

## **POL 454: Theories of International Relations**

### **Summer Session**

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## **Course Description and Objectives**

In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, states have little choice in interacting with one another across issue domains involving security and economic interests. Within these broad categories of international issues, states must address whether to work together or separately on questions involving, among other issues, human rights, war, territory, environmental sustainability, and trade. Do these interactions lead states to conflict or cooperation? What conditions increase or decrease the likelihood that states find themselves locked in conflict with others? Who are the actors making decisions on behalf of states that exacerbate conflict or encourage cooperation?

Conflict, however, is not solely a characteristic of the international realm; to the contrary, the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have witnessed an increase in civil wars within the territories of sovereign states. Although intrastate wars involve campaigns by rebels to either gain control of the levers of state power or the opportunity for self-determination, many of these conflicts expand beyond state borders to implicate, either directly or indirectly, other states. Are civil wars distinct from wars in the international realm? How should scholars and policymakers understand the complexities of civil wars? Are these solely local conflicts or do they become internationalized, inducing external interventions into domestic politics?

In this course, we will be reviewing, discussing, and analyzing the scholarly work that has been directed at seeking answers to these questions. The authors and works we discuss in this course approach these questions scientifically, that is, they craft theories, which rely on a set of certain assumptions, to explain the observable dynamics of international politics. From these theories, expectations for political behavior are derived and the resulting hypotheses are tested through empirical analysis. By pursuing the scientific study of international relations, we should have a better understand of cooperation and conflict in the midst of international politics by the end of this course.

To that end, the course is divided into five sections. In the first week, we will begin our initial foray into the realm of international politics by looking at the major paradigms of international relations (*e.g.*, realism, liberalism, and constructivism) and theories predicated on intuitions of power. The second week addresses three important questions: (1) who are the salient actors in international politics, (2) do the individual characteristics of these actors matter for understanding international dynamics, and (3) is there a linkage between domestic politics and

international behavior. In the following week, our consideration turns to looking much closer at domestic conditions on questions of conflict and cooperation before analyzing how instances of conflict can end and create an environment for sustainable cooperation. These issues set the stage for the fourth week in which we will delve into domestic politics concerning instances of civil war, terrorism, and human rights. We will end the fourth week by discussing the future of the scientific study of international relations and how it remains relevant to scholars, policymakers, citizens, and students in the twenty-first century. The course concludes in the fifth week with the final exam and the term paper.

## **Course Format and Materials**

### *Course Readings*

In this course, we will be engaging with readings from the relevant literatures concerning the many dimensions of international relations. Each week has approximately three-to-five readings and the majority of the readings are articles available through the University of Arizona Library's electronic system. In the third week, there are two chapters assigned as readings from John A. Vasquez's edited volume *What Do We Know about War?* As with the assigned articles, this book is available through the library's electronic system.

The assigned readings are separated into two categories: (1) required and (2) recommended. Students will only be expected to read those denoted as "required," however, the recommended readings will provide important background information that greatly assists in the reading and analysis of the required readings.

Each of these readings approaches their subject matter from a scientific perspective, however, they do not all use similar empirical methodologies, that is, some of the readings leverage qualitative methods and others incorporate quantitative methods. For this course, the important aspects of these works are the research questions they are investigating, the theories each author constructs to answer these questions, and the conclusions the authors draw. Neither the questions nor the exams will include questions about the methodologies employed in the assigned readings.

### *Course Assignments*

#### *Lecture Quizzes*

Throughout the course, students will be expected to complete a number of lecture quizzes. Although five quizzes are assigned during the course, the final course grade will only take into account each student's four highest quiz scores of the five quizzes. These quizzes will be 10-15 questions in length and will be completed through the University of Arizona's D2L system. Each quiz will consist of multiple choice, true/false, matching or ordering of terms, or fill-in-the-blank questions.

Each quiz will become available on the D2L page at the beginning of the week on Monday mornings and each must be completed by the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m. Students will have

30 minutes to complete each quiz. The lecture quizzes are open-notes assignments, however, students may not discuss the questions or answers with any other student.

Quizzes 1 through 4 will be based upon material covered in the lectures and required readings for each week, whereas Quiz 5 will derive questions from any of the subjects covered in the course. In this way, Quiz 5 will assist students in preparing for the final exam. Please see the Course Schedule in the syllabus and the D2L page for the specific due dates for each quiz.

