Overview

Can laws and treaties stem the proliferation of nuclear weapons? Does the rise of China present a security threat to the world? Why can’t global leaders come to an agreement to effectively tackle climate change? Why is global cooperation so difficult, even when most of the world shares similar goals of peace and prosperity? This class will help students answer these questions and more.

This course is structured over three parts. We start with a historical overview of the international system, from the Peloponnesian War to the Cold War to ground our collective understanding of global affairs. Second, we turn to number of theories – or analytical lenses – that scholars and policy-makers make use of to understand our world. Third, we examine a number of current debates, including those concerning nuclear deterrence, terrorism, global financial crises, human rights, climate governance, and the rise of China.

Students will come away from the course with a set of analytic frameworks and a depth of historical knowledge that will enable them to better understand current issues in global politics and will empower them to participate in the process of crafting solutions, whether that be as a future policymaker, an issue-advocate, or an engaged global citizen.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Be familiar with core theories of international relations (IR)
- Be familiar with current debates within the study of IR
- Be able to think critically about global politics and apply diverse analytical lenses to contemporary issues
- Be able to analyze and critique scholarly work
- Be able to articulate their views confidently and competently in both discussions and written work
Requirements and Grading

Course Requirements

- Class Participation: 15% (on-going)
- Reading Check-Ins: 10% (see below)
- Map Quizzes 5% (5 on Monday of week 2-6)
- Written Assignment 1: 15% (Due March 19th)
- Written Assignment 2: 20% (Due April 23rd)
- Midterm Exam: 15% (March 7)
- Final Exam: 20% (May 7)

Class Participation (10%): Students are expected to have read and reflected upon required readings prior to each class. Participation in class means active engagement in discussions, group activities, and other forms of interaction with your colleagues and Instructor. If you are not in class, you cannot earn participation points. However, missing one or two classes is less consequential than attending all classes but remaining quiet, distracted, or disengaged. If you have concerns about your performance or your ability to confidently engage within the class, please (at any time) speak to me in office hours.

Reading Check-Ins (10%): They will consist of multiple choice questions and short answers based on the assigned reading for the day (and/or recent days) as well as current events and will happen unannounced at the discretion of the instructor. Check-ins will be equally weighted (For example, if there are 10 throughout the semester, each will be worth 1 point each. If there are 16, each will be worth 0.625 points each).

Map Quizzes (10%): (1) Five map quizzes are scheduled in advance and noted in the course schedule below. Map quizzes require students to locate up to 10 countries or locations on a blank map of a given continent or geographic area. Blank maps are available on Blackboard and you can use the map in your textbook or a current online map to fill in names and to study.

  - January 22nd – The Americas
  - January 29th – Europe
  - February 5th – Africa
  - February 12th – Middle East
  - February 19th - Asia

Note that there is no opportunity to make-up either type of quiz without a formally documented (i.e. medical) absence and the approval from the Instructor. Make-up quizzes, if offered, will vary from those held in class and may, necessarily, be more challenging. No additional time will be provided (e.g. if you arrive to class a few minutes late to find a Reading Check-In or Map Quiz in progress, you will not be granted extra time to complete it).

Written Assignments (15% and 20%): Students will write two short essays of 3-4 double-spaced pages. Essays will ask students to critically analyze a current issue in global politics
of a student's choosing using content from the course. Further details will be provided the coming weeks.

Midterm Exam (15%): The midterm exam will be held in class (see below schedule). It will consist of both multiple choice and long-answer essay questions. Students will have 65 minutes to complete the midterm.

Final Exam (20%): The final exam will be held during the designated exam period as decided by the Registrar. It will consist of both multiple choice and long-answer questions.

Course Materials

There are two required texts for the course. Please note the editions. It may be possible to utilize alternative editions of these textbooks for some readings. Students interested in doing so should consult the alternative editions to note and manage discrepancies (i.e. some readings may not be within older editions). Additional readings beyond these two texts will be provided via Blackboard (as noted by BB in the below schedule).


Copies of the assigned textbooks are available on two-hour course reserve at the Founders Library.

