

GOVT 204: Introduction to International Politics

William & Mary
Spring 2017

Instructor Information

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Office hours:
3:30-5:00pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays

Classrooms:
Section 01 (12:30-1:50pm) in Tyler Hall Room 133
Section 06 (2:00-3:20pm) in Tyler Hall Room 123

Overview

This course introduces students to the study of international politics. Political scientists seek to understand and explain observable political phenomena. Scholars of international politics study questions about political outcomes at the international level: Why do wars occur? Why do states cooperate and trade? Why do states form alliances? Under what conditions can international institutions influence states' behaviors? Why do global problems such as pollution, poverty, and terrorism persist? We will focus on interests, interactions, and institutions as tools for understanding international outcomes and foreign policy choices. We will use this framework to study conflict (both international and civil), international political economy, and transnational politics. There is no prerequisite for this course, and no prior background in international relations is assumed.

Course Objectives

There are four main objectives of this course. First, the course will introduce you to the study of international politics as a discipline within political science. Second, the course will help you gain familiarity with leading theoretical approaches to understanding international politics and problems involving strategic interaction. Third, the course will help you understand major substantive issue areas in international politics (e.g., international trade, human rights, development, nuclear proliferation). Fourth, the course will expose you to recent examples of academic research in international politics, including research that scholars are conducting at William & Mary.

At the end of the course you will be better equipped to understand patterns and events in international politics, critically evaluate arguments about politics and political phenomena, and pursue upper-level courses in international politics (e.g., International Security,

International Political Economy) and political methodology (e.g., Game Theory and Politics).

Required Text

There is one required book in this class:

- Frieden, Jeffrey, David A. Lake, and Kenneth Schultz. 2016. *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions* (Third Edition). New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

This book (FLS) is on reserve at the Swem library and is available to purchase through the W&M bookstore, Amazon, etc. The ebook version is considerably cheaper than the paperback edition. If you cannot find a reasonably priced copy of the third edition, the sequence and coverage of topics is similar in the second edition.

In addition to the required book, we will read a variety of articles, book chapters (available on Blackboard), and blog posts. I have included some recent selections from the blogs *Political Violence at a Glance* and *The Duck of Minerva* below. I recommend reading both regularly. Additionally, it will be useful to keep up with current events (*The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Foreign Policy*, *The Economist*, etc.).

The authors of some of our readings use statistical methods and (less often) formal mathematical reasoning to make their arguments. Although we will review some of the basic concepts and intuition behind these methods, you will, of course, **not** be graded on your comprehension of these methods. Though we will sometimes use mathematical language and figures in class, you will not need skills beyond basic high-school-level algebra to keep up. Focus mainly on understanding the logic and evidence in terms of the authors' verbal exposition and/or interpretation. For any article we read, think about the following questions: What is the research question? What is the argument/theory? What are potential alternative explanations? What evidence do the authors present in support of their arguments?

It is your responsibility to acquire the articles that we will be reading, all of which you should be able to access for free through the W&M library. However, to make this easier for you, I have provided links to many of the articles below (you will need to be logged in to your W&M account or on campus to download them). Alternatively, you can search for the articles on Google Scholar by logging in remotely with your WMuserid here.

Assignments

- **Class attendance and participation** (10%). This portion of your grade includes attendance, participation, and preparedness. Class time will be a mixture of lecture and discussion. As such, it is essential that you complete the assigned readings **prior to coming to class** and come prepared to discuss the readings.

- **Map quiz (5%).** There will be a map quiz on **Thursday, February 16th** that will require you to identify 30 randomly-selected countries on the world map. You can get some practice here.
- **Midterm exam (20%).** There will be an in-class midterm on the topics we cover before spring break. The midterm will consist of 30 multiple choice questions, two short answer questions, and an essay.
- **Final exam (25%).** The format of the final exam will be similar to the midterm. The final will mostly focus on the material we cover after spring break, but may include questions from the first part of the semester.
- **Short analytical papers (20% each).** There will be two short analytical papers. The first will ask you to respond to a prompt that I will distribute during the second week of class. For the second short paper, you will have a choice between (1) a policy background memo on a topic of your choice or (2) a summary of a puzzle or question in international politics of interest to you along with an analysis or critique of a recent peer-reviewed research article on that topic (you may not choose an article that is already on the syllabus). Think of the second short paper as a mini research project. Each paper should be between 4 and 5 double-spaced pages (12 pt font, 1 inch margins, stapled), not including a list of references. We will review the expectations for the short papers more thoroughly in class.

