

Introduction

POSC 1020 – Introduction to International Relations

Steven V. Miller

Department of Political Science



Goal for Today

Familiarize students with the topic of the course and the instructor's expectations.

Structure of the Course

My goals for this class are multiple. These include:

- How to *evaluate* arguments in international politics.
- How to conceptualize and model behavior by foreign policy actors.
- Getting students over “math anxiety”.

Topically, we'll cover several topics in IR. These include:

- War and peace
- Bargaining
- Democratic peace
- Terrorism
- Foreign aid
- IGOs and international law

Course Objectives

- Learn how to construct and evaluate arguments in international politics.
- Appreciate that all international politics are strategic problems.
- Understand basic elements of expected utility and game theory.
- List basic arguments for war and peace.
- Understand the rationality of terrorism.
- Understand situational effectiveness of foreign aid.

Book

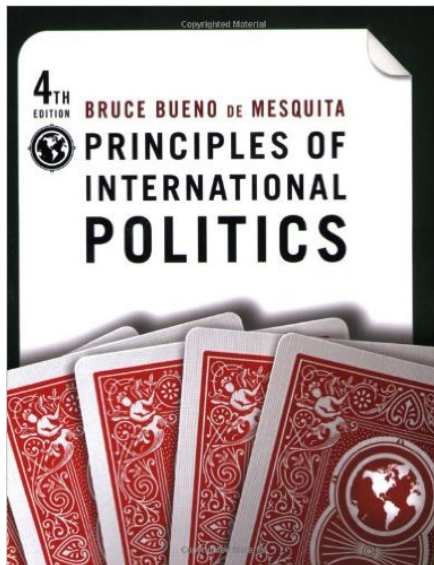


Figure 1: The required textbook for the class

Grading Policy and Important Dates

- Midterm 1: (October 1) **[20%]**
- Midterm 2: (November 5) **[20%]**
- Article summaries (due through semester) **[20%]**
 - See syllabus for pertinent information.
- Final: (December 10, 8 a.m.) **[30%]**

Attendance and participation will be the final 10% of your grade.

Course Policies

Read the syllabus. I'll reiterate the following:

- **Attendance:** Effectively mandatory. You get five unexcused absences.
- **Participation:** I may “cold-call” you to answer a question.
 - You should *at least* give a convincing partial answer.
 - If you don't (or are absent), you'll get a point deduction from your overall grade.
- **Make-up Exams:** Don't bother asking. The answer is no.
- **Cell phones, laptops, etc.:** Put them away.
- **Academic dishonesty:** Don't be that guy. . .
- **Disabilities:** let me know ASAP (privately) if you need accommodations
 - Student must initiate the process *each semester*.
 - Student must schedule room at testing center (if necessary).

My Contact Information

- *Name:* Steve Miller (as in the band)
- *E-mail:* svmille@clermson.edu
- *Office Hours:* Wednesday: 9-11:30 a.m.
- *Office:* 230A Brackett Hall
- *Website:* svmiller.com/teaching

Additional Course Materials

I don't like Blackboard. I only intend to use it for:

- Turnitin (and grading the Turnitin assignments)
- Classwide e-mails

I do like making lectures publicly available, though.

- Check course website at svmiller.com
- Check my Github repository (just in case):
github.com/svmiller/posc1020

My Expectations

I come off as a bit cruel in my expectations.

- I expect a lot, and I expect a commitment from you.
- Otherwise, why bother? Your job is to become “pro-ready”.

I also expect it to be a bit difficult for you.

- My philosophy: if you 100% understand something the first time you read it, you didn't learn anything.
- Read and re-read if necessary.
- Lectures should help, but they're not sufficient. You need to read.

I take seriously the “science” of political science.

- This will constitute a large part of the first half of the class.
- I am *more* than generous with study guides.
- I'm also eager to help in-class or office hours.

I don't care for whom you'll vote or what you saw on TV. *Don't bring it up.*

Etiquette Concerns

In-class:

- Raise your hand and ask a question the *moment* something doesn't make sense.
 - I do have a bad habit of talking a bit fast.
- *Do the reading before class.* Seriously.
- Resist the urge to write down every word on a slide.
 - Listening is more important than reading in this context.

Etiquette Concerns

Outside class:

- **Resist the urge** to e-mail me if you missed a class (for which there wasn't an exam).
 - Short answer: you missed what was on the syllabus.
- Please use conventional e-mail etiquette.
 - This is a good professional exercise for you.
- I'm usually in my office Tuesday and Thursday mornings before class.
- Knock first, even when the door is open.
- You may not use my office supplies.
- I am not a study session. Come prepared with something specific to ask or discuss.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Structure of POSC 1020

POSC 1020 Syllabus
Course Policies

Etiquette and Expectations