Current Events

Important and consequential events in international political will be happening all the time this semester. Accordingly, this course will rely on discussions that transcend reading material and beckon engagement with contemporary issues of global politics. It is therefore required that students stay up to date with current global affairs by following a major newspaper (e.g. New York Times, BBC, or the Economist). I highly recommend getting in the habit of reading the news every day and, if you can, purchasing a subscription (quality journalism does not come cheaply) to an outlet of your choice for the duration of the semester.

If a natural curiosity about the world or performing your civic duty is not enough to motivate a reading habit, current events will be discussed every day in class (i.e. participation points), be a component of reading quizzes, and be a part of the midterm and final.

Policies:

Attendance: Attendance is expected at every lecture. If you have a conflict on the same day as a quiz or a paper please email me BEFORE lecture and we will find an alternative
solution. Emails received after lecture will be dealt with on a case by case.

Disability accommodations: If you need an accommodation for this class, please contact the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. The DRC coordinates accommodations for students with disabilities. It is located on the 4th floor of the Health Services Building, and can be reached at 815-753-1303 or drc@niu.edu. Also, please contact me privately as soon as possible so we can discuss your accommodations.

Office Hours: These are drop-in times and all students are always welcome to attend to discuss anything related to the course, or anything else you feel that I could potentially help with. No RSVP is required. Students are encouraged to visit as often as they like, and are invited to attend in small groups if you wish. Face to face interaction allows me to get to know you and allows me to much efficiently and effectively answer any questions you may have. If you cannot meet during this period, please email me well in advance to arrange an alternative time.

Email: I prefer face to face communication. If you have questions about course content please come see me in person, before or after lecture, during office hours, or at another scheduled time. If you have smaller logistical questions etc. please feel free to email. If the response requires more than a couple sentences I will ask that we meet in person. I will check my email from the hours of 9 am - 5 pm, but am not available on weekends. I will try to respond within 24 hours. Please include the course number (POLS 285) in the subject line.

Laptops and Technology: I highly recommend taking notes in lecture by hand. Research suggests it is more effective in helping you learn. If you insist on using a laptop please sit in the back of the classroom.

Please stay off your cell phone for the duration of the class period(you can wait a whole hour to answer a text message). If I catch you on you on your phone I reserve the right to ruthless cold call on you.

Academic Integrity - I take academic misconduct very seriously. All work submitted must be a students’ own in full. Any student in this course found to have plagiarized (accidentally or otherwise) the work of another individual (including, but not limited to, other students or from existing scholarship) will receive a failing grade in this course and may be subject to additional sanctions by the University. Students are expected to have read and to abide by NIU’s Student Code of Conduct. This is your responsibility and a requirement of this course. Please take NIU’s Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity to re-familiarize yourself if you have doubts or concerns and/or speak to your Instructor in office hours. If you have any questions throughout the course relating to academic practices, academic integrity, and issues of plagiarism and/or citation please speak to the Instructor and/or consult the links noted above. Failure to understand these requirements does not constitute an excuse to deviate from them.

Exams: Exams must be completed at the scheduled date and time, unless prior accommodations have been arranged. Students should bring their own exam blue book to complete each exam. The exam book will be inspected before the exam is administered.

Assignment Submission: Your paper assignments will be submitted on blackboard and in hard copy at the beginning of class. For every 24 hours the assignment is late you will receive a 10% reduction in your grade, starting at the beginning of the class period the day
the assignment is due. After 72 hours late the grade becomes a zero. Late assignments are due in hardcopy to the Department of Political Science and *not* by email. A late penalty will be applied as per the notation by Departmental staff.

**Extensions** I understand that life happens and accommodations are possible for documented medical or family emergencies, or when agreed upon with the Instructor. If you think you need to delay taking an exam or submitting a written assignment, you should talk to me as soon as possible. Extensions are never guaranteed, but are much more likely if you talk to me before the issue arises, not after. They will be based on University policy, exigency of the circumstances, and timeliness of the request (i.e. the earlier the better).

**Grade Appeals:** If you wish to appeal a grade you must wait 48 hours after you receive the grade and send the instructor a 1 page email specifying why you believe your grade is incorrect.

