Course description and learning objectives

In August, 2008, Russia sent armored trucks and troops into neighboring Georgia. Was this action “right”, according to international law? What are the different reasons for why Russia crossed the borders? Do we care that human rights might have been abused? How does this action change the face of international relations?

This course introduces students to the major concepts and theories in the field of International Relations. Students will become familiar with some of the major debates in the field and be comfortable using IR concepts and theories to understand and explain events in international politics. These events cover the causes of war, power, security and cooperation, international economic relations, poverty, human rights, and the behavior of state and non-state actors in the international system.

The overall objectives of the course require that students:
1. Understand the history of international relations among states, international organizations and other groups and evaluate the roles, processes and functions of these relations in today’s world;
2. Analyze the various theories and concepts used to study international relations;
3. Assess the past and present performance and future prospects of international relations among countries, organizations, and international actors.
4. Develop analytical and critical thinking skills through written work and oral presentations.

Exams (2) 30%
Essays (3) 30%
Final Exam 20%
Participation/Presentations 10%
Response Papers (3) 10%

Participation and class attendance: I value highly student participation in class, which is only possible if you are physically present. While illness and other life events do happen, I do expect you to make an effort to come to class. Once in class, the quality of your participation can be difficult to evaluate, but I will try to make my standards of measurement clear. First, I expect you to come to class having read the assigned readings. If you need to take notes to remember key points, then do so, and bring them to class. Second, I expect you to be able to state the argument of a reading. This is most important: sometimes an author may not be clear, sometimes he or she may develop several arguments. Your assignment is to come to class with your interpretation of what the author wants to communicate. It might be different from that of your classmate’s, which is fine. But come prepared. Third, I expect some recollection of dates and names of important events from the reading. Last, I expect you will be able to communicate your ideas to your classmates in a polite and professional manner.
**Exams and quizzes:** In-class quizzes will assess your understanding of major concepts in the course, as well as identifications of key terms. The take-home final exam will also test your writing skills.

**Essays:** The essays seek to develop your analytical and writing skills. You may do a critical reading of an article, a policy brief, or an editorial. I will give you guidance for these essays.

**Class Presentation:** Each student will present his/her research paper topic in a 3-5 minute time slot. This assignment tests your ability to clearly define an argument and seeks to improve your skills at persuasive reasoning.

**Response Papers:** Students are requested to attend at least two of the three Sunday Speakers this semester and write a three-page response paper to each one. The Sunday Series events are held at 4:00 pm in Saunders Lounge, PAR. Your options are:

**September 7:** Ben Bricker on “Asylum Seekers in the Changing European Union.” Bricker is a JD from the University of Illinois.

**October 5:** Fazal Rizve, Professor of Education, University of Illinois, on topic to be announced.

**November 9:** Dorothee Schneider (History, University of Illinois). “A comparison of US and European migration and integration policies.”

**Academic Integrity:** Cases of cheating and plagiarism, and unauthorized collaboration will be handled in accordance with University of Illinois guidelines: [http://www.admin.uiuc.edu/policy/code/](http://www.admin.uiuc.edu/policy/code/) Students are expected to use generally accepted practices governing bibliographic research and citations of resource materials in written assignments and written materials used in conjunction with an oral presentation. These requirements apply to resources from the Internet as well as to published and unpublished materials. Please read my handout on Plagiarism.

**Course Website:**

The general website for this course can be found at [http://compass.uiuc.edu](http://compass.uiuc.edu). On the website I will post instructor contact information, the reading guides, links to online readings, handouts, a copy of the syllabus, and other documents. We also will post announcements on the course website, and you should login to the website at least twice a week to check for any new announcements. Please contact us if you have any problems accessing materials on the course website.

**Books available for purchase:**


*To insure that disability-related concerns are properly addressed from the beginning, students with disabilities who require auxiliary aids and/or academic accommodations/adjustments to participate in this class are asked to see me as soon as possible, and contact the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services at 333-4603 or email at disability@illinois.edu.*
Module 1: History and Concepts

August 24  Introduction to the Course and Student Worksheet

Monday

August 26  What is International Relations – Why history and theory matter

Wednesday

- Goldstein and Pevehouse, Chapter 1, “The Globalization of International Relations”

Module 2: Competing Theories

August 31  Realism

Monday

- Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War – The Melian Dialogue*, Book 5, Ch. 17
  [http://classics.mit.edu/Thucydides/pelopwar.html](http://classics.mit.edu/Thucydides/pelopwar.html)
- Nye, Chapter 1, “Is there an enduring logic of conflict in world politics?”, pp 1-32.
- Thomas Hobbes, parts of *Leviathan* ([http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/hobbes/leviathan-c.html](http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/hobbes/leviathan-c.html))

September 2  Realism and Liberalism

Wednesday

- Goldstein and Pevehouse, Chapter 2, “Power Politics”.

