

PSCI 3143: Current Affairs in International Relations

Fall 2017

Instructor: Megan Roosevelt
Email: megan.roosevelt@colorado.edu
Location: HUMN 135
Time: MWF 1:00 – 1:50 pm

Office: Ketchum 215
Office Hours: M 2:00 – 3:00pm
Th 12:00 – 1:00pm
or by appointment

Course Overview/Objectives: The field of political science concerns itself first and foremost with the study of preferences and power. Using the scientific method we develop and test theories about the way states and individuals interact, producing a body of empirical relationships that help us understand the political world around us. A firm grasp on current affairs is critical to this exercise: it grounds our research questions to ensure their salience, it helps us formulate hypotheses, and it may help us disprove longstanding working theories, which is arguably just as crucial to the endeavor of producing “good” science. And outside of the discipline, knowledge of current affairs equips us to participate actively in society, perform our civic duties, and develop a fuller understanding of lives other than our own. This course pairs the study of robust scientific relationships on topics such as war, the global economy, and migration with case studies of current conflicts, trade agreements, etc., prompting students to assess how well the world as we see it today matches onto the general statistical trends demonstrated by data.

Required Text: None

- All assigned readings will be available online through D2L.

Grading Policy:

Attendance	10%
Participation	10%
Reaction papers	3 @ 10% apiece
Quizzes	5 (of 6) @ 5% apiece
<u>Research design</u>	25%
Total	100%

For converting final percentages into letter grades, A: 94-100, A-: 90-93, B+: 86-89, B: 83-85, B-: 80-82, C+: 77-79, C: 73-76, C-: 70-72, D+: 67-69, D: 63-66, D-: 60-62, F: <60.

Graded items and assignments:

Attendance: Students will sign next to their name on daily attendance sheets which will circulate at the beginning of each class. Attendance makes up 10 percent of the overall grade. Students are allowed four missed classes with no questions asked; beyond that, each missed day will deduct one percentage point from your attendance grade (i.e. once you miss 14 days of class, you will have an attendance grade of 0). The four free days are intended to encompass all absences, “excused” or otherwise. If you miss a day due to illness or unforeseen circumstances, feel free to drop by my office hours or talk about it if you wish, but I do not require (or want) documentation to attempt to excuse the absence.

Participation: Students will receive a participation score that counts for 10 percent of their overall grade in the class. This grade will come in part from routine engagement with colleagues and course materials during the semester, and in part from contribution to casual in-class debates. Reading assignments should be

completed before the class for which they are assigned; as an upper-division class, this course will require readings for most days, including some peer-reviewed scientific articles. While you may not understand all of the quantitative testing, you should make your best effort to understand the arguments put forth and the broader debates in which they are situated. If you need help with effective reading strategies for academic writing, please come by office hours.

Reaction papers: students will complete three short written assignments between Weeks 4 and 16, each accounting for 10 percent of their grade (30% total), demonstrating comprehension of the material covered in the week prior, and analyzing it by making connections to other topics covered, lived experience, and/or other newsworthy events. These should be *turned in in hard copy at the start of class on Mondays* and should be approximately one page, single-spaced, in Times New Roman 12pt or comparable font, with standard margins. You may space out your completion of these papers throughout Weeks 4-16 however you like, but keep in mind that students are rewarded for improvement over the course of the semester, and waiting until the final three weeks will limit the amount and quality of feedback you will receive to foster such improvement. The best papers will make connections between theories and current events that have not already been explicitly made in class.

Quizzes: There will be six short quizzes administered at my discretion throughout the semester. I will drop your lowest (or one missing) quiz score, and the remaining five will each account for five percent of your overall grade.

Research design: In lieu of a final exam, students will complete a research design – think of this as the “front half” (i.e. everything before data, testing, and analysis of results) of an academic research paper, worth 25 percent of the overall grade. This will be due both in hard copy and electronically via D2L on the last day of class, Wednesday, December 13. With guidance later in the semester, students will develop an original research question, motivated by relevance to broader debates in international relations, and propose a theory and hypotheses that could answer this question. The research design should also propose possible sources of evidence and tests for these hypotheses, but will not be graded on methodological rigor. Detailed guidelines will be available on D2L.

Late work policy: All late work will be penalized by one letter grade for every day it is late. This is mainly applicable to the research design assignment, but may apply to reaction papers as well if students fail to complete three before Week 16.

Note: This class will cover sensitive and controversial topics, including (but not limited to) refugee crises, foreign policy debates, and strategies of terrorism. We will watch documentaries that may be graphic in parts. The goal of covering such subjects is to prompt thoughtful, informed, and respectful dialogue, and as such, I encourage students to participate even when it challenges them personally. However, I cannot make you do so; feel free to talk to me if you have any concerns about the topics we will cover or the ways in which we will address them.

