

# **Introduction to International Politics**

PSC 1003 | Summer 2022

Tuesday/Thursday | 2:20 p.m. – 4:40 p.m. | Bell Hall 107

**Instructor:** Joseph Cerrone

**Office:** Monroe Hall/Hall of Government 409

**Office Hours:** Tuesday/Thursday, 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. or by appointment

**Email:** [jcerrone@gwu.edu](mailto:jcerrone@gwu.edu)

## **Overview**

This course offers an introduction to the core theories, concepts, and ideas that animate scholarly study of international politics. We will explore how a variety of global actors—including states, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations—interact with each other and shape political outcomes. Our focus will be on applying scholarly ideas to investigate real-world problems and answer pressing questions about international politics.

The course is divided into four parts. In Part I—Theoretical Foundations, we will examine the primary rationalist and constructivist approaches to understanding international politics. In Part II—International Security, we will explore issues of war and peace in the international arena. In Part III—International Political Economy, we will focus on how the modern international economic system works and how it influences political outcomes. In Part IV—New Horizons in International Politics, we will address several up-and-coming issues of importance in international politics.

## **Learning Objectives**

As a result of completing this course, students will be able to:

- ❖ Understand the core concepts and theoretical approaches that animate scholarly study of international politics;
- ❖ Analyze current events in light of these aforementioned concepts and theories; and
- ❖ Develop and evaluate scholarly arguments about international politics.

## **Course Materials**

All readings and course materials are available via Blackboard under the “Electronic Reserves” tab. There is no textbook for this course.

## **Assignments**

There are four assignments for this course:

- ❖ Participation (20%)
- ❖ Current Event Presentation and Memo (20%)
- ❖ Midterm Exam (30%)
- ❖ Final Exam (30%)

### ***Participation (20%)***

It is important to come to class prepared to actively participate in discussions. Participation can take many forms, including asking questions, answering questions, and engaging in group conversations. Participation will be assessed by both the frequency and the quality of students' contributions.

### ***Current Event Presentation and Memo (20%)***

Each student will take a turn beginning class with a short, five-minute presentation on a current event relevant to international politics. The presentation should explain the topic or issue at stake and link it to material covered in the course. Students must also submit a one-page memo (Times New Roman font, 12-point, double-spaced, one-inch margins) summarizing the current event and providing a short reflection linking it to topics and themes of international politics covered in class and the readings. The memo should be submitted on Blackboard before class on the day of the presentation. Students will sign up for the date of their presentation during the first week of the semester.

### ***Midterm Exam (30%)***

The take-home midterm exam will be distributed on Blackboard following class on Thursday, July 14 and will be due on Blackboard by 12 p.m. on Tuesday, July 19. The exam will include material covered in the first half of the course (June 28/Foundations of International Politics – July 14/Peace and Justice). The exam will consist of identification, short-answer, and essay questions. You are permitted to use your notes and course readings, but you may not consult other students or online sources.

### ***Final Exam (30%)***

The take-home final exam will be distributed on Blackboard following class on Thursday, August 4 and will be due on Blackboard by 12 p.m. on Tuesday, August 9. The exam will include material covered in the second half of the course (July 19/The International Economic System – August 4/New World Orders). The exam will consist of identification, short-answer, and essay questions. You are permitted to use your notes and course readings, but you may not consult other students or online sources.

## **Course Policies**

### *Covid-19 Precautions*

Students are required to follow all health and safety guidelines set forth by the university and the District of Columbia. The university's policies can be found in the [Onward GW Plan](#) and updates can be found on the university's [coronavirus website](#). Specifically, students are required to wear a mask **at all times** during in-person class sessions and to **stay home** if you are experiencing Covid symptoms or have tested positive. In accordance with the university's [classroom policy](#), students are not permitted to bring or consume food or drink in the classroom. Failure to comply with these policies will be sanctioned, including removal from class and reporting to the relevant university authority.

