

POSC 1020: Introduction to International Relations

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Class Hours: TR 02:00-03:15 p.m.

Class Room: 213 Brackett Hall

Course Description

This introductory-level course will survey several core topics in the study of international relations and its discussion in policy circles. While our survey of topics will be broad, our approach will be targeted. Students will learn to think of core issues and topics in international relations as strategic dilemmas involving self-interested actors trying to maximize their expected utility. This approach may not be intuitive to entry-level students accustomed to receiving talking points on cable news or blogs, but it provides much more leverage over understanding foreign affairs, including the ongoing Iran nuclear deal. Students will then review several topics in international relations scholarship after they learn of strategic approaches and its associated methodological tools. These will include broad paradigms of war and peace, problems associated with terrorism and foreign aid, and an introduction to international organizations and international law. By the end of the semester, students should have a deeper understanding of international relations and, importantly, how to better understand its current events.

Course Objectives

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

Required Readings

- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce. 2010. *Principles of International Politics* (4th ed). Washington, DC: CQ Press. ISBN 978-0-87289-598-0

Course Policies

This section of the syllabus details multiple policies that will be implemented in this class through the semester. Continuation in this class constitutes acceptance of the terms outlined in this document.

Grading Policy

- 20% of your grade will be determined by a midterm to be administered on **Thursday, October 1** during normal class hours. There will be **NO** make-ups.
- 20% of your grade will be determined by a midterm to be administered on **Thursday, November 5** during normal class hours. There will be **NO** make-ups.
- 10% of your grade will be determined by your attendance and participation in class.
- 20% of your grade will be determined by two article summaries to be completed through the semester. More information about these two article summaries are included at the end of the syllabus.
- 30% of your grade will be determined by a final exam. Clemson University has scheduled this final exam on **Thursday, December 10, 08:00-10:30 a.m.**. There will be **NO** make-ups.

In-Class Policy

- **Attendance:** I will take attendance every class. Students are allocated **five** unexcused absences. Upon the sixth unexcused absence, the student receives 0% of the attendance grade for the class. Students have one week after a missed class to provide documentation excusing the absence in class. I will *not* inform students, even upon request, about how many unexcused absences they have through the semester. I only tabulate that information near the end of the semester when I am finalizing grades.
- **Participation:** I want to reward each student in the class with all the participation and attendance points. If I suspect students are not doing the reading and not volunteering answers to questions posed by me in class, I will resort to cold-calling students from a list. Failure to answer a question posed by me when cold-called from a roster of students will result in a one-point deduction of the overall grade for the semester.
- **Late Arrival of the Professor:** If, for some reason, I am more than fifteen minutes late to class, a volunteer student should check in 232 Brackett Hall with Ms. Angela Guido. If class is cancelled, I will send an email in advance of class.

- **Make-Up Exams:** There are **NO** make-ups for missed exams. Professors are forever intolerant of weak excuses. Do not bring them to me. Missed exams in cases of illness or personal emergency can be accommodated only with proper documentation. This *does not* mean a student can punt an exam to the near future because of a headache or the sniffles, for which a medical excuse is sought several hours after missing the exam in question. Exams missed due to a university-sponsored event or religious holiday may also be accommodated, provided that the student informs me of the conflict at least two weeks in advance. Students who have valid excuses, with documentation, for missing exam dates have *one week at the most* from the original date of the exam to complete a missed exam.
- **Cell Phones, Pagers, Laptops, PDAs:** Unless Student Disabilities Services informs me that such a device is a necessary accommodation for a student with disabilities, all laptops, tablets, and PDAs are to be put away during class (both in lecture and during exams). You are on Facebook anyway when you are using them during class. Likewise, keep your phone or pager (do people still use those?) in your bag or pocket during class. The professor reserves the right to embarrass the student for not having a phone on “vibrate mode” during class. The ringtone better be something good.
- **Disputing an Assignment Grade:** I am willing to accommodate students who believe my grading of an assignment was too harsh or misunderstanding. Students who wish to dispute a grade on an assignment must submit a one-page, single-spaced argument for a grade change before that request is considered.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

I take academic integrity seriously and will show no tolerance for any instances of academic dishonesty. The logic behind cheating or plagiarism may be self-interest, but this is too myopic. Penalties for being caught are severe and the consequences of being found culpable will extend well beyond the student’s time as a college student at Clemson. In the interest of clarification, I provide the definitions of several types of academic dishonesty below, **as understood by Clemson University**. Avoid intentionally or inadvertently committing any of these acts:

- **Cheating:** Giving, receiving, or using unauthorized aid, including the inappropriate use of electronic devices, in any work submitted to fulfill academic requirements. In examination situations all electronic devices must be off and stowed unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- **Plagiarism:** The intentional or unintentional copying of language, structure, or ideas of another and attributing the work to one’s own efforts;
- **Unlawful Access to Private Material:** Attempts to copy, edit, or delete computer files that belong to another person or use of computer accounts that belong to another person without the permission of the file owner or account owner.

