

International Relations
POLS 202-04, Spring 2012
Syllabus (Revised 1/12/2012)

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Office Hours: Tuesday 4-6 pm and Thursday 4-5 pm at Café Diem

Course Description

This course provides a historical introduction to the political science subfield of international relations. Over the course of the semester, we will devote attention to the varying ways scholars and practitioners in the past and present attempted to understand the nature of politics among nations and peoples. We will focus particularly on the way this endeavor has changed over time into an attempt to come as close as possible to scientific inquiry into the conduct of war and peace, with the aim of predicting behavior in world politics.

In order to show this change, our course will involve the analysis of several texts including Machiavelli's *Prince* that illustrate an older approach to statecraft that aims to counsel decision makers rather than any scientific understanding. From there, we will survey the development of major schools of international relations thought, examine a few current issues in international politics, and conclude with a short book exploring attempts to do away with war.

Course Goals

Students will improve their ability to interpret texts as well as enhance their written and verbal expression. They will also acquire a basic understanding of the most important problems in international affairs and various prominent attempts to grapple with the dilemmas of war and peace. Knowledge of these ideas and their consequences will help prepare students for more advanced courses in political science.

Course Expectations

First and most importantly: Read this syllabus carefully. Clearly understanding the class requirements will save us all trouble later.

I will conduct the class primarily as a discussion and will begin each class session by calling on people at random. If you are not there on time, you will lose participation credit for that day. Active participation in class is required and will count for 35% of the final grade. On average, I ask that students make a minimum of one or two comments per class period. Questions count as a form of participation. Class discussions should be respectful and considerate of others' views and opinions. Expect to be challenged, but look on it as an opportunity, not a threat.

Students should come to class with the assigned texts in hand and read, and your participation in class should directly reference the readings. In order to be prepared for this, you should take notes on the readings that identify key passages for discussion, or which you do not understand. Under each class meeting, I have listed one or two questions designed to guide your reading of the texts. You should come prepared to talk about these. Because I do not take attendance in the conventional way (and instead only count participation), if you miss a class session for any reason, you should turn in a 1-2 page, double spaced response to one of the questions about the readings discussed on the day(s) you missed.

Some additional observations about reading for the class: these are not standard textbooks with bold lettering around every word you need to know. A casual reading or one undertaken with various distractions present will probably not get you very far. If you get confused, reread the passage, and if you still cannot make sense of the subject matter, try reading the introduction or commentary essays that come with most of the primary texts I have assigned, or email me for suggestions of what to read. Because of all this, you should probably allot two hours of focused attention per class meeting to the material. If you fail to do this, your ability to follow class discussion will be minimal and your chances of doing well on any of the writing assignments will be slim.

In terms of notes on the class readings, I recommend all students both mark up their books and take extensive notes with page references that essentially index the readings. You should type these up so that they are searchable. This is very time-consuming, but will benefit you tremendously both for the short papers I assign as well as the take-home final.

Regarding note-taking in class, I have noticed that once some time has passed, most students have a very difficult time following their notes from a discussion based class like this. Because of the circuitous nature of most discussions, you will not leave class with a neat outline. This means that if you want decent notes you can use to help you with papers and the final, within a day or so of each class, you should rewrite or type up the class notes and attempt to provide a structure for them that you will understand later in the class.

Silence all cell phones, pagers, or other communication devices while in class. If I catch you texting, you will be the first person I call on and you will lose participation credit for that day. If I catch you more than once, I will lower your final grade in the class and ask you to leave.

This syllabus is subject to change, but I will always provide advance notice both in class and via email. You can always find a copy of the most up-to-date syllabus on Blackboard.

Assignments and Grading

Because we will discuss the sections listed in class on the corresponding day, you must keep up with the reading and be ready to talk about it. You must complete three take-home essays over the course of the semester. The final exam will be comprehensive, but at least two weeks prior to the exam date, you will receive the questions. Failure to complete all three essays and the final exam will result in a maximum grade of D- in the class. All late essays will be marked down one minus step per day until I receive them.

I will determine your grades using the following breakdown:

First Paper:	10%
Second Paper:	10%
Third Paper:	15%
Final Exam:	30%
Participation:	35%

Both the individual components and final grade will be calculated on and entered into the gradebook under the slightly more generous 4.0 scale. So, A = 3.71-4.0, A- = 3.31-3.70, B+ = 3.01-3.3, and so on.

Textbooks

Please purchase the following books from a source of your choice. They should all be at the bookstore by the first week of the semester. Other readings and all course documents, may be always found online at our course website on Blackboard. As class discussions will frequently refer to the text and our discussions will be hard to follow without the right page numbers, you *must* use these editions for the course.

