

# Introduction to International Relations

Time: TBD

Location: TBD

Office Hours: TBD

Office: TBD [will include in-person and online]

*[This course is designed for anywhere from 10-35 students. It is aimed at the introductory level, although it may also work well if students have already taken at least one political science course already. With larger classes, I will adjust the main simulation and the engagement score component to account for the larger class size]*

## What Will We Study?

We will cover a wide variety of questions involving interactions between states in the global system such as: Why do wars occur? Do international organizations matter? What are the benefits and drawbacks of free trade? Why can states cooperate on some issues but not others? Can the current global order last in the future?

## What Will I Learn?

You will finish this class with a clear understanding of the major concepts and debates in international relations, the ability to read and critically evaluate policy and academic articles in the discipline of international relations, improved argumentative writing skills, and a better understanding of the major causes and consequences of current events happening around the world. This will prepare you for upper-level classes in the subfield of international relations and may prove useful in other political science subfields as well.

## How Will I Be Evaluated?

*20% of total grade: Class Engagement.*

A successful course requires work on the part of both the instructor and the students to prepare for and participate in each class. This grade will consist of three parts:

- Successful completion of in-class assignments and quizzes. All of these in-class assignments and quizzes are graded for *completion* only; they are intended to help you review the material and for the instructor to get feedback on strengths and weaknesses. The most common one of these will be a “YourTake” writing assignment at the start of every class (we will discuss this more on the first day of class). These may be periodically collected.

- Two 3-4 minute presentations of a current events article that illustrates some aspect of the readings for that day. Please email this article and approximately a paragraph explaining how that article exemplifies a concept, theory, or idea from the reading a minimum of 24 hours before you are slated to present to the instructor. Sign-ups will take the first week of class.

- Participation in in-class discussions and group activities. This is not simply a matter of how many times one speaks, but rather the appropriate use of critical thinking techniques to analyze, compare, contrast, and above all contribute to the discussion. Contributions that tie in others' contributions as well are also highly desired. We will discuss this the first week of class and go over as a group the expectations for useful, inclusive, and insightful classroom discussions (including attendance).

### *15% of Total Grade: First Paper*

This paper is a 3-4 page paper (1200-1500 words) that makes an argument in response to the readings for one week. Full instructions for this paper and a guide to avoiding plagiarism will be provided in class. You will receive a full, detailed response to this paper to help improve by identifying strengths and weaknesses.

### *20% of Total Grade: Exam*

The exam will be a check of your understanding of the major concepts in the course. It will be entirely objective and short-answer (approximately 4-5 sentences) questions. There will be no long essays. This will be administered in-class at approximately two-thirds of the way through the course. All concepts that appear in **bold** on the weekly handouts for the course will be fair game for exam material. We will also conduct additional reviews in class.

### *20% Simulation: Position Paper + Actions During Simulation*

The position paper will outline the person whom you will be representing during the simulation's position on the major questions relating to that simulation (we will vote in class on the topic of the simulation and will choose roles well in advance). As part of this, you will need to meet with the instructor at office hours at least once before the simulation to discuss your role.

You will be evaluated in both the paper and during the simulation on how well you represent your actor. For instance, North Korea would be highly unlikely to agree to unilaterally hand over all its all nuclear weapons and send the Kim family into exile. A future handout will have more details, including information about potential sources and the procedures for the simulation.

## *25% Second Paper*

This paper will be due at the end of the course. It will be similar in format to the first paper, except slightly longer at 1500-2000 words. Given that it comes after the first paper is returned, the expectations for this paper will be slightly higher.

Total Grade:

20% Class Engagement

15% First Paper

20% Exam

20% Simulation

25% Second Paper

A consistently strong record of class engagement throughout the course *may* raise your final grade by up to one-half letter grade (i.e. from a C+ to a B-). There is no direct extra credit offered, but there will be opportunities to contribute to the class engagement portion outside of class as well.

### **What do I need to purchase?**

One book, which you can buy used (or find in a library) to save money.

#### **1) Frieden, Lake, and Schultz. *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions* (W.W. Norton) [Required]**

Since a 4th edition has just come out, the 3rd edition is now significantly cheaper. The 3rd edition will be the edition that I will use for class. You are welcome to purchase a new 4th edition as well if you are interested in access to some of the online review materials. The 2nd edition is also quite affordable now and is not that different from the 3rd.

Friedan, Lake, and Schultz (FLS) is very effective at explaining concepts clearly. For that reason, it makes a useful reference text— its explanations are often far more clear than what you'd find in articles or books written by political scientists for other political scientists.

This book does, however, have a very particular point of view—one might even call it an argument—about how best to study international relations. We will discuss this as we go along in class and undertake a critical reading of FLS to compare it to other theories and approaches.

There will also be additional readings some weeks as marked on the syllabus and as announced by the instructor in class. All additional readings will be available in PDF form on the course CANVAS page.

