Introduction

The department offers two survey courses on International Relations theory, POLI 5523X and POLI 5524Y. POLI 5523X explores classic and contemporary work on the nature of the international system, war and peace, and the bases for order and change. POLI 5524Y looks at cooperation, institutions, and international political economy.

The aim, in both courses, is to develop a sound understanding of the basic premises, expectations, and recommendations of the various theoretical perspectives, to assess them logically and empirically, and to think about how we might incorporate them into our own theoretically-grounded research.

Note that while these courses were originally designed as “core courses” for graduate students in Political Science, well-prepared, fourth-year undergraduates may be admitted with special permission from the course instructor.

Assignments and assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Share of final grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>every week...</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion paper/presentation #1</td>
<td>see below</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion paper/presentation #2</td>
<td>see below</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion paper/presentation #3</td>
<td>see below</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major paper #1 (book review)</td>
<td>October 16</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major paper #2 (research paper)</td>
<td>December 4</td>
<td>35%</td>
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Class participation

This class will feature some small-scale lecturing from time to time, but this is a (graduate-level) seminar class, and all students are expected to contribute to the discussion. Your class
participation grade will be based on the quantity and quality of your contributions to class discussion. Attendance is mandatory. Students that miss more than two classes (without a valid reason—e.g., serious illness) will get a zero for the “class participation” portion of their grade.

Before each class, every student should: 1. carefully read all of the required readings assigned for the given week; 2. carefully read the discussion papers for the given week (see below); and 3. make a few preparatory notes for discussion—e.g., a few sentences on the main ideas from each reading, plus a short list of ideas or questions for further discussion.

Over the course of the semester, each student will take special responsibility for leading part of the discussion in three classes. For each of those three classes, the student will prepare a short discussion paper (500-750 words), summarizing a particular reading, explaining how it relates to other readings from that week, and offering his or her own comments and criticisms of that assigned reading. And for each of those three classes, the student will also make a short, in-class presentation (5-8 minutes), reprising their assessment of the assigned reading, and suggesting potentially-fruitful avenues for further discussion.

Discussion papers will be due at least 48 hours before the class which will tackle the relevant readings (i.e., 10:30am on the Monday before your assigned class). Each student will send his or her discussion paper to everyone in the class (including the professor) through the OWL email system. Because these discussion papers are supposed to be an important part of all students’ seminar preparation, late papers (without a valid excuse) will be severely penalized.

Major Papers

For both of the two papers, students will choose their own topics/questions, but each will be a different kind of essay. Presentation is important here, in the sense of having clear and correct prose, careful editing, and proper citations, but also in the sense of being methodical, well-organized, and concise.

BOOK REVIEW (5000 words): The first paper (due October 24) will be a publishable-quality review of a recent book on any aspect of International Relations. Please choose something with a solid theoretical core, rather than an atheoretical current-events book. Reviews should: 1. Give a brief summary of what questions the book poses, what kinds of answers it rejects, and what kind of answer it supports; 2. Explain how the book fits into a larger literature on a particular subject or cluster of subjects; 3. Be sure to make it clear which IR theories are in play, and how the author’s main arguments “fit” (or don’t “fit”) with various theories; and 4. Be presented in a way that is lively and interesting, so that it would be appealing to a wide (academic) audience. Obviously, students will need to read more than just one book in order to write a good review. Each student should try to make him- or herself an expert on both the theoretical debates and the real-world subject matter covered in the
book they are reviewing, and that will require background reading that is both broad and deep; students should get started on this right from the first week of the semester. With the submission of the review, each student should be sure to attach a brief note (or send a brief email) outlining his or her plans to pursue publication of the review: What journals would be appropriate venues, and which one do you plan to approach? What further edits do you think you might need to make, in order to make the review suitable for that journal?

RESEARCH PAPER (10,000 words): The second paper (due December 6) will be a research paper, which will use a particular historical case or small number of related cases (e.g., a historical event or trend, like WWII or decolonization, or a set of events, like a comparison of the Gulf War and the Iraq War) as an empirical “test” for competing IR theories: e.g., “Which theoretical perspective best accounts for Gorbachev’s decision to make unilateral cuts to the USSR’s nuclear arsenal in the late 1980s—Realism, Liberalism, or Constructivism?” The idea here is not that the paper will revolutionize our understanding of the historical episode(s) itself/themselves, or that it will decisively confirm or defeat any of the theoretical perspectives, but rather that the student will show that he or she understands what’s involved in applying and evaluating the theories empirically. All students are strongly encouraged (but not strictly required) to discuss their research paper ideas with the professor as soon as they are reasonably solid. (This should really happen at least two weeks before the paper is due, but I will give feedback on proposals or outlines right up until a few days before the due date...)

General policies concerning assignments, deadlines, and grades

The University Calendar makes plain that “[s]tudents are expected to complete class work by the prescribed deadlines. Only in special circumstances (e.g. the death of a close relative) may an instructor extend such deadlines.” Late essays will be assessed a penalty at the instructor’s discretion. Students who miss the deadline for a discussion paper or major paper on account of illness are expected to hand the assignment in within one week of their return to class, with a medical certificate in hand, per academic regulations in the Dalhousie Calendar.

Plagiarism (intentionally or unintentionally representing other people’s ideas as your own) is a violation of academic ethics, and will be taken seriously in this class. Information on what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, and the penalties for not doing so, is available at: http://academicintegrity.dal.ca/index.php

Resources

In order to keep the cost of readings down, on-line readings have been used wherever possible. Most of these are available through the university library’s subscriptions to on-line indexes like JSTOR and ProQuest. These items are marked below with “.”
There were a number of readings which were not available on-line or through Dalhousie’s libraries; these items have been put together as a course reader. The readers are available from Julia’s Copy Services, on the corner of LeMarchant and Cobourg (in the ground level of the apartment building there). Items in the reader are marked with “ vielen.”