### *Weekly Discussions*

In order to facilitate class discussion regarding the concepts and readings we will encounter in this course, students will be required to participate in weekly class discussions via the discussion boards on D2L. The discussions will consist of two parts. First, students should select one of the topics addressed in either the weekly lectures or readings, and write a two-to-three paragraph reaction to selected topic. The short essay should briefly identify the topic being discussed, the student's assessment of the topic in its ability to help us understand international politics, any potential shortcomings of the topic, and any possible additions or extensions of the topic. Each student's written reaction should be posted to the class discussion boards on D2L by 11:59 p.m. on each Friday of the course.

The second part of the weekly discussion assignments requires students to respond briefly to one classmate's postings. This response should be one-to-two paragraphs in length and written in a courteous and professional manner. The response to be written and submitted by students must be posted to the class discussion boards on D2L by 11:59 p.m. on each Sunday of the course.

### *Final Exam*

Students will be required to complete a final exam. The final exam will be comprehensive and exam questions can incorporate material from any and all concepts and topics included in the course lectures and readings. Thus, students will be expected to answer questions on any of the topics discussed during the first four weeks of the course. The final exam will become available on D2L on the morning of August 2, 2019 and it will be due on August 7, 2019 at 11:59 p.m.

### *Term Paper*

Each student is expected to complete a term paper by the end of the course that addresses one of the following topics:

**Topic 1:** History is marked by instances of both cooperation and conflict among states in the international sphere. Realism, liberalism, and constructivism are three prominent paradigms scholars leverage to identify and explain the factors that lead to either cooperation or conflict. These paradigms vary in a number of ways, which often leads to different understandings of international politics and expectations concerning international outcomes. Students selecting this topic should choose two of the paradigms and address the following questions:

- What assumptions set the foundations for the theories?
- How do the theories understand states and their interests?
- What outcomes do the theories anticipate?
- Which theory, in the student's opinion, is best able to explain international politics?
- Are there real-world examples that support one theory over another?

**Topic 2:** Across the many issue domains of international relations, states are important actors; however, scholars do not always agree on the conceptualization, definition, or scope of states. Do national leaders typify the state? Do state interests supersede individual decision makers? Do citizens and civil society actors influence state behavior? How do state characteristics impact international and domestic politics, if at all? For students selecting this topic, the paper should focus on one of the following areas of international relations: (1) interstate conflict; (2) international cooperation; (3) civil wars; or (4) state repression. After choosing an issue area, students should describe how states and their characteristics help or hinder our understanding of the chosen issue area.

**Topic 3:** Although the twentieth century was marred by tensions and wars between and among major power states, conflict has not been relegated solely to the realm of international politics. Rather, many states, particularly in the post-Cold War period, have experienced civil wars, which have taken innumerable lives and destroyed many communities. Are these types of conflicts (civil wars) different than conflict among states? If so, how are civil wars unique? If not, how might scholarship on interstate conflicts inform our understanding of civil wars?

**Topic 4:** Students have the opportunity to write a term paper on a topic of their own choosing; however, the topic should relate to the materials and concepts discussed during the course. If students would like to write on an alternative topic, they must email the instructor a brief description of the topic and they must obtain the instructor's approval to write the term paper on the topic.

In terms of formatting, the term paper should be five-to-seven pages (excluding the bibliography) and double-spaced. Students should include their names in the header of each page and page numbers in the footer of each page. In addressing the chosen topic, students should use the materials covered during the course; however, students may also utilize outside sources that may be applicable to their paper's topic. With respect to any source, the term paper should be accompanied by a bibliography that includes citations to those works cited in the term paper. The bibliography does not count toward the page limitation.

Term papers are due at 11:59 p.m. on August 7, 2019, and the papers should be submitted through the D2L system in Word format.

#### *Extra Credit*

Students will have an opportunity to earn extra credit points for this course by selecting a news media article and writing a short paper relating one of the concepts we have discussed in this

course to the subject of article. The short paper should be at least 1 page in length (double-spaced) but not more than 2 pages and it should include the following components:

1. A brief summary of the article, including a link or citation to the article;
2. A description of the relevant concept from the course; and
3. A discussion as to how the concept relates to the article.

The short paper must be turned in on D2L by 11:59 p.m. on August 2, 2019.

