1 Course Information

Time: M/W/F 1:30 PM. – 2:20 PM.
Location: KNOY B033

2 Contact Information

Instructor: Sinh Nguyen
Email: nguyens@purdue.edu
Office: BRNG 2229
Office hours: M/W/F 2:30 PM. – 4:00 PM and by appointment.

3 Course Description and Objectives

The primary goal of this course is to introduce students to major concepts, theories, and a critical framework to think analytically about international relations. We will also apply those theories and the unified framework to the study of some of the most important topics in international relations. Another key goal of the course is to critically examine the scholarship and debates concerning empirical issues in war and peace, international political economy, and transnational politics and international human rights.

Throughout the semester, students are expected to build up both their critical thinking skills and content knowledge of the field reflected in their informed participation in class discussions, non-cumulative exams, and short essays. At the end of the course, students should be able to grasp abstract theoretical approaches and a unified framework to international relations, apply them to analyze important issues in the contemporary world, and communicate their own analyses through effective writing.

The course is divided into four sections: (1) Concepts, Theories, and Framework; (2) War and Peace; (3) International Political Economy; and (4) Transnational Politics and Human Rights. Occasional DVDs might be featured during the semester.
4 Required Text

The following textbook is required and available for purchase at campus bookstores.


Assigned journal articles can be accessed from either Blackboard webpage or Purdue Library website with individual student’s account. Regular reading of *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Economist*, *Foreign Policy*, and other important news outlets can help you keep up with current events in international relations.

5 Course Requirements

Students will be evaluated on the following bases.

5.1 Attendance

Students are expected to be present for every meeting of the class. Attendance will be taken in the form of unannounced quizzes for five (5) times over the semester. For absences to be excused, the instructor should be provided with documentation in a timely manner.

5.2 Participation

Class discussion and participation is heavily emphasized in this course. Cold calling will also be used regularly. Students are required to attend all lectures having read assigned material. Informed contributions to class discussions will be tallied individually. Usually, full credit can be achieved by participating in class at least once a week.

5.3 Reading summaries

Before certain specified class sessions, each student will turn in a summary of that day’s reading assignment either electronically on Blackboard or in person. The summaries should not exceed one single-spaced page. Summaries should have standard margins and use a twelve-point font.

Students should select the most important aspects of the reading and organize them in a coherent fashion. Summaries will be graded on a no credit/half credit/full credit basis. A summary that accurately captures major points of the reading will receive full credit. If important points are left out or there are inaccuracies, then it will receive half credit. There will be no credits if no summary is handed in. There are five (5) summaries over the semester.

5.4 Exams

There will be four closed-book exams to evaluate students’ knowledge and understanding of the lectures and readings. These exams are noncumulative and will be based on the material of each of the four sections in the class. Exams will take the form of multiple choice questions and short answers in response to essay questions. The purpose of these exams is to evaluate not only your content mastery but also your skills in applying theoretical frameworks to think and analyze practical issues.
In the event you must miss an exam for a university validated reason such as illness, university documented absence, or death in your family you must (a) notify me by email or in person at least one day prior to the exam date AND (b) provide appropriate documentation in order to receive a makeup exam. If you are missing the exam due to an emergency, you must email me with details of your situation within 24 hours of the scheduled exam time and follow up with appropriate documentation. Also, please note that airline schedules, planned family trips or work do not constitute valid reasons to receive a makeup exam.

5.5 Reflection paper

In five double-spaced pages, reflectively evaluate the theoretical framework(s) and/or substantive issue(s) you have learned and the work you have done for the class this semester. Assess your learning and what you have possibly changed in terms of thinking about particular issues or events either current or historically. Refer to the Appendix for more detailed suggestions.

6 Assignment Policy

All assignments should be individually and independently completed. Assignments should be turned in at the beginning of the class sessions. I will not accept late assignments unless there are extenuating circumstances.

7 Evaluation

Your final grade will depend on the following components with these proportions: attendance (5%), participation (15%), reading summaries (10%), exams (60%), and reflection paper (10%).

Grades for the assignments will be available on Blackboard. Students are encouraged to keep track of their grades throughout the semester. Final grades will be calculated by adding the weighted percentage of the total points possible earned in each area (attendance, participation, reading summaries, exams, and reflection paper), using the weights listed above.


8 Course Caveat

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Here are ways to get information about changes in this course: Blackboard webpage or by emailing me. General information about a campus emergency can be found on the Purdue website: www.purdue.edu
9 Academic Honesty

Purdue prohibits “[d]ishonesty in connection with any University activity. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnish false information to the University are examples of dishonesty” [Part 5, Section III-B-2-a, University Regulations]. Furthermore, the University Senate has stipulated that “[t]he commitment of the acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of ghost-written papers, the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest.”

More specifically, the following are a few examples of academic dishonesty which have been discovered at Purdue University:

- substituting on an exam for another student
- substituting in a course for another student
- paying someone else to write a paper and submitting it as one’s own work
- giving or receiving answers by use of signals during an exam
- copying with or without the other person’s knowledge during an exam
- doing class assignments for someone else
- plagiarizing published material, class assignments, or lab reports
- turning in a paper that has been purchased from a commercial research firm or obtained from the internet
- obtaining an unauthorized copy of a test in advance of its scheduled administration
- using unauthorized notes during an exam
- collaborating with other students on assignments when it is not allowed
- obtaining a test from the exam site, completing and submitting it later
- altering answers on a scored test and submitting it for a regrade
- accessing and altering grade records
- stealing class assignments from other students and submitting them as one’s own
- fabricating data
- destroying or stealing the work of other students

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1See at http://www.purdue.edu/studentregulations/student_conduct/regulations.html.
Plagiarism is a special kind of academic dishonesty in which one person steals another person’s ideas or words and falsely presents them as the plagiarist’s own product. This is most likely to occur in the following ways:

- using the exact language of someone else without the use of quotation marks and without giving proper credit to the author
- presenting the sequence of ideas or arranging the material of someone else even though such is expressed in one’s own words, without giving appropriate acknowledgment
- submitting a document written by someone else but representing it as one’s own.

