PLS550

IR Core Seminar

Fall 2020 | W 12:00-14:50 | Online

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Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with a firm foundation of the subfield of IR and prepare them for advanced study in IR. International Relations concerns itself with explaining the behavior of states and other actors in the international system. As such, there is no overarching theory of world politics. This course lays the foundation for all subsequent international relations courses, since all scholars in the subfield face the same theoretical and methodological issues regardless of their empirical interests. Taking this course should help you learn to think about international relations like a political scientist.

Course Learning Objectives (CLOs)

At the end of this course, you should not only have a working knowledge of major theoretical approaches of IR, but also be in a position to critically evaluate theoretical and empirical claims of IR scholarship. This course has the following learning objectives:

- Students will gain a substantive knowledge of one or more primary subfields within the discipline of political science.

- Students will demonstrate their synthesis of a body of literature by producing a coherent literature review.

- Students will learn to work independently.

- Students will be able to present research ideas and findings in a coherent and organized manner.

- Students will be able to make their own evidence-based arguments.

- Students will be able to generate hypotheses and design research to test them.

- Students will become proficient analysts of real politics in oral and written formats.

Textbooks

Students must be prepared for each class by fully digesting assigned readings for the week (see the course schedule). Following books are frequently used in this course for reading assignments. Read the unassigned chapters in the books below on your own to better prepare yourself for the seminar and your thesis projects.

- Susan D. Hyde. 2011. *The Pseudo-Democrats Dilemma: Why Election Observation Became an International Norm* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press).
- Reus-Smit, Christian and Duncan Snidal, eds. 2008. *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations* (Oxford University Press).
- Mearshiemer, John J. 2001. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (Norton & Company).
- Carlsnaes, Walter, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons. eds. 2006. *Sage Handbook of International Relations* (Sage Publications).
- Lake, David and Robert Powell. 1999. *Strategic Choice and International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ Press)
- Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press).
- Katzenstein, Peter J. 1996. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (Columbia University Press).
- Schelling, Thomas C. 1960. *The Strategy of Conflict* (Oxford University Press).

Assignments

Discussion Memo Each week, four or five students will be responsible for writing brief (no longer than 2 pages) memos responding to the readings of the week. Each student will respond to one reading in some way: proposing a topic of discussion, noting some commonality or disagreement between the readings, proposing a research design inspired by the week's readings, drawing out further implications of some findings, or just digging into some things that were not completely understood about the readings. The memos must show some new arguments or thoughts; they should not be just summaries of the readings. The memo must be posted on the week's forum by Wednesday 12:00 pm.

Online seminar While memo writers are responsible for starting each week's discussion, other students should actively engage in online seminars. The discussion begins at noon every Wednesday as the memos are posted. For effective discussion, everyone must read assigned readings *and* discussion memos before the discussion. Each student must post at least two postings per discussion memo, responding to questions proposed in the memo. Each week's online seminar remains active until noon next Tuesday. If you fail to contribute to the discussion, you will receive a warning and negative evaluation at the end of the course.

Literature review Students will be expected to write a literature review on a topic/question of their own choice. This should be a good place to learn and practice how to write a literature review. A literature review is a fundamental part of a research in elaborating your study's position within the literature and sharpening your arguments. It should be synthesized and focused around a specific question you have. A comprehensive literature review often takes 20-30 pages (consider a book chapter of any graduate level textbooks or handbooks). In this course, however, I expect that students write about 4,000 words (it's about single-spaced 10 pages). The literature review must be organized as a synthesized review of the literature on a specific question. Therefore, you must have a research question to start. A preliminary memo (2-3 pages, often called a research note or sketch) is due by the end of September.