Grades

I will give A's for excellent work, B's for good/above-average work, and C's for average-quality work. D's indicate below-average performance. If your work is significantly below average, you will receive an F. Letter grades will correspond to the following point intervals:

A: 93-100 | A-: 90-92
 B+: 87-89 | B: 83-86 | B-: 80-82
 C+: 77-79 | C: 73-76 | C-: 70-72
 D+: 67-69 | D: 63-66 | D-: 60-62
 F: < 60

Late Work

If you are having trouble with an assignment and are unable to turn it in on time, please contact me in advance of the due date. Assignments should be turned in at the beginning of class on their due dates. (Exceptions can be made in cases of documented family or medical emergencies.) Late assignments will be reduced by a half letter grade (i.e., by 5 points on a 100-point scale) for each day that they are late. For example, if an assignment is due at 12:30pm on a Tuesday, and you hand in your assignment at any point from 12:31pm on Tuesday to 12:30pm on Wednesday, I will deduct half a letter grade from your

final grade on that assignment. After 12:30pm on Wednesday, I will deduct a full letter grade until 12:30pm on Thursday, and so on.

Academic Honesty

Your work in this class is governed by the Honor Code. Discussing course materials with others is fine (and encouraged), but your work for this class must be entirely your own (e.g., you cannot collaborate with your fellow students on assignments). Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment in question and a referral to the Honor Council. When in doubt about whether or not you should cite something, feel free to consult me (or just provide a citation, since that will most likely be my advice). You can find further guidance on this question [here](#).

Accommodations

If you require accommodations due to a disability please contact Student Accessibility Services at 757-221-2509 or sas@wm.edu to make arrangements as soon as possible.

Communication

You can reach me via email (mdilorenzo@wm.edu) or during office hours. Always feel free to contact me about setting up an appointment outside of my office hours if they conflict with your schedule. I will do my best to respond to e-mails within 24-48 hours.

Technology

You are permitted to use a laptop, tablet, etc. only to take notes or reference readings during class (not during exams). Please make sure the sound is turned off on any devices you use. Still, I encourage you to try setting aside your electronic device and taking notes on paper.

Topics and Schedule of Readings

Below is the schedule of class meetings and assigned readings. I may make changes to the assigned readings as the course progresses. In the event that I do make a change, I will notify you in advance and change the syllabus to reflect the updated assignment. Typically we will read a chapter from the FLS book for the Tuesday meeting and one or more articles/blogs for discussion for the Thursday meeting.

Week 1: Introduction

Thursday, January 19

- Introductions and reviewing the syllabus. Read syllabus thoroughly.

Week 2: Puzzles, Theories, Methods

Tuesday, January 24

- Read FLS Introduction
- Skim FLS Chapter 1: What Shaped Our World? A Historical Introduction

Thursday, January 26

- Read FLS Chapter 2: Understanding Interests, Interactions, and Institutions (*Including the Special Topic: “A Primer on Game Theory”*)

Week 3: Causes of War

Tuesday, January 31

- Read FLS Chapter 3: Why Are There Wars?
- Fearon, James D. 1995. “Rationalist Explanations for War.” *International Organization* 49(3): 379-414.

Thursday, February 2

- Review expectations for short papers
- Arena, Phil. November 21, 2016. “The All-Too-Plausible Path to the Next Major War.” *The Duck of Minerva*.

Week 4: Domestic Politics and War

Tuesday, February 7

- Read FLS Chapter 4: Domestic Politics and War

Thursday, February 9

- Croco, Sarah E. 2011. “The Decider’s Dilemma: Leader Culpability, War Outcomes, and Domestic Punishment.” *American Political Science Review* 105(3): 457-477.

