

Political Science 2223

Fall 2010

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office hours: M 10am-11am, W 10am-12pm, or by appointment

This course serves as the gateway course for more advanced classes in international relations. As an introductory course, it seeks to survey the major concepts, theories, and problems of the field. It also presents some illustrative examples of policy challenges facing officials although its basic intent is not to address “current events.” By the end of the semester, you should have gained a reasonable idea about what the study of international relations and foreign policy is all about and a basic competency to pursue further inquiries in this field.

There is only one text for this course. It is *World Politics: The Menu for Choice* (9th edition) written by Bruce Russett, Harvey Starr, and David Kinsella (Boston: Wadsworth, 2009). This book should be available at the UMC Bookstore for your purchase. You may also check its availability at the Colorado Bookstore located across the campus in the Hill area. Older editions of this book will not be suitable because the authors have made content changes.

While the text provides a general framework for the course and some background information for the research traditions and problems to be discussed in the class, my lectures will present additional material that seeks to expand, elaborate, and explore in further depth some of the analytic, substantive and/or policy concerns raised in the readings (and other topics not covered in the book). Therefore, it is important that you attend classes and take good notes. You should also know that I will not be able to cover and explain everything discussed in the text, as there is not enough time to do so in the lectures. Because many of you are likely to be freshmen starting your first semester at CU, do please contact your teaching assistant or me if there is anything that is unclear. You should seek clarification or help early in the semester rather than wait until the last minute.

Evaluation of your course performance will be based on the following considerations. There will be an in-class mid-term exam and also an in-class final exam. It is mandatory for you to take these two exams. The mid-term will constitute 30% and the final another 40% of your course grade. Unless as otherwise provided for by university policy *and* with my prior approval, students are required to take these exams at the scheduled times. You will not be able to make up for a missed exam except for reasons qualifying for university-approved excuses -- namely, for genuine emergencies beyond a student's control. The specific format for each exam will be explained in class. You should know that the final exam has been scheduled on Monday, December 13, 2010, from 7.30pm to 9.00pm in our regular classroom. You will not be allowed to take the mid-term or final exam if you arrive after the exam's scheduled starting time.

Your course evaluation will also include a required term paper. You must write on the topic assigned at the end of this syllabus. This topic will have a critical thinking component, requiring you to apply your analytic skills to address a theoretical and/or policy problem germane to international relations. This term paper will constitute 25% of your course grade. This paper is limited to 10 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font size). The deadline for turning in this paper assignment is 9am, Monday, October 25, 2010 – that is, at the start of the lecture on that day. You must personally turn

in your paper to your teaching assistant by this deadline (making sure that you have saved a hard copy and computer file of this paper). For every day that this paper is tardy, a penalty of 10% will be assessed on its grade (weekend days will count in assessing this penalty for tardiness).

As a further requirement for this paper assignment, you must make an appointment to meet with your teaching assistant to discuss an outline of your paper no later than Friday, October 22, 2010. Please be prompt in scheduling an appointment with your teaching assistant for this meeting. This consultation is necessary for you to receive preliminary approval from your teaching assistant for your paper plan and for you to seek substantive feedback from him/her on your outline. Ten percent of your paper's grade will come from this meeting.

The remaining 5% of your course grade will be based on your attendance of and participation in the recitation and other germane considerations such as your performance on any impromptu quizzes.

Academic dishonesty in fulfilling any assignment will be grounds for failing the course. Thus, for instance, you must not represent someone else's work as your own in carrying out your paper assignment. And, when presenting another person's ideas or data, you must provide explicit citation to acknowledge your intellectual debt. Quotation marks must be used when you are quoting someone. Minor changes that try to paraphrase someone else's ideas do not relieve you of the responsibility of acknowledging your intellectual debt. When in doubt, you should err on the conservative side (that is, by citing your sources), or you should at least consult with your teaching assistant or me.

If you have questions or complaints about an assignment grade, you should first contact your TA. You should provide a written note to him/her explaining the basis of your concern. This note must be presented to your TA within five school days after the assignment has been returned to your recitation section. The period for appealing your grade will expire five school days after this time. If you are unable to settle your complaint with your TA after making this appeal, I will either read the assignment myself or have another TA read it to assign another grade to you. This grade can be higher or lower than your original grade.

You are responsible to learn about the Honor Code adopted by the University. You can find relevant information at the following websites: <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/faculty.html>; <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html>; and <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>

If you happened to have three final exams scheduled on the same day, you are entitled to request a change in the time designated for the last exam for that day. If this last exam of the day happens to be this course, please provide the relevant documentation to the professor during the first two weeks of the semester in order to schedule an alternate time for your exam. You should direct your request for an alternate exam time to another professor if the third exam on the same day happens to be for another course.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, University faculty members are required to make "reasonable and timely accommodations" for students with disabilities. By University policy that obligation only extends to students who have registered with the Office of Disability Services, which makes the determination of whether, for example, students have real learning disorders. If you are a student with a disability, please notify the professor in writing within the first two weeks of the semester what accommodations are needed. Please provide me

documentation from Disability Services (303-4928671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

If a student has religious obligations that may conflict with this course, please notify the professor in writing within the first two weeks of semester in order to seek a reasonable and fair arrangement. The campus policy regarding religious observance is available at http://www.colorado.edu/policies.fac_relig.html.

