

Introduction to International Relations

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Spring 2021

Course Description

Survey of key debates and concepts in international relations. Exploration of historical and contemporary issues using Western and non-Western cases and evidence. Topics include the rise of states; causes, conduct, and outcomes of wars; the emergence of new actors and forms of conflict; and evolution of the global economy.

This course has three main learning goals.

1. Students will be able to articulate answers to big questions about international politics including:
 - Why is the world divided up into formally independent countries, and what are the consequences of organizing global politics in this way, as a "states system"? Does anarchy (absence of an effective world government) imply that international politics are necessarily going to be highly costly and conflict prone? Would some form of world government be better?
 - What is nationalism, where did it come from historically, and what role does it play in international politics?
 - What determines success and failure for international cooperation on "global public goods" problems, such as climate change and public health (e.g., pandemic infectious diseases)?
 - How much can treaties and international organizations fix problems in these various issue areas, and how do they work?
 - What explains war and peace between countries, and global patterns of civil war within them?
 - What are the implications of nuclear weapons for international politics?
 - What are the international political consequences of the rapid economic growth of China? Is war likely between the U.S. and China?
 - How do democracies and non-democracies differ in their foreign policies, and why?
 - What factors determine the amount of protectionism and free trade, and what are the domestic political consequences of international trade? What explains the populist backlash against globalization in wealthy countries?
 - Why are some countries rich and others much poorer? Can international relations bring about development and income convergence?

Good answers will show strong comprehension of the relevant theoretical arguments presented in both lectures and readings, and empirical knowledge sufficient to provide appropriate examples and illustrations of the theoretical arguments.

2. Students will be able to evaluate hypotheses about international policy and outcomes using empirical evidence and be able to assess potential threats to valid inferences.

3. Students will be able to communicate clearly and persuasively their policy and scientific ideas about international relations in both speaking and writing.

Course Format

The course will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:30am online. These meetings are lectures but will include interactive components and discussion. You should attend lecture synchronously, ask questions, and participate in breakout sessions and other activities.

Additionally, I will hold an open public forum from 5:30 to 6:00pm on Fridays. Attendance is completely optional and students should bring questions that they want to discuss. We can chat about the lectures, readings, discussion section, or how the material from class connects with what is happening in the world.

In addition to lectures and the public forum, the course will have discussion sections. Synchronous attendance to your assigned discussion section is required. Discussions sections will include skill-building exercises, case study discussions, debates, and review/discussion of material presented in lectures. They are critical to your learning in the course and section participation constitutes 20% of your grade. If you cannot attend a synchronous section, you should not take this class. You may miss one discussion section with no consequence for your grade. Otherwise a Dean's excuse is required and a written make-up paper will be assigned if the absence is excused.

To assess how your learning of the basic course material is proceeding, there will be five short, open book/notes quizzes worth 10% of your grade (in total). The quizzes will be accessed through Canvas and you will have 24 hours to complete them. They will be made available on February 15th, March 1st, March 22nd, April 5th, and April 26th at 5pm and due the following day by 5pm.

The course will have two take-home, open book/notes midterm exams. The format of these exams will be short answer and essay. Each exam will count 20% (40% in total) toward your final grade. The exams will be made available on March 15th and May 3rd at 5pm and will be due in Canvas 48 hours later.

The final requirement for the course is to write a 6-8 page research paper. The purpose of the paper is to work on developing your ability to ask and answer social scientific questions about international relations. This includes developing an argument and evaluating it using the qualitative and basic quantitative empirical skills developed in this course. We will structure the writing assignment by providing you five different

prompts/topics to respond to on March 1st. You should develop a couple of ideas and meet your TF to discuss them. On April 1st at 5pm, you need to turn in a paper proposal of not longer than one page that states your research question, why it is important or interesting, your tentative answer or argument, and your empirical plan to investigate the question more closely and/or evaluate your argument. On April 28th at 5pm you need to turn in an outline that includes a draft introduction which summarizes the main argument. We encourage you to meet with your TF before and/or after turning in the outline to make sure the paper is headed in a productive direction. One consistent topic in discussion sections will be how to formulate, research, and write these research papers. TFs will also help with ideas for where to look for information. The final draft of the paper is due in Canvas by **Friday May 14th at 5pm**. The final paper counts as 30% of your total grade. There is no final exam.