### *Absences*

Students should plan to attend and participate in all class sessions. Students will be given one free absence, after which their grade will be adversely affected. In the case of an absence, students should ensure they keep up with the class readings and consult another student for class notes. In accordance with the university's policy on religious holidays: (1) students should notify faculty at least three weeks in advance of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance; (2) the faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations; (3) faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or make other provisions for course-related activities. Additional details on this policy are available [here](#).

### *Academic Integrity*

Students are expected to be familiar with the [Code of Academic Integrity](#) and the [Code of Student Conduct](#). Academic dishonesty or other violations of the codes will be reported to the university and will be penalized. Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.

### *Blackboard*

All course materials—including the syllabus, assignment instructions, and additional resources—are posted on Blackboard. Students should regularly check Blackboard and their GW email address for class updates. All assignments must be submitted on Blackboard.

### *Classroom Conduct*

All students are responsible for contributing to a professional, scholarly, and welcoming classroom environment. Rudeness, intolerance, or discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated.

### *Extensions and Late Assignments*

Please consult the instructor about an extension before the deadline if you need extra time to complete an assignment. Requests for an extension following the deadline will not be granted. Late assignments will be penalized five points each day they are late.

### *Grading*

Letter grades convert to points on a 0–100 scale as follows:

- ❖ A: 94–100
- ❖ A–: 90–93
- ❖ B+: 87–89
- ❖ B: 84–86
- ❖ B–: 80–83
- ❖ C+: 77–79
- ❖ C: 74–76
- ❖ C–: 70–73
- ❖ D+: 67–69
- ❖ D: 64–66
- ❖ D–: 60–63
- ❖ F: 0–59

### *Safety and Security*

In an emergency, call GWPD at 202-994-6111 or 911. For situation-specific actions, review the [Emergency Response Handbook](#). To stay informed on campus safety and security, see [here](#).

### *Technology in the Classroom*

In order to facilitate active engagement, students are asked to not use technology in the classroom. This includes laptops, tablets, phones, or other electronic devices. Students with DSS accommodation will be exempted from this policy.

### *Use of Electronic Class Material*

Students are encouraged to use electronic course materials for private personal use in connection with their academic program of study. Electronic course materials should not be shared or used for non-course related purposes unless express permission has been granted by the instructor. Students who impermissibly share any electronic course materials are subject to discipline under the Student

Code of Conduct. Please contact the instructor if you have questions regarding what constitutes permissible or impermissible use of electronic course materials.

### *Workload*

In accordance with university policy, students are expected to spend a minimum of 100 minutes on independent coursework for every 50 minutes of direct instruction per week. This course meets for 4 hours and 40 minutes of direct instruction per week, meaning students are expected to spend 9 hours of independent learning per week. This totals a minimum of 13.5 hours of learning per week.

### **Resources**

#### *Counseling and Psychological Services*

GW's Colonial Health Center offers counseling and psychological services, supporting mental health and personal development by collaborating directly with students to overcome challenges and difficulties that may interfere with academic, emotional, and personal success. For additional information, call 202-994-5300 or see [here](#).

#### *Disability Support Services (DSS)*

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact Disability Support Services in Rome Hall, 801 22nd Street NW, Suite 102 to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information, call 202-994-8250 or see [here](#).

#### *Gelman Library*

The [Gelman Library](#) offers a vast array of digital and print resources to support student learning. These include a [Political Science Guide](#) and [Citation Styles Guide](#).

#### *Writing Center*

The [Writing Center](#) offers free writing support to students through one-on-one consultations. Appointments can be made [here](#).

## Course Schedule

---

### Part I: Theoretical Foundations

---

#### June 28 – Foundations of International Politics

Overview: What is international politics? What core concepts underlie our study of international politics? What do we stand to gain from academic study of international politics?

Readings:

- ❖ Syllabus
- 

#### June 30 – Rationalist Theories of International Politics

Overview: What makes a theory “rationalist”? How do realists and liberals/institutionalists understand international politics? What underlying assumptions differentiate these approaches? What do they have in common?

