COURSE DESCRIPTION

This IR Pro-Seminar provides students with an overview of the theoretical traditions inspiring current research in international relations. The course will focus on the major theories of IR, and how theoretical debates inform key literature in major subfields of international relations. The course is designed to help students prepare for the IR comprehensive exam as well as to develop dissertation topics and research plans in international relations. As such, it is constructed in such a way as to familiarize students with canonical readings, debates and cleavages in the field, key substantive subfields, and ways in which individual scholars might situate topically interesting work in such a way as to speak to the wider discipline.

This is a reading seminar. Normally the first 20-30 minutes will be devoted to a brief overview of the literature being covered that week. This will be followed by a two presentations. Each week, one student will describe the historical and political context of the material through references to the biographies of canonical authors drawn from the Fifty Key Thinkers volume and other readings. Second, a different student will summarize the supplementary readings as assigned for that week and link them analytically and critically to the required readings. A semi-structured discussion will follow these two presentations each week in which each student is expected to participate in an informed, thoughtful way. Students will discuss their reactions to the required literature, based on 1-2 page critical reaction memos they will prepare weekly. This format will commence in modules two and three after some introductory material in the first two weeks, and prior to module four which will include a series of guest speakers working on topics that cut across conventional IR subfields. The course will conclude with a discussion of navigating IR as a profession.

REQUIRED READINGS

The reading load for this course is heavy. You are not required to read every word. Use your time strategically, but try to understand the main points of all the readings as well as similarities and contrasts between the arguments made by different authors.

Required Readings are the minimum essential to do well in the class and will form the basis of class discussions and exercises. You are expected to come to class having absorbed the basic substance of and prepared to raise questions about all the required readings. You will need to obtain hard copies of the readings either by purchase, copying reserve readings, or downloading from the Internet, and bring them to class. I recommend reading both with a highlighter (to make visible the basic points of the articles and books for later re-skimming) and with a pen (for writing comments and questions to yourself in the margins).

Supplementary Readings are additional to the class readings for that week. They are not mandatory for all students, but will enhance your understanding of the material even if you simply find time to skim them. On any given week, a particular student will be responsible for completing the supplementary readings, and summarizing them for the rest of the class as they relate to the required readings.
Every student enrolled in this course should invest, at a minimum, in the following books:

Martin Griffins, Steve Roach, and Scott Solomon. 2009. *Fifty Key Thinkers in International Relations*.

In addition to these overviews of the field, we will be reading four canonical sole-authored books: these will be on reserve and can also be purchased on Amazon if a student wishes for their own copy to mark up (highly recommended):

Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony*.

The following readers will also be used enough to justify purchase; however if you prefer you can find these on reserve as well, or download many of the articles therein from online databases.


In addition to these required and supplementary readings, students are strongly encouraged to stay abreast of the latest abstracts, and articles in their areas of interest, in the following flagship journals in the profession of international relations: *International Organization, International Studies Quarterly, and International Security*. It is also important to cultivate a habit of reading *The New York Times* or *Washington Post, The Economist*, and as many other sources of information on current foreign policy debates and discourse as possible.
GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Grading: Your final letter grade is based on a 100 pt. scale. 93-100 = A; 90-92.9 = A-; 87-89.9 = B+; 82-86.9 = B; 80-81.9 = B-; 77-79.9 = C+; 72-76.9 = C; 70-72.9 = C-; 60-69 = D; less than 60 = F. Only exceptional work will receive grades of an A- or higher, but it is expected that all doctoral students will cultivate the skills necessary to produce such work. These include completing the readings; coming to class prepared to provide incisive commentary on the readings; meeting writing deadlines with polished, concise, well-organized prose; synthesizing existing literature into original arguments rather than simply regurgitating it; and linking theories to real-world evidence in order to critically assess them. I will provide ample mentorship on all these skills as we go through the semester.

Attendance and Participation (40 pts):

The class and discussion sections will be highly interactive. Attendance and engaged participation is essential both to your ability to absorb the information and to the effective functioning of the classroom environment. You are required to come to each class prepared to discuss in depth each of the required readings listed on the syllabus.

