

GVPT 200 Freshmen Connection: International Political Relations

Fall 2014

Tu Thur 6:00-7:15 PM

Tydings 1101

Instructor: Mr. Ping-Kuei Chen

Office: Tydings 5149 (Take the stairs to the 5th floor)

Office phone: 301-405-4133

E-mail: pkchen@umd.edu

Office hours: Tu 3:00-5:00PM (or by appointment)

Introduction

This course will serve as a broad introduction to the analytical study of international relations. It is designed to prepare students for advanced IR courses. To this end, the course will start from an introduction on IR theory and concepts. The remainder of the course is devoted to the application of theoretical paradigm and concepts on various issue areas including power politics, theory of war and peace, international trade, and international monetary relations, non-state actors, international institutions, and international governance. Coverage does not include every aspect, but it addresses the core problems animating international politics today.

The course consists of two lectures each week given by the instructor. Course readings are substantial, and students are expected to complete all readings for each week prior to the lecture.

Learning Outcomes

- Understand primary issues and disputes in international politics: students will learn to identify main actors and their interests that explains these actors' political behavior.
- Develop a strong understanding of key concepts relating to international relations: students will be introduced to theoretical concepts and models, and will learn to identify and apply these different concepts on international politics.
- Improve critical thinking skills relating to international politics: students will learn to provide critical analysis on the prospect of current affairs based on verifiable evidence.

The course aims to help students visualize puzzles such as why states engage wars? How do states maintain peace? What causes global financial crisis? How does political force intervene in international trade? How do international organizations change interstate relations? In addition to background information that help students understand the relationship and interests between actors, students will be exposed to different perspectives and views relating to international affairs. They will be encouraged to think critically about these debates and provide their assessment on different arguments.

Grading

A midterm exam (30 percent of final grade),
A cumulative final exam (30 percent),
Two in-class quiz given randomly (10 percent),
A policy analysis paper (20 percent),
Participation (10 percent).

Grade Scale:

96-100 A+ 93-95 A 90-92 A- 88-89 B+ 83-87 B 80-82 B-
78-79 C+ 73-77 C 70-72 C- 68-69 D+ 63-67 D 60-62 D-
60 and below F

(Three Steps to an A: (1) complete all assigned readings, (2) attend class, take notes, think hard, and ask meaningful questions, and (3) form study groups in preparation for exams)

Challenges:

Students wishing to challenge a grade must do so within 1 week of the day the exam/quiz/paper is handed back. Challenges must be made in writing, with a clear explanation explaining the reasons for the challenge.

General Class Rules:

If a student has a question or concern? Should an issue arise, you should contact me. I will do my best to help you out.

If a student cheats? One strike, you're out. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the University's code regarding academic integrity.

Lecture attendance? I take attendance in the beginning of lectures. Students are allowed to miss two lectures with no legitimate reasons. Regular attendance is the most important factor contributing to a student's success in this classes. Remember: class participation takes 10% of final grade. If you don't show up at all, there is no way I can evaluate your participation.

Participation? As a social science major, you will need to hone your skills of expression. There will be many chances of discussion where you can exchange your opinions with your colleagues. To get full point of participation, you need to actively participate in these discussions. I encourage a lively and free exchange of ideas no matter how unconventional they are. But you must always be respectful of other students.

Cellphone and laptop? Please silence your cellphone. Please do not text during the class. It is a courtesy to pay respect to the instructor, your fellow colleagues, and yourself. Laptop or tablet is only allowed for note taking and class-related searching.

Talking to my friend? If I can hear you, it means you are too loud and disturbing the class.

Readings

Jeffrey A. Frieden, David A. Lake, and Kenneth Schultz, *Work Politics: interests, interactions, institutions*. 2nd edition. [Be careful. Do not buy/rent the first edition.]

I have also assigned several journal articles for the course. They are must-read. Students are responsible for retrieving journal articles using the library web page. Please refer to the instruction I post on ELMS.

Other important information Honor code/Academic integrity

It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information please visit <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>.

Medically necessitated absences

The University of Maryland has a policy regarding medically necessitated absences from class. I will accept a self-signed note from the student attesting to the date of the illness as an excused absence. A student is allowed only **ONE self-signed note per class per semester**. A student who experiences a prolonged absence or an illness preventing attendance at a major scheduled grading event (see below) is required to provide written documentation of the illness from the Health Center or an outside health care provider, verifying the dates of the treatment and the time period during which the student was unable to meet academic responsibilities.

