

**PSC / SSC 102**  
**Introduction to International Politics**  
**Fall 2010**

Instructor: Nicholas P. Nicoletti

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Class Hours: Tuesdays from 7:00 — 9:50 pm

Room: Talbert 107

Office Hours: Tuesdays from 1:00 pm — 2:30 pm OR By Appointment

**Course Description:**

The course is designed to explore the contemporary and historical aspects of international relations; it will also examine nationalism, imperialism, power diplomacy, and ideological conflict. The course is centered around the core concepts of interests, interactions, and institutions. We will examine the actors of international politics and their interests. We will look at the nature of actors' interactions, what strategies they can be expected to pursue, which choices are likely to bring about conflict, and which choices may lead to cooperation. The course will also explore the impact of international institutions on interactions among actors. We will explore whether institutions impede or facilitate conflict and how institutions may favor different actors and their interests. Throughout the course we will examine the major theories of international politics and how they can be understood as a different set of assumptions about interests, interactions, and institutions. The major theories include Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism, and the many variants of these major research programs. Course material will be drawn from the required text book as well as various scholarly journal articles which will focus on International Relations Theory.

**Grading:**

- Quizzes — 20%
- Exam One — 25%
- Exam Two — 25%
- Short Assignments — 20%
- Participation — 10%

**Grading Distribution:**

- A = 94 and Above
- A- = 90 — 93
- B+ = 87 — 89
- B = 84 — 86
- B- = 80 — 83
- C+ = 76 — 79
- C = 70 — 75
- D = 60 — 69
- F = 0 — 59

## **Required Readings:**

- Frieden, Jeffrey A, David A. Lake, and Kenneth A. Schultz. (2009). *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions* New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. ISBN-13: 978-0-393-92709-2.
- The remaining are a mixture of scholarly articles and books which can be found on UB Learns.

## **Academic Honesty:**

Cheating and plagiarism (using someone else's work or ideas without proper citation) will not be tolerated. The UB policy on plagiarism is available at: <http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/as1/guides/plagiarism.html>. Cheating and/or plagiarism is a serious offense and can have severe consequences. Cell phones, PDAs, or electronic devices of any kind (calculators can be utilized if necessary) are banned from all tests and quizzes. Students using electronic devices during tests and quizzes will fail the assignment.

## **Special Needs:**

Any student who requires accommodations to complete the requirements and expectations of this course because of a disability is invited to make his or her needs known to the instructor and to the Disabilities Services Office, 25 Capen. Students with special needs should bring their requirements to my attention in the first week of classes. I will make every effort to assist students with special needs. Students dealing with stress-related problems should visit the Counseling Center, 120 Richmond Quad.

## **Short Assignments:**

Students will be responsible for two (2) short assignments throughout the semester. Students will choose an article from one of the top journals in Political Science. The article must be from the last five (5) years. A list of acceptable academic journals can be found on the "Journal Assignment" sheet presented by the instructor. After the student has read the journal article they will answer a series of questions regarding: (1) The purpose of the article and the theory presented in the paper; (2) The methodology / procedures used to test the theory or develop arguments; (3) A summary of the major points and conclusions the author(s) present; and (4) The student's reaction to the paper in terms of the political science material learned throughout the semester. The answers must be typed, double-spaced, using 12-point font, and must be a minimum of 1 page and a maximum of 2 pages. Each assignment is worth approximately 10%; together the assignments make up 20% of the overall course grade. A hard copy of the assignment will be due on the date listed in the syllabus and students will be required to submit a digital copy to SafeAssign (more information on similarity detection software can be found below). Late assignments will not be accepted.

## **Similarity Detection Software:**

I will require students to use similarity detection software (e.g. SafeAssign) in this course. Textual similarity software compares submitted student text to a database of millions of previously

published documents, including those on the public internet, a proprietary collection of published articles, as well as every student paper previously submitted to the detection software. When similarities between student text and an existing document are found, the software identifies those similarities for the instructor and / or student to review. Similarity alone is not evidence of academic misconduct, as such material may be correctly cited. This software may be used as an educational tool to assist students in learning how to properly cite resources, to decrease instances of academic misconduct, and / or to assist in the identification of acts of academic misconduct.

### **Participation:**

Attendance is an important part of the college learning experience. I expect students to come to class prepared (having done the readings and assignments) and ready to participate in the form of answering and asking questions. While I will not take formal attendance, I will be keeping track of average participation rates. Participation is worth approximately 10% of your grade.

### **Course Schedule:**

#### **August 31: Course Introduction**

- Administrative Review.
- Frieden, Lake and Schultz (FLS): Introduction (xix — xxx).

#### **September 7: Historical Perspective / Foundations of IR**

- FLS: Chapter 1 (3 — 38).
- \* Arena, Phil. “Explaining International Politics.” *Department of Political Science, University at Buffalo*. pp. 1-19.

#### **September 14: IR Theory Overview**

- \* Wagner, R. Harrison. 2007. “Theory of International Politics.” *War and the State, Chapter 1: The Theory of International Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp. 1-52.
- \* Arena, Phil. “Explaining International Politics.” *Department of Political Science, University at Buffalo*. pp. 19-55.

#### **September 21: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions**

- FLS: Chapter 2 (41-79).

#### **September 28: Institutional Theory, Neo-Realism vs. Neo-Liberalism**

- \* Mearsheimer, John J. 1994/95. “The False Promise of International Institutions.” *International Security* 19 (3): 5-49.
- \* Keohane, Robert O. and Lisa L. Martin. 1995. “The Promise of Institutional Theory.” *International Security* 20 (1): 39-51.

### **October 5: War and Bargaining**

- FLS: Chapter 3 (83 — 125).
- \* Fearon, James D. 1995. “Rationalist Explanations for War.” *International Organization* 49 (3): 379-414.

### **October 12: Domestic Politics and Conflict**

- FLS: Chapter 4 (127 — 168).
- **Short Assignment Number 1 Due.**

### **October 19: Midterm Exam**

- **Midterm Exam.**

### **October 26: The Democratic Peace**

- \* Maoz, Zeev, and Bruce Russett. 1993. “Normative and Structural Causes of the Democratic Peace, 1946-1986.” *American Political Science Review* 87 (3): 624-638.
- \* Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, James D. Morrow, Randolph M. Siverson, and Alastair Smith. 1999. “An Institutional Explanation for the Democratic Peace.” *American Political Science Review* 93 (4): 791-808.

### **November 2: International Institutions and Conflict**

- FLS: Chapter 5 (170 — 210).

### **November 9: International Institutions and Regimes Theory**

- \* Krasner Stephen D. 1982. “Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables.” *International Organization* 36 (2): 185-205.
- \* Ruggie, John Gerard. 1982. “International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order.” *International Organization* 36 (2): 379-415.

### **November 16: International Trade and International Political Economy Theory**

- FLS: Chapter 6 (216 — 255).
- \* Frieden, Jeffrey, and Lisa Martin. 2003. “International Political Economy: Global and Domestic Interactions.” *In Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, edited by Ira Katznelson and Helen V. Milner. New York: W.W. Norton, pp. 118-146.

### **November 23: International Economic Development**

- FLS: Chapter 9 (330 — 360).
- \* Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson. 2001. “The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation.” *The American Economic Review* 91 (5): 1369-1401

**November 30: Transnational Politics and Terrorism**

- FLS: Chapter 10 (364 — 402).

**December 7: The Global Environment and Conclusion**

- FLS: Chapter 12 (444 — 476).
- **Short Assignment Number 2 Due.**

**TBA: Final Exam**

- **Final Exam.**