To do well in this class, you must attend lectures and recitations regularly. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to seek clarification from the professor or your TA.

The lecture plan and reading assignments below are intended to give you an approximate timeline. We may occasionally get ahead of or fall behind this rough schedule. It is important for you to keep up with the reading assignments. As you can see, the course schedule is very tight and there is very little room for slippage. I strongly urge you to do the readings before you attend the lectures for the relevant chapters. The lectures are not a substitute for the readings because as already mentioned, I will not be able to discuss everything covered in the readings in my lectures. You should not hesitate to ask questions in your recitation sessions and even during lectures (notwithstanding the large number of students attending the lectures).

One final note and reminder: you must not allow your work to fall behind schedule. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your teaching assistant or me early on, not after the fact.

Reading Assignments (Russett, Starr, and Kinsella, 9th edition)

Part 1

August 23	Introduction, Organizational Meeting
August 25	Preface & Chapter 1 (World Politics: Levels of Analysis, Choice, and Constraint)
August 30	Chapter 2 (Thinking About World Politics: Theory and Reality)
September 1, 8	Chapter 3 (International Actors: States and Other Players on the World Stage)
September 6	Labor Day Holiday, no class
September 13, 15	Chapter 4 (The World System: International Structure and Polarity)
September 20, 22	Chapter 5 (Relations Between States: Power and Influence)
September 27	Chapter 6 (Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy: Society and Polity)
September 29, October 4	Chapter 7 (Individuals and World Politics: Roles, Perceptions, and Decision Making)
October 6	Review of Part I
October 11	Mid-term exam, 9.00-9.50am

Part 2

October 13	Chapter 8 (Military Conflict: Why States and Other Actors Resort to Force)
October 18, 20	Chapter 9 (The Security Dilemma: Armament and Disarmament)
October 22	Last Day to meet with TA about your paper plan and outline

October 25	Term paper due in class at 9.00am
October 25	Chapter 10 (International Law and Organization)
October 27, November 1	Chapter 11 (Causes of Peace and Nonviolent Transformation)
November 3, 8	Chapter 12 (Political Economy of National Security and Defense)
Part 3	
November 10	Chapter 13 (Interdependence and Economic Order)
November 15	Chapter 14 (Regional Economic Integration and Globalization)
November 17	Chapter 15 (Development and Underdevelopment: The North-South Gap)
November 22-26	Fall break, no classes
Part 4	
November 29, December 1	Chapter 16 (Limits of Sovereignty: Humanity and the Commons)
December 6	Chapter 17 (Which Global Future)
December 8	Review of Parts 2, 3, and 4, last lecture of semester
December 13	Final exam, 7.30pm-9.00pm

Paper Topic

One of the key concepts in international relations theorizing is *polarity*.

Whether the interstate system is *unipolar*, *bipolar*, or *multipolar* has been hypothesized by different scholars in different ways to affect interstate peace and stability.

Your paper assignment has four parts.

First, explain what is meant by polarity.

Second, explain how you would characterize the polarity of the current interstate system. You should support your view with some evidence on why you believe the current system's structure is unipolar, bipolar, or multipolar.

Third, explain how you see the interstate peace and stability are being affected by the interstate system's current polarity. You should be clear about the logic behind your view, and introduce the pertinent theories or concepts (examples: balance of power, power transition, hegemonic stability, decision uncertainty, interaction opportunity, alliance rigidity, relative gains, etc., etc.).

Fourth, explain how long you expect the interstate system's current polarity to last. Again, you should present your logic, evidence, and any pertinent theories and concepts (e.g., imperial overstretch, loss-of-power gradient, long cycles, etc., etc.).

Your paper must include a discussion and explanation of at least three theoretical ideas or concepts such as those mentioned above in the third and fourth parts of your assignment. A hint: ideas and concepts such as those just mentioned can be easily looked up in the glossary and index sections of your textbook (and of course, they are also discussed in the text's discussion and/or taken up in the lectures).

Your paper will be evaluated on the basis of the coherence, clarity, consistency, and completeness of your answer to the above questions. As well, the extent to which you can introduce compelling evidence and present cogent arguments to support your conclusions would be a basis of evaluation. Naturally, historical accuracy will be another consideration for evaluation.

The best thing you can do to help yourself is to start preparing for your paper project early, and to avoid turning in your paper late. Consult your teaching assistant about questions you have about the paper. Finally, be mindful of the deadlines for you to consult with your teaching assistant about your paper's outline and for turning in the finished paper, the penalties for tardiness, and the Honor Code's stipulations against cheating and plagiarism.