

Introduction to International Relations

PS 280

Fall 2016

223 Gregory, 9:00-9:50 (M-W)

Prof. Stephen Chaudoin and TA Justin Pierce

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Justin Office Hours: 2-4 Thursday or by appointment

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Course Description and Objectives

The phenomena studied in International Relations are among the most important of any discipline: What explains the outbreak of violent wars among and within nations? What explains the success or failure of international institutions like the World Trade Organization, the United Nations, or the International Criminal Court? What explains the policies that govern trillions of dollars of international trade and investment? This course teaches you to think about these questions like a social scientist. We will learn how to develop theoretical answers to these questions, how to make empirically testable predictions about relationships and correlations implied by those theories, and we will learn how to assess data in light of those predictions.

While I personally believe that IR is inherently interesting, I want to emphasize approaches and tools that will serve students in any social science context and beyond. This class will train you to think systematically about messy real-world phenomena. This is the same skill set that helps you in any Poli Sci, Economics, Sociology, or Psychology class (and many others). This is also the same skill set that employers are looking for when they search for students who can take a question (e.g., ‘what would be the effect of this marketing strategy on our sales’), theorize about the answer, and

then assess their predictions with real-world data.

Required* Text: Frieden, Lake, and Schultz. World Politics, 3rd edition. 2015.

* I have listed the textbook as required, but it is possible to complete the course without the textbook. I only have one assignment planned that requires the use of the textbook. That said, there are two strong reasons why you might consider purchasing the book.

- Background: We use it as a great background resource so that everyone understands common terms and the “basics” of what we study. For example, if we’re studying war and I say “an asymmetric dyad” in lecture, it’s important to know what that means in the context of countries at war. Or if we’re studying international trade and I mention “protectionism,” you’ll need to know what that word means. I want you to get the most out of our limited class time as possible, so I do not spend a lot of time defining terms (since you, as smart people, can figure that out on your own by doing to the reading).
- Practice: The book gives helpful practice on certain things that are necessary for the course, but which can be best learned with a little pen and paper and repetition. For example, game theory is best learned by doing problems and sitting down and solving a game. We cover this topic in depth in class, but we don’t assign problem sets. The book can be a good resource for this.

Organization of Course Content

The course is organized by topic. We will start with an introduction to some social science tools that we’ll need. We will then study aspects of conflict and war, followed by the midterm. Afterwards, we will study aspects of cooperation and international political economy.

Course Requirements

Grades will be distributed in the following manner:

In Class Assignments: 20%

HW Assignments and Session Attendance: 25%

Midterm Exam: 25%

Final Exam: 30%

In Class Assignments

For many classes, we will have a brief in-class activity. Usually, this will involve answering a few questions related to that day's topic. I assign these ICAs in lieu of taking attendance. The ICAs are also a great way to get an idea of the types of questions that will show up on exams. I often put ICAs early or at the beginning of class sessions. This is because I want you to be on time.

HW Assignments

Over the course of the semester, we will have several HW assignments. These will usually differ from the ICAs. The HWs will often be more open-ended questions, e.g. "How would you design a study to analyze the relationship between [this] and [that]?" The homework assignments are also designed to be very hands on. For some of them, I have made You Tube videos to show you how to use certain resources. You then use those resources to answer an open ended question.

Section Attendance

The TA will take attendance at the sections. Your attendance grade will count as the equivalent of one HW assignment at the end of the semester. In addition to that incentive, I highly recommend attending. We have designed the TA sessions to build on and be good examples of the concepts from class and also the types of questions you should expect on the midterm and final.

Mid-Term and Final Exams

The mid-term exam will cover material from the beginning of the semester until the point of the exam. The final exam will focus more heavily on material covered after the mid-term exam. Since you need the basic social science tools for every application, the final is technically cumulative. But the final will focus almost exclusively on topics after the midterm.

My exams are also never multiple choice. They almost always involve open-ended questions that require you to demonstrate comprehension of a subject as opposed to regurgitation.

Grading Policy

- Absence: I do not take attendance. You do not need to alert me to the fact that you will be absent.
- Missed ICAs: You have two options. (1) For issues that you can anticipate, you can email the TA, at least 48 hours in advance, with your reason for missing that class session. They will provide you with the ICA, and it will be due, to them, within 48 hours of its originally scheduled class period. (2) For issues that you cannot anticipate, you can bring a University-approved medical or other excuse form to me, and bring the TA the completed ICA from the lecture within 72 hours of when you got back to school work.
- Late HW Assignments: HW Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the days indicated on the assignment, unless otherwise indicated. I will *not* accept assignments that are more than 48 hours late. Within the two day window, assignments are penalized a letter grade per day.
- Assignment Review: You should bring any grade disputes to the TA first. Then the TA and I will make any necessary decisions together. We are willing to review any graded assignment or exam. However, we will not hear any concerns until 48 hours after the assignment has been returned to you. We reserve the right to raise your grade or lower it on any part of the assignment. In other words, be tactful and careful in your use of review.

