

Introduction to International Relations

Course Description and Objectives

This course introduces the study and practice of international relations (IR). It examines the way that states and other international actors interact in their pursuit of security and prosperity, as well as the theoretical tools scholars use to understand why states and other international actors interact as they do. With this practical and theoretical background, you will be able to:

- understand the causes of international conflict and cooperation, including international causes such as anarchy and polarity and transnational causes such as economic interdependence and environmental conditions
- explain similarity and variety in the foreign policies of states
- apply international-relations theories to explain international-political history and predict the important international issues of the coming decades
- develop and support arguments about how and why individuals, states, and other international actors do, will, and should address important international issues

General Education X and Political Science Major Requirements

To receive credit for the Gen Ed Global and Indigenous (X) requirement and the PSCI major Intro to IR major requirement, you must take the course for a traditional letter grade and receive a C- or better.

Teaching Assistants

The teaching assistants for this course are two PSCI graduate (M.A.) students. They will hold regular office hours and several review sessions to help you understand the material and prepare for the paper and exams.

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Required Readings

There are about 50 pages of required reading per week. The reading consists of one book, articles posted on the Moodle website, and international news in the *New York Times*. The book is:

- Jon C. Pevehouse and Joshua S. Goldstein, *International Relations Brief*, 7th Edition (New York: Pearson, 2017) ISBN-13: 9780134406350. An e-version of this book is available for rent (\$28) and purchase (\$76) at the UM Bookstore.¹

In addition to reading the book and articles as noted on the schedule below, you are required to keep up with and develop an in-depth understanding of current international-relations actors, events, issues, and problems by reading the *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com>) on a daily (Monday - Friday) basis. In class and on the Moodle website, I will explain which of the *New York Times* (NYT) sections and stories you should read.

¹ If you would like to purchase a hard copy of the book, Amazon and other sellers may have used copies. To save money, it's OK to purchase other editions. The best alternative is the Brief 6th (2013-2014, ISBN 978-0205971435). It would also be fine to use the full-length 10th (2013-2014, ISBN 978-0205971367) or 11th editions (2017, 978-0134404769). In the other editions, use headings as a guide. The examples may be less current; you can get up to date by reading the *NYT*. I will also place a hard copy of the Brief 6th edition on 2-hour reserve at Mansfield Library.

For other ways to keep up with current events, please see the Moodle website page for the course. I encourage you to consult these and other additional sources, but they will not substitute for the *New York Times*. Because it offers the broadest range and greatest depth of international news and opinion, current event discussions and exam questions will be based on the *New York Times*.

Course Requirements

You are expected to attend class regularly and complete all of the assigned reading, including the previous day's *New York Times*, before each class. Your grade in the class will be determined as follows:

- 10% attendance and participation
- 25% research paper (due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, February 19)
- 30% midterm (Thursday, March 7, in class)
- 35% final (Tuesday, April 30 from 1:10-3:10 in our regular classroom)

Attendance and participation will be graded about 15 times (once a week) over the semester, based on your attendance and participation in individual and group exercises during class.

In the research paper, you will analyze a current international conflict in terms of the various levels of analysis and theories of international relations discussed in class. Papers must be typewritten, double-spaced, and between 3-5 pages. They must cite at least three articles from the NYT or other approved newspaper or magazine sources. Papers will be graded on the extent to which they fulfill the assignment and the accuracy, clarity, and thoughtfulness with which they are written. A detailed paper assignment will be distributed in class.

The midterm and final exams will test your understanding of and ability to analyze material from the book and readings, lectures, and *New York Times*. They will consist of multiple choice questions, short answers, and essay questions. Be prepared to recall what you have learned and to write clear, thoughtful, and well-supported answers to challenging questions.

Extra Credit

You can earn up to 10 extra credit points towards your overall grade in the class by attending and writing about certain pre-approved international events and/or by preparing, practicing, and presenting a 5-minute presentation on an IR topic that interests you. For information, see the Moodle website.

Grades

The plus/minus grading system will be used. Grades may be curved, but the following distribution is the lowest I will use (*i.e.*, if you earn 93% of all possible points you are assured of an A in the course):

93-100	A	83-86	B	73-76	C	63-66	D
90-92	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-	60-62	D-
87-89	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+	0-59	F

Academic Honesty

Students must practice academic honesty and should be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available at on the [Dean of Students website](#). Students who engage in academic misconduct such as plagiarism (representing another person's work as their own) will receive a 0 for the assignment in question and may be subject to a disciplinary sanction by the university.

Make-Up Policy

I will schedule make-up exams and accept late papers only for students directly involved in serious, documented emergencies. If you find yourself in the midst of an emergency, you must notify me as soon as possible (in advance of the due-date if possible) that you will be unable to attend the scheduled exam or submit the paper on time. To do so, send me an email explaining the circumstances of your emergency and giving me a way to contact you. I reserve the right to deny requests and require makeup work substantially different from the original assignment. Make-up work for missed attendance and participation points will not be provided. Instead you can use extra credit points (see above).