Short Reaction Memos. As part of your participation grade each week, you are required to prepare a 1-2 page reaction memo with pithy descriptions of the overall set of readings along with critical reactions to the set of readings for the week, and be prepared to share your views with your classmates in order to jump-start discussion. These memos will be ungraded, but the instructor will provide feedback each week on student’s ability to concisely write and synthesize literature in IR, with the expectation that each student will demonstrate improvement over the course of the term culminating in well-written graded assignments. You must come to class with a total of ten reaction memos for full participation points,¹ and the instructor will consider the quality of the memos in the subjective assessment of your participation grade. These memos should also be archived as a set of notes that will help you study and prepare for comps.

It should go without saying that in a graduate seminar of this type it is vital to attend all sessions, and to communicate in advance with the instructor should you require an excused absence. Events such as deaths in the family, documented illness of oneself or one’s child, or emergencies of similar gravity qualify for excused absences. It is also important to show up for section prepared to discuss the readings and link them to global issues.

Writing Assignments (60 pts)

In addition to weekly 1-2 pg reaction memos to the required readings, students must turn in two types of formal writing assignments for the term.

Analytical Essays (30 points) First, each must turn in two of three possible analytical essays drawing on the readings in Modules 2-4 to make an original argument about a) the theoretical fields in IR; b) the state of the substantive subfields in IR and c) the state of cross-cutting research agendas within IR. These are due electronically the Sunday after the end of each module, to leave time to complete the readings before the next module begins the following Thursday. Each essay should be 3-5 single-spaced pages and is worth 15 points.

¹ Memos can be turned in during a total of twelve weeks, January 28 – April 22, so in essence this allows you to skip the memo in any two weeks without penalty. However, I recommend saving these for when you really need them. Any additional missing memos will result in a deduction of 2 points from your final grade. I do not accept late memos.
Final Exam (30 points) Each student must turn in an 10-15 pg final exam designed to simulate a comprehensive exam question. These are due on the last day of class and further instructions will be provided as the end of the semester arrives.

NOTE: PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED ON ANY WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT.² PLAGIARIZED WORK OF ANY KIND OR ANY OTHER FORM OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC F FOR THE ASSIGNMENT.

Students with Disabilities. If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact me as well as Disability Resources and Services (231 Whitmore Administration Building, 413-545-0892) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for the course.

TENTATIVE READING SCHEDULE

MODULE ONE: INTRODUCTION TO IR THEORY AS A FIELD

January 21: Welcome and Introduction
What does it mean to refer to international relations as a field of political science? What is the role of the IR scholar in the world? What is the relationship of responsible IR scholarship to foreign policy-making? What do research agendas in international relations look like and what do we bring to them? In what historical and sociological processes is the study of international relations rooted and how is it changing? By whom is it all written?

Robert Keohane, "Political Science as a Vocation"
Stephen Walt, "One World, Many Theories."
Hollis and Smith, Explaining and Understanding IR, chapters 1 and 2
Viotti and Kauppi, International Relations Theory, chapter 1 minus selected readings.
Ann Tickner and Andrei Tsygankov, "Responsible Scholarship in International Relations: A Symposium"
Ole Waever, "The Sociology of a Not-So-International Discipline"

January 28: Contested Concepts, Useful Jargon and some Sociology of the Field

Viotti and Kauppi, ch. 1 Selected Readings: (Rosenau, Waltz, Weber)
Hollis and Smith, ch. 3 and 4
Yosef Lapid, “The Third Debate”
Colin Elman and Miram Fendus Elman, “How Not to Be Lakatos Intolerant”
Patrick Jackson and Daniel Nexon. “Paradigmatic Faults in IR Theory”
Barnett and Duvall, “Power in Global Governance”
David Lake, “The New Sovereignty in International Relations”

²Plagiarism means attempting to pass off someone else’s research or writing as your own. It is very easy to catch plagiarists, and I love to do it, so don’t risk your grade or your academic reputation. University of Massachusetts-Amherst’s plagiarism policy can be found at: http://www.umass.edu/writingprogram/resources/plagiarism.html.
MODULE TWO: MAJOR SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT IN THE CONTEMPORARY IR CANON

February 4: Realism and Neo-realism
What accounts for patterns of war and peace among great powers? What are the characteristics of the international system, and to what extent do systemic factors determine state behavior? Given these factors, under what conditions is international stability likeliest? What are the policy implications of such ideas?

