

## **PSC 161: INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

Summer 2012

MTWR 4:30-7:30 PM

Location: 105 Hylan

Instructor: Youngchae Lee ([youngchae.lee@rochester.edu](mailto:youngchae.lee@rochester.edu))

Office: 302 Harkness Hall (meetings by appointment)

### **Class Description**

This class will present a broad overview of the issues and problems in international politics, and the principal theories that scholars use to explain these events. We will begin by discussing the most fundamental and well-known approaches to understanding IR, as well as important concepts such as the nature and major actors of international relations. This will provide the basic foundation on which we can build our understanding of other topics. We then discuss issues such as the causes of war, nuclear weapons and terrorism, international law, international political economy, and globalization. Although we will be discussing past and current events in relation to the theories being presented, it should be noted that this is not a class primarily about history or current events. The purpose of this course is to provide a framework to help you understand, criticize and analyze issues of international politics.

### **Textbooks**

Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *International Relations, 2012-2013 update, 10<sup>th</sup> edition*. Pearson, 2012.

Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues, 11<sup>th</sup> edition*. Prentice Hall, 2012.

(*International Relations* is more of a conventional textbook which is meant to provide a basic introduction to each topic. *International Politics* is a collection of papers and chapter excerpts written by leading academics and policy-makers, which will expose you to a wide variety of viewpoints and explain them in greater detail.)

## **Course Requirements**

### **1. Exams**

There will be two exams given in class. The midterm is scheduled for June 4, and is worth 30% of your grade. The final is scheduled for June 18<sup>th</sup>, and is worth 50% of your grade. The final exam is cumulative. Each exam will contain short-answer questions and long essay questions. The questions will be based on material from the readings, lectures and class discussions. If you have a legitimate reason for not being able to take an exam on a scheduled date, please let me know as soon as possible. Last minute rescheduling will only be granted for medical or personal emergencies. Also, please keep returned exams in your possession until you receive your final course grade. I will not consider questions or protests about grades unless you do so.

### **2. Attendance and participation**

Since there is no separate recitation section, I will be incorporating discussions into the lectures. Therefore, it is important that you attend class regularly and participate in the discussions. Before coming to class, please read the assigned material and think about the discussion points listed in the syllabus. Outside knowledge of international politics, while welcome, is not necessary for effective participation. What is important is a careful reading of the materials assigned, and focused thinking of the ideas and theories presented in lectures.

Since this is a small class, I will be making note of your attendance and participation in every class. That being said, I will not penalize your grade if you need to miss class for a legitimate reason (such as religious observance or medical emergency), so if you cannot attend a lecture please let me know in advance unless this is physically impossible. Attendance and participation are collectively worth 20% of your grade.

## Course Schedule

(Please keep in mind that this schedule may be updated and adjusted if necessary.)

*1. Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup>: Course Overview and Introduction*

*2. Tuesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>: Classical Realism*

Pevehouse & Goldstein, Chapter 2: Realist Theories

Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogue"

Hans J. Morgenthau, "Six Principles of Political Realism"

Discussion points: Some of the basic tenets of classical realism are the immutability of human nature, importance of power considerations, and that countries should not be held accountable to "moral" standards in the same way that individuals are. Do you agree with these principles? Can you think of examples that support or contradict them?

*3. Wednesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>: Neorealism*

Pevehouse & Goldstein, Chapter 2: Realist Theories

Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Anarchic Structure of World Politics"

Stephen M. Walt, "Alliances: Balancing and Bandwagoning"

Discussion points: Neorealism argues that the structure of the international system is most important in explaining international politics. Is this convincing, and can you think of examples that support this argument? Does "balancing" power between countries make the world a more stable place?

*4. Thursday, May 24<sup>th</sup>: Liberalism and Constructivism*

P&G Chapter 3: Liberal and Social Theories

Michael W. Doyle, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs"

Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It"

Discussion points: Liberalists' view of international politics differs significantly from that of realists. Some major differences are belief in human progress, optimism regarding world cooperation, and the importance of domestic institutions in explaining international politics. Constructivists also differ from realists in that they believe that many aspects of international relations are socially constructed. Do you think they are able to make a strong case against realism? Which perspective would you agree with the most?

Watch: Lord of the Flies (1963)

5. *Tuesday, May 29<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>: Causes of Conflict*

Pevehouse & Goldstein, Chapter 5: International Conflict

Robert Jervis, "Offense, Defense, and the Security Dilemma"

James D. Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War"

Robert Jervis, "The Era of Leading Power Peace"

Robert J. Art, "The U.S. and the Rise of China"

Discussion points: There are many different explanations about the causes of war. Some focus on human nature, others focus on the domestic characteristics of countries, and some focus on the distribution of power in the international system. Which of these approaches do you think explains causes of war the best? If distribution of power is a good explanation, do you think the presence of a "hegemon" is a good insurer of international peace? What implications might this have regarding the United States vis-à-vis the rising power of China?