There are three major scheduled grading events: the midterm exam; the final exam; and the day the policy paper is due. It is necessary that you attend these events.

Students with disabilities

I will make every effort to accommodate students with disabilities. If you need accommodation, please let me know as early as possible; I will need written documentation from the Disability Support Service Office.

Religious observances

Please let me know in advance if a religious observance will cause you to miss a grading event. Provided you give advance notice, you will be given the opportunity to make up exams or other assignments.

*I reserve the right to change anything on this syllabus at any time, provided I give proper notice.

Resources: these well-known resources will help you keep track on international affairs.

Virtual library: international affairs resources <http://www2.etown.edu/vl/>

BBC <http://www.bbc.com/news/>

NY Times <http://www.nytimes.com/>

Financial Times <http://www.ft.com/home/us>

The Wall Street Journal <http://online.wsj.com/home-page>

The Washington Post <http://www.washingtonpost.com/regional/>

Economist <http://www.economist.com/>

Foreign Policy <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/>

Foreign Affairs <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/>

CNN <http://www.cnn.com/>

CIA World Fact Book <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>

Course Schedule

PART I: INTRODUCTION

The first week of the course will introduce to the class. In addition to summarizing course expectations, we will briefly survey major approaches to the study of international politics.

Week 1

9/2: Introduction.

9/4: Approaches to theories of international relations: realism, liberalism, constructivism.

Readings: Frieden et. al., introduction p. xxvi-xxxii; Stephen Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories", *Foreign Policy*, No. 110 (Spring 1998).

PART II: INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND CONFLICT

The second part of the course examines international security and conflict. In week 2 we will take a closer look at the realist worldview of an anarchic international system in which states struggle for power and security. In week 3 we consider the causes of war, focusing in particular on rationalist explanations for armed conflict. In week 4, we continue the focus on war by considering how domestic politics can influence the prospects for military conflict. We also discuss the relationship between democracy and war. Then we move on the effect of nuclear weapon on international security. Finally, we will discuss non-state actors and their violent behavior.

Key questions:

- What is the security dilemma, and what factors make it more or less severe?
- How do states seek security?
- Wars are very costly, so why do they occur?
- Do democracy and trade promote peace?
- Does nuclear weapon make the world more secure or more dangerous?
- Why do civil war occur?
- What do terrorist want?

Week 2

9/9: Power and the security dilemma

Readings: Robert Jervis. 1978. "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma." *World Politics* Vol. 30, No. 2. Read pages 186-214 only (start with section III).

9/11: Seeking security in an anarchic world, PD game

Readings: John Mearsheimer, *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Ch5 [ELMS]

Week 3

9/16: Exploring the causes of war

Readings: Frieden et. al. Ch3 p.80-99

9/18: Bargaining and war

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch3 p.110-122; David Lake, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory", *International Security*, vol.35, No. 3. (Winter2010/2011).

Week 4

9/23: Domestic politics and war: diversionary war, individual level of analysis

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch4 p. 136-154.

9/25: The liberal peace

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch4 p. 154-167; Sebastian Rosato, “The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory.” *American Political Science Review* Vol. 97, no. 4 (November 2003), pp. 585-602.

Week 5

9/30 Civil war

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch. 6 p. 216-237

10/2: Non-state actor and conflict: terrorism

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch. 6 p. 242-261

Week 6

10/7: Nuclear weapons

Readings: Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed* (New York: WW Norton, 2003), Chapter 3 (“Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Weapons: For Better or for Worse?”), pp. 88-124. [ELMS].

10/9: Review for midterm.

Week 7

10/14: MIDTERM EXAM

PART III: COOPERATION

Part 3 of the course focuses on what makes cooperation possible. Here we begin with concepts that explains what is meant by “cooperation.” We consider the factors that make cooperation more or less likely between countries. We also discuss international institutions and the role that they might play in facilitating cooperation between countries. First, we discuss efforts by states to achieve collective security, and we consider the United Nations here in particular. Second, we examine the reason behind states’ compliance on international treaty. We discuss human right and environmental issues. In the end, we examine how non-state actors have increasingly played an important role in international politics.