Clemson University’s Academic Integrity Statement broadly defines breaches of academic integrity as “lying, cheating, or stealing in any form.” This broad definition of academic integrity that will be enforced in my classroom.

Disabilities Policy

Federal laws mandate the provision of services at the university level to qualified students with disabilities. If a student requires special provisions, I encourage that student to let me know *privately* as soon as possible (preferably within the first two weeks of the semester). Afterward, I am required to refer the student to the **Student Disabilities Services** (SDS), which will determine the necessary provisions that I must make. SDS will give its recommendations to the student, who must relay their recommendations to me. I, as the instructor, am responsible for providing the necessary accommodations, but only at the behest of SDS. The student maintains privacy rights on the matter, which I wholeheartedly will respect. That said, *it is the student's responsibility to initiate the provision process*. This can only be done, privately and securely, through SDS.

Students who require quiet test rooms or extended time for exams must take the initiative to schedule a room at the **Test Proctoring Center** on campus. These rooms must be scheduled by the student for the day of the exam as listed in the syllabus. Failure by the student to schedule a room at the Test Proctoring Center for the day of the exam will lead to a zero on the assignment.

Class Schedule

Students must read the associated chapter in the Bueno de Mesquita (BDM) book and any other readings before Tuesday's class session. Additional readings for the week may be listed below the week in question. Unless noted as suggested, all additional readings are required. Class readings are subject to change, contingent on mitigating circumstances and the progress we make as a class. Students are encouraged to attend lectures and check the course website for updates.

Week 01, 08/17 - 08/21: Syllabus Day

- Read associated documents on course website.

Week 02, 08/24 - 08/28: Evaluating Arguments about International Politics (BDM, Appendix B)

- Miller, Steven V. 2014. "Reading a Regression Table: A Guide for Students".
<http://svmiller.com/blog/2014/08/reading-a-regression-table-a-guide-for-students/>

Week 03, 08/31 - 09/04: Introduction, Foundations of IR (BDM, Introduction)

Week 04, 09/07 - 09/11: Strategic Approaches and Selectorate Theory (BDM, chp. 1)

Week 05, 09/14 - 09/18: Tools for Analyzing International Affairs (BDM, chp. 2)

Background Information on Iran Nuclear Program

- Sadr, Ehsaneh I. 2005. "The Impact of Iran's Nuclearization on Israel." *Middle East Policy* 12(2): 58-72.

Week 06, 09/21 - 09/25: Game Theory (BDM, chp. 3)

Week 07, 09/28 - 10/02: MIDTERM 1

- Review: Tuesday; Exam: Thursday

Week 08, 10/05 - 10/09: Structural Theories of War (BDM, chp. 4)

Suggested Reading

- Wagner, R. Harrison. 2010. "War and the State: A Synopsis." *International Theory* 2(2): 283-287.
- Fearon, James D. 2010. "Comments on R. Harrison Wagner's *War and the State: The Theory of International Politics*" *International Theory* 2(2): 333-342.
- Wagner R. Harrison. 2007. *War and the State: The Theory of International Politics*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Week 09, 10/12 - 10/16: Fall Break, No Class Thursday

Week 10, 10/19 - 10/23: Strategic Theories of War (BDM, chp. 5)

Week 11, 10/26 - 10/30: What is the Democratic Peace? (BDM, chp. 6)

- *Article summary #1 due by October 29 before 2:00 p.m.*

Week 12, 11/02 - 11/06: MIDTERM 2

- Review: Tuesday; Exam: Thursday

Week 13, 11/09 - 11/13: The Rationality of Terrorism (BDM, chp. 7)

Methodological Issues in the Study of Terrorism

- Ashworth, Scott, Joshua D. Clinton, Adam Meirowitz and Kristopher W. Ramsay. 2008. "Design, Inference, and the Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *American Political Science Review* 102(2):269–273.
- Pape, Robert A. 2008. "Methods and Findings in the Study of Suicide Terrorism." *American Political Science Review* 102(2):275–277.
- Ashworth, Scott, Joshua D. Clinton, Adam Meirowitz and Kristopher W. Ramsay. 2008. "Design, Inference, and the Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism: A Rejoinder"
<http://home.uchicago.edu/~sashwort/rejoinder3.pdf>

Week 14, 11/16 - 11/20: What is the Problem with Foreign Aid? (BDM, chp. 9)

- *Article summary #2 due by November 19 before 2:00 p.m.*

Week 15, 11/23 - 11/27: Thanksgiving (No class this week)

Week 16, 11/30 - 12/04: International Organizations and International Law (BDM, chp. 11)

Week 17, 12/07 - 12/11: Final Exams

Article Summaries

20% of your grade for this course will be determined by two article summaries you will write. These article summaries will focus on two topics that will be discussed in lectures after the first midterm. The first will be on democratic peace and the second will be on foreign aid. For *each* of these topics, you will choose *one* article from the three options listed in the reading list for these topics. This reading list is at the end of the syllabus.