Summary of Requirements and Deadlines

Assignment	Due Date
Section Discussion Participation (20%)	Weekly
Quiz 1 (2%)	February 15 th , 5pm (+24 hrs)
Quiz 2 (2%)	March 1 st , 5pm (+24 hrs)
Midterm 1 (20%)	March 15 th , 5pm (+48 hrs)
Quiz 3 (2%)	March 22 nd , 5pm (+24 hrs)
Paper Proposal	April 1 st , 5pm
Quiz 4 (2%)	April 5 th , 5pm (+24 hrs)
Quiz 5 (2%)	April 26 th , 5pm (+24 hrs)
Paper Outline	April 28 th , 5pm
Midterm 2 (20%)	May 3 rd , 5pm (+48 hrs)
Final Paper (30%)	May 14th, 5pm

Enrollment Cap, Selection Process, and Notification (if applicable)

To pre-register for this lecture, students must use Preference Selection. Applications will be accepted between 9am on December 1 and 5pm on December 9 and students will be informed of preference selection assignments by December 14. To access the preference selection site for this lecture, students must copy and paste this link: <http://students.yale.edu/ocs-preference/select/select?id=20437>

Prerequisites

None. This is an introductory course appropriate for first years and other interested students including those wanting to satisfy a social science distributional requirement.

Assignments

See above.

Grading

See above.

Required Course Materials

The main readings for this course are the selected journal articles and book chapters listed below for each lecture and case study discussion. These readings are available at the course web site on Canvas.

Recording Policy

Lectures will be recorded, but discussion sections will not be recorded. Our educational materials are private within our course and should not be shared externally, except with explicit permission of the instructor. Educational material includes, but is not limited to, images, screen shots, message board posts, digital presentations (e.g., PowerPoint, etc.), and links to live or recorded class sessions.

Schedule

Unit 1: The International System

February 1: What is international relations?

Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogue," in *History of the Peloponnesian War*, chapter 17.

February 3: Why is the world divided up into countries? Would some form of world government be better?

Jeffrey Frieden, David Lake, and Kenneth A. Schultz. "What Shaped Our World? A Historical Introduction." In *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions*. Chapter 1.

Unit 2: Global Public Goods in the International System

February 8: The Tragedy of the Global Commons

Garrett Hardin. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science* 162, no. 3859: 1243–48.

Elinor Ostrom. 2008. "Tragedy of the Commons," in *New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*, 2nd ed, eds. Steven N. Durlauf and Lawrence E. Blume. Palgrave Macmillan.

February 10: Cooperation and International Agreements

Scott Barrett. 2007. *Why Cooperate? The Incentive to Supply Global Public Goods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 1-21, 74-102.

Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change." *International Organization* 52(4):887-917.

Section 1: How Might the World Cooperate to Prevent Epidemic Diseases?

Mahlet Mesfin. 2020. "It Takes a World to End a Pandemic." *Foreign Affairs*. March 21, 2020.

Thomas J. Bollyky and Chad P. Bown. "The Tragedy of Vaccine Nationalism," *Foreign Affairs*. July 27, 2020.

See also "[What Does the WHO Do? \(Links to an external site.\)](#)" CFR Backgrounder on the WHO.

Recommended: Richard N. Cooper. "International Cooperation in Public Health as a Prologue to Macroeconomic Cooperation," in Richard N. Cooper et al., eds., *Can Nations Agree?*, Brookings Institution, 1989. This is a long essay that has a lot of fascinating material in it, particularly on how common and awful epidemic disease was, and how confused and ailing were efforts to do something about it until recently. Most important pages: 178-187, 212-216, 226-235, 237-240.

February 15: Climate Change I

William Nordhaus. 2019. "Climate Change: The Ultimate Challenge for Economics". *American Economic Review* 109(6):1991-2014.

Council on Foreign Relations. 2020. "[The Paris Agreement \(Links to an external site.\)](#)".

February 17: Climate Change II

Jared Cory, Michael Lerner, and Iain Osgood. *Forthcoming*. "Supply Chain Linkages and the Extended Carbon Coalition." *American Journal of Political Science*

Amanda Kennard. 2020. "The Enemy of My Enemy: When Firms Support Climate Change Regulation." *International Organization* 74:187-197, 205-210.

