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PSCI 530.01: International Relations Seminar

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Graduate Seminar in International Relations

Course Description and Learning Objectives

This course will introduce you to the major literatures in international relations and help you develop theoretical, methodological, and empirical tools to evaluate and advance arguments about the contemporary international system. In the first part of the class, you will write and participate in seminar discussions about the structure, character, and future of the international system, and about the causes and consequences of recent and ongoing wars. In the second part of the class, you will write and present a professional-length paper analyzing an international issue of interest to you. The presentations and associated readings will help you develop expertise in four issue areas: security studies, international political economy, human rights, and the environment.

Prerequisite

Graduate standing. Seniors with a strong record of upper-division coursework in international relations may be admitted with my permission.

Required Texts

The following texts are required:

- Jennifer Sterling-Folker (JSF), ed., *Making Sense of International Relations Theory*, 2nd edition (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2013). [\\$29 to buy new on Amazon.](#)
- Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis (A&J), *International Politics*, 13th edition (New York: Pearson, 2016). [\\$43 to rent for the semester on Chegg.](#)
- Anne E. Greene, *Writing Science in Plain English* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013). The UM bookstore and other Missoula bookstores often have copies. [\\$16 to buy new on Amazon.](#)
- The New York Times* (Monday - Friday): <http://www.nyt.com>
As a student, you can subscribe for a reduced rate, or you can read it for free on the Mansfield Library website
- Online readings, denoted by a plus sign (+). These readings are available on the course's Moodle website.

Course Requirements and Grading

Students are expected to attend and actively participate in each class session. This means that before class you must both read and begin to analyze and synthesize the assigned readings.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

- 5% Intellectual autobiography (3-5 pages, due 9/6)
- 20% Weekly seminar participation
- 30% Three essays on weekly readings (3-5 pages each)
- 10% Paper proposal (8-12 pages, due 10/25)
- 30% Research paper (16-18 pages, due 12/6)
- 5% Presentation of research paper (10 minutes, 12/6)

The plus/minus grading system will be used. Grades may be curved, but the following distribution is the lowest I will use (*i.e.*, if you earn 93% of all possible points you are assured of an A in the course):

93-100	A	83-86	B	73-76	C	63-66	D
90-92	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-	60-62	D-
87-89	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+	0-59	F

For UM's policy on incompletes, please see the Course Catalog.

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty and should be familiar with [UM's Student Conduct Code](#). Students who engage in academic misconduct such as plagiarism (representing another person's work as their own) will receive a 0 for the assignment in question and may be subject to a disciplinary sanction by the university.

Disabilities

UM assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [Office for Disability Equity](#). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with ODE, please contact them in Lommasson Center 154 or 406-243-2243. I will work with you and ODE to provide a reasonable modification. "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. Students with disabilities should apprise me of their needs well before the due date of an assignment on which they wish to be accommodated.

Make-Up Policy

In general, I excuse absences and accept late papers only from students directly involved in serious, documented emergencies. This year, I will also consider requests from students whose lives are strongly affected by the coronavirus. If you find yourself in the midst of an emergency or strongly affected by Covid, please notify me as soon as possible (in advance of the seminar or due-date if possible) that you will be unable to attend class or submit work on time. To do so, send me an email explaining the circumstances of your emergency or other situation, and provide me with your phone number and relevant documentation. *Please note* that I may deny make up requests, and I may assign makeup work that differs from the regular assignment. Also note that if you fail to submit work for any other reason you will receive a 0 for the class session or assignment. That may put you at risk of failing the course.

Drop Policy, Grading Options, and Incompletes

The 15th instructional day is the last day to drop this class without my signature on an override form. If you wish to drop after that, you must provide documentation of an emergency or other serious situation that has made it impossible for you to complete the course. Please see [UM's policy on incompletes](#).