7. *Thursday, May 31<sup>st</sup>: Weapons of Mass Destruction*

Pevehouse & Goldstein, Chapter 6: Military Force and Terrorism

Thomas C. Schelling, "The Diplomacy of Violence"

Henry Sokolski and Patrick Clawson, "Getting Ready for a Nuclear-Ready Iran"

Barry R. Posen, "Dealing with a Nuclear-Armed Iran"

Discussion points: Do you think nuclear weapons can be an effective tool of coercion between countries, given that their usage can be mutually destructive, which makes countries reluctant to use them? Will nuclear proliferation be detrimental to world peace?

Watch: Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb

8. *Monday, June 4<sup>th</sup>: Midterm*

9. *Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>: Terrorism*

Pevehouse & Goldstein, Chapter 6: Military Force and Terrorism

Bruce Hoffman, "What Is Terrorism?"

Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism"

Audrey Cronin, "Ending Terrorism"

Discussion points: How convincing to you find the argument that terrorists are not irrational, but instead rational people who use terrorism strategically? Do you think the "terrorism as strategy" argument explains terrorism better than "psychological" explanations? Do you agree with the idea that democracies are "soft" targets that are more likely to give into terrorist demands?

*10. Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup>: International Law*

Pevehouse & Goldstein, Chapter 7: International Organization, Law, and Human rights

Robert O. Keohane, "International Institutions"

Stanley Hoffmann, "The Uses and Limits of International Law"

Stephen R. Ratner, "International Law: The Trials of Global Norms"

Rhoda E. Howard and Jack Donnelly, "Human Rights in World Politics"

Discussion points: Can international law be effective, given that there is no supra-national government to enforce it? Are powerful countries less likely to comply with international laws? Do countries actually care about norms and values such as justice or fairness?

*11. Thursday, June 7<sup>th</sup>: International Institutions*

Pevehouse & Goldstein, Chapter 7: International Organization, Law, and Human rights

Adam Roberts, "The United Nations and International Security"

Kofi Annan, "Reflections on Intervention"

Discussion points: Do you think international institutions such as the UN are functioning effectively? Are these institutions "fair" to all countries? How important do you think power considerations are to the workings of these institutions?

Watch: Shake Hands With the Devil: The Journey of Romeo Dallaire

*12. Monday, June 11<sup>th</sup>: International Political Economy*

Pevehouse & Goldstein, Chapter 8: International Trade

Pevehouse & Goldstein, Chapter 9: Global Finance and Business

Robert Gilpin, "The Nature of Political Economy"

Michael J. Hiscox, "The Domestic Sources of Foreign Economic Policies"

Discussion points: Do you think mercantilist forces or liberalist forces are stronger in international trade today? Do you think it is acceptable for countries to pursue protectionist policies to protect specific domestic interests?

*13. Tuesday, June 12<sup>th</sup>: Globalization*

Jeffrey Frankel, "The Globalization of the International Economy"

Dani Rodrik, "Trading in Illusions"

John Micklethwait and Adrain Wooldridge, "Why the Globalization Backlash is Stupid"

Bruce R. Scott, "The Great Divide in the Global Village"

Discussion points: There are many arguments for and against globalization. Do you think the pros outweigh the cons of globalization? Do you think the downsides of globalization are inevitable? Can raising economic barriers be justified in the interest of mitigating these drawbacks?

*14. Wednesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>: Clash of Civilizations*

Samuel P. Huntington. 1993. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, vol.27, No.3. pp 22-49.

Discussion points: Do you think clashes between "cultures" can be a convincing explanation for war? Is this something we observe in the real world? Is the concept of "culture" something that can be properly conceptualized?

Watch: The Myth of the Clash of Civilizations

*14. Thursday, June 14<sup>th</sup>: Environmental Problems*

Pevehouse & Goldstein, Chapter 11: Environment and Population

Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons"

David G. Victor, "International Cooperation on Climate Change: Numbers, Interests, and Institutions"

Discussion points: Why is international cooperation on environmental issues so difficult? Do you think these problems are more difficult to solve than issues relating to trade or military conflict? Do NGOs have a part to play in this process, and how might they work? Do they have any actual powers of persuasion over governments?

*16. Monday, June 18<sup>th</sup>: Final exam.*