## Grading and Evaluation

Students overall grades for the course will be derived from four categories of assignments: (1) lecture quizzes, (2) weekly discussion assignments, (3) a final exam, and (4) a term paper. The grade breakdown between the course assignments are presented in the following table:

Lecture Quiz 1	5%
Lecture Quiz 2	5%
Lecture Quiz 3	5%
Lecture Quiz 4	5%
Weekly Discussion 1	5%
Weekly Discussion 2	5%
Weekly Discussion 3	5%
Weekly Discussion 4	5%
Final Exam	30%
Term Paper	30%
Extra Credit	Up to 3 percentage points on the overall grade

### *Grading Scale:*

90%-100% A  
80%-89% B  
70%-79% C  
60%-69% D  
59% and below F

## Course Schedule and Assignments

*Week 1: July 8 – 12, 2019*

Lecture 1: Introduction to the Course

- Reading(s):
- Course Syllabus

Lecture 2: The Scientific Study of International Relations

-Reading(s):

-(**Required**) Milner, Helen. "The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory: A Critique." *Review of International Studies* 17(1) (1991): 67-85.

-(*Recommended*) Singer, J. David. "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations." *World Politics* 14(1) (1961): 77-92.

Lecture 3: Major Paradigms in International Relations

-Reading(s):

-(**Required**) Walt, Stephen M. "International Relations: One World, Many Theories." *Foreign Policy* 110 (1998): 29-32 & 34-46.

-(*Recommended*) Tannenwald, Nina. "Stigmatizing the Bomb: Origins of the Nuclear Taboo." *International Security* 29(4) (2005): 5-49.

Lecture 4: Theories of Power – Conflict or Cooperation?

-Reading(s):

-(**Required**) Butt, Ahsan. "Anarchy and Hierarchy in International Relations: Examining South America's War-Prone Decade, 1932-1941." *International Organization* 67(3) (2013): 575-607.

Assignments:

-Lecture Quiz 1

-Discussion Assignment 1

*Week 2: July 15 – 19, 2019*

Lecture 5: Rational Choice Theories and the Bargaining Framework of War

-Reading(s):

-(*Recommended*) Reiter, Dan. "Exploring the Bargaining Model of War." *Perspective on Politics* 1(1) (2003): 27-43.

Lecture 6: Systemic and Dyadic Approaches to International Relations

-Reading(s):

-(**Required**) Bremer, Stuart A. "Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate War, 1816-1965." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36(2) (1992): 309-341.

-(**Required**) Mitchell, Sara M. "A Kantian System? Democracy and Third-Party Conflict Resolution." *American Journal of Political Science* 46(4) (2002): 749-759.

Lecture 7: Linking the International Sphere with the Domestic Arena through Domestic Political Institutions

-Reading(s):

- (**Required**) Weeks, Jessica L. "Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve." *International Organization* 62(1) (2008): 35-64.
- (*Recommended*) Putnam, Robert D. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level games." *International Organization* 42(3) (1988): 427-460.

Assignments:

- Lecture Quiz 2
- Discussion Assignment 2

*Week 3: July 22 – 26, 2019*

Lecture 8: The Democratic Peace and Its Challengers

-Reading(s):

- (**Required**) Mitchell, Sara M. "Norms and the Democratic Peace." In *What Do We Know about War?* Edited by John A. Vasquez (2012), 167-188. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- (**Required**) Gibler, Douglas. "The Implications of a Territorial Peace." In *What Do We Know about War?* Edited by John A. Vasquez (2012), 211-234. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- (*Recommended*) Maoz, Zeev, and Bruce Russett. "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946-1986." *American Political Science Review* 87(3) (1993): 624-638.

Lecture 9: International Institutions

-Reading(s):

- (*Recommended*) Abbott, Kenneth W., and Duncan Snidal. "Why States Act through Formal International Organizations." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42(1) (1998): 3-32.

Lecture 10: Conflict Management and the Pursuit of Stability

-Reading(s):

- (**Required**) Fortna, Virginia, P., and Lisa M. Howard. "Pitfalls and Prospects in the Peacekeeping Literature." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (2008): 283-301.
- (*Recommended*) Simmons, Beth A. "Capacity, Commitment, and Compliance: International Institutions and Territorial Disputes." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46(6) (2002): 829-856.