Research Design Paper Each student should come up with an original research idea that could ultimately become a thesis proposal or a publishable article, and explain how you would undertake that research. You will write the first part of this hypothetical paper, laying out the motivation, the relevant literature, and the methods to be used. Students will not be expected to present the results of this research, but it should actually be feasible, and students should point to the actual dataset that would be used or describe the way in which original data would be collected. A research design paper usually takes about 20 pages, in which you should describe thoroughly the research question and the approach to answering it, including a short literature review on the question. Students may combine this assignment with another course's seminar paper requirement (with approval of both faculty members). If you combine the assignment you will be expected to complete the research project and turn in a full paper.

Grading Policy

General rules Grading for graduate students is different from grading for undergraduate students. Your role is shifting from being a student to becoming a researcher. I assume that all of you are here because you are interested and motivated in studying political science *and* that you desire to be proficient in some subfields of political science. My grading in this course is to give you a general idea of whether your work meets expectations of such desire. For graduate grades, you should be aware of the following rule:

A/A-	Your work is generally meeting the standards of graduate work.
B/B+	Your work is meeting undergraduate standards but is still falling short in terms of depth of analysis, originality, and quality.
B-/C+	Your work has serious weaknesses and is not up to standard.
C and below	Your work is failing at the graduate level.

Feedback and grades During the semester I will mark each assignment with a letter grade or a range of grades. I am looking for your trajectory and improvement. Unlike undergraduate classes I am not compiling your percentage as the semester goes on. I am seeing what level your work is on generally and where you end up with the quality of your work by the end of the semester. I will provide written feedback on all work and will let you know if your work is falling below standard and if you are in danger of receiving a grade below a B in the course.

Late submissions and extension I do *not* accept late submissions, except for extreme circumstances. All written assignments must be submitted via the course Moodle, unless instructed otherwise. Extensions will be granted in a collective manner only. No one will get an extension individually for personal excuses.

Plagiarism This will never be tolerated. Students must be familiarized with the student code of conduct and the university regulations about academic misconduct. If you don't agree with the penalty imposed by the instructor, you can appeal to the School disciplinary committee. See the Academic Integrity Policy for more information.

Course Format

General expectations This course is a graduate-level seminar, expecting students to act professionally and accordingly. The MAPSIR program is a full-time program, meaning that studying is your job and responsibility. Although the course will be done online, students are required to participate in online discussions and to attend a weekly meeting as much as possible.

Weekly meetings The class will have an hour long online meeting session on a weekly basis. A one-hour zoom session will be held from 12:00 to 13:00 every Wednesday, unless told otherwise. Although attendance is not mandatory, I highly recommend that students attend the meeting as often as possible. If a student never shows up to an online session, he/she will be required to write a letter for explanation. All online sessions will be recorded and shared in this course (a recorded session will be posted on the course Moodle site with a link).

Seminars This is a seminar course, meaning that students and the professor are collaborating to build and strengthen our knowledge base of political science. You will be asked to answer questions using your knowledge accumulated, to comment thoughts of others, and sometimes to lead a discussion. Discussions will be online but expectations remain the same as offline seminars.

Office hours Your goal in the program is to finish your MA thesis on time. The sooner you begin to think about your thesis, the higher the quality of your thesis is. In this course, you will not only read and discuss IR topics but also interact with the professor for learning about how to conduct research. Each student must individually meet with the professor (via online) *at least three times* before the end of the course, discussing his/her research interests, thesis topics, or other general issues about academic career (if interested). To book an online meeting with the professor, send an email.

Academic Misconduct

Official documents Students must become familiarized with the NU Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures, which are available at the NU portal. It is your responsibility to know the procedure and basic rules and regulations pertaining to your study at NU.
Plagiarism I assume that you are familiar with the definition of plagiarism and its consequences. Again, graduate students are supposed to act professionally. If your work turns out to be plagiarism, you will be reported to the Director of Graduate Studies and the SSH Disciplinary Committee. This applies to your discussion memos, literature review, and research design papers.

Other Policies

Medical emergency If a student faces a medical issue of herself/himself or direct family members and if it is going to disturb your study in the program, he/she must notify the instructor and the Director of MAPSIR (Dr. Schenk) immediately. The department will put its best effort to assist the student.