Readings:

- ❖ Wohlforth, William C. 2010. “Realism.” In *Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, eds. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal, 131–149. New York: Oxford University Press.  
*\*\*Read up to “Myth-Induced Misconceptions” on p. 143.\*\**
  - ❖ Sterling-Folker, Jennifer. 2016. “Neoliberalism.” In *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, 4th ed., eds. Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith, 88–106. New York: Oxford University Press. *\*\*Skip “Case Study: the World Trade Organization” on pp. 99–103.\*\**
-

## July 5 –Constructivist Theories of Internationalist Politics

Overview: What makes a theory “constructivist”? How do traditional constructivists and feminists understand international politics? What underlying assumptions differentiate these approaches? What do they have in common?

### Readings:

- ❖ Wendt, Alexander. 2003. “Anarchy Is What States Make of It.” In *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, eds. Robert J. Art and Robert Jervis, 73–80. New York: Longman.
- ❖ Finnemore, Martha, and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change.” *International Organization* 53(4): 887–917. \*\*Read from “Evolution and Influence of Norms” on p. 894 to “Which Norms Matter Under What Conditions?” on p. 905.\*\*
- ❖ True, Jacqui. 2010. “Feminism and Gender Studies in International Relations Theory.” In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. \*\*Read up to “Implications for International Conduct” on p. 10.\*\*

---

## Part II: International Security

---

## July 7 – War and Alliances

Overview: Why do states go to war? What factors increase or decrease the likelihood of war? Why do states form alliances? What costs and benefits does alliance membership entail?

### Readings:

- ❖ Reiter, Dan. 2003. “Exploring the Bargaining Model of War.” *Perspectives on Politics* 1(1): 27–43. \*\*Skip “Old Wine in New Bottles?” on pp. 32–33 and “Future Directions for Research” on p. 37.\*\*
- ❖ Walt, Stephen M. 2019. “How to Tell if You’re in a Good Alliance.” *Foreign Policy*.
- ❖ Guyer, Jonathan. 2022. “NATO Was in Crisis. Putin’s War Made It Even More Powerful.” *Vox*. March 25.

---

## July 12 – Nuclear Weapons and Cybersecurity Challenges

Overview: What is nuclear proliferation? Does proliferation strengthen or weaken international security? How have cybersecurity threats changed the nature of interstate disputes?

### Readings:

- ❖ Waltz, Kenneth N. 2002. “More May Be Better.” In *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed*, eds. Kenneth N. Waltz and Scott D. Sagan, 3–45. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- ❖ Sagan, Scott D. 2002. “More Will Be Worse.” In *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed*, eds. Kenneth N. Waltz and Scott D. Sagan, 46–87. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- ❖ Gordon, Sue, and Eric Rosenbach. 2022. “America’s Cyber-Reckoning: How to Fix a Failing Strategy.” *Foreign Affairs*.

---

## July 14 – Peace and Justice

Overview: How do peacekeeping, responsibility to protect, and international courts contribute to the promotion of international peace and justice?

### Readings:

- ❖ Autesserre, Séverine. 2019. “The Crisis of Peacekeeping: Why the UN Can’t End Wars.” *Foreign Affairs*.
- ❖ Al-Oraibi, Mina. 2021. “‘Responsibility to Protect’ Is One More Casualty of the Syrian War.” *Foreign Policy*. June 14.
- ❖ Felter, Claire. 2022. “The Role of the International Criminal Court.” *Council on Foreign Relations*. March 28.
- ❖ Gladstone, Rick. 2021. “An Old Legal Doctrine that Puts War Criminals in the Reach of Justice.” *New York Times*. February 28.

---

**Midterm – Due July 19 at 12 p.m.**

---

### **Part III: International Political Economy**

---

#### **July 19 – The International Economic System**

Overview: How did the postwar international economic system develop? What core economic concepts and theories help explain the open and liberal nature of this system?