Required Readings:
Viotti and Kauppi, ch 2., including these selected readings: (Thucydides, Hobbes, Machiavelli, Rousseau)
Hollis and Smith, ch. 5
John Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, chs. 1, 2, 6, 9, 10; skim ch 4, 5, 7 and 8.

Supplementary Readings:
Fifty Key Thinkers: Chapters on Carr, Gilpin, Krasner, Morgenthau, Waltz.

February 11: Liberalism, Institutionalism and Neo-liberal Institutionalism
To what extent do domestic politics and institutions influence international behavior and why? Does economic interdependence affect state behavior under anarchy? Do international institutions and regimes matter independently of great power interests or are they simply side effects of those interests? Why have such questions often been dismissed as “idealistic” by “realist” thinkers?

Required Readings:
Viotti and Kauppi, ch. 3, incl selected readings: (Doyle, Keohane)
Keohane, “Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond,” in Neorealism and Its Critics.
Keohane, After Hegemony, 2005 Preface and chs, 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 11.
Stephen Haggard and Beth Simmons, “Theories of International Regimes” in Theories of IPE
Andrew Moravscik, “Taking Preferences Seriously” in Theories of IPE
Robert Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics,” in Theories of IPE

Supplementary Readings:
Fifty Key Thinkers, Chapters on Keohane, Doyle, Haas
Theories of War and Peace, Chapters by Mearshemier, “False Promise…”; Keohane and Martin, and Wendt.

February 18: NO CLASS – Professor Away at International Studies Association Conference

February 25: Rationalist Approaches
What does it mean to behave “rationally” and how far can assumptions of rationality take us in explaining human behavior? How does game theory work and what does it tell us? What are the characteristics and assumptions of formal models, and can they be used to reliably explain and predict international outcomes?

Required Readings:
Hollis and Smith, ch. 6
James Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War”
Bueno de Mesquita, “Game Theory, Political Economy and the Evolving Study of War and Peace”
David Lake and Robert Powell, Strategic Choice and International Relations, chs. 1, 2, 3 and 7.

Supplementary Readings:
Stephen Walt, “Rigor or Rigor Mortis?”
Frank Zagare, “All Mortis, No Rigor”
March 4: Constructivist Approaches
Where do preferences come from? What is identity? Why do self-interested actors so often follow “norms” that contradict their material interests? Under what conditions can states caught in a security dilemma be expected to behave this way? How do these norms evolve, how are they carried and how much power do they have relative to “might” in international politics?

Required Readings:
Viotti and Kauppi, ch. 6, “Constructivist Understandings”
Hollis and Smith, ch. 7
Martha Finnemore, National Interests in International Society.
Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy Is What States Make of It” in Theories of IPE.
Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change” in KKK.
Emmanuel Adler, Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics
James March and Johan Olsen, “The Institutional Dynamics of International Politics Orders” in KKK.
Thomas Risse, “Let’s Argue! Communicative Action in World Politics”

Supplementary Readings:
Fifty Key Thinkers, chapters on Wendt, Ruggie, Onuf, Kratochwil, Reus-Smit
Samuel Barkin, Realist Constructivism
Patrick Jackson, ed., Bridging the Gap: Toward a Realist-Constructivist Dialogue

March 11: Critical Theory and Feminist IR
How do the theoretical assumptions, normative biases and interpersonal subjectivities we bring to the research enterprise impact our understandings of the world, and through us, the world itself? Are IR theorists complicit in reproducing unjust social relations, such as gender hierarchies? How are these social relations inscribed upon disciplinary practices? What is the theorists’ role in helping to illuminate and change such social relations? Is ‘objective’ science possible and defensible?

Required Readings:
Viotti and Kauppi, ch. 7 incl. selected readings: (Campbell, Beer and Hariman)
Hollis and Smith, ch. 8
Viotti and Kauppi, ch. 8 incl selected readings: (Young)
Ann Tickner, Gendering World Politics, ch, 1, 4 and 5
Lene Hansen, The Little Mermaid’s Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School

Supplementary:
Fifty Key Thinkers, chapters on Cox, Campbell, Tickner, Enloe, Sylvester
Keohane, Beyond Dichotomy
Marchand, Different Communities/Different Realities/Different Encounters
Tickner, Continuing the Conversation

Sunday, March 14th: Module Two Analytical Paper Due Electronically at 5pm.
MODULE THREE: MAJOR THEMATIC SUBFIELDS WITHIN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

March 18: International Security (Foreign Policy)
What constitutes “security studies” as a subfield in IR? How has the subject matter of international security changed in the last two decades and where is it going? What is its relationship to the wider field of IR and to the practice of foreign policy?