Assistance for physical/mental needs If a student needs special attention due to his/her own physical or mental conditions, the student is responsible for notifying the instructor in the beginning of the semester. If necessary, the instructor can demand official documentation on the student's condition. Upon such requests, the student should provide appropriate records/proofs of the condition. If not provided, the requests may not be considered at all.

Writing Center Students are encouraged to work with the writing center to improve their writing. Students are also encouraged to form writing groups to read and comment on each other's draft of work. Academic writing is a long process that is not complete in a vacuum.
Communication If a student needs to communicate with the instructor, he/she should send a request via email. Leaving a message in the Moodle may not efficiently reach the instructor.
Changes to syllabus The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus. Any changes will be communicated via Moodle.

Course Schedule

Readings are available on Moodle [M], NU library [L], or link from campus computer network [H]. If you have any problems with locating readings, contact the instructor immediately.

Week 1. Introduction

An inaugural online session is scheduled via zoom. All students are expected to attend. We will discuss course format and schedule for the semester. Students should read the course syllabus prior to the meeting and prepare to introduce themselves.

- Barnett, Michael and Kathryn Sikkink. 2008. "From international relations to global society" in Reus-Smit and Snidal. eds. *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations* (Oxford Univ Press).
- Cox, Robert W. 2008. "The point is not just to explain the world but to change it" in Reus-Smit and Snidal. eds. *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations* (Oxford Univ Press)
- Zipp, G.P. "Alternative writing assignments: the integrated paper," Faculty Focus (available at here)
- Knopf, J.W. 2006. "Doing a literature review," *PS: Political Science & Politics,* 39: 127-132.
- Pacheco, R. "Literature review" at the author's blog (his blog has many useful tips for graduate students and young scholars, highly recommended).

Week 2. Realism, Liberalism, Anarchy, and Hierarchy

- Milner, Helen V. 1991. "The assumption of anarchy in international relations theory: A critique," *Review of International Studies* 17(1): 67-85.
- Keohane, Robert O. 1984. *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton University Press), chapters 1, 4, and 5.
- Waltz, Kenneth. 2010. *Theory of International Politics*, Reissue edition (Waveland Press), chapters 5, 6 and 8.
- Mearsheimer, John J. 2001. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (W.W. Norton & Company), chapter 2.
- Lake, David A. 1996. "Anarchy, hierarchy, and the variety of international relations," *International Organization*, 50(1): 1-34.
- Kegley, Charles W. 1993. "The Neoidealist Moment in International Studies? Realist Myths and the New International Realities," *International Studies Quarterly* 37(2): 131-146.

Week 3. Rational Approaches

- Oye, Kenneth, 1985. "Explaining cooperation under anarchy," *World Politics* 38(1):1-24.
- Powell, Robert. 1994. "Anarchy in international relations theory: the neorealist-neolibreal debate," *International Organization* 48(2): 313-344.
- Lake, David and Robert Powell. 1999. *Strategic Choice and International* Relations (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ Press), chapters 1 and 2.
- Tomz, Michael. 2007. *Reputation and International Cooperation: Sovereign Debt Across Three Centuries* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ Press), chapters 1 and 2.
- Stein, Arthur A. 1990. Why Nations Cooperate: Circumstance and Choice in International Relations (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), chapter 2.
- Kahler, Miles. 1998. "Rationality in International Relations," *International Organization* 52(4): 919-941.
- Kydd, Andrew H. "Methodological individualism and rational choice" in Reus-Smit and Snidal. eds. *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations* (Oxford Univ Press)
- Snidal, Duncan. 2002. "Rational choice and international relations," in Carlsnaes, Risse and Simmons. eds. *Sage Handbook of International Relations* (Sage Publications), chapter 4.