Your article summary must meet the following criteria. Formatting concerns are important. First, your article summary must be three-to-five pages, *single*-spaced. Font must be 12pt Times New Roman or Computer Modern Roman. Margins must be *no wider than* one inch all around. The preamble of your summary must be single-spaced and *no longer* than three lines. For example, the first line will be your name. The second line will be something like “Article Summary #1”. The third line could be the date the assignment is due. Wasting space and padding the preamble of a writing assignment in order to meet the bare minimum of a page requirement is discouraged at this level of your education.¹ After preamble, enter a blank line, followed by the title of the article you are summarizing, and follow it with another blank line. Thereafter, begin summarizing the article.

The rest of this section concerns how the substance of your article summary should look. In the first paragraph, you will want to give a solid summary of the article. Think of this first paragraph as akin to a scholarly abstract. In this paragraph, you will want to condense the author’s article into a five-to-seven sentence synopsis of the article. If done right, this will give a nice synopsis of the article while also encouraging the reader to continue with your summary in order to find more details about the author’s original analysis.

The next two or three paragraphs should deal with the author’s “problem”. All political science articles have some kind of problem statement. In short, there is something the author wants to know, which can take on a multitude of forms. Some common “problems” in peer-reviewed political science are as follow.

1. Why is X the case and not Y?
2. We know a lot about X but we know astonishingly little about Y.
3. Author X and Author Y make different predictions about Z. Who is right?

These are just examples. The nature of X, Y, and Z will vary by the topic. Whatever the case, it is your job to identify the “problem” and, importantly, summarize what the author says about this problem and what past authors have said about it. This exercise will essentially be a literature review. You are encouraged to begin with the section with a heading like “literature review” or “past research”. Not only will it help your meet the page requirement, this compartmentalization of your summary will help the reader as well.

In the next few paragraphs, you will want to understand how the author proposes an answer to the “problem”. Namely, what type of “proof” is given by the author? You will want to discuss, *in your own words*, what the author says. If the author’s “proof” is largely theorizing about the nature of a particular problem with a stylized case study of a particular incident, mention that and describe the author’s treatment of that particular example. Articles that are

¹It signals to the professor that you do not know the material, did not read it, did not work to understand it, or all the above.

more “mathematical” (in the sense they include a mathematical model of actor strategies and behavior) should include a general summary of the mathematical model the author uses. If the article is more statistically (or quantitatively) oriented, describe how the author summarizes the results from a regression table. In the regression table, what is “significant” and what is not “significant”? Why does it matter for the author’s claims? Make sure to section this part of the summary as well so that it is more readable.

Finally, you will want to use two, maybe more, paragraphs at the end of your summary to relate this article to other things you have read in this class and/or an ongoing, or otherwise noteworthy, policy concern central to the study of international politics. Some autonomy will be granted in this section. Nevertheless, it is imperative for the student to demonstrate to the reader that the student has engaged the article and thought critically of what it says about the study of international politics (and scholarly debates contained in the discipline) or its relevance to particular problems of international politics that we are observing now, or with which we have wrestled in the past.

These assignments must be submitted via *Turnitin* on the Blackboard module for this course in advance of the scheduled due date. E-mailed documents will not be accepted as proof of completion. Failure to hand in the assignment in time will result in an F for the assignment. Unless there is an extreme emergency or serious illness that can be documented, do not ask for an exception. University policy regarding academic dishonesty will be enforced. Do *not* plagiarize. Further, do *not* copy and paste the author’s words into your summary, even if you attribute the words back to the author. While this is not plagiarism, it is not the assignment. Copying and pasting large stretches of text from an article and dumping it in a summary does not demonstrate to the reader that the student has understood the article.

Reading List

Democratic Peace

- Maoz, Zeev, and Bruce Russett. 1993. “Normative and Structural Causes of the Democratic Peace, 1946-1986.” *American Political Science Review* 87(3): 624-638.
- Dixon, William J. 1994. “Democracy and the Peaceful Settlement of International Conflict.” *American Political Science Review* 88(1): 14-32.
- Rousseau, David L., Christopher Gelpi, Dan Reiter, and Paul K. Huth. 1996. “Assessing the Dyadic Nature of the Democratic Peace, 1918-88.” *American Political Science Review* 90(3): 512-33.

Foreign Aid

- Gibling, Douglas M. 2008. “United States Economic Aid and Repression: The Opportunity Cost Argument.” *Journal of Politics* 70(2): 513–526.
- Heinrich, Tobias. 2013. “When is Foreign Aid Selfish, When is it Selfless?” *Journal of Politics* 75(2): 422–435.
- Boutton, Andrew and David B. Carter. 2014. “Fair-Weather Allies? Terrorism and the Allocation of US Foreign Aid.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58(7): 1144–1173.