Preparing for Class

International relations is a venerable and far-reaching field composed of many literatures, each with many arguments and contributors. To provide as intensive and extensive an introduction to the field as is needed for Master's comprehensive examinations and professional papers/theses, this course has a significant reading load: an average of 150 pages per week, with as much as 210 pages in a single week. This means you must set aside at least 6-8 hours per week to prepare for the seminar. To facilitate planning, weekly reading totals are noted on the reading schedule. Please bring all of the week's readings, your reading notes, and any required papers to class.

Reading the assigned books and articles is necessary, but insufficient, to prepare for seminar meetings. You must also analyze and synthesize the material and reflect on the questions it has raised for you. Before each seminar, record your answers to these questions. Bring both your notes and the readings to class.

A. Analysis of Particular Readings

- What is the central question or problem addressed by the author, and what is their answer or argument?
- What is the logic of this answer or argument? Does it make sense? Is it plausible? Into what school/s of thought does it fall?
- What evidence does the author use to support their argument? Is the evidence primarily quantitative (numerical) or qualitative (discussion of one or several historical cases)? Does the evidence support the argument? Is it convincing? Are you aware of other evidence that would support or weaken the argument?
- What is your overall position on this argument, and why?

B. Synthesis of the Week's Readings

- What are the overarching themes developed in these readings?
- To what extent, and how, do the readings complement or compete with one another?
- Which of these readings do you find most and least interesting and convincing, and why?
- How do these themes and readings speak to those in other sections of the course?
- How do these themes and readings relate to current events?

C. Reflection on Questions and Insights Raised by the Readings

- What questions (theoretical, methodological, empirical, etc.) have these readings raised for you?
- What insights (about theory, methodology, history, current events, etc.) have you had in reading, analyzing, and synthesizing these selections? How did you arrive at these insights? What theoretical and/or policy implications do they have? Is this something you might want to pursue in future research? If not, why not? If so, how?

Essays on Readings

Three times during the semester, you will write a 3-5 page essay on one or two of the weeks' readings.

1. Learning objective: The purpose of the paper is to show that you have done and thought about the readings from the week/s and to codify your analysis, synthesis, and reflection in essay form.
2. Reading coverage: The paper must address the bulk of the week/s readings. It's fine to for the primary focus to be on several authors, arguments, or readings, but at some point in the paper you need to compare those one or two authors, arguments, or readings to all or most of the others assigned for the week/s. For example, you can start your introduction with a broad overview and explain what you are focusing on and why it is interesting or important to you.
3. Essay structure: your paper should have:
 - a) an introduction with *a thesis statement that summarizes the argument you are making about the readings (the question you raise and your answer to it)*,
 - b) an overarching argument developed over several paragraphs with reference to specific authors and passages
 - c) a conclusion in which you summarize your argument and analysis and explore its implications for theory, policy, and/or something else you care about
4. Argument about the readings: To develop your argument, you should follow the instructions above in Preparing for Class. Specifically:
 - a) Read and answer the analytic questions for each assigned reading.
 - b) Answer the synthetic questions for all of the assigned readings.
 - c) Answer the reflection questions.
 - d) Decide which reflection question/s to address in your essay.
 - e) Brainstorm some possible answers to the question/s.
 - f) Review your notes to see which authors and what evidence would support and contradict this answer.
 - g) Outline, write, revise, and proofread your essay.
5. Format and Citations: Papers must be typed, double-spaced, in 10-12 point font. The sources of all ideas, quotes, and facts must be cited in footnotes or endnotes formatted according to the [International Security Style Guide](#).
6. Submission and Grading: Papers are due on Moodle by the beginning of class. There will be a separate Moodle form for you to submit each paper. In addition to uploading the essay, the Moodle form will ask you to evaluate your paper according to the following rubric.

Paper grading rubric:

- Step 1*: Assign points based on the following substantive criteria:
- | | |
|--|--------|
| Unclear or perfunctory treatment of the week/s readings | 70-79 |
| A good argument about some readings; unclear or perfunctory treatment of others. | 80-89 |
| A clear, informed, and interesting argument about all or most of the week/s readings | 90-100 |
- Step 2*: Subtract points for improper essay structure, formatting, citations, grammar, submission, factual errors, etc. to arrive at paper grade.
- Step 3*: Reflect on the process of writing the paper. What did you learn? What worked well? What worked less well? What would you do differently next time? What feedback do you have for the professor?