No Class Labor Day

Sunday Discussion, September 7, 4pm Saunders Lounge

September 9  Marxism

Wednesday

- Ignacio Ramonet, “Response to Friedman”, and Friedman’s response, and Ramonet’s, in *Foreign Policy*, Autumn 1999.

Assignment: Bring in a newspaper article on an International Relations topic. Describe the issue. Does the journalist convey a particular perspective? Write a one-page essay. Due December 10
September 14
Monday Constructivism/Gender Theories

- Goldstein and Pevehouse, Chapter 3, “Alternatives to Power Politics”.


Module 3: War and Peace

September 16 Introduction to Conflict
Wednesday

- Goldstein and Pevehouse, Chapter 5, “International Conflict”.


September 21 Terrorism
Monday

- Goldstein and Pevehouse, Chapter 6, “Military Force and Terrorism”.


September 23 The United Nations, Multilateral Organizations and NGOs
Wednesday

- Browse the United Nations website.
- Goldstein and Pevehouse, Chapter 7, “International Organization, Law and Human Rights”
- Globalization 101 website run by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: click on Issue Briefs, and select “International Law and Organizations”

EXTRA CREDIT: Take Quiz

September 28 Intervention and Conflicts (Bosnia)
Monday

- Nye, Chapter 6, “Intervention, Institutions, and Regional & Ethnic Conflicts”.


**September 30**

**Theories of Cooperation**

**Wednesday**


**October 5**

**Exam – Foreign Language Building G-17**

**Monday**

**Sunday Discussion, October, 4pm Saunders Lounge**

**October 7**

**Library tips for writing your paper - Dr. Lynn Rudasill**

**Wednesday**

Room 291, Undergrad Library

**October 12**

**Movie “Ghosts of Rwanda”**

**Monday**

**October 14**

**The United Nations, the United States, and Rwanda**

**Wednesday**


**October 19**

**Evaluating the United Nations and Multilateral Organizations**

**Monday**

- Anne-Marie Slaughter, Foreign Affairs,
Module 4: The Politics of International Economic Relations & Globalization

**October 21**  
**International Trade**  
**Wednesday**  
- Goldstein and Pevehouse, Chapter 8, “International Trade”.  

**October 26**  
**International Finance**  
**Monday**  
- Chapter 9, “Money and Business”.  

**Assignment:** Write a 5-page paper on the following topic: Compare and contrast how the different perspectives treat the concept of globalization. Due October 27.

**October 28**  
**International Corporations**  
**Wednesday**  

**Recommended:** Movie: *The Corporation*

**November 2**  
**Regional Trading Blocs**  
**Monday**  
- Goldstein and Pevehouse, Chapter 10, “International Integration”  

**November 4**  
**Evaluating Global Governance**  
**Wednesday**  
- Anne-Marie Slaughter, “The Real World Order”  
November 9  In-class Exam: Foreign Languages Building, Room G17 (S. Mathews Ave)
Monday

**Sunday Discussion, November , 4pm Saunders Lounge**

Module 6: Ethics and International Relations

November 11  International Indebtedness: Who’s in Charge?
Wednesday

- Goldstein and Pevehouse, Chapter 12 & 13, “The North-South Gap” and “International Development”

November 16  International Development Issues
Monday

- Globalization 101 website run by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: click on Issue Briefs, and select “Development” **EXTRA CREDIT: Take Quiz**

November 18  What are the NGOs Doing?
Wednesday


**Thanksgiving Break**

November 30  Human Rights and New Security Issues
Monday


December 2  Human Rights and Ethics
Wednesday


**December 7  Human Rights and the International Economy**

**Monday**


*Assignment: Write an 8-10 page paper on one of the four assigned topics. Due December 8.*

**December 9  The Future of International Relations**

**Wednesday**


*Final Exam – Same format as other exams*