Because I accept make-up work only in the event of serious, documented emergencies, if you miss an exam or fail to submit a paper for any other reason you will receive a 0 for the assignment. This will put you at risk of failing the course.

Drop Policy, Grading Options, and Incompletes

The 15th day of the semester is the last day to drop the class or change the grading option without my signature on an override form. If you wish to drop or change the grading option after that, you must provide documentation of an emergency or other serious situation in which you are directly involved that has made it impossible for you to complete the course. For UM's policy on incompletes, please see UM's [Academic Policies and Procedures](#).

Disabilities

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance and if you have not already registered with Disability Services, please go to Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 (406-243-2243). I will work with you and Disability Services to provide a reasonable modification. "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. Students with disabilities should apprise me of their needs well before the due date of an assignment on which they wish to be accommodated.

Course Communications

Throughout the course, I will communicate with you by email and by posting announcements and other materials on the Moodle website, which you can access via the UM homepage. I will also email you from time to time. To ensure that you receive my emails, you should either check your UM email account on a regular basis or have your UM email forwarded to an account you do check regularly.

Study Tips

To do well in this course, you need to do more than attend class. You need to do the readings and think about what the lectures and readings are arguing, determine how they relate to one another, and practice applying the concepts and theories to understand international history and current events. Here are my tips for doing so:

1. *Read, think about, and make notes on the assigned reading (including the previous day's NYT) before class.*
 - a. Set aside time to read. Set a timer for 40 minutes, and follow the steps below. When the timer goes off, get up and take a 10-20 minute break to move around and drink some water or have a snack or meal. This on-off pace helps you focus and integrate the material.
 - b. Begin with the first reading listed on the syllabus. Start an Author Reading page in your notebook (real or virtual) with the author's name, reading title, and date at the top. As you read, highlight or underline in the text, and write your comments or questions in the margins or the reading or in your notebook. When you're done reading, make a list in your notebook of the author's central questions, concepts, arguments, and evidence. If you were to draw their argument, what would it look like? (Drawing helps you remember things.) Also note your most important questions and comments about the reading. Do this for each of the day's readings.
 - c. After doing all of the day's readings, start a Day's Reading Summary page in your notebook to compare and contrast the readings. For example:
 - i. Are the authors answering the same or different questions?
 - ii. Do the authors define key terms (for example, state, power, security) the same way?
 - iii. Are they arguing from the same or different levels of analysis? Do they espouse similar or different theoretical perspectives? How can you tell?
 - iv. To which historical examples or current events do the authors refer?
 - v. Which of the readings is most helpful? Most interesting? Most persuasive? Why?
 - d. Read the day's NYT (international relations articles in the World, US, Business, and Opinion sections). On the summary page of your notebook, make notes about current events and articles that relate to the questions, concepts, arguments, and evidence of these readings. What questions do you have about these events?
 - e. Bring your notebook and questions to class.

2. *Attend class and take notes.*
 - a. Print or download the lecture notes and key terms from the Moodle website, and bring them to class.
 - b. Start a new page in your notebook for the day's Lecture Notes. Put the day and topic at the top.
During class, take notes. Use the lecture outlines to help you organize them. The outlines list topics in the order they will be discussed. By taking detailed notes about the discussion in your own words, you will learn and remember the material. Pay particular attention to the lecture's central questions, key terms, argument (level of analysis and theory), and evidence. Also make notes about your questions and reactions.
 - c. Ask questions and participate in discussions.

3. *Review your lecture notes, compile a topic summary, and practice using the material.*
 - a. Review your lecture notes. Underline or highlight the key points, and note any additional comments or questions you have.
 - b. Make a new page for your Topic Summary & Practice. On this page, make a list about how the readings and lectures fit together. For example:
 - i. Did the lecture directly or indirectly answer questions you had about the readings?
 - ii. Did lecture or discussion directly or indirectly clarify current events?
 - iii. What new questions did class raise? Can you use the readings and NYT to answer them?
 - iv. Overall, what are the key questions, terms, theoretical approaches, historical facts, and current events in this section of the class?
 - c. Finally, practice using the concepts and developing your own arguments:
 - i. Quiz yourself on the key terms (see 4a below).
 - ii. Write an essay answering one of the Critical Reading Questions at the end of the P&G chapter (see 4b below)
 - iii. Make a note of any questions or comments you would like to discuss in class, office hours, or review sessions.