7. I will read and grade your paper and provide feedback to help you improve your writing and analysis.

The schedule for reading reviews is as follows:

Week 4, 9/20	Realism (Weeks 3 and 4)	All students (Group A and B)
Week 6, 10/4	Liberalism (Weeks 5 and 6)	All students (Groups A and B)
Week 7, 10/11	Marxism (Week 7)	Group A
Week 8, 10/18	Constructivism, Postmodernism, & Feminism (Wk 8)	Group B

I am in Group _____.

On the days your papers are due, bring a printed or e-copy to class to refer to during our discussion.

In class, I will probably ask you to read your thesis statement. I may also ask you to walk us through your paper in 8-10 minutes. I suggest you practice both before class.

Seminar Format and Participation

At the beginning of each class, we will go around the room to hear each student's argument/thesis statement about the week's readings. During class, take notes on the points raised by other students and on your own further insights and questions. Each day, there will be multiple opportunities for you to participate. The success of our learning community depends on you sharing your thoughts and questions, and listening to and responding to others.

After class, take a few minutes to jot down your overall impressions of the session and the insights and questions it has raised for you. These notes will provide you with leads to follow in defining and writing your research paper and preparing for the M.A. comprehensive exam in international relations.

After each class, you will submit a Moodle form with a self-grade for your participation, based on the following rubric:

Participation grading rubric:

- Step 1:* Assign points based on the following substantive criteria:
- | | |
|---|--------|
| Posed unclear, perfunctory, or unrelated arguments or questions | 70-79 |
| Posed clear, informed, & relevant arguments & questions | 80-89 |
| Posed clear, informed, and relevant arguments & questions | 90-100 |
- Step 2:* Subtract points for little participation, discussing only a few readings, factual errors, uncivil conduct etc. to arrive at participation grade.
- Step 3:* Reflect on the process of preparing for and participating in class. What did you learn? What worked well? What worked less well? What would you do differently next time? What feedback do you have for the professor?

I will read your participation reflections and provide feedback on your self-grade and seminar participation.

Research Paper

Over the semester, you will plan, research, write, and present a 16-18 page paper on an international issue of your choice. This paper is worth 45% of your grade in the class (10% for the proposal, 30% for the paper, and 5% for the presentation). I will provide detailed instructions and meet individually with each student at least twice. For now, it is important to brainstorm, then narrow down the international issues of interest to you and consider which two theories you would like to use to analyze this issue. Papers must have both theoretical and empirical elements and must apply two IR theories to understand a significant contemporary or historical issue or problem. As with the other work in this class, when you have completed the paper you will submit a self-grade and learning statement.

Presentation of Research Paper

Each student will present their paper to the class in the final week of the semester. This 10 minute presentation is worth 5% of your grade in the class. Presentations should be clear, concise, and informative. To make your findings easy to understand, you should prepare either a power point presentation or a handout. To ensure that your presentation is polished and conversational and that it fits within 10 minutes, practice your remarks in advance.

Course Outline and Schedule

Readings marked (+) are online and accessible on Moodle. All other readings are in the books by Jennifer Sterling-Folker (JSF), Art and Jervis (A&J), or Greene. If a link is broken, please let me know. To access journal articles with broken links or for which only citations are given, go to the UM library homepage (<http://www.lib.umt.edu/>), click on "Journals," type in the name of the newspaper or journal, select the index that contains the issue in which the article appeared, and search for the article using the title and/or author's name.

Note: at the end of the semester, you will lose access to the Moodle readings unless you download them to your computer. Doing so on a regular basis will enable you to build a library to consult later for the MA comprehensive exam and professional papers.

I and II. INTRODUCTION (Weeks 1-2, 8/30 and 9/6; 210 pp.)

*****Intellectual Autobiography due 9/6; see assignment below**

Please read in the order listed below. Use my section headings to organize your notes.