Michael M. Bechtel and Kenneth F. Scheve. 2013. "Mass Support for Global Climate Agreements Depends on Institutional Design." *Proceedings of the National Academy Science* 110(34): 13763-8.

Section 2: Questions, Theory, and Evidence in International Relations I

Kenneth Hoover and Todd Donovan, *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking*, 11th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2014): 12-37, 40-48, 60-78.

Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993): 3-23, 30-42.

Unit 3: War

February 24: What do states want? What do countries fight over?

Jack Levy. 1998. "The Causes of War and the Conditions of Peace." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1:139-65.

James Fearon. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations of War." *International Organization* 49(3):379-414.

Section 3: Questions, Theory, and Evidence in International Relations II

Kenneth Hoover and Todd Donovan, *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking*, 11th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2014): 49-57, 80-117.

Henry S. Farber and Joanne Gowa, "Politics and Peace," *International Security* 20, no. 2 (Fall 1995): 123-46.

March 1: What is nationalism, where did it come from historically, and what role does it play in international politics?

Benedict Anderson. 1983. *Imagined Communities*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Chapters 1-4, 6, 8 (pages 150-54 only).

Kwame Anthony Appiah. 2015. "Race in the Modern World." *Foreign Affairs*. March/April.

Recommended: Snyder, Jack, and Karen Ballentine. "Nationalism and the Marketplace of Ideas." *International Security*, vol. 21, no. 2, 1996, pp. 5-40.

March 3: Why are there wars? I

David A. Lake, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," *International Security* 35, 3 (Winter 2010/11), 7-52.

Alexandre Debs, Nuno Monteiro, and David Lake. 2013. "What Caused the Iraq War? A Debate." From Duck of Minerva. [Part 1. \(Links to an external site.\)](#) [Part 2. \(Links to an external site.\)](#) [Part 3. \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Section 4: Israel-Palestine Case Study Discussion

Zack Beauchamp, "[Everything you need to know about Israel-Palestine \(Links to an external site.\)](#)," Vox (November 20, 2018).

March 8: War: Why are there wars? II

Jessica Weeks. 2012. "Strongmen and Straw Men: Authoritarian Regimes and the Initiation of International Conflict." *American Political Science Review* 106(2):326-347.

Joslyn N. Barnhart, Robert F. Trager, Elizabeth N. Saunders, and Allan Dafoe. 2020. "The Suffragist Peace." *International Organization* 74 (Fall):633-70.

March 10: Military Alliances

Brett Ashley Leeds. 2003. "Do Alliances Deter Aggression? The Influence of Military Alliances on the Initiation of Militarized Interstate Disputes." *American Journal of Political Science* 47(3): 427-439.

Nuno Monteiro and Alex Debs. 2014. "The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation." *International Security* 39(2):7-51.

Section 5: Review

March 15: Civil War and Terrorism

Barbara Walter. 2017. "The New New Civil Wars." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20:469-86.

Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter. 2006. "The Strategies of Terrorism." *International Security* 31(1):49-80.

March 17: International Institutions and Conflict

Erik Voeten. 2005. "The Political Origins of the UN Security Council's Ability to Legitimize the Use of Force." *International Organization* 59 (Summer):527-557.

Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis. 2000. "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 94(4):779-801.

Jason Lyall, Graeme Blair, and Kosuke Imai. 2013. "Explaining support for combatants during wartime: A survey experiment in Afghanistan." *American Political Science Review* 107(4): 679-705.

Section 6: Questions, Theory, and Evidence in International Relations III

Michael Tomz and Jessica Weeks. 2013 "Public Opinion and the Democratic Peace." *American Political Science Review* 107(4): 849-865.

March 22: International Law, Norms, and Conflict

Oona Hathaway. 2002. "Do Human Rights Treaties Make a Difference?" *The Yale Law Journal* 111(8):1935-2025.

Tanisha M. Fazal. 2013. "The Demise of Peace Treaties in Interstate War." *International Organization* 67(4):695-724.

Section 7: Paper Topics and Proposals

Unit 4: International Trade and Globalization

March 29: Trading States in the World Economy I

Paul Krugman, Maurice Obstfeld & Marc Melitz. 2018. *International Economics: Theory and Policy*, Eleventh Edition. New York: Pearson. pp. 10-50.