Class Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction

- Monday, 8/28: Syllabus day and introduction to the class
- Wednesday, 8/30: The evolution of normal science
 - Reading: Kuhn, Thomas S. 1962. *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (excerpt). University of Chicago Press.

- Friday, 9/01: ****no class – APSA annual conference****

Week 2: The Origins of International Relations

- Monday, 9/04: ****no class – Labor Day holiday****
- Wednesday, 9/06: Grand theories of IR – Realism and Liberalism
- Friday, 9/08: Grand theories of IR – Constructivism and Marxism

Week 3: A Brief Who's Who in International Politics

- Monday, 9/11: States and Intergovernmental Organizations
 - Reading: Hafner-Burton, Emilie M., Jana von Stein, and Erik Gartzke. 2009. "International Organizations Count." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52(2): 175-188.
- Wednesday 9/13: Individuals – politicians and citizens
 - Reading: Huddy, Leonie, David O. Sears, and Jack S. Levy. 2013. "Introduction: Theoretical Foundations of Political Psychology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (2nd ed). Oxford University Press.
- Friday, 9/15: Social media as a political phenomenon

Week 4: Russia

- Monday, 9/18: The Gerasimov Doctrine and Russia's military strategy
 - Reading: Connell, Mary Ellen, and Ryan Evans. "Russia's 'Ambiguous Warfare' and Implications for the US Marine Corps." *CNA*, May 2015.
- Wednesday, 9/20: Guest lecture – the US-Russia relationship in historical context
 - Reading: "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections." Declassified *Intelligence Community Assessment*, January 6, 2017.
- Friday, 9/22: A centuries-old struggle with Westernization
 - "Russian Culture Wars Take Centre Stage: An Outbreak of Competitive Cultural Toadying in Moscow." *The Economist*, August 19, 2017.

Week 5: China

- Monday, 9/25: The Great Firewall – governing the most populated country in the world
 - Reading: King, Gary, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts. 2017. "How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, Not Engaged Argument." *American Political Science Review* 111(3): 484-511.
- Wednesday, 9/27: The renminbi – currency as a political tool
 - Reading: Bergsten, C. Fred. "China is No Longer Manipulating its Currency." Petersen Institute for International Economics, published November 18, 2016.
- Friday, 9/29: Quiet investment – Chinese interests in Latin America and Africa
 - Reading: "A Golden Opportunity: China's President Ventures into Donald Trump's Backyard," *The Economist*, November 17, 2016.
 - Reading: Adisu, Kinfu, Thomas Sharkey, and Sam C. Okoroafo. 2010. "The Impact of Chinese Investment in Africa." *International Journal of Business and Management* 5(9): 3-9.

Week 6: North Korea

- Monday, 10/02: Strategies in International War and Security
 - Reading: Morgan, P. M. 1983. *Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis*. Sage Press: p. 11-26.
- Wednesday, 10/04: US-North Korean Diplomacy Since the 1950s

- Reading: Stanton, Joshua, Sung-Yoon Lee, and Bruce Klingner. “Getting Tough on North Korea: How to Hit Pyongyang Where It Hurts.” *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2017.
- Friday, 10/06: Brinkmanship between Trump and Kim Jong Un

Week 7: Islam, Islamism, and Democracy

- Monday, 10/09: Islam, Politics, and Political Islam
 - Reading: Noor, Farish A. 2003. “What is the Victory of Islam? Towards a Different Understanding of the *Ummah* and Political Success in the Contemporary World,” in Safi, Omid (ed.). *Progressive Muslims: On Gender, Justice, and Pluralism*. Oneworld.
- Wednesday, 10/11: The Arab Spring and its Aftermath
 - Reading: “Blanket Repression is the Wrong Way to Deal with Political Islamists,” *The Economist*, August 26, 2017.
- Friday, 10/13: Prospects for Democracy in the Middle East
 - Reading: Jamal, Amaney A. 2006. “Reassessing Support for Islam and Democracy in the Arab World?” *World Affairs* 169(2): 51-63.