Readings:

- ❖ Grieco, Joseph M., and G. John Ikenberry. 2003. “The Economics of International Trade.” In *State Power and World Markets: The International Political Economy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
  - ❖ Smith, Robert, and Zoe Chace. 2014. “The Dollar at the Center of the World.” Podcast. *Planet Money*. July 16.
- 

#### **July 21 – Globalization I: Development and Migration**

Overview: What is globalization? What is development? How have globalization and development impacted “developing” countries? What are the causes and consequences of international migration?

Readings:

- ❖ Gray, Alex. 2017. “What Is Globalization Anyway?” *World Economic Forum*. January 10.
- ❖ Easterly, William. 2009. “The Ideology of Development.” *Foreign Policy*. October 13.
- ❖ Yester, Katherine. 2009. “In Defense of Development.” *Foreign Policy*. October 13.
- ❖ Helms, Benjamin, and David Leblang. 2019. “Global Migration: Causes and Consequences.” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

---

## July 26 – Globalization II: Populism and Pathogens

Overview: How has globalization constrained states? To what extent is populism a backlash against globalization? How has the Covid-19 pandemic illustrated the limitations of global interconnectedness and cooperation?

### Readings:

- ❖ Farrell, Henry, and Abraham L. Newman. 2020. “Chained to Globalization.” *Foreign Affairs*.
- ❖ Milner, Helen V. 2019. “Globalization, Populism, and the Decline of the Welfare State.” *International Institute for Strategic Studies*. February 14.
- ❖ Patrick, Stewart. 2020. “When the System Fails.” *Foreign Affairs*.
- ❖ Urbinati, Nadia. 2020. “The Pandemic Hasn’t Killed Populism.” *Foreign Affairs*. August 6.

---

## Part IV: New Horizons in International Politics

---

## July 28 – Climate Change

Overview: Why is climate change such an intractable problem at the international level? How do economic concepts help us understand the challenges posed by this issue? What solutions to this issue seem most promising?

### Readings:

- ❖ Lu, Christina. 2021. “Four Key Takeaways from the IPCC Climate Report.” *Foreign Policy*. August 9.
- ❖ Maizland, Lindsay. 2021. “Global Climate Agreements: Successes and Failures.” *Council on Foreign Relations*. November 17.
- ❖ Kamarck, Elaine. 2019. “The Challenging Politics of Climate Change.” *Brookings Institution*. September 23.

- ❖ Táíwò, Olúfẹ̀mì O., and Beba Cibralic. 2020. “The Case for Climate Reparations.” *Foreign Policy*. October 10.
- 

## **August 2 – Race and Identity in International Relations**

Overview: How have questions of race, racism, and identity been overlooked in international relations scholarship? What does a closer look at these concepts reveal about the origins, nature, and workings of contemporary international politics?

### Readings:

- ❖ Hopf, Ted. 2009. “Identity Relations and the Sino-Soviet Split.” In *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*, eds., Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Rose McDermott. New York: Cambridge University Press. *\*\*Read only “The Social Construction of Identity and the Logic of Habit” on pp. 280–284\*\**
  - ❖ Acharya, Amitav. 2022. “Race and Racism in the Founding of the Modern World Order.” *International Affairs* 98(1): 23–43.
  - ❖ NA. 2020. “Why Is Mainstream International Relations Blind to Racism?” *Foreign Policy*.
- 

## **August 4 – New World Orders**

Overview: What does the future hold for international politics? What alternatives for international order are offered by European Union, the rise of China, and new forms of multilateralism?

### Readings:

- ❖ De Vries, Catherine, Sara B. Hobolt, Sven-Oliver Proksch, and Jonathan B. Slapin. 2021. “Multilevel Governance in Europe.” In *Foundations of European Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 32–51.
- ❖ Kagan, Robert. 2017. “The Twilight of the Liberal World Order.” *Brookings Institution*. January 24.
- ❖ Slaughter, Anne-Marie, and Gordon LaForge. 2021. “Opening Up the Order: A More Inclusive International System.” *Foreign Affairs*.

---

**Final Exam – Due August 9 at 12 p.m.**

---