Disclaimer

This course syllabus is intended as a general guideline. The instructor reserves the right to reschedule or revise assigned readings, assignments, lecture topics, etc., as necessary.

Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK ONE</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class meeting:</td>
<td>September 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Topics/themes: | • Overview of course, orientation, etc.  
• Historical development of I.R. |
• Barry Eichengreen, “Dental Hygiene and Nuclear War: How International Relations Look from the Perspective of Economics” |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK TWO</th>
<th>REALISM(S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REMINDER:</td>
<td>Choose discussion papers and presentation dates – September 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class meetings:</td>
<td>September 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Topics/themes: | “Classical” Realism  
 Structural Realism (aka “Neorealism”)  
 Internal and external critiques of realism(s) |
 4. Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics (Addison-Wesley, 1979), chs. 4-6.  
| Recommended reading: | • Kenneth N. Waltz, Man, the State, and War (Columbia, 1959), esp. chs. 1-2, 4, 6.  
  • Arnold Wolfers, Discord and Collaboration (Johns Hopkins, 1967), chs. 6, 8.  
  • Robert Gilpin, War and Change in World Politics (Cambridge, 1981), esp. chs. 4-5.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK THREE</th>
<th>LIBERALISM(S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class meeting:</td>
<td>September 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Topics/themes: | • “Classical” Liberalism  
• Neoliberalism  
• Internal and external critiques of liberalism(s) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK FOUR</th>
<th>CONSTRUCTIVISM (AND THE ENGLISH SCHOOL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class meeting:</td>
<td>October 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Topics/themes: | - Constructivism as critique of “rationalist” theories  
- Constructivism as a research project  
- The English School—a precursor to contemporary constructivism? |
- Peter J. Katzenstein, Robert O. Keohane, and Stephen D. Krasner,  
- Peter J. Katzenstein, Robert O. Keohane, and Stephen D. Krasner,  
**Recommended reading**

- Emanuel Adler, “Constructivism in International Relations” in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth Simmons, eds., *Handbook of International Relations* (Cambridge, 2002).

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**WEEK FIVE**

**OUTSIDERS: MARXIST, FEMINIST, & CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class meeting:</th>
<th>October 9</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Topics/themes: | Feminist critiques and theories  
Marxist and neo-Marxist theories  
Critical theory and interpretivism |


Recommended reading

- Anthony Brewer, Marxist Theories of Imperialism (Routledge, 1980).
- Marysia Zalewski, “Feminism and/in International Relations: An Exhausted Conversation?” in Frank Harvey and Michael Brecher, eds., Evaluating Methodology in International Studies (Michigan, 2002).

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WEEK SIX  DECISION-MAKING

Class meeting: October 16

REMINDER: FIRST PAPER DUE TODAY

Topics/themes:
- Perceptions and psychology
- Bureaucratic politics, organizational routines
- Domestic political structures

Required reading:


5. Jack Snyder, Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition (Cornell, 1992), chs. 1, 4.

Strongly recommended reading:


Recommended reading

- Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, War and Reason (Yale, 1992), esp. chs. 1-2.
- Helen V. Milner, Interests, Institutions, and Information: Domestic Politics and International Relations (Princeton, 1997).
### WEEK SEVEN

#### NON-STATE / TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class meeting:</th>
<th>October 23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Topics/themes:** | **When/why are non-state actors able to influence state policies?**  
**What are transnational actors, and why might they be important?**  
**Does the intensification of transnational politics seriously undercut the value of traditional (state-centric) theories?** |
| **Recommended reading:** |  
**Robert Gilpin, *US Power and the Multinational Corporation* (Basic Books, 1975), esp. chs. 1-2, 4-6.**  
### WEEK EIGHT

#### THEORY AND METHOD IN I.R.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class meeting:</th>
<th>October 30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Topics/themes: | • A very quick and relatively painless overview of the logic and techniques behind multivariate regression analysis  
• Qualitative vs Quantitative, Formal vs “Informal” |
| Recommended reading: | • Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, Explaining and Understanding International Relations (Clarendon, 1990), chs. 3-4.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK NINE</th>
<th>FROM THEORY TO RESEARCH: REALISM VS LIBERALISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class meeting:</td>
<td>November 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Topics/themes: | • Who’s winning, Realism or Liberalism?  
• Relative vs absolute gains  
• Trade or war: does conquest pay?  
• Democratic Peace |
• David E. Spiro, “The Insignificance of the Liberal Peace” *International...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK TEN</th>
<th>FROM THEORY TO RESEARCH: RATIONALISM VS CONSTRUCTIVISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class meeting:</td>
<td>November 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Topics/themes: | • How do we get from saying that “ideas matter” to showing that ideas matter, and showing how they matter?  
| | • Can’t we all just get along? |


• Elizabeth Kier, Imagining War: French and British Military Doctrine between the Wars (Princeton, 1997), esp. ch. 1.


**WEEK ELEVEN**

**THE NEW REALISM: RE-INVENTION OR SELF-DESTRUCTION?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class meeting:</th>
<th>November 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Topics/themes:       | • “Classical" vs “Structural" vs “Neoclassical"  
                      • Progressive vs degenerative research agendas  
                      • How much can you add to Realism before it stops being Realism? |
| Required             | 1. Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravscik, “Is Anybody Still a Realist?” |
reading:


Strongly recommended reading:


Recommended reading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK TWELVE</th>
<th>WHAT’S THE POINT?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class meeting:</td>
<td>November 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REMINDER:</td>
<td>SECOND PAPER DUE DECEMBER 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics/themes:</td>
<td>• I.R. theory and the policy relevance question</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>