**Our Academic Environment** - Together, we will foster a comfortable, engaging, and accessible scholarly environment. All students should feel welcome to attend and speak freely in class and in Office Hours. Issues of politics can be controversial and debates can become heated. However, we will approach this course as colleagues, and we will treat each other with respect and dignity at all times.

**Blackboard** - This course will use Blackboard as our course webpage. This webpage will host readings that are *not* available in the above-mentioned textbooks, to document student grades, and to disseminate announcements. Blackboard will also host copies of all additional material provided in the course (e.g. assignment details). Please check Blackboard before contacting the Instructor or Teaching Assistant for information regarding assignments or readings, and regularly visit the webpage to ensure you are up to date on announcements in the course.

**Recordings** - Please do not record lectures without first getting permission from the instructor. Lecture slides will be posted to blackboard after class.

**Preferred Names and Pronouns** - Class rosters and University data systems are provided to faculty with the student’s legal name and legal gender marker. As an NIU student, you are able to change how your preferred/proper name shows up on class rosters. I am committed to using your proper name and pronouns as you prefer it.

**Letter Grade Distribution** -

Students will receive a percentage score for each assignment that can be totaled and translated into a letter grade according to the scale below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Score</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93.00 - 100.00</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90.00 - 92.99</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87.00 - 89.99</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83.00 - 86.99</td>
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<td>80.00 - 82.99</td>
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<td>59.99 or less</td>
<td>F</td>
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## Class Schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January 16</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; Historical Context</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>January 23</td>
<td>Thinking Critically About IR</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>February 6</td>
<td>Neorealism &amp; Neoliberalism</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>February 13</td>
<td>Constructivism &amp; Marxism</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>February 20</td>
<td>Individual Psychology &amp; Foreign Policy Decision-Making</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>Feminism and Thinking Analytically About IR, again</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>Review &amp; Midterm Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>No Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>The Cold War and the Nuclear Age</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>March 27</td>
<td>Human Security, Terrorism, and Intra-State Conflict</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>April 3</td>
<td>International Law &amp; Institutions</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>International Political Economy</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>Human Rights &amp; Non-State Actors</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>Climate Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>The Future of the World Order &amp; Review</td>
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### Midterm Exam March 9

### Written Assignment 1 Due March 19

### Written Assignment 2 Due April 23

## Detailed Class Schedule and Assigned Readings

### Introduction & Historical Context

**Class 1:** Introduction to International Relations  
Start EIR Chapter 2  
(Be sure to catch up on the news)

**Class 2:** Whirlwind History!  
EIR Chapter 2  
Nicholas Kristof "Why 2017 was the Greatest Year in Human History" *New York Times* (BB)  
Max Boot "Buckle Up for Year 2 of Trump" *Foreign Policy* (BB)  
Recommended: “Trump, the insurgent, breaks with 70 years of American Foreign Policy” *New York Times* (BB)

### Thinking Analytically About IR

**Class 3:** What is Theory?  
EIR 71-74
Jack Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," from *Foreign Policy* (ERWP)

Class 4. Levels of Analysis
- EIR Ch. 1
- EIR 74-76
- EIR 271-277
  Recommended: David Singer "The Levels-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations" *World Politics*

**Core Theories: Realism & Liberalism (Classical and Neo)**

Class 5: Classical Realism
- EIR 76-83
  Thomas Hobbes, from *Leviathan* (ERWP)
  + Review EIR 21-38
  + Review EIR 271-275

Class 6: Classical Liberalism
- EIR 83-89
- EIR 305-312
  + Review EIR 38-40
  Woodrow Wilson, “The Fourteen Points” (ERWP)
  Michael W. Doyle, “Liberalism and World Politics” (ERWP)

Class 7: Neorealism
- EIR 109-116
- EIR 113-142
- EIR 275-277
  + Review EIR 76-83
  Thucydides, “Melian Dialogue,” from The Peloponnesian War (ERWP)

Class 8: Neoliberalism
- EIR 116-118
- EIR 142-143
  + Review EIR 83-89

**Alternative Theories:**

Class 9: Constructivism
*Recommended:* Ba and Hoffman, “Making and Remaking the World for IR 101” (*BB*)

Class 10: Marxism and Dependency Theory
- EIR 89-92
- EIR 143-144
- V. I. Lenin, from *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (*ERWP*)
  *Recommended:* Dos Santos, “The Structure of Dependence” (*BB*)

Class 11: Models of Foreign Policy Decision-Making
- EIR 162-169

Class 12: The Individual
- EIR 181-207
  - Robert Jervis, “Hypotheses on Misperception” (*ERWP*)

Class 13: Feminism and IR
- EIR 95-97
  - J. Ann Tickner, “Man, the State, and War: Gendered Perspectives on National Security” (*ERWP*)

Class 14: Thinking Analytically About IR, again & Midterm Review
- EIR 97-104
  - Drezner, “Theories of International Politics...and Zombies” (*BB*)
  + Review: Jack Snyder, “One World, Rival Theories,” from *Foreign Policy* (*ERWP*)

Class 16: Midterm Exam (March 7th)
- Bring a large bluebook

*Week 9. Spring Break*

The Cold War and the Nuclear Age

Class 17: The Cold War & The International System
- EIR 58-59
  + Review EIR 44-56
  - George F. Kennan (“X”), “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” (*ERWP*)
  - G. John Ikenberry, from *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (*ERWP*)

Class 18: Security Dilemmas & Nuclear Proliferation
- EIR 297-305
Robert Jervis, “Cooperation under the Security Dilemma” (ERWP)
Kenneth N. Waltz, “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb: Nuclear Balancing Would Mean Stability” (ERWP)

**Human Security, Terrorism, and Intra-State Conflict**

Class 19: Old & ‘New’ Wars, and Terrorism  
EIR 277-291  
Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, “The Strategies of Terrorism” (ERWP)

Class 20: Just War & Human Security  
EIR 291-297

**International Law & Institutions**

Class 21: International Organizations and the UN  
EIR 208-228  
Samantha Power, “Bystanders to Genocide: Why the United States Let the Rwandan Tragedy Happen” (ERWP)

Class 22: Regional International Organizations and International Law  
EIR 228-246

**International Political Economy**

Class 23: History and Functions of the Global Economy  
EIR 316-338  

Class 24: International Development and Crises  
EIR 339-359  
Daniel W. Drezner, “The Irony of Global Economic Governance: The System Worked” (ERWP)

**Human Rights & Non-State Actors**

Class 25: Human Rights  
EIR 360-395  
*Recommended:* Amartya Sen, “Human Rights and Capabilities” (ERWP)

Class 26: Human Rights and Non-State Actors  
EIR 247-258
Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, “Transnational Advocacy Networks in International Politics” (ERWP)

Climate Change and Global Environment

Class 27: Climate Change
EIR 397-417
Robert Kaplan, “The Coming Anarchy” (BB)
*Recommended:* Thomas Homer-Dixon (1994), “Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict” (BB)

For useful background, review:
(A) Climate Science Basics (per the 2016 EPA):
[https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/climatechange_.html](https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/climatechange_.html)

(B) Global Limits TED Talk:
[http://www.ted.com/talks/johan_rockstrom_let_the_environment_guide_our_development](http://www.ted.com/talks/johan_rockstrom_let_the_environment_guide_our_development)

Class 28: Climate Change Governance
Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons” (ERWP)
Scott Barrett, “Why Have Climate Negotiations Proved So Disappointing?”
*(ERWP)*

The Future of the World Order

Class 29: The Future of World Politics
Francis Fukuyama “The End of History?” (ERWP)
Samuel Huntington “The Clash of Civilizations” ERWP

Class 30: Review Class

**Final Exam:** Monday, May 7, 12-1:50 p.m.
Bring a large bluebook

*Note:* Topics and readings may be subject to change at the discretion of your Instructor. Any change in the above schedule (e.g. the cancellation or rescheduling of a class or the hosting of the class by a guest other than your Instructor) will be noted as soon as possible by your Instructor through Blackboard.