Key questions:

- What is meant by international cooperation?
- Why are states able to cooperate on some issues, but not others?
- What is meant by collective security, and how successful have states been at achieving it?
- How do international institutions affect the prospects for cooperation?
- How do non-state actors influence state decision?

Week 7

10/16: Conceptualizing cooperation and coordination, public goods, collective action, battle of sexes

Readings: Frieden et. al., p. 52-57, p. 74-79.

Week 8

10/21: The United Nations, UN peace keeping and collective security

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch. 5 p.188-210. John J. Mearsheimer, “The False Promise of International Institutions.” *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Winter 1994/1995), pp. 5-49.

10/23: The global environment: prospects for cooperation.

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch. 13, p.493-509.

Week 9

10/28: Treaty compliance, norms, and global cooperation on human rights

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch11, p. 434-445 & Ch. 12, p.456-472.

10/30: Non-state actors and activists: how they influence state compliance

Readings: Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, “Transnational advocacy networks in international and regional politics” *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. 51, Issue 159, (1999), p. 89–101.

PART IV: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

This part serves as an introduction to international political economy. We begin with trade. We ask why countries trade with each other, and why they established institutions governing international trade. Then we examine why states often choose to place restrictions on trade. We continue with international monetary relations in week 11. Here we discuss exchange rates and how it works. Then we shifts attention to currency crises. We focus especially on the role of the International Monetary Fund. Finally, in week 13 we begin with a discussion of regional integration. We will examine the evolution of the EU over time, culminating in the decision to create a monetary union. We will also examine other regional organizations. The week 14 will end with a broader consideration of globalization’s implications for state sovereignty, focusing in particular on the “race to the bottom” argument.

Key questions:

- Why do states trade with each other?
- Why do states trade the products that they do?
- Given that economists believe that trade is welfare-enhancing for countries, why do states place limits on trade?
- What are exchange rates, and why are they important?
- What criticisms have been leveled at the IMF for its handling of currency crises, and how valid are those criticisms?
- Does globalization create a race to the bottom?

Week 10

11/4: Why do countries trade with each other?

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch. 7. p. 306-311; 268-273.

11/6: protectionism in trade

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch. 7. p. 276-285. Kimberly Elliot, “Big Sugar and the Political Economy of U.S. Agricultural Policy,” Center for Global Development brief, April 2005. Online at: http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/2794_file_CGDEV_BigSugar3a.pdf

Week 11

11/11: International cooperation on trade, the World Trade Organization.

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch. 7. p. 298-306.

11/13: International monetary relations. Bretton Woods system and its collapse

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch. 9, p. 350-371.

[OUTLINE FOR THE POLICY ANALYSIS PAPER IS DUE]

Week 12

11/18: Currency crises and the International Monetary Fund.

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch. 8, p. 327-337, Ch. 9, p. 377-384

11/20: Foreign direct investment, bilateral investment treaty

Readings: Frieden et. al., Ch.8 p.316-319, 337-347).

Week 13

11/25: Regional economic integration: The European Union, NAFTA, and ASEAN

Philomena Murray, "Comparative regional integration in the EU and East Asia: Moving beyond integration snobbery", *International Politics* (2010) 47, 308–323.

11/27: Thanksgiving Day, no class

Week 14

12/2: Globalization and the "race to the bottom."

Daniel Drezner, "Globalization and Policy Convergence." *International Studies Review* 3 (Spring 2001): 53-78.

PART V: CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

Week 14

12/4: Conclusion: how will world politics change in the future? The US primacy revisited.

Joseph Nye, "Future of American Power: Dominance and Decline in Perspective", *Foreign Policy*, 2010, Vol. 89, no. 6, p.2-12.

[POLICY ANALYSIS PAPER DUE ON 12/4]

Week 15

12/9: Rise of a great power: the security and economic implications of China's rise.

Susan L. Shirk, *China, Fragile Superpower: How China's Internal Politics Could Derail its Peaceful Rise* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), chapter 3, p. 38-76. [ELMS]

12/11: Review for final

FINAL EXAM: SCHEDULED FOR Thursday, December 18, 6:30-8:30pm. PLEASE CONSULT THE UNIVERSITY'S OFFICIAL FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE TO VERIFY.