership of other organizations with whom they may need to negotiate. While presentations often take place in conference rooms similar in size to a seminar room, they may also be done on conference calls and through videoconferences. Hence, class sessions should be considered opportunities to practice and learn effective communication and presentation skills.

Textbooks:

Required:
(available at the UAlbany Bookstore)

William H. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday/Anchor, 1976). (any more recent editions/printings are fine)


Recommended:


Additional required readings: The bulk of the readings not in the above books will be journal articles and policy reports that will be posted on Blackboard. Unless noted, all required articles can also be accessed on-line at a under “e-journals” or through Lexis/Nexis. Readings that are not available in the UAlbany e-journal collection and are marked with an asterisk (*) will be made available on Blackboard. The instructor will assign several additional readings after the course begins – refer to the syllabus posted on Blackboard for all assignments and required for each session.

Knowledge of current events: All students should keep abreast of recent developments with respect to the contemporary coronavirus pandemic and international travel by reading a high quality daily news source with good international coverage (e.g. *New York Times; Wall Street Journal; Financial Times, Washington Post*) supplemented by a weekly newsmagazine, such as the *Economist*. Additional online world news sources include: BBC World News [https://www.bbc.com/news/world](https://www.bbc.com/news/world); Reuters World News [https://www.reuters.com/news/world](https://www.reuters.com/news/world); NPR World [https://www.npr.org/sections/world](https://www.npr.org/sections/world)
Guest speakers: We will have guest speakers join the class throughout the semester via Zoom. We may not be able to arrange for some of them to join during our Wednesday evening classes, given that some guests may be connecting from different time zones or may only be able to join during the day. Students may be asked join sessions with guests outside of class periods and, in order for these visits to be worthwhile, most students will need to commit to out-of-class-times (that will be scheduled at the most convenient times for speakers and students).

Description of requirements

1. Class participation: All students are expected to attend all classes, complete all assigned readings in advance of class and be prepared to discuss them, including cold calls. The baseline grade for class participation is a D. Routine attendance with minimal participation will earn a C. 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.

2. Personal statement: All students are asked to submit a 250-word statement describing their background, academic interests and research objectives as they relate to this course. These should be posted on the discussion forum on Blackboard. Although mandatory, the assignment will not be graded; its purpose is for students (and the instructor) to get to know one another better.

3. Reaction memos: Students will submit five brief memos (of approx. 700-1,000 words) in which students react to required weekly readings of five selected class sessions. Students need not cover each and every reading for the week in these memos. The point is to focus on and analyze what you see as important, interesting issues in the reading. The memo should be analytical, not just a summary. These reaction memos are intended generate informed class discussion, so they must be written and submitted before class. Students should email their memos to the instructor (must arrive in the instructor’s mailbox before class). Each reaction memo is worth 5% of the course grade. Excellent papers will receive 5 points, good 4 points, failing 3 points. A total of five reaction memos must be submitted for full credit. Students may choose which week’s readings to review, however, reaction memos chosen must be distributed in the following manner:
   One on or before 9/9
   One on or before 9/30
   One on or before 10/14
   One on or before 10/28
   One on or before 11/18
   If students do not hand in the required reaction memo by the date specified above, the overdue memo will be considered a failed assignment. They will not receive credit for the missing reaction memo.

4. Online discussion: All students should formulate one thoughtful statement about the required readings for each week of class (aside from the first class, i.e., 12 weeks worth). Each statement should explicitly reference one (possibly more) of the assigned readings. Each statement should be concise and direct, 100 - 200 words long. Statements can explicitly criticize the position of an author, agree with an author or describe how the reading led you to think about or view matters differently. Students must post the statements on the appropriate class session forum of the Blackboard discussion board by 12:00 noon on the day of class. In addition, all students should comment on at least one of their fellow classmate’s statements. Again these comments should be concise and direct (but not hostile). These comments may agree or disagree with the student statement being commented upon and should also reference the reading that was the subject of the statement. Comments should be posted no later than 48 hours after the end of the class session and be around 50 -100 words long but, in any case, no more than 200 words.

5. Team Project: TBA
6. **Term paper:** PhD Students are expected to write a paper of about 6,000 – 7,000 words (double-paced, 12 pt, one inch margins). PhD student papers should demonstrate a command of the theoretical literature relevant to the topic selected and develop an analytical argument related to debates in that literature. Students may do any one of the following: 1) a paper that is based on secondary sources; 2) a paper based mostly on primary sources or 3) a paper based on the analysis of existing data sets or data that the student has collected. Masters students are expected to write a paper of about 4,000-5,000 words. Masters students may opt to model their papers on policy reports published by think tanks such as the Brookings Institution, the Wilson Center, etc. or articles found policy-oriented journals such as *Washington Quarterly*, etc. All students are expected to draw on material from the syllabus but students should also incorporate significant additional research on the topic chosen (which would be reflected in a majority of references to material not listed as required reading on the syllabus). All students may select a topic of their own choosing as long as it is within the confines of the course and approved by the instructor. For those students having difficulty selecting a topic, a good approach would be to consider a paper topic that delves into the details of one aspect of one of the session topics. At the very beginning of the course, students should carefully review the entire syllabus and scan readings for possible topics. Students are expected to submit a paper topic by Sept. 16. Students are expected to submit a full paper proposal comprised of a 100-150 word abstract, outline and preliminary bibliography by Sept. 23 then schedule a Zoom meeting with the instructor to discuss their project. Students should submit a rough draft of their paper (at least half the total length) by Oct. 21. If students miss the deadline for the proposal or the rough draft, a half letter grade will be subtracted from the final grade for the paper. Students will give a brief presentation (15 minutes max) of their paper project to the class, which will contribute to the overall grade for the paper. Seminar papers are due on Wed. Dec. 2.