Each week, bring all of the week's readings, your reading notes, and any required papers to class.

Required readings for 9/6 (219 pp. total):

Overview of the course

Syllabus for PSCI 530 (7 pp.)

Overview of IR Theories

+Stephen M. Walt, "International relations: one world, many theories," *Foreign Policy*, 110 (Spring 1998), pp. 29+, available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1149275?origin=JSTOR-pdf> (17 pp).

+Kelebogile Zvobgo and Meredith Loken, "Race is Critical to the Field of International Relations," *Foreign Policy*, 19 June 2020 (4 pp).

Jennifer Sterling-Folker in JSF, "Introduction" (Chapter 1), pp. 1-14 (13 pp).

Jennifer Sterling-Folker in JSF, "Applying Theories" (Chapter 11), pp. 351-356 (5 pp).

Realism and Idealism

Thucydides, "The Melian Dialogue," in A&J (7 pp).

+Woodrow Wilson, "The World Must Be Made Safe for Democracy" (Address to Congress Asking for Declaration of War, April 2, 1917) and Woodrow Wilson, "Fourteen Points" (Address to Congress, January 8, 1918) available at the World War I Document Archive, <http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/> (select year, then scroll down to dates) (9 pp).

+Hans Morgenthau, "A Realist Theory of International Relations," *Politics among Nations*, Ch. 1, pp. 3-15 (12 pp).

Hans Morgenthau, "The Future of Diplomacy" in A&J (11 pp).

Levels of Analysis

+Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), Ch. 1 (16 pp).

+J. David Singer, "The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations," in Phil Williams, *et al.*, eds, *Classic Readings of International Relations*, 2nd ed (Wadsworth, 1999), pp. 105-119 (14 pp).

Additional Readings Required This Week

+*International Security* Style Guide,

<http://www.belfercenter.org/journal-international-security/overview#!style-guide>

Greene, Table of Contents and Chapters 1-9 (68 pp).

Jennifer Sterling-Folker in JSF, "A Brief History of Iraq" (Appendix), pp. 357-388 (28 pp).

Begin daily reading related to international relations in NYT World, US, Business, & Opinion sections

*****Assignment for Intellectual Autobiography (submit on Moodle by 3:00 pm on 9/6 and bring a printed or e-copy for yourself to discuss in class):** After doing this week's readings, make notes for yourself in which you answer the analytic, synthetic, and reflective questions above. Then write an intellectual autobiography in which you explain what you have experienced, studied, and learned about international relations, as well as what you would like to know. In particular, discuss three issues upon which you may be interested in writing your research

paper, and describe your goals for graduate study and beyond. In addition, explain which (if any) of the families of IR theory -- realist, liberal, or critical (Marxist/radical, constructivist, feminist, etc) – as well as which levels of analysis you are familiar with and tend to favor, and why. Your autobiography should be in essay form. It should have an introduction with a thesis statement that summarizes your answers to these questions, an overarching argument developed over 3-5 pages (double-spaced, with 10 or 12 point font), a conclusion, and proper footnote or endnote citations consistent with the *International Security* Style Guide. It should refer to all or most of the week's readings.

III. CLASSICAL AND STRUCTURAL REALISM: THEORY (Week 3, 9/13)

Review and follow the instructions above about preparing for class. Bring your notes and the readings so we can have a detailed discussion.

ALL REMAINING READINGS ARE LISTED AND POSTED ON MOODLE

IV. STRUCTURAL AND (NEO)CLASSICAL REALISM: APPLICATIONS & TESTS (Week 4, 9/20)

****Reading Reviews due today from all students (Groups A and B)*. See reading review instructions above (page 3). The paper should cover readings from both Week 3 and 4.

V. CLASSICAL LIBERALISM (Week 5, 9/27)

VI. NEOLIBERALISM AND THE ENGLISH SCHOOL (Week 6, 10/4)

****Reading Reviews due today from all students (Groups A and B)*. See reading review instructions above (page 3). The paper should cover readings from both Week 5 and 6. At a minimum, it should compare and evaluate the overall schools of Classical Liberalism and Neoliberalism, with reference to several articles you find especially interesting. You may also wish to discuss the English School, but that is not necessary.