Assignments:

- Lecture Quiz 3
- Discussion Assignment 3

*Week 4: July 29 – August 2, 2019*

Lecture 11: International Human Rights Regimes and Instances of State Repression

-Reading(s):

- (**Required**) Hafner-Burton, Emilie M. “International Regimes for Human Rights.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 15 (2012): 265-286.
- (*Recommended*) Davenport, Christian. “State Repression and Political Order.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (2007): 1-23.

Lecture 12: Civil War and Terrorism

-Reading(s):

- (**Required**) Stewart, Megan A. “Civil War as State-Making: Strategic Governance in Civil War.” *International Organization* 72(1) (2018): 205-226.
- (*Recommended*) Walter, Barbara F. “Bargaining Failures and Civil War.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 243-261.
- (*Recommended*) Kydd, Andrew H., and Barbara F. Walter. “The Strategies of Terrorism.” *International Security* 31(1) (2006): 49-80.

Lecture 13: The Future of International Relations and Its Relevance for 21<sup>st</sup> Century International Politics

-Reading(s):

- (**Required**) Sanger, David E., and Nicole Perlroth. “U.S. Escalates Online Attacks on Russia’s Power Grid.” *The New York Times* (June 15, 2019).
- (**Required**) Graham, Dave, and David Ljunggren. “New NAFTA Deal ‘in Trouble,’ Bruised by Elections, Tariff Rows.” *Reuters* (April 7, 2019).
- (**Required**) “Syria’s War: Who Is Fighting and Why.” *Vox* (April 7, 2017), accessible at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFpanWNgfQY>.
- (*Recommended*) Snyder, Jack. “One World, Rival Theories.” *Foreign Policy* 145 (2004): 52-62.

Lecture 14: Review and Preparation for the Final Exam

Assignments:

- Lecture Quiz 4
- Lecture Quiz 5
- Discussion Assignment 4

*Week 5: August 5 – 9, 2019*

Assignments:

- Final Exam (Due on D2L August 7, 2019 at 11:59 p.m.)
- Term Paper (Due on D2L August 7, 2019 at 11:59 p.m.)

## **Course Policies**

### *Late Work Policy*

Students are required to complete all assignments on time, and late work will not be accepted outside the times described in the syllabus, except in cases involving a documented emergency or illness. If a student believes there is a compelling reason to turn in assignments beyond the designated due date, the student should e-mail the instructor.

### *Academic Integrity*

Students are responsible for knowing, understanding, and abiding by the University of Arizona's Code of Academic Integrity. Honesty is a pillar standing at the center of the pursuit of knowledge and its transmission through the educational process, and students are expected to maintain high levels of integrity and ethical behavior throughout all the assignments and discussions in this course. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Each student's work must be completed individually unless otherwise stated in the syllabus;
- Student's work in this course should be original, however, there will be instances wherein students will be expected to incorporate or build upon others' works. Students must avoid plagiarism by attributing credit to others' works when appropriate. The university's library has several tips for students as to how to avoid plagiarism, which can be found at <https://new.library.arizona.edu/research/citing/plagiarism>.
- An important aspect of this course is the "classroom" discussions we will have via the weekly discussion assignments. Students are encouraged to engage in free and open discussions involving the students' intellectual perspectives on the theories and concepts discussed in the course. In this endeavor, students are expected to comport themselves in a courteous and professional manner. Derogatory and/or threatening comments are unacceptable and will be addressed through appropriate actions via university channels. For more information concerning students' responsibilities in fostering a positive learning environment, please see <https://policy.arizona.edu/education-and-student-affairs/threatening-behavior-students>.
- Course lectures, quizzes, and exam materials are property of the instructor and cannot be copied, recorded, distributed, or sold without the instructor's consent.

For additional information on the university's Code of Academic Integrity, please see <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity>.

### *Confidentiality of Student Records*

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA") is a federal law governing the rights of students and outlining the institutional responsibilities attendant to student records. Of its many aims, FERPA is a federal law directed toward the protection of students' privacy regarding their educational records. One practical implication of FERPA is that any component of the course related to, either directly or indirectly, individual grades will not be discussed via e-mail. If a student wishes to discuss individual grades, the student should e-mail the instructor to schedule an appointment to meet with the instructor.

For additional information concerning FERPA, please see the university's website at <https://www.registrar.arizona.edu/personal-information/family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act-1974-ferpa>.

### *Revisions to the Syllabus*

As instructor, I reserve the right to amend, modify, and/or update the syllabus; and in the event of a modification to the syllabus, an updated version will be provided to the class.