4. *Prepare for the midterm and final by practicing short answer and essay questions.*
 - a. Short answer questions will ask you to define and give an example of a term, define and explain the significance of a term, compare and contrast two terms, or something of that nature. 1-2 paragraphs should suffice. You will have about 10 minutes per question. I've posted key term lists on Moodle. Some will appear in multiple choice questions; others will be short answer questions.

 - b. The essay question will ask you to write an essay (with a paragraph for your introduction and thesis statement, several paragraphs for your argument and evidence, and a paragraph for your conclusion) in which you analyze an international political issue and compare and contrast your argument to the arguments of other scholars. You will have about 30 minutes per essay. Practice by answering the Critical Reading Questions and Policy Perspectives questions in P&G.

Essay Grading

- 100 Superb. Develops an extremely well-written, clear, and convincing argument that answers the question and substantiates the answer with facts and other information from readings.
- 90-99 Excellent. Develops a generally well-written, clear, and convincing argument that answers the question and refers well to readings. Omissions or inaccuracies are few and detract little from the overall quality of the argument.
- 80-89 Good. The argument is generally good and answers the question, but the answer is disorganized, unclear, inaccurate, or unsupported in several important respects -- OR -- The argument is well-written, clear, and convincing but doesn't fully answer the question or has few and/or insubstantial references to readings.
- 70-79 Marginal. The answer has numerous shortcomings in organization, clarity, accuracy, or support -- OR -- The argument is fairly well-written, more or less clear, and somewhat convincingly but doesn't really answer the question AND has few and/or insubstantial references to readings.
- 60-69 Unacceptable. The answer is very vague, completely wrong, has nothing to do with the question, and/or provides no evidence of reading.

Course Outline and Schedule

Readings marked “P&G” are in the book by Pevehouse and Goldstein. *Page numbers refer to the 7th (2017) Brief Edition.* Page numbers in other editions are slightly different; use chapter and section names as a guide.

Readings marked with an asterisk (*) are on the Moodle website. If you have trouble accessing them, go to the UM library homepage (<http://www.lib.umt.edu/>), click on “Journal Titles,” type in the name of the newspaper or journal, select the electronic index that contains the issue in which the article appeared, and search for the article using the title and/or author’s name.

I. International Politics: The Basics (1/10-1/15; about 53 pp.)

To do after class on 1/10 and before class on 1/15:

- Read pp. 1-4 of the syllabus, and skim the topic list on pp. 5+.
- Log into the Moodle website and look around.
- Do the following readings, using the reading and note-taking tips above. As you read about countries, find them on the world map (P&G, pp. xx-xxi):
 - In P&G, “Preface,” (p. xi), “To the Student” (p. xviii), and “The Globalization of IR” (pp. 1-36)
 - *Erik Ringmar, “The Making of the Modern World,” in Stephen McGlinchey, ed., *International Relations* (Bristol, UK: E-International Relations, 2017), pp. 8-19.
 - Go to the NYT website and skim the headlines on the World, US, Business, and Opinion pages, looking for articles related to international relations (see instructions on “Keeping Up with Current Events” on the Moodle website).

II. Theoretical Perspectives on International Politics

A. Realism (1/17-22; 45 pp.)

- Read before class on 1/17:
 - P&G, Chapter 2, “Realist Theories,” pp. 37-66.
- Read before class on 1/22:
 - *Benjamin Schwartz and Christopher Layne, “A New Grand Strategy,” *Atlantic*, January 2002 (7 pp).
 - *Graham Allison, “The Thucydides Trap: Are the US and China Headed for War?,” *Atlantic*, 24 September 2015 (9 pp).

B. Idealism

1. Liberalism (1/24-29)

For reading assignments, see Moodle

Review Session #1

2. Critical/Revolutionary Theories

a. Marxism and Dependency Theory (1/31)

b. Feminism, Constructivism, and Peace Studies (2/5)

III. Foreign Policy (2/7-12)

Review Session #2

IV. International Security

A. The Causes and Resolution of International Conflict (2/14-19)

****PAPER DUE at the beginning of class on Tuesday, February 19****

B. The Use of Force in International Conflicts

1. **Decisions States Must Make About Military Force** (2/21)
2. **Nuclear Weapons** (2/26)

C. Alternatives to International Conflict

1. **International Organizations and Law** (2/28-3/5)

Review Session #3

***** MIDTERM EXAMINATION in class on Thursday, March 7 *****

V. International Political Economy

A. International Trade (3/12-14)

B. International Finance (3/19-21)

Spring Break (3/25-29)

C. International Integration (4/2-4)

Review Session #4

VI. International Cooperation on the Environment (4/9-11)

VII. Development and North-South Relations (4/16-18)

VIII. The Future of International Politics; extra credit presentations (4/23-25)

Review Session #5

*****FINAL EXAMINATION, Tuesday, April 30 from 1:10-3:10 in our regular classroom*****