## What if I need accommodations before or during the course?

Please contact the Office of Student Disability Services before the class begins to arrange accommodations. For other issues that might arise during the course like major illnesses, please email me as soon as possible. In fact, for most issues in the course, emailing the instructor or attending office hours is an excellent idea and the earlier any issues are brought to my attention the more likely it is that we can work around anything that might arise.

## What will the course be like?

Below is the tentative schedule; we will have a class Google Document accessible to all that will be the official class schedule and will be kept up-to-date with changes as needed.

### Week 1: What is International Relations?

**Goal:** Understand what IR is and how it differs from other aspects of political science and the social sciences. Understand the basic levels of analysis used in IR and how to read a social science article.

**Readings:** FLS Introduction

Singer, J. David (1961). "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations" *World Politics*

### Week 2: What is a Theory of International Relations?

**Goal:** Understand what a social-scientific theory is and what the major theories of international relations theory are.

**Readings:** Snyder, Jack. (2004) "One World, Rival Theories" *Foreign Policy*

Slaughter, Anne-Marie (2011) "International Relations, Principal Theories" *Max Planck Encyclopedia of Public International Law*

### Week 3: Analyzing Theories and Key Concepts in International Relations

**Goal:** Understand how to evaluate theories and what kind of evidence is most useful and relevant to testing them.

**Readings:** FLS Chapter 2

Huntington, Samuel. (1993) "The Clash of Civilizations" *Foreign Affairs*

### Week 4: Wars: How They Start, How to Prevent Them

**Goal:** Understand why conflict breaks out between states and how various institutions may help reduce the likelihood of conflict.

**Readings:** FLS Chapter 3

Waltz, Kenneth (2012) "Why Iran Should Get the Bomb" *Foreign Affairs*

Kroenig, Matthew (2012) "Time to Strike Iran" *Foreign Affairs*

## Week 5: Domestic Politics and International Politics

**Goal:** Understand how domestic political dynamics and institutions can affect international politics. Introduction to reading political science research articles.

**Readings:** FLS Chapter 4

Lake, David (1992) "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War" *American Political Science Review*

SIMULATION TOPIC CHOSEN BY TODAY

## Week 6: International Institutions: Do they matter?

**Goal:** Understand what institutions do and assess the effect that they might have on conflict and cooperation. Evaluate the main question of whether or not they matter.

**Readings:** FLS Chapter 5

Mearsheimer, John J. (1994/95) "The False Promise of International Institutions" *International Security*

## Week 7: International Trade: Theory vs. Reality

**Goal:** Understand the basic economic principles of international trade and the reasons behind more open or closed trade policies.

**Readings:** FLS Chapter 6

## Week 8: International Development

**Goal:** Evaluate the effectiveness of international development efforts and what factors have contributed to development over time.

**Readings:** FLS Chapter 9

**\*\*First Paper Due by Email at Start of Class\*\***

**\*\*Simulation Roles Assigned by Today\*\***

## Week 9: The Environment and Tragedy of the Commons

**Goal:** Understand what a common-pool resource is and how international relations and foreign policy relate to solving the issues around them.

**Readings:** FLS Chapter 12

Hardin, Garret (1968), "The Tragedy of the Commons"

Ostrom et. al (1999), "Revisiting the Commons" *Science*

Busby, Joshua (2018), "Why Climate Change Matters More Than Anything Else" *Foreign Affairs*

## Week 10: Human Rights and International Law

**Goal:** Understand the environmental issues as well as larger questions about incentives and governing the international commons.

**Readings:** FLS Chapter 11

Annan, Kofi (1997) "Advocating for an International Criminal Court," *Fordham International Law Journal*

"Do we need the International Criminal Court?" *New York Times* (2014)

<<https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/12/11/do-we-need-the-international-criminal-court>>

## Week 11: Non-State Actors: Terrorism, Markets, and Social Change

**Goal:** Differentiate between state and non-state actors and how those complicate the questions of global governance.

**Readings:**

FLS Chapter 10 AND Chapter 7 (partial) pp. 282-288

Mousseau, Michael (2002-3) "Market Civilization and Its Clash with Terror." *International Security*

Finnemore, Martha and Sikkink, Kathryn "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change" *International Organization*

## Week 12: Historical Applications of IR Theory and Review

**Goal:** Apply the Theories of IR and the knowledge of institutions, interests, and interactions to prominent historical examples and trace the development of the current international system over time.

**Readings:** FLS Chapter 1

Thucydides, "Melian Dialogue" *History of the Peloponnesian War*

## Week 13: Exam and Simulation Introduction

**Goal:** Understand the context in which the simulation will take place as well as the procedures by which the simulation will be conducted.

**\*\*EXAM In-Class\*\***

**Readings:** TBD (will be related to the simulation)

## Week 14: Simulation (in-class)

## Week 15: Simulation Debrief; discussion of the Future of IR

**Goal:** Compare how the simulation turned out to the actual history. What were the major reasons for the differences? How did what happened relate to IR theory? Analyze the prospects for the future of the current global order. Have students relate their own experiences and choices, from careers to political decisions.

**Readings:** FLS Chapter 13

**\*\*Second Paper Due by Email at the start of the Final Day of Class\*\***