

PSCI 3143: Current Affairs in International Relations

Fall 2019

HUMN 135 | T & TH 9:30-10:45AM

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Office Hours: Tues 11-12, Wed 8-9
(or by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an advanced undergraduate-level political science course that is intended to provide students with a theoretical tool kit for analyzing and informing themselves about some of the most important contemporary issues in international relations (IR). Our discussion will cover a number of debates pertaining to international security, global migration, international political economy, environmental cooperation, and human rights. Since we cannot possibly cover all current events in the span of a semester, I will also give students a say about which remaining topics to discuss during the final two weeks of class.

With the exception of the first four weeks—in which, we will cover more foundational material relating to concepts, theory, and methods—each week will be dedicated to a specific current event in IR. Generally, Tuesdays will be devoted to learning the historical background and relevant empirical research on a given issue while Thursdays will be devoted to discussing news articles and opinion pieces. Accordingly, reading and frequent participation are vital for achieving success in the course.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- In lieu of a textbook, all students are responsible for purchasing an online subscription to the *Washington Post* (Please see <https://subscribe.washingtonpost.com>). This should only cost you \$4 per month (or \$40 per year if you decide to purchase the yearly subscription). The readings sets will frequently include pieces from the *Monkey Cage*.
- I will post all other readings for this class on Canvas.

GRADING

Letter grades for the course are computed as follows: **A** = 93-100; **A-** = 90-92; **B+** = 87-89 ; **B** = 83-86; **B-** = 80-82; **C+** = 77-79; **C** = 73-76; **C-** = 70-72 ; **D+** = 67-69; **D** = 63-66; **D-** = 60-62; **F** = <60.

Your final grade is comprised of the following criteria:

“Mini” Exam (Sept 19)	10%
Final Exam (Dec 12)	30%
Quizzes (x4)	20%
Participation	15%
Op-Ed Outline (Oct 24)	5%
Op-Ed Paper (Nov 21)	20%

Exams (40% total) There are two non-cumulative exams for this class. The first “mini” exam will test your knowledge of underlying concepts and theory that we will return to during the second part of the course. The final exam will instead be geared toward testing your knowledge of current events and specific topics from the course readings. Both exams will consist of term definitions and a series of short-answer questions (i.e., a 6-7 sentence response per question). For the final exam, I will provide you with a study guide roughly a week prior to the exam date. No make-up exams will be offered unless (1) you have documented proof of your absence; and (2) you notify me of this excused absence well in advance of the exam date.

Quizzes (5% each; 20% total). Throughout the semester, I will administer *five* unannounced quizzes at the beginning of class. These quizzes are intended to be brief and will typically test you on the required readings for the day or material covered during the previous class. At the end of the semester, I will drop your lowest quiz grade. There are no make-ups for quizzes, regardless of whether your absence is excused or not. Additional time for quizzes will not be granted to students who arrive late to class.

Participation (15%). Students are expected to actively participate each class. This is especially true for Thursday classes during the second part of the course, which will be a lot more discussion-based. Note that lack of attendance will also hurt your participation. At the end of the semester, I will assign you a letter grade according to the quantity and quality of your participation throughout the semester. From my experience, students that keep up with the readings and prepare questions/notes before each class tend to receive the highest participation grades.

Op-Ed (20% Paper; 5% Outline). Each student will write their own opinion piece on a current events issue or problem. You may choose any topic to write on as long as it qualifies as an IR issue. This means you will have to approve a topic with me by **Thursday, October 24th**. By then, please submit a typed bullet-point 1-2 page (double-spaced) outline that briefly answers the following questions:

- What is the problem/question you are addressing/answering?
- Why is this problem/question important?
- What are other people saying about this problem/question and why are they (or some of them) wrong?
- What is *your* argument or the potential answer you are giving to this problem/question?

- What relevant data/information (e.g, historical cases, descriptive statistics, existing empirical studies) will you use to develop and defend your argument?

Please see the attached assignment for in-depth instructions for writing the op-ed. The intention of this paper is to develop your ability to make an argument on a relevant IR topic while also promoting clear and concise writing. At the conclusion of the semester, students will ideally have an opinion piece that they can submit to a news outlet, magazine, blog, or some other online venue. The word limit for the paper is 800 words. Failure to abide by this word limit will result in a lower grade (i.e., a 10 percentage-point penalty). The due date for this paper is **Thursday, November 21st (in class)**. Late papers and outlines will also be penalized 10 percentage points for each day late.

I do not offer any extra credit opportunities. Please do not ask for them during or at the conclusion of the term.