Required Readings:
Stephen Walt, “The Renaissance of Security Studies”
Graham Allison, “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis”
James Fearon, “Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes”
Theories of War and Peace, chapters by Owen, Layne, Mansfield & Snyder
New Global Dangers, Part I (Sagan)
Tickner, Gendering World Politics, Ch. 2

Supplementary Readings:

March 25: International Political Economy (Globalization)
What constitutes “international political economy” as a subfield of IR? How has the subject matter of IPE changed in the last two decades and where is it going? What is its relationship to the wider field of IR, to other fields within political science and other disciplines, and to processes of globalization?

Required Readings:
Viotti and Kauppi, ch 4 incl. selected readings: (Wallerstein)
John Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, ch. 3
John Ruggie, “International Regimes, Transactions and Exchange,” in Theories of IPE.
Robert Keohane, “The Old IPE and the New”
Tickner, Ch. 3

Supplementary Readings:
David Lake, “Open Economy Politics: A Critical Review”

April 1: International Law and Organizations (Human Rights / International Environmental Politics)
How cohesive are “international law” and “international organizations” as specializations within IR? How has the study of international law / organizations changed and where is it going? What is their relationship to the wider field of IR, to other fields within political science and other disciplines, and to wider processes of global governance, such as those in the areas of human rights and environmental politics?

Required Readings:
Martin and Simmons, International Institutions: An International Organizations Reader, (Martin and Simmons, Young, Mitchell, Chayes and Chayes, Barnett and Finnemore)
Inis Claude, “Collective Legitimation as a Political Function of the UN”
Christian Reus-Smit, The Politics of International Law ch. 2

Supplementary Readings:
Hafner-Burton and Ron, “Seeing Double: Human Rights Impact Through Qualitative and Quantitative Eyes”

April 4th, Sunday: Module Three Analytical Paper Due Electronically at 5pm.
MODULE FOUR: CROSS-CUTTING THEMES IN IR THEORY

April 8: Unconventional Threats
Guest Speaker: Daniel Drezner, Tufts University
How is the global security environment changing in the twenty-first century world? How do global threats such as pandemics, environmental pressures and asymmetric warfare challenge the constitution of actors and their preferences on the global stage? How is the discipline of IR reacting to these changes? Can conventional theories of IR explain, predict and accommodate such historical events? Or are conventional assumptions, theories and norms standing in the way of a more comprehensive response to such unconventional threats?

Required Readings:
*Alexander Wendt, “Sovereignty and the UFO”

April 15: Post-Westphalian Governance
Guest Speaker: Virginia Haufler, University of Maryland
What does ‘governance’ look like in a world characterized by transnational problems and common pool resources disputes? Are state-centric notions of ‘governance’ adequate to describe and explain world political processes?

Required Readings:
Virginia Haufler, “Corporations in zones of conflict: issues, actors and institutions,” forthcoming. TBD
Deborah Avant, Martha Finnemore and Susan Sell, “Who Governs the Globe?” forthcoming. TBD
New Global Dangers, Part III “Transnational Actors and Security” (Moussea, Cronin, Cooley/Ron, Singer)

April 22: Networks and Global Politics
Guest Speaker: Alex Montgomery, Reed College
‘Networks’ are often used as a way to describe global processes that challenge the conventional notion of state sovereignty. What are the possibilities and limits of the “networks” metaphor for international relations? What does it mean to move beyond this metaphor and use network analysis to study IR?

Required Readings:
Alexander Montgomery and Emilie Hafner-Burton. “Centrality in International Politics.” TBD.
Miles Kahler, Alex Montgomery and Emilie Hafner-Burton, “Network Theory for International Relations.”
Alexander H. Montgomery. “Proliferation Networks in Theory and Practice.” TBD.
Phil Williams. “Transnational Criminal Networks.” TBD.
Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, Activists Beyond Borders, ch. 1
Peter Haas, “Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination”
Anne-Marie Slaughter, A New World Order, ch. 1

Sunday, April 25: Module 4 Analytical Paper Due Electronically at 5pm.

April 29: Conclusion
Final Exams Due in Class
Hollis and Smith, ch. 9