Some students put off buying books or don't buy them at all because of financial concerns. The Dean of Students Office runs a program where you can get a loan to purchase course materials. They are located on the 4th Floor of the Student Center. You can also find contact information for them at their website:

<http://www.montclair.edu/deanstudents/contact.html>

Colin S. Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations: An Introduction to Strategic History*, 2nd ed. Routledge, ISBN: 0415594871

Michael Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, 2nd ed, Columbia UP, ISBN: 9780231700481

Niccoló Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Harvey C. Mansfield trans., 2nd ed, U of Chicago Press, ISBN: 0226500446

Karen Mingst and Jack Snyder eds., *Essential Readings in World Politics*, 4th ed. WW Norton, ISBN: 9780393935349

Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, Columbia UP, ISBN: 0231085648

Course Schedule and Readings

Readings from the Mingst and Snyder text, *Essentials in World Politics* are identified by *EWP* after the individual essay's author and title. I will scan and post the reading assignments for 1/17 and 1/20 to Blackboard for those who do not immediately have the books.

1/17: Course Introduction: A Classical Debate in IR

Read: Thucydides, "Melian Dialogue," in *EWP*, pp. 10-12

Kant, "To Perpetual Peace", in *EWP*, pp. 12-15

- 1) Why does Kant believe republican government leads to peace?
- 2) Does the fact Athens and Melos both governed themselves as republics suggest anything about Kant's argument?

1/20: Intellectual Orientation to World Politics

Read: Snyder, "One World, Many Theories," in *EWP*, pp. 2-10

Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations*, Introduction and Ch. 1, pp. 1-16

- 1) How what Gray calls strategic history differ from the rival theories of international relations?
- 2) Where might Snyder place Gray's ideas on his chart of IR ideas (on p. 7)? Why?

1/24: *The Prince*, I

Read: Machiavelli, *Prince*, Chs. 1-6, pp. 3-25

- 1) What errors can a prince make in acquiring new territory?
- 2) What factors aid a prince in maintaining order and defending land they already possess?

1/27: *The Prince*, II

Read: Machiavelli, *Prince*, Chs. 7-13, pp. 25-57

- 1) What lessons does Machiavelli intend us to learn from the actions of Cesare Borgia?
- 2) How does the means one uses to acquire power affect one's reputation and the likelihood of maintaining one's position?

1/31: *The Prince*, III

Read: Machiavelli, *Prince*, Chs. 14-20, pp. 58-87

- 1) Describe the relative uses of fear and kindness in statecraft.
- 2) Why does avoiding hatred matter? How does it relate to the discussion of military forces and policies like building fortresses?

2/3: *The Prince*, IV

Paper 1 Assigned (3-4 pages)

Read: Machiavelli, Chs. 21-26 and Appendix, pp. 87-111

- 1) What role do advisors play in the formation of statecraft? What dangers do they create?
- 2) What is the role of fortune in international relations? How should we approach it?

2/7: Clausewitz and the Nature of War

Read: Clausewitz, "War as an Instrument of Policy," in *EWP*, pp. 322-326
Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations*, Chs. 2-3, pp. 17-53

- 1) In what senses does Clausewitz argue war depends upon politics?
- 2) How did the French Revolution and Napoleon's efforts undermine the practice of limited war?

2/10: The Nineteenth Century

Paper 1 due in class but you still need to do the readings and show up ready to talk.

Read: Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations*, Chs. 4-5, pp. 55-89

- 1) How did changes in technology affect international relations?
- 2) What were the strategic consequences of the Industrial Revolution?

2/14: World War I and the Aftermath

Read: Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations*, Chs. 6-8, pp. 90-129

- 1) What lessons does Gray suggest we learn from World War I?
- 2) What were the principal features of the inter-war period?

2/17: Class Cancelled – I will be at a conference in Detroit; Paper 2 Assigned (3-4 pages)

World War II

Read: Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations*, Chs. 9-13, pp. 130-208

- 1) How did the mechanization of warfare affect the making of strategy?
- 2) What lessons does the conduct of WW II suggest about international relations?

2/21: The Cold War

Read: Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," in *EWP*, pp. 19-24

Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations*, Chs. 14-15, pp. 209-244

- 1) How does Kennan explain Soviet behavior? Does his account differ from Gray's?
- 2) How does the Cold War differ from previous conflicts we have studied? Do the ideas that drove it differ significantly?

2/24: **Paper 2 due – again, be ready to participate in class**

Explaining War and Peace Through Individual Choice

Read: Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, Chs. 1-2, pp. 1-41

- 1) Waltz identifies himself as engaging in a social scientific approach to IR. How does this differ from what we have read so far?
- 2) Why does Waltz think "first image" thinkers are naïve?

2/28: Choice and Conflict

Read: Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, Ch. 3, pp. 42-79

- 1) What does it mean to say that "war is not in human nature"?
- 2) Why does Waltz think that equating knowledge and control is a dangerous fallacy in international relations?