OFFICE HOURS AND EMAIL POLICY

My office and office hours are located at the top of this syllabus. However, if you have classes, sports, or any other obligations that conflict with my regular office hours, I am always open to scheduling individual appointments that work best for you.

Office hours are always superior to talking over email. Nonetheless, I am also readily accessible through email (brendan.connell@colorado.edu) if you have any brief questions to ask me. Just keep in mind that it may take up to 48 hours for me to respond back to you.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html>.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

I take cheating and plagiarism very seriously. All written assignments must be submitted electronically through Canvas. The penalty for plagiarism — purposeful or accidental — carries the

penalty of a “0” for the assignment. A second violation automatically results in an “F” for the course. If you have any questions concerning the ground rules for what qualifies as plagiarism, please consult me.

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found online.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Students with Disabilities

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with disabilities should ask for “reasonable and timely” accommodations. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries under Quick Links at Disability Services website and discuss your needs with me.

Religious Observances

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Students in this situation can ask for “reasonable and timely” accommodations. Please review the syllabus closely and try to find out whether you have time conflicts with any of the assignments. I encourage you to do so in the first two weeks of the semester and inform me about your concerns either during my office hours or after lecture.

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado at Boulder Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures, the University of Colorado Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures, and the University of Colorado Conflict of Interest in Cases of Amorous Relationships policy apply to all students, staff, and faculty. Any student, staff, or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of sexual harassment or discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus

resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: During Part II of the course, I will post all reading sets on Canvas at the beginning of the week. You are responsible for completing the readings by the day each reading is posted.

PART I: FOUNDATIONS

Week 1, 08/26 - 08/30: Introduction

Tuesday, Aug 27: Introduction, Syllabus, and the Op-Ed Assignment

- Syllabus
- Op-Ed Instructions

Thursday, Aug 29: No Class (Away at APSA Conference)

- Avey, Paul C., and Michael C. Desch. 2014. "What Do Policymakers Want From Us? Results of a Survey of Current and Former Senior National Security Decision Makers." *International Studies Quarterly* 58: 227-246.

Week 2, 09/02 - 09/06: What Makes International Relations Unique?

Tuesday, Sept 3: The Anarchy Assumption

- Helen Milner. 1991. "The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory: A Critique." *Review of International Studies* 17 (1): 67-85.

Thursday, Sept 5: The Demand for Global Governance

- Kenneth W. Abbott and Duncan Snidal. 1998. "Why States Act Through Formal International Organizations." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42 (1): 3-32.
- Howard, Lise M. "Should U.N. Peacekeepers Launch Preemptive Strikes? The Cruz Report Seems to Think So." *Washington Post*. March 16, 2018.

Week 3, 09/09 - 09/13: What Are the Prospects for International Cooperation?

Tuesday, Sept 10: Skeptical and Optimistic Takes on International Cooperation

- George W. Downs, David M. Rocke, and Peter N. Barsoom. 1996. "Is the Good News about Compliance Good News about Cooperation?" *International Organization* 50 (3): 379-406.
- Abram Chayes and Antonia Handler Chayes. 1993. "On Compliance." *International Organization* 47 (2): 175-205.

Thursday, Sept 12: Domestic Politics and Its Interaction with Global Governance

- Cortell, Andrew P, and James W. Davis Jr. 1996. "How Do International Institutions Matter? The Domestic Impact of International Rules and Norms." *International Studies Quarterly* 40: 451-478.

Week 4, 09/16 - 09/20: Tying Evidence to Theory in IR

Tuesday, September 17: Evaluating Research Design in IR

- Adcock, Robert, and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American Political Science Review* 95 (3): 529-546.
- "10 Things to Know about Reading a Regression Table." Egap. <https://egap.org/methods-guides/10-things-know-about-reading-regression-table>

Thursday, September 19: "Mini" Exam

- No Readings

PART II: CURRENT EVENTS IN IR

Week 5, 09/23 - 09/27: Iran and Nuclear Latency

Tuesday, September 24: Nuclear Nonproliferation Strategies

- Kroenig, Matthew. 2016. "US Nuclear Weapons and Non-Proliferation: Is There a Link?" *Journal of Peace Research* 53 (2): 166-179.
- Mehta, Rupal N., and Rachel Elizabeth Whitlark. 2017. "The Benefits and Burdens of Nuclear Latency." *International Studies Quarterly* 61: 517-528. **(skim results)**

Thursday, September 26: Discussion

- Reading Set A

Week 6, 09/30 - 10/04: North Korea and Rogue Nuclear States

Tuesday, October 1: Methods for Dealing with a Rogue Nuclear Power

- Miller, Nicholas L. 2014. "The Secret Success of Nonproliferation Sanctions." *International Organization* 68: 913-944.
- Bowen, Wyn Q. 2006. "The Decision." In *Libya and Nuclear Proliferation: Stepping Back from the Brink*. New York, NY: Routledge for the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Thursday, October 3: Discussion

- Reading Set B

Week 7, 10/07 - 10/11: Venezuela and Foreign Intervention

Tuesday, October 8:

- Rice, Condoleeza. "The Promise of Democratic Peace." *Washington Post*. December 11, 2005. <https://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/57888.htm>.