Week 4. Norms, Identity, and Culture

- Katzenstein, Peter, ed. 1996. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York, NY: Columbia Univ Press), chapters 2, 4, 5, 9, and 13.
- Goddard, Stacie. 2006. "Uncommon ground: indivisible territory and the politics of legitimacy," *International Organization* 60(1): 35-68.
- Abdelal, Rawi, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Rose McDermott. 2006. "Identity as a Variable," *Perspectives on Politics,* 4(4): 695-711.
- Finnemore, Martha and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. "International norm dynamics and political change," *International Organization*, 52(4): 887-917.
- Wendt, Alexander. 1992. "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics," *International Organization*, 46(2): 391-425.

Week 5. Cognitive and Bureaucratic Approaches

- Jervis, Robert. 1968. "Hypotheses on misperception," *World Politics* 20(3): 454-479.
- Levy, Jack S. 1997. "Prospect theory, rational choice, and international relations," *International Studies Quarterly* 41(1): 87-112.
- Mercer, Jonathan. 2010. "Emotional beliefs," *International Organization* 64(1): 1-31.
- Yarhi-Milo, Keren. 2013. "In the eye of the beholder: how leaders and intelligence communities assess the intentions of adversaries," *International Security* 38(1): 7-51.
- Allison, Graham T. 1969. "Conceptual models and the Cuban missile crisis," *American Political Science Review* 63(3): 689-718.

- Bendor, Jonathan and Thomas H. Hammond. 1992. 'Rethinking Allison's models," *American Political Science Review* 86(2): 301-322.

Week 6. Paradigms and Progress in IR

* Literature review due Wednesday 17:00

- Frieden, Jeffry and David Lake. 2005. "International Relations as a social science: rigor and relevance," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 600(1): 136-156.
- Fearon, James and Alexander Wendt. 2002. "Rationalism vs. constructivism: a skeptical view" in Carlsnaes, Risse and Simons, eds. *Handbook of International Relations* (London: Sage), chapter 3.
- Lake, David. 2011. "Why 'isms' are evil: theory, epistemology, and academic sects as impediments to understanding and progress," *International Studies Quarterly* 55: 465-480.

Week 7. Bargaining, Coercion, and War

- Schelling, Thomas C. 1960. *The Strategy of Conflict* (Harvard University Press), chapter 2.
- Fearon, James D. 1995. "Rationalist explanations of war," *International Organization* 49(3): 379- 414.
- Powell, Robert. 2006. "War as a Commitment Problem," *International Organization* 60(1): 169- 203.
- Sechser, Todd and Matthew Fuhrmann. 2013. "Crisis Bargaining and Nuclear Blackmail," *International Organization* 67(1):173-95.
- Lake, David A. 2010/2011. "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," *International Security* 35(3): 7-52.

Week 8. Fall break (writing week)

No class.

Week 9. Democratic Peace, Domestic Institutions, and Audience Costs

- Owen, John M. 1994. "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace," *International Security* 19(2): 87-125.
- Schultz, Kenneth A. 1999. "Do Democratic Institutions Constrain or Inform? Contrasting Two Institutional Perspectives on Democracy and War," *International Organization* 53(2): 233-266.
- Weeks, Jessica L. 2012. "Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict," *American Political Science Review* 106(2):326-347.

- Bueno De Mesquita, Bruce, James D. Morrow, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alastair Smith. 1999. "An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace," *American Political Science Review* 93(4): 791-807.
- Tomz, Michael. 2007. "Domestic Audience Costs in International Relations: An Experimental Approach," *International Organization* 61(4): 821-840
- Weiss, Jessica C. 2013. "Authoritarian signaling, mass audiences, and nationalist protest in China," *International Organization* 61(4): 821-840.