10 Accessibility Concerns

Students should inform instructor of their accessibility concerns so that arrangements could be made to accommodate their needs according to relevant policies of Purdue University and its Disability Resource Guide.

11 Course Schedule

Jan 12 Class 1: Course Introduction

Jan 14–16 Class 2–3: Historical Overview
FLS, pp. 2–37.

Jan 19 No classes

Jan 21–23 Class 4–5: Theory and Methods

Jan 26–30 Class 6–8: Three Traditions: Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism
Assignment due Jan 26: Summary 1 (Mearsheimer 2014)

Feb 2–6 Class 9–11: A Unified Framework
Assignment due Feb 2: Summary 2 (FLS, 62–69)
FLS, pp. xxiii–xxxi, 38–79.

Feb 9 EXAM 1 (15% final grade)

Feb 11 Class 12: War and Bargaining
FLS, pp. 80–93
Feb 13–16 Class 13–14: Rationalist Explanations for War
Assignment due Feb 13: Summary 3 (Fearon 1995)

Feb 18–20 No classes Instructor at professional conference

Feb 23 Class 15: War from Information, Commitment, and Indivisibility Problems
FLS, pp. 93–122

Feb 25–27 Class 16–17: War and Domestic Politics
FLS, pp. 124–154

Mar 2 Class 18: Democratic Peace
FLS, pp. 154–166

Mar 4 Class 19: War and Alliances
FLS, pp. 168–188

Mar 6 Class 20: War and Collective Security
FLS, pp. 188–212

Mar 9 Class 21: Civil War
Assignment due Mar 9: Summary 4 (FLS, 224–237)
FLS, pp. 214–242

Mar 11 Class 22: Terrorism
FLS, pp. 242–262

Mar 13 EXAM 2 (20% final grade)

Mar 16–20 No classes Spring break

Mar 23–25 Class 23–24: Domestic Political Economy of Trade
FLS, pp. 264–287

Mar 27–30 Class 25–26: International Political Economy of Trade
FLS, pp. 287–311

Apr 1–3 Class 27-28: International Financial Relations
FLS, pp. 312–347

Apr 6–10 Class 29–31: International Development
Assignment due Apr 6: Summary 5 (FLS, 390–400)
FLS, pp. 386–418

Apr 13 EXAM 3 (15% final grade)
Apr 15–17 Class 32–33 International Law and International Norms
FLS, pp. 420–450

Apr 20–24 Class 34–36 International Human Rights
Assignment due Apr 24: Reflection paper (10% final grade)
FLS, pp. 452–490

Apr 27–29 Class 37–38 The Global Environment
FLS, pp. 492–524

May 1 Class 39 Review session

EXAM 4 (10% final grade) TBD
Appendix: Reflection Paper Requirement

A.1 Purpose
The purpose of writing a reflection paper is to develop connections between class information, personal perspectives and experiences.

A.2 Description
The process of putting thoughts on paper can be a meaningful learning experience. The reflection paper demonstrates not only that you are reading the material and preparing for class, but also that you are pondering the issues. The reflection paper is your opportunity to articulate ideas and arguments that you have found interesting during the course. The reflection paper is a mechanism to explore ideas that are not necessarily covered in details in class or that you may be hesitant to assert verbally. It also allows you to apply what you are learning to your personal life experiences. Most significantly, the reflection paper allows you to engage in the process of experiencing the harmony or dissonance between the perspectives described in the readings and your own. First person language – the use of “I” – is acceptable for this assignment.

A reflection paper privileges experience and the forceful articulation of that experience. A high quality reflection paper shows the development of complex insights and critical thinking. The reflection paper should explore the underlying value implications of the reading, articles, lectures and class discussion and relate it to personal experience and observations. You may want to explore the strengths and weaknesses of your thinking and writing; to assess your intellectual development; to make analogies to other things that you have learned; or to explore the priorities being set by some aspect of the course material. While reflection papers are personal in nature, they must be significantly connected to the concepts and ideas covered in the course regarding international relations. It should be clear from your reflection that it is based on your experience, the readings, lectures and the class discussion. The reflection paper should be maximum five pages in length.

A.3 Due Date
At the beginning of Class 23 (December 4).

A.4 Grading
- Weight: 10% of final grade.
- Points Possible: 100 pts.

A.5 Grading Rubric
- Clarity of response (30 pts total)
  - Response fully addresses assignment description /15 pts
  - Response supports broad statements with facts and sources /10 pts
  - Response is well organized and thoughtful /5 pts
- Use of class material (50 pts total)
  - Response uses applicable information from class /10 pts
– Response demonstrates a depth of knowledge about class reading /10 pts
– Response demonstrates a depth of knowledge about class lectures /10 pts
– Response expresses that class material has been examined critically /10 pts
– Response connects ideas/concepts from different parts of the class /10 pts

• Appropriate use of sources (10 pts total)
  – Correct and proper format for citations /5 pts
  – Information from sources is appropriately cited /5 pts

• Grammar and spelling (10 pts)
  – Grammatically correct /5 pts
  – Spell checked /5 pts

• Total (100 pts)