Week 5: International Institutions and War

Tuesday, February 14

- Read FLS Chapter 5: International Institutions and War

Thursday, February 16

- **MAP QUIZ**

- Weiss, Thomas G. 2009. "What Happened to the Idea of World Government." *International Studies Quarterly* 53(2): 253-271.

Week 6: Civil War and Terrorism

Tuesday, February 21

- Read FLS Chapter 6: Violence by Nonstate Actors: Civil War and Terrorism

Thursday, February 23

- **SHORT PAPER #1 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS**
- Roessler, Philip. 2011. "The Enemy Within: Personal Rule, Coups, and Civil War in Africa." *World Politics* 63(2): 300-346.
- Parks, Bradley, Caroline Bergeron and Michael J. Tierney. 2016. "Foreign Aid and Conflict: What We Know and Need to Know," in Backer, David, Ravi Bhavnani, and Paul Huth (Eds.), *Peace and Conflict 2016*, Routledge: 120-127. (Available on Blackboard)

Week 7: Review and Midterm

Tuesday, February 28

- Review for midterm (No assigned reading)

Thursday, March 2

- **MIDTERM EXAM (IN CLASS, CLOSED BOOK/NOTES)**

Week 8: Spring Break, No Class

[*Tuesday, March 7* and *Thursday, March 9*]

Week 9: International Trade

Tuesday, March 14

- Read FLS Chapter 7: International Trade

Thursday, March 16 (**Note: March 17 is the last day to withdraw from class**)

- No assigned reading.

Week 10: International Finance

Tuesday, March 21

- Read FLS Chapter 8: International Financial Relations

Thursday, March 23

- Carolina Garriga, Ana, and Brian J Phillips. 2014. "Foreign Aid as a Signal to Investors: Predicting FDI in Post-Conflict Countries." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58(2): 280-306.

Week 11: International Monetary Relations

Tuesday, March 28

- Read FLS Chapter 9: International Monetary Relations

Thursday, March 30

- Drezner, Daniel. 2014. *The System Worked: How the World Stopped Another Great Depression*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 2: "Yes, the System Worked." Available on Blackboard.
- Drezner, Daniel. 2016. "The populist revolt to 'The System Worked'" *The Washington Post*. December 8, 2016.

Week 12: Development

Tuesday, April 4

- Read FLS Chapter 10: Development: Causes of the Wealth and Poverty of Nations

Thursday, April 6

- Briggs, Ryan. 2016. "Does Foreign Aid Target the Poorest?" *International Organization* (forthcoming).

Week 13: International Law, Norms, and Human Rights

Tuesday, April 11

- Read FLS Chapter 11: International Law and Norms
- Fazal, Tanisha. 2012. "Why States No Longer Declare War." *Security Studies* 21(4): 557-593.

Thursday, April 13

- Read FLS Chapter 12: Human Rights
- Wong, Wendy. July 20, 2015. "Human Rights aren't Revolutionary? Good!" The Duck of Minerva (Blog).

Week 14: The Global Environment and International Cooperation

Tuesday, April 18

- **SHORT PAPER #2 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS**
- Read FLS Chapter 13: The Global Environment

Thursday, April 20

- Mattes, Michaela and Mariana Rodriguez. 2014. "Autocracies and International Cooperation." *International Studies Quarterly* 58(3): 527-538.

Week 15: Looking Ahead

Tuesday, April 25

- Read FLS Chapter 14: The Future of International Politics

Thursday, April 27

- Goldstein, Joshua and Stephen Pinker. December 17, 2011. "War Really Is Going Out of Style." *The New York Times*.
- Fazal, Tanisha. 2014. "Dead Wrong? Battle Deaths, Military Medicine, and Exaggerated Reports of War's Demise." *International Security* 39(1): 95-125.

Final Exams

FINAL EXAM FOR SECTION 01 (12:30-1:50pm): Friday May 5th, 9:00am - 12:00pm

FINAL EXAM FOR SECTION 06 (2:00-3:20pm): Monday May 8th, 2:00pm - 5:00pm