**Grading**

- Reaction memos about 25%
- Team project about 10%
- Online discussion about 5%
- Term paper about 40%
- Class participation about 20%

**Grade Scale:**

- A 90 and above
- A- 88-89
- B+ 85-87
- B 80-84
- B- 78-79
- C+ 75-77
- C 70-74
- C- 68-69
- D+ 65-67
- D 60-64
- E Below 60

**Late assignments will be penalized.**

**Incomplete grades:** A tentative grade given only when the student has nearly completed the course but due to circumstances beyond the student’s control the work is not completed on schedule. The date for the completion of the work will not be later than one month before the end of the Fall semester. The grade I is automatically changed to E or U unless work is completed as agreed between the student and the instructor.

**References:** All papers submitted must have all sources properly referenced. The “Harvard style” with in-text references to items in a bibliography at the end of the paper is recommended, see:
Alternatively, students may use footnotes following the Chicago manual of style. Papers without proper references are unacceptable and will not be read. Papers should be emailed to the instructor.

**Academic integrity:** All students are responsible for understanding and following the university’s rules on academic integrity (see [http://www.albany.edu/eltl/academic_integrity.php](http://www.albany.edu/eltl/academic_integrity.php)). Students must properly reference all sources, including assigned readings, in all written assignments. References to all sources must be clearly indicated. Direct quotations must be marked with double quotation marks (e.g. “...”) and the source cited. Indirect quotations must have sources cited. Sources require citation each time they are referred to.

**Class schedule:**

**8/26 Intro**
*Required:*
*Crosby, Ecological Imperialism*, prologue, pp. 1-7

**I. Migration and epidemics in world history**

**9/2 Plagues and peoples**
*Required:*
Barry, *The Great Influenza*, Part 1, pp. 11-87

*Recommended:*

**9/9 Influenza pandemic of 1918-19**
*Required:*

**II. Border controls and public health**

**9/16 International migration, travel and border controls**
*Required:*
Rey Koslowski, The Evolution of Border Controls as a Mechanism to Prevent Illegal Immigration (Migration Policy Institute and European University Institute, February 2011) posted at: http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/bordercontrols-koslowski.pdf
Prof. Beth Simmons & Dean Geoff Garrett Interview, May 1, 2020
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGl1pwrSXCQ

9/23 Epidemics, public health responses and quarantine
Required:
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/003335490912400207

Recommended:
Institute of Medicine, Quarantine Stations at Ports of Entry: Protecting the Public’s Health (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2006).

9/30 COVID-19 travel restrictions, quarantine and testing
Required:
Rey Koslowski, “Rethinking Air Travel Security to Address the Coronavirus Pandemic,” unpublished manuscript.


International Organization for Migration (IOM) Travel Restrictions database [https://migration.iom.int](https://migration.iom.int)

### III Epidemics and national security

#### 10/7 Armies, epidemics and shifts in the balance of power

**Required:**


Barry R. Posen, "Do Pandemics Promote Peace? Why Sickness Slows the March to War," *Foreign Affairs Snapshot* (online), April 23, 2020


#### 10/14 Biological warfare and bioterrorism

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


### IV. Epidemics and international political economy

10/21 Economic consequences of epidemics and pandemics
Required:
Pascale Joassart-Marcelli, “The Pandemic Exposes Dangers of the Informal Economy: And It Is Not Just Developing Countries That Are in Trouble,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), May 18, 2020
Carmen Reinhart and Vincent Reinhart, “The Pandemic Depression: The Global Economy Will Never Be the Same,” Foreign Affairs September/October 2020

10/28 Epidemics and economic development
Required:
Robert Malley and Richard Malley, “When the Pandemic Hits the Most Vulnerable: Developing Countries Are Hurting Toward Coronavirus Catastrophe,” Foreign Affairs Snapshot (online), Mar. 31, 2020

V. International cooperation on global mobility and public health

11/4 Global mobility regimes
Required:
11/11 WHO international health regulations and emergency response

**Required:**
Donald J. Trump’s letter to Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, The White House, May 18, 2020

**Recommended:**
Visit World Health Organization website: [https://www.who.int](https://www.who.int)

11/18 International cooperation to combat COVID-19

**Required:**
Bruce Jones, “Can Middle Powers Lead the World Out of the Pandemic? Because the United States and China Have Shown They Can’t,” *Foreign Affairs Snapshot* (online), June 18, 2020