VII. RESEARCH AND WRITING METHODS; IR SUBFIELDS; MARXISM, LENINISM, DEPENDENCY THEORY, AND OTHER MATERIALIST THEORIES (Week 7, 10/11)

****Paper Question due today from all students* (1-3 sentences with a causal question and a question mark); email to me before class and bring a printed copy to class

****Reading Reviews due today from students in Group A*

VIII. CONSTRUCTIVISM, POSTMODERNISM, AND FEMINISM (Week 8, 10/18)

****Reading Reviews due today from students in Group B*. Your review must consider either (1) constructivism and postmodernism, or (2) constructivism and feminism.

****Individual Meetings today*. From 5:00 on, I will meet with each student for 10-15 minutes. We will discuss your research question, theories, hypotheses, tests, and data. We will schedule times in advance. Please see Moodle for a list of items to bring to the meeting.

IX. INTERNATIONAL SECURITY (Week 9, 10/25)

****Paper Proposals due today*. Be ready to make a 5-minute presentation of the research question and plan discussed in your paper proposal. Also bring a list of questions you grappled with during your research and writing process to discuss with the group. We will discuss the process of turning your paper proposal into the outline and first draft of your research paper, which I suggest you do immediately after class today.

X. INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS ON RESEARCH PAPER (Week 10, 11/1)

Today I will give general feedback on the research proposals with the class as a whole. Then I will meet individually with each student for 15-20 minutes to provide feedback on individual paper proposals and research papers.

In your *individual meeting today*, we will discuss your research question, understanding and use of theories, hypotheses, tests, data, paper outline, draft introduction, and/or proposed bibliography of outside sources. We will schedule times in class. Please see Moodle for a list of items to bring to the meeting.

No class 11/8 – ELECTION DAY

XI. INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY (Week 11, 11/15)

XII. HUMAN RIGHTS, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND OTHER GLOBAL ISSUES (Week 12, 11/22)

Remember: Research Paper due in two weeks on 12/6. In class today, I will ask you to make a 5-minute presentation on one of your hypotheses and tests to date. Also bring a list of the questions you have about finishing your paper and presenting it in class on 12/6.

XIII. FORECASTING THE FUTURE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM & REFLECTIONS ON THE FIELD (Week 13, 11/29)

By today, you should have a complete draft of the research paper, with notes to yourself about what remains to be done to meet the terms of the assignment and respond to my comments on your proposal.

If your schedule permits, I encourage you to exchange drafts with a fellow seminar student and, by the end of the week, give each other feedback on ways to clarify and strengthen your organization, writing, analysis, synthesis, and conclusions.

XIV. REFLECTIONS ON THE FIELD (Week 14, 12/6)

****Research Papers due today.** See paper assignment handout.

*****Paper Presentations today.** Be ready to give a formal, 10-minute presentation of your findings (see assignment on p. 4), and to discuss the questions and challenges that arose for you in your research and writing. Participate actively and constructively in the discussion of other students' papers.

NOTES FOR STUDENTS IN THE PSCI MASTERS' PROGRAM:

1) I would be happy to serve on the faculty committee for your *Comprehensive Exam*. Please see the M.A. advisors and handbook for information about the exam process. The readings in Sections XIII and XIV give you an idea of the kind of questions I often include in the comprehensive exam.

2) If you would like to turn your seminar paper into an *MA Professional Paper*, please indicate that on the top of your final seminar paper. I will then give you detailed feedback about what is needed. I suggest you work on the paper during winter break and spring semester. It's best to get these papers done asap while the material is still fresh in your mind. Generally, professional papers go through several drafts. In your first draft, be sure to address all of the comments I send on your seminar paper. Professional papers are 20-25 pages in length. See the MA handbook for information on format, including the required abstract and bibliography. When you submit the first draft of your professional paper, it should be in that format, with bibliography and a 100-word abstract summarizing your argument and findings.