Week 8: ISIS in North Africa and the Levant

- Monday, 10/16: What does ISIS control look like?
 - Reading: “We Feel We Are Cursed: Life under ISIS in Sirte, Libya.” *Human Rights Watch* report, May 18, 2016.
- Wednesday, 10/18: Understanding Terror Tactics
 - Reading: Kydd, Andrew H. and Barbara F. Walter. “The Strategies of Terrorism” in Shiraev, Eric B. and Vladislav M. Zubok (eds). *International Relations*. Oxford University Press.
 - Reading: Reese, Michael J., Keven G. Ruby, and Robert A. Pape. 2017. “Days of Action or Restraint? How the Islamic Calendar Impacts Violence.” *American Political Science Review* 111(3): 439-459.
- Friday, 10/20: Syria’s White Helmets

Week 9: Migration

- Monday, 10/23: Trends in migration flows & policy, and their effects
 - “Legal Migration and its Skills Dimension.” *Inform* 5, May 2010. *European Training Foundation*.
- Wednesday, 10/25: Why are people anti-immigrant?
 - Reading: Hainmueller, Jens, and Michael J. Hiscox. 2010. “Attitudes toward Highly Skilled and Low-skilled Immigration: Evidence from a Survey Experiment.” *American Political Science Review* 104(1): 61-84.
 - Hopkins, Daniel J. 2010. “Politicized Places: Explaining Where and When Immigrants Provoke Local Opposition.” *American Political Science Review* 104(1): 40-60.
- Friday, 10/27: Right-wing populism and migration politics

Week 10: Brexit and the EU

- Monday, 10/30: The good times
 - Reading: Dinan, Desmond. 2005. “Introduction,” excerpted from *Ever Closer Union: An Introduction to European Integration*. Lynne Rienner Publishers. p. 1-8.
- Wednesday, 11/01: The break-up
 - Reading: Dhingra, Swati. “Salvaging Brexit: The Right Way to Leave the EU.” *Foreign Affairs* November/December 2016.
- Friday, 11/03: What’s next?

Week 11: TPP and NAFTA

- Monday, 11/06: Cooperation in international trade
 - Reading: Whalley, John. 1998. "Why do countries seek regional trade agreements?" in Frankel, Jeffrey A. (ed.). *The Regionalization of the World Economy*. University of Chicago Press.
- Wednesday, 11/08
 - Reading: Granville, Kevin. "What is TPP? Behind the Trade Deal that Died." *The New York Times*, January 23, 2017.
- Friday, 11/10
 - Reading: "How to Improve NAFTA," *The Economist*, August 19, 2017.

Week 12: Paris accords and climate

- Monday, 11/13: Environmental policy in the United States
 - Nordhaus, Ted, and Alex Trembath. "Trump's Paris Agreement Withdrawal in Context: The Polarization of the Climate Issue Continues." *Foreign Affairs* snapshot, June 5, 2017.
- Wednesday, 11/15: Transnational networks of "green" NGOs
 - Reading: Rohrschneider, Robert, and Russell J. Dalton. 2002. "A Global Network? Transnational Cooperation among Environmental Groups." *Journal of Politics* 64(2): 510-513.
- Friday, 11/17 ******no class – IPES annual conference******

Week 13

- ******no class – Fall Break******

Week 15: Secessionist movements and tenuous statehood

- Monday, 11/27: Kurdistan
 - Reading: Ra'anan, Uri. 1990. "The Nation-State Fallacy," in Montville, Joseph V. (ed). *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies*. Lexington Books.
 - Reading: Connolly, Kevin. "Iraqi Kurdistan: State-in-the-making?" *BBC News*, October 28, 2013.
- Wednesday, 11/29: Chechnya
 - Reading: Mirovalev, Mansur. "Chechnya, Russia, and 20 Years of Conflict." *Al Jazeera*, December 11, 2014.
- Friday, 12/01: South Sudan
 - Reading: Gettleman, Jeffrey. "After Years of Struggle, South Sudan Becomes a New Nation." *The New York Times*, July 9, 2011.

Week 15: Visions of the future of international relations

- Monday, 12/04: Predictions for 21st century politics at the end of the Cold War
 - Huntington, Samuel. 1992. "The Clash of Civilizations?" in Art, Robert J., and Robert Jervis (eds). *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Ideas* (9th ed.). Prentice Hall.
- Wednesday, 12/06: Predictions for 21st century politics one decade in
 - Friedman, George. 2010. "The New Fault Lines," excerpted from *The Next 100 Years: A Forecast for the 21st Century*. Anchor.
- Friday, 12/08: Which future?

Week 16: Looking forward

- Monday, 12/11: In-class writing day
- Wednesday, 12/13: ****LDOC – research design due in class****

University Policies:

Academic Honesty: 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). Additional information regarding the Honor Code policy can be found online and at the Honor Code Office.

Disabilities: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to your professor 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 guidelines under the Quick Links at the Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

Religious Observances: Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. If applicable, please let me know in a timely manner.

Appropriate Learning Environment: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. 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.

Discrimination and Harassment: The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the OIEC, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be found at the OIEC website.