Course Policies

- Cell Phones, Laptops, Tablets: Laptops and tablets are allowed in class, provided they are used for class related purposes. Abuse of this privilege may cause us to re-evaluate this policy. Cell phones should be off.
- Academic Integrity: Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students suspected of violating the University of Illinois Policy on Academic Integrity will be required to participate in the University's procedural process. (For the full Academic Integrity policy, go to <http://studentcode.illinois.edu/>. The CS department has a succinct summary of these procedures on its website.) For this course specifically, all assignments are to be completed *individually* and not in groups, unless otherwise indicated. I feel very, very strongly about violations of academic integrity. Do not cheat.
- Emergency Response: We will follow the University's recommendations, which can be found here <http://police.illinois.edu/emergency/response/>. Basically, RUN>HIDE>FIGHT.
- Disability Services: To insure that disability-related concerns are properly addressed from the beginning, students with disabilities who require assistance to participate in this class are asked to see me as soon as possible. The University guidelines for DS can be found here <http://disability.illinois.edu/academic-support/instructor-information>.
- Statement on Classroom Recording: To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.
- Email Communication Policy: Each student is issued a University e-mail address upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the

student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. For the submission of assignments, email error will not be considered a valid excuse for late assignments under any circumstances. Do NOT use your non-Illinois email for communications. Often, emails from Yahoo and other servers get sent to my Spam folder.

- Feedback: I am very interested in what you're getting from the course and how I can make the course better. Periodically, I'll solicit anonymous feedback in class about what you find most or least useful.

Schedule

Note on Readings: Students are expected to complete the readings prior to the course meeting on the listed date. All readings are available electronically or on the course website or in the textbook. The most up-to-date syllabus will always be found on the course website, since the schedule may change.

Note on Slides: Slides will generally be posted shortly before the lecture. Many slides are incomplete *by design*. The best way to approach the lecture slides is to revisit them after the lecture and fill them in from your own notes.

Social Science and IR

Class 1, Aug. 22: Syllabus and Variation

- **Required**: The syllabus.
- **Required**: FLS, Introduction, pp. xx-xxxiii
- **Class Summary**: Examples of Variation

Class 2, Aug. 24: Variation and Theory I

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 1, pp. 1-41 (History and Introduction)
- Class Summary: Theories and Predictions
- TA Session: Variation

Class 3, Aug. 29: Variation and Theory II

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 1, pp. 1-41 (History and Introduction)
- Class Summary: Game Theory Primer
- TA Session: Normal Form Games Examples

Class 4, Aug. 31: Measurement and Predictions

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 2, pp. 42-87 (I3 and Game Theory Module)
- Class Summary: Designing Studies
- **Approximate HW Due:** Design a Study
- TA Session: Parts of Abstracts

Sep. 5: Class Cancelled (Labor Day)

War

Class 5, Sep. 7: War I

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 2, pp. 42-87 (I3 and Game Theory Module)

- Class Summary: Bargaining Activity

Class 6, Sep. 12: War II

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 2, pp. 88-135 (Bargaining Model)
- Class Summary: Model of War Puzzle

Class 7, Sep. 14: War III

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 3, pp. 88-135 (Bargaining Model)
- Class Summary: Inc. Info., Commitments, Indivisibility

Class 8, Sep. 19: Domestic Politics and War I

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 4, pp. 136-182
- Class Summary: Gamble for Res.
- **Approximate HW Due:** Design a Study

Class 9, Sep. 21: Domestic Politics and War II

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 4, pp. 136-182
- Class Summary: Democratic Peace

Class 10, Sep. 26: IOs and War

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 5, pp. 184-233
- **Accompanying HW:** War

Class 11, Sep. 28: Civil War I

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 6, pp. 234-289

Class 12, Oct. 3: Civil War II (Syria Exercise)

- **Required:** Debate club arguments for Syria Exercise
- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 6, pp. 234-289
- **Approximate HW Due:** War and Economics

Class 13, Oct. 5: Terrorism

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 6, pp. 234-289
- **Required:** Nielsen paper <http://www.mit.edu/~rnielsen/decap.pdf>
- **Accompanying HW:** Terrorism

Class 14, Oct. 10: Review Session

- **Required:** Come with questions!
- **Required:** Catch up with FLS through the end of Chapter 6
- TA Session: Extra Review

Class 15, Oct. 12: Midterm (In Class)

- **Required:** None

International Political Economy

Class 16, Oct. 17: Trade I (TPP Exercise)

- **Required:** To Do

Class 17, Oct. 19: Trade I

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 7, pp. 290-339

Class 18, Oct. 24: Trade II

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 8, pp. 340-379
- TA Session: Regression Tables
- **Approximate HW Due:** LAPOP and Opinions on Chinese Firms

Class 20, Oct. 26: Investment/Finance I

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 8, pp. 340-379

Class 21, Oct. 31: Monetary Policy

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 9, pp. 380-419
- TA Session: Networks

International Law

Class 22, Nov. 2: International Law I

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 11, pp. 456-489

Class 25, Nov. 7: International Law II

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 11, pp. 456-489
- TA Session: TBD

Class 25, Nov. 9: International Law III ICC Exercise

- **Required:** Robinson Article

Class 26, Nov. 14: Human Rights I

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 12, pp. 490-531

Class 27, Nov. 28: Human Rights II

- **Required:** FLS, Ch. 12, pp. 490-531

- **Accompanying HW:** Human Rights State Department Reports

Nov. 16: Class Cancelled (LSE Conference)

Class 28, Nov. 30: Student Chosen Topic

- **Required:** TBD

Class 29, Dec 5: Review

- **Required:** None