

Introduction

J2P216 SE: International Cooperation and Conflict
March 3/4, 2016

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① Course Logistics

- Schedule

- Readings

- Website & Piazza

- Assessment

② Theories and Models of International Relations

- Why Do We Need Theories of International Relations?

- What is a Theory?

- What is a model?

- The Relationship Between Theory and Models

- The Purposes of Models

- How Are Theories Evaluated?

- ① Introduction to International Relations
- ② What Causes Conflict Between States?
 - Commerce
 - Territory
 - Ideology
 - Identity
- ③ Why Does Bargaining Fail?
 - Bargaining Theory
 - Uncertainty
 - Commitment Problems
 - Domestic Politics
- ④ Conclusion

- Up to two required readings each week
- Read all required readings prior to class
- Readings under “Further Readings” are not required
- Links to journal articles in the syllabus
(to download the papers, you must be connected to the UNIGE network)

- Find the course website at this link:
`http://retowuest.github.io/j2p216/`
- Contains the syllabus, slides, and information on assignments
- Check it regularly, as the syllabus may change throughout the semester

- We use Piazza for class Q&A
- Post your questions on Piazza
- Replaces mailing lists
- Find our class page at: https://piazza.com/university_of_geneva/spring2016/j2p216se/home

- Complete the following steps to sign up on Piazza:
 - Go to <https://piazza.com/>
 - Under “Sign Up,” select “Students Get Started”
 - Enter “University of Geneva”
 - Under “Class 1,” search for J2P216
 - Select “Join as Student” and enter the Class Access Code
 - Enter your email address and activate your account using the link you receive by email
 - Enter your full name, choose a password, and complete the required information

Assessment for this course consists of:

- ➊ Two critical response papers (50%)
- ➋ Class presentation (30%)
- ➌ Your class participation (20%)

Critical response paper:

- Two goals: (i) summarize the main idea of a course reading and (ii) provide a critical assessment
- Max. 1,000 words including tables, references, captions, footnotes, and endnotes
- Must be turned in within two weeks of the discussion of the reading it responds to
- Late papers will not be accepted
- For more information on the structure of a critical response paper, see <http://retowest.github.io/j2p216/assignments/01-critical-response.html>

Class presentation:

- 15 minute presentation in class about a required reading
- Before your presentation, come to my office hours (Wed, 13:00-15:00) to discuss questions about reading
- You might want to write a critical response paper on the same reading that you present
- For more information on class presentations, see <http://retowuest.github.io/j2p216/assignments/02-presentation.html>

Class participation

- Ask questions
- Answer my and other students' questions

- Choose two readings for the critical response papers and one reading for the presentation
- Next week: Doodles where you can choose your readings

Any Questions?

Theories and Models of International Relations

Why Do We Need Theories of International Relations?

Question

Why do we need theories of international relations?

Question

Why do we need theories of international relations?

Walt's (1998, 29f.) answer:

- Real world is complicated.
- We need theory about how the world works in order to make sense of it.
- No single theory can explain all the complexity of contemporary world politics.
- Therefore, we are better off having a set of different theories.

Question

What is a theory?

Question

What is a theory?

According to the semantic view of theories, a theory comprises two elements (Clarke and Primo 2012, 74-77):

- ① A set of models.
- ② Hypotheses linking those models to a real-world system.

Question

What is a model?

Question

What is a model?

Models are like maps (Clarke and Primo 2012, 52-60):

- They represent systems in the real world.
- They have limited accuracy.
- They are partial.
- They are purpose-relative.

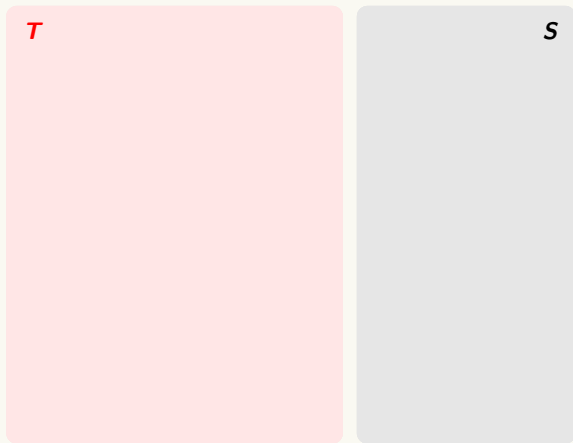
Theories and Models of International Relations

The Relationship Between Theory and Models

- A **model** is a definition of a system. The modeler chooses the level of abstraction and what features of the real-world system are modeled.
- Question is not whether a model is true or false, but in which respects and to which degree a model is similar to a system in the real world.
- A **theoretical hypothesis** shows how a model is connected to reality. More precisely, theoretical hypothesis TH_i states the respects in which and the degree to which model M_i is similar to the real-world system S .
- (A **hypothesis** is a statement that describes a relationship between two phenomena.)

Theories and Models of International Relations

The Relationship Between Theory and Models



A theory, T , comprises n models, M_i , and theoretical hypotheses, TH_i . A real-world system, S , comprises m features, f_j , which can be modeled (Clarke and Primo 2012, 75).

Theories and Models of International Relations

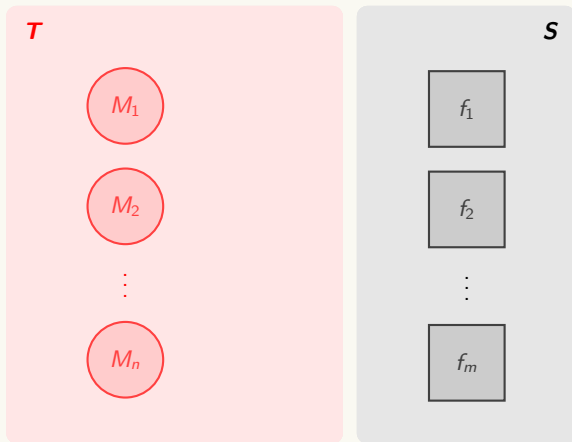
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Theories and Models of International Relations

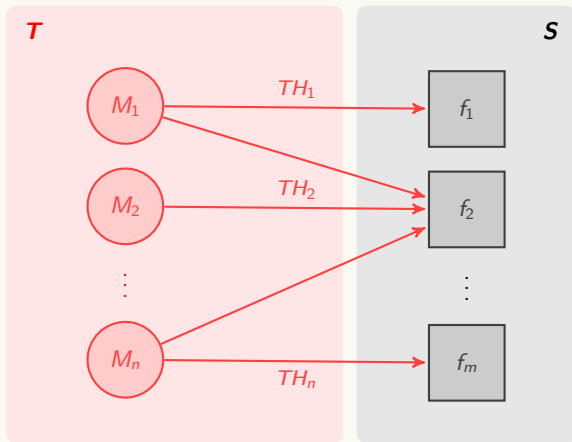
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Theories and Models of International Relations

The Main Purposes of Models

- Explanation: Provide answers to puzzles in the study of international relations.
- Prediction: Make predictions about how a change in a factor will lead to changes in behavior and outcomes.

A model specifies:

- The relevant **actors**
- The **goals** of actors
- How the choices of two or more actors **interact** to produce outcomes
- **Institutions**, which are sets of rules that constrain behavior