3/2: State Structure and War

Read: Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, Ch. 4, pp. 80-123

- 1) What is the “second image”? Describe some of the versions of it that Waltz mentions.
- 2) What failings does Waltz ascribe to the “second image”?

3/6: Consequences of the Second Image

Read: Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, Ch. 5, pp. 124-158

- 1) What does Waltz attempt to show by examining socialist parties in World War I?
- 2) According to Waltz, to what degree did socialism alter the way states behaved?

3/9: Class cancelled

3/13, 3/16: Spring Break – no class

3/20: The International System

Read: Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, Chs. 6-7 (to “Balance of Power”), pp. 159-198

- 1) What differentiates his “third image” from the other two?
- 2) How does Waltz define a rational act of state?

3/23: Toward a General Theory of International Relations

Read: Waltz, *Man, the State, and War*, Chs. 7-8, pp. 198-238

- 1) How does the acceptance that anarchy really exists actually help order relations between states?
- 2) To what degree does morality figure in Waltz’s analysis of state action?

3/27: Anarchy, Fear, and Order

Read: Morgenthau, “A Realist Theory of International Politics,” in *EWP*, pp. 26-30

Mearsheimer, “Anarchy and the Struggle for Power,” in *EWP*, pp. 31-50

Jervis, “Hypotheses on Misperception,” in *EWP*, pp. 192-205

- 1) How do Morgenthau and Mearsheimer differ in their definition of what realism consists in?
- 2) What role does fear play in each of these theories?

3/30: Liberalism and the Power of Ideas

Read: Doyle, “Liberalism and World Politics,” in *EWP*, pp. 50-64

Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of It,” in *EWP*, pp. 64-88

- 1) How does Wendt reinterpret the idea of anarchy in his article?
- 2) According to Doyle, what makes republics less violent than other regimes?

4/3: The Balance of Power and Other Forms of Order

Read: Morgenthau, “The Balance of Power...,” in *EWP*, pp. 99-104

Bull, “Does Order Exist in World Politics?” in *EWP*, pp. 105-109

Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations*, Ch. 16-17, pp. 245-277

- 1) Does Gray’s analysis of recent history challenge either Morgenthau or Bull’s theories?
- 2) Explain Bull’s concept of an “international society.”

4/6: No class – Good Friday

4/10: Unipolarity, International Institutions, and the Hope for Peace

Read: Ikenberry, Mastanduno, and Wohlforth, “Unipolarity...,” in *EWP*, pp. 110-129

Keohane, Excerpt from *After Hegemony*, in *EWP*, pp. 292-307

Mearsheimer, “The False Promise...,” in *EWP*, pp. 308-319

- 1) Can international institutions work effectively without coercive power? Do they require stability as well?
- 2) Under what conditions do the authors believe cooperation emerges?

4/13: The Uses of Coercion, or, Why Offensive War is Sometimes Reasonable

Essay 3 assigned (4-5 pages)

Read: Schelling, “The Diplomacy of Violence,” in *EWP*, pp. 326-334

Jervis, “Cooperation under the Security Dilemma,” in *EWP*, pp. 335-349

Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War,” in *EWP*, pp. 349-374

- 1) According to Schelling and Fearon, in what sense is war reasonable?
- 2) Explain the security dilemma. Are Schelling and Fearon describing the same situation?

4/17: Terrorism, Insurgency, and Military Responses

Read: Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations*, Ch. 18, pp. 279-305

Kilcullen, Excerpt from *The Accidental Guerilla*, in *EWP*, pp. 416-444

- 1) Does irregular war alter the regular conduct of international relations? If so, how great a change does it create?
- 2) To what degree do ideas motivate insurgencies? Are they more important than in “conventional” warfare?

4/20: Liberalism and Nationalism

Read: Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, Foreward, Introduction, and Chs. 1-2, pp. vi-viii, 1-42

- 1) What commonalities did early anti-war thinking share?
- 2) Explain the place of reasoned discussion in the thinking of the philosophes, at least as it applies to international relations.

4/24: **Essay 3 due in class**

World War I and After, Revisted

Read: Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, Chs. 3-4, pp. 43-82

- 1) How did the ideal of national self-determination complicate the desires of the liberal conscience?
- 2) What dangers does associating all war with material interests pose?

4/27: Pacifism in World War II and the Cold War

Read: Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience*, Chs. 5-6, pp. 83-119

- 1) According to Howard, how did opposition to fascism align with disarmament?
- 2) In what ways does Howard’s account challenge the idea of a democratic peace?

Take-Home Final Exam Distributed

5/1: Last Day of Class

Strategy, Geography, and the Future of International Relations

Read: Gray, *War, Peace, and International Relations*, Chs. 19-21, pp. 307-347

- 1) What lessons does Gray's presentation of geographic theories convey for international relations theorizing?
- 2) Describe the "war-peace cycle" that Grey presents. Is his presentation compelling? Why or why not?

5/9: Take-home final exams due via email by 4:30 pm