Week 10. Leaders, Coalitions, and Diversionary Dynamics

* Preliminary summary of research design paper due Wednesday 17:00

- Solingen, Etel. 2007. "Pax Asiatica versus Bella Levantina: The Foundations of War and Peace in East Asia and the Middle East," *American Political Science Review* 101(4): 757-780.
- Fravel, M. Taylor. 2010. "The Limits of Diversion: Rethinking Internal and External Conflict," *Security Studies* 19(2): 307-341.
- Croco, Sarah. 2011. "The Decider's Dilemma: Leader Culpability, War Outcomes, and Domestic Punishment," *American Political Science Review* 105(3): 457-477.
- Saunders, Elizabeth N. 2018. "Leaders, advisers, and the political origins of elite support for war," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62(10): 2118-2149.

Week 11. The Politics of International Trade and Investment

- Broz, J. Lawrence and Jeffry A. Frieden. 2001. "The political economy of international monetary relations," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4, 317-343.
- Hiscox, Michael J. 2001. "Class versus Industry Cleavages: Inter-Industry Factor Mobility and the Politics of Trade," *International Organization* 55(1): 1-46.
- Rudra, Nita. 2002. "Globalization and the Decline of the Welfare State in Less Developed Countries," *International Organization* 56(2): 411-445.
- Hiscox, Michael J. 2006. "Through a glass and darkly: Framing effects and individuals' attitudes toward international trade," *International Organization* 60(3): 755-780.
- Rogowski, Ronald. 1987. "Political Cleavages and Changing Exposure to Trade," *American Political Science Review* 81(4): 1121-1137.
- Naoi, Megumi and Ikuo Kume. 2011. "Explaining Mass support for Agricultural Protectionism: Evidence from a Survey Experiment during the Global Recession," *International Organization* 65(4): 771-795.

Week 12. Economics and Security

- Baldwin, David A. 1999/2000. "The sanctions debate and the logic of choice," *International Security* 24(3): 80-170.
- Drezner, Daniel W. 2009. "Bad debts: Assessing China's financial influence in great power politics," *International Security* 34(2): 7-45.
- Davis, Christina L. and Sophie Muenier. 2011. "Business as usual? Economic responses to political tensions," *American Journal of Political Science* 55(3): 628-646.
- Farrell, Henry and Abraham L. Newman. 2019. "Weaponized interdependence: How global eco- nomic networks shape state coercion," *International Security* 44(1): 42-79.
- Reed, William. 2003. "Information and economic interdependence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 47(1): 54-71.

Week 13. International law and Institutions

- Lipscy, Phillip Y. 2015. "Explaining Institutional Change: Policy Areas, Outside Options, and the Bretton Woods Institutions." *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (2): 341-356.
- Carnegie, Allison. 2014. "States Held Hostage: Political Hold-Up Problems and the Effects of International Institutions." *American Political Science Review* 108 (1): 54-70.
- Morrow, James. 2007. "When Do States Follow the Laws of War?" *American Political Science Review* 101 (3): 559-572.
- Allee, Todd and Paul Huth. 2006. "Legitimizing Dispute Settlement: International Legal Rulings as Domestic Political Cover." *American Political Science Review* 100 (2): 219-234.
- Koremenos, Barbara, Charles Lipson, and Duncan Snidal. 2001. "The Rational Design of International Institutions." *International Organization* 55 (4): 1051-1082.
- Downs, George, David Rocke, and Peter Barsoom. 1996. "Is the Good News about Compliance Good News about Cooperation?" *International Organization* 50 (3): 379-406.

Week 14. Diffusion, International Normative Change, and Networks

- Susan D. Hyde. 2011. *The Pseudo-Democrats Dilemma: Why Election Observation Became an International Norm* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), introduction and chapters 1-4.
- Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), chapters 1 and 3.

- Beth A. Simmons, Frank Dobbin and Geoffrey Garrett. 2006. "Introduction: The International Diffusion of Liberalism." *International Organization* 60 (4): 781-810.
- Emilie M. Hafner-Burton, Miles Kahler and Alexander H. Montgomery. 2009. "Network Analysis for International Relations." *International Organization* 63 (3): 559-592.

Week 15. Online Presentations

- Students will present their research design papers.

* Final draft of research design paper due 2 December, Friday 17:00