- Downes, Alexander B., and Lindsey A. O'Rourke. 2016. "You Can't Always Get What You Want: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Seldom Improves Interstate Relations." *International Security* 41 (2): 43-89.

Thursday, October 10: Discussion

- Reading Set C

Week 8, 10/14 - 10/18: Migration Politics and the European Refugee Crisis

Tuesday, October 15: Immigration Attitudes and Regulation

- Hainmueller, Jens and Dominik Hangartner. 2013. "Who Gets a Swiss Passport? A Natural Experiment in Immigration Discrimination." *American Political Science Review* 107 (1): 159-187.
- Czaika, Mathias, and Mogens Holboth. 2016. "Do Restrictive Asylum and Visa Policies Increase Irregular Migration into Europe?" *European Union Politics* 17 (3): 345-365.

Thursday, October 17: Discussion

- Reading Set D

Week 9, 10/21 - 10/25: Brexit and Euroskepticism

Tuesday, October 22: Euroskepticism and Its Causes

- Taggart, Paul and Aleks Szczerbiak. 2018. "Putting Brexit into Perspective: The Effect of the Eurozone and Migration Crises and Brexit on Euroscepticism in European States." *Journal of European Public Policy* 25 (8): 1194-1214.

Thursday, October 24: Discussion

- Reading Set E
- **Op-Ed Outlines Due** (Electronic and Hard Copy)

Week 10, 10/28 - 11/01: The Rise of China

Tuesday, October 29: A "Beijing Consensus"?

- Kennedy, Scott. 2010. "The Myth of the Beijing Consensus." *Journal of Contemporary China* 19 (65): 461-477.
- Kaplan, Stephen B. 2016. "Banking Unconditionally: The Political Economy of Chinese Finance in Latin America." *Review of International Political Economy* 23 (4): 643-676.

Thursday, October 31: Discussion

- Reading Set F

Week 11, 11/04 - 11/08: Contemporary U.S. Trade Policy

Tuesday, November 5: Trade Wars – Past and Present

- Conybeare, John. 1985. "Trade Wars: A Comparative Study of Anglo-Hanse, Franco-Italian and Hawley-Smoot Conflicts." *World Politics* 38 (1): 147-172.
- Bown, Chad P. "Trump's Threat of Steel Tariffs Heralds Big Changes in Trade Policy." *Washington Post*. April 21, 2017. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/04/21/trumps-threat-of-steel-tariffs-heralds-big-changes-in-trade-policy/>.

Thursday, November 7: Discussion

- Reading Set G

Week 12, 11/11 - 11/15: The Paris Accord and the Prospects for Environmental Cooperation

Tuesday, November 12: Explaining Past (Non-)Compliance with Environmental Law

- Von Stein, Jana. 2008. "The International Law and Politics of Climate Change: Ratification of the United Nations Framework Convention and the Kyoto Protocol." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52 (2): 243-268. **(skim results)**
- Dai, Xinyuan. 2005. "Why Comply? The Domestic Constituency Mechanism." *International Organization* 59. **(Read pp. 363-366 and 374-389)**

Thursday, November 14: Discussion

- Reading Set H

Week 13, 11/18 - 11/22: Africa's Experience with International Human Rights Regimes

Tuesday, November 19: Power Politics at the ICC

- Bosco, David. 2014. *Rough Justice: The International Criminal Court in a World of Power Politics*. Oxford University Press: New York, NY. Chapters 1 & 6.

Thursday, November 21: Discussion

- Reading Set I
- **Op-Ed Papers Due** (Electronic and Hard Copy)

Week 14, 11/25 - 11/29: Fall Break

No Classes

Week 15, 12/02 - 12/06: Topics TBD [Students Pick]

Tuesday, December 3: TBD

- Readings TBA

Thursday, December 5: TBD

- Readings TBA

Week 16, 12/09 - 12/13: Course Wrap-Up

Tuesday, December 10: Discussion and Course Wrap-Up

- Readings TBA

Thursday, December 12: Final Exam

- A study guide will be distributed a week prior.