March 31: Trading States in the World Economy II

Paul Krugman, Maurice Obstfeld & Marc Melitz. 2018. *International Economics: Theory and Policy*, Eleventh Edition. New York: Pearson. pp. 215-245.

April 5: Distributive Politics, Institutions, and Trade Policy I

Helen Milner & Keiko Kubota. 2005. "Why the Move to Free Trade? Democracy and Trade Policy in the Developing Countries." *International Organization* Vol. 59 No. 1:107-143.

April 7: Distributive Politics, Institutions, and Trade Policy II

Kim, In Song & Iain Osgood. 2019. "Firms in Trade and Trade Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 22:399-417.

Section 8: Workshopping Paper Proposals/Outlines

April 12: The Populist Backlash Against Globalization

Mansfield, Edward, and Nita Rudra. Forthcoming. "Embedded Liberalism in the Digital Era." *International Organization*.

Broz, Lawrence, Jeffry Frieden, and Stephen Weymouth. Forthcoming. "Populism in Place: The Economic Geography of the Globalization Backlash." *International Organization*.

April 14: International Institutions and Trade

Douglas Irwin. 2009. *Free Trade Under Fire*, 3rd edition. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 7, pp. 219-269.

John Mearsheimer. 1994. "The False Promise of International Institutions." *International Security* Vol. 19 No. 2:5-49.

Section 9: U.S.-China Trade War Case Study

Richard Clark, Nikhar Gaikwad, and Kenneth Scheve. Forthcoming. "Contentious Trade: Political Economy of the U.S.-China Trade War." Jackson Case Studies in Global Affairs.

April 19: National Security and the Politics of Trade

Joanne Gowa and Edward D. Mansfield. 1993. "Power Politics and International Trade." *American Political Science Review* 87 (2):408-20.

Matthew O. Jackson and Stephen Nei. 2015. "Networks of military alliances, wars, and international trade." *PNAS* 112(50): 15277-15284.

Unit 5: The International Politics of Development

April 21: Why Are Some Countries Rich and Others Poor?

Charles I. Jones. 2015. "The Facts of Economic Growth." NBER Working Paper #21142.

Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson. 2012. *Why Nations Fail*. New York: Random House. pp. 70-95, 245-373.

Section 10: Review

April 26: The Politics of International Investment in the Developing World I

Quan Li. 2009. "Democracy, Autocracy, and Expropriation of Foreign Direct Investment." *Comparative Political Studies* 42 (8):1098-1127.

Zachary Elkins, Andrew T. Guzman, and Beth A. Simmons. 2006. "Competing for Capital: the Diffusion of Bilateral Investment Treaties, 1960-2000." *International Organization* 60 (4):811-846.

April 28: The Politics of International Investment in the Developing World II

Brian Greenhill, Layna Mosley and Aseem Prakash. 2009. "Trade-based Diffusion of Labor Rights: A Panel Study, 1986-2002." *American Political Science Review* 104(4): 669-690.

Foer, Franklin. 2009. "[Soccer vs. McWorld \(Links to an external site.\)](#)." *Foreign Policy*.

James R. Hines and Lawrence Summers. 2009. "How Globalization Affects Tax Design." In *Tax Policy and the Economy*, Jeffrey Brown and James Poterba (eds.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 123-157.

Section 11: Review

May 3: Aid from Governments

Alex Dreher, Andreas Fuchs, Brad Parks, Austin Strange, and Michael Tierney. 2018. "Apples and Dragon Fruits: The Determinants of Aid and Other Forms of State Financing from China to Africa." *International Studies Quarterly* 62:182-194.

Dan Banik and Nikolai Hegertun, "[Why do nations invest in international aid? Ask Norway. And China \(Links to an external site.\)](#)." *Washington Post* 27 October 2017.

May 5: Aid from International Organizations

International Monetary Fund. "[The IMF at a Glance \(Links to an external site.\)](#)" (March 2019).

James Raymond Vreeland. 2007. *The International Monetary Fund: Politics of Conditional Lending*. New York: Routledge. pp. 37–49.

Jeffrey D. Sachs. 2005. "The Development Challenge." *Foreign Affairs* (March/April): 79–90.

William Easterly. 2005. "The Utopian Nightmare." *Foreign Policy* (September/October): 58–64.

Also watch news clip summarizing Dambisa Moyo's arguments in *Dead Aid*:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIPvIQOCfAQ>