INTL 6200 (CRN: 30751) / Fall 2019

Pre-Seminar in International Relations

Ryan Powers
ryan.powers@uga.edu
http://ryanpowers.net

Office: 310 Candler Hall
Office hours: By appointment (https://ryanpowers.youcanbook.me/).
Class meetings: Tuesdays, 12:30 p.m.–3:15 p.m. in Caldwell Hall 0203.

Course Description

This course is a graduate-level field seminar on international politics. In this course, we will review the dominant approaches to studying international relations and the application of those approaches to a wide variety of substantive issue areas (war, human rights, environment, trade, migration, etc). We will put particular emphasis on critically evaluating the theoretical arguments advanced by IR scholars and the evidence that they marshal in support for those arguments. Throughout, our goal will be to practice reading international relations scholarship with an eye towards translating and applying its insights to contemporary international policy problems. This course is a requirement for the Masters in International Policy (MIP) and a prerequisite for a number of other MIP courses, but should also be of interest to advanced undergraduates in Political Science and International Affairs.

Course Materials

There are no required textbooks for this course. Those readings that are not readily available online or via the library will be posted on the eLearning Commons.

Grading and Expectations

Grade Composition

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Class attendance and participation: 25%
- Five response papers: 25%
- Discussion lead: 10%
- Issue Report: 30%
- Final Presentation: 10%
Grading Scale

- 94–100: A
- 90–93: A-
- 87–89: B+
- 84–87: B
- 80–83: B-
- 77–79: C+
- 74–77: C
- 70–73: C-
- 67–69: D+
- 64–67: D
- 60–63: D-
- Less than 59: F

Attendance and Participation

Your attendance and participation in class discussions is vital to our success this semester. I will take attendance at each class meeting. You must let me know in advance and provide documentation excusing your absence to avoid a grade penalty.

You should come to class having read the assigned work closely enough to actively participate in a detailed and critical discussion of the arguments and evidence presented by the authors. I also expect you to come to class already familiar with the major international news stories of the day. You get access to both The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal as part of your student activities fees. Failing to actively participate in class discussions will result in a participation grade penalty for the day.

The use of electronic devices during our class meetings is not prohibited, but is strongly discouraged. All noise-making electronics should be silenced and, where possible, set to “Do Not Disturb” for the duration of our class meetings.

Assignments

Assignments should be submitted online to the eLearning Commons. Late assignments will not be accepted without documentation of illness or bereavement.

- Response Papers. You will write five response essays over the course of the semester in which you critically evaluate one or more of a given week's assigned readings. A successful response essay will quickly summarize the major claims of a given reading, discuss how those claims are evaluated empirically, and then
identify several strengths or weaknesses of the argument and/or the empirical evidence used to support that argument. Each essay should be about 1,000 words and conclude with at least two ideas for in-class discussion questions. Response papers are due at 6 p.m. the evening before we discuss the readings about which you have written. They should be uploaded to the eLearning Commons and your suggested questions should be posted to the discussion board.

• Discussion Lead. You (and perhaps a colleague or two) will lead the class discussion one week during the semester. You will be responsible for selecting discussion questions from among those submitted by your colleagues, generating several of your own, and moderating our review and critique of each of the readings. You will sign up for a discussion slot on the first day of class.

• Issue Report. You will write a 20-25 page issue report for policy makers and practitioners summarizing the causes and consequences of a contemporary international policy problem from the perspective of an international relations scholar. Your brief should identify the relevant actors and stakeholders, specify their interests, and outline the strategies that those actors are likely to use to pursue those interests. Your goal is to clearly and efficiently communicate to those not steeped in the IR literature why IR scholars believe the problem exists and persists as well as policy changes that would help manage, mitigate, or resolve the problem. You will thus summarize and critically evaluate the theoretical arguments in the literature and any relevant empirical findings. Proposed policy changes must be theoretically-motivated and accompanied by ideas for evaluating their effectiveness upon implementation. You should include a 1-2 page executive summary at the beginning of the brief aimed at senior policy makers. I will distribute a detailed assignment sheet in the first few weeks of class.

• Final Presentation. You will give a 10 minute presentation summarizing your issue brief to the class at the end of the semester.

Accommodations

In accordance with UGA policy, "[s]tudents with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designate during regular office hours or by appointment.” More information about accommodations that are available to students with disabilities is available from the Disability Resource Center.

Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct

I expect you to do your own work and to abide by University of Georgia’s policies on academic integrity and professional conduct. In part, these policies state:

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University’s academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in “A
Culture of Honesty” found at: https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Course Outline

The UGA Course Syllabus Policy requires me to include the following statement: “The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviation announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.”

1. Tuesday, August 20, 2019: Preliminaries
   - Review the 2014 Teaching, Research, and International Policy Faculty Survey results posted at: https://trip.wm.edu/charts/#/questions/37. These results represent responses from IR scholars at U.S. colleges and universities. Pay particular attention to the questions on paradigm, methodological tools, issues that are of greatest strategic importance to the U.S. today, and the relationship between the academy and the policy process.

2. Tuesday, August 27, 2019: Paradigms and Progress

3. Tuesday, September 03, 2019: Anarchy and Hierarchy


4. Tuesday, September 10, 2019: Conflict


5. Tuesday, September 17, 2019: Cooperation


6. Tuesday, September 24, 2019: Domestic Politics


7. Tuesday, October 01, 2019: Leaders


• McManus, Roseanne W. "Making it personal: The Role of Leader-Specific Signals in Extended Deterrence." *The Journal of Politics* 80, no. 3 (2018): 000–000.


8. Tuesday, October 08, 2019: Environment and Climate Change


9. Tuesday, October 15, 2019: Human rights and human security


• Murdie, Amanda. *Help or harm: The human security effects of international NGOs.* Stanford University Press, 2014, Chapters 2, 3, and 5


10. Tuesday, October 22, 2019: Nuclear Weapons


11. Tuesday, October 29, 2019: Trade and Migration


12. Tuesday, November 05, 2019: Money and Finance


13. Tuesday, November 12, 2019: Aid


14. Tuesday, November 19, 2019: Emerging Issues

• Lindsay, Jon R. “Stuxnet and the Limits of Cyber Warfare.” Security Studies 22, no. 3 (2013): 365–404
• Washington Post Monkey Cage Symposium on Cybersecurity (link on eLC)
15. Tuesday, November 26, 2019: Bridging the Gap


16. Tuesday, December 03, 2019: Final Presentations

17. Tuesday, December 10, 2019: Issue Reports Due (upload in eLC)