POLI 7940 Seminar in International Politics  
Spring 2011

Classroom:  210 Stubbs Hall  
Course hours:  Tuesday 1:40 to 4:30  
Office Hours:  T 9-10, TH 12:00-1:00  
and by appointment

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Course Description
This seminar provides an in-depth coverage of past and recent developments in international relations 
theory. We will examine general approaches to international relations (realism, neorealism, neoliberalism, 
critical theories) and their variants, major disciplinary debates, topics and controversies in the areas of 
conflict and cooperation, and evaluation of the scientific progress in the field. The readings include both the 
classic and recent literature with different theoretical and methodological orientations.

Reading Materials
All required readings for the course consist of selected book chapters and journal articles. If not available 
through the LSU library’s electronic journal holdings (http://www.lib.lsu.edu/epubs/ejournals.html), they 
can be accessed on the Moodle page for this course. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to download all 
materials.

Course Requirements
Final grades will be based on three components: class participation (20%), two short papers (30%), and a 
final exam (50%).

- **Class participation:** Students are expected to complete the assigned readings each week according to 
the topic covered. For this part of the grade, students will be expected to perform consistently well both 
when participating on a voluntary basis as well as when called upon to discuss the readings. Class 
participation will count for 20% of the final grade.

- **Two short papers:** Beyond regular attendance and active participation in class discussion, each student 
is expected to make two brief (10-15 minute) in-class presentations on the weekly topics, based on a 
short (approximately 6 pages double-spaced) paper to be e-mailed to me by 4 p.m. one day before the 
scheduled class for that topic. These papers and presentations should highlight the principle points of 
all the week's readings, critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the readings (and of their 
theoretical contributions), and provide guidance for future research in this area (such as identifying a 
related question that has been left unanswered or answered incompletely by the readings, or by 
proposing an extension of the week's reading to a new question or area). They should not be simple 
summaries of the readings or annotated bibliographies; suggestions on how to analytically and 
critically evaluate the readings will be detailed in an additional handout. These presentations are meant 
to help focus the class discussion on the week's topic, readings, and future directions; as a result, each 
presentation will be followed by a period of general class reaction and discussion. Each short 
paper/presentation will count for 15% of the overall course grade, for a total of 30%.
• **Final exam:** The take-home final exam is similar in format to the comprehensive exams in international relations, although it will be shorter and with an extended time of one week. It will be distributed in class on May 3 and will be due by 4 p.m. on May 10. Although both hard copy and electronic version are preferable, an electronic version is required and must reach me by e-mail by the deadline. The final exam will count toward 50% of the final grade.

**Excused Absences, Deadline Extensions, and Make-Ups**
This is a graduate-level seminar, and students are expected to attend all classes. If the student is seeking an excused absence, s/he must notify me as soon as possible after the absence, but no later than the end of the second working day after the last date of absence. If the absence occurs the same day as a scheduled presentation or other graded procedure, the student must notify me or the department by the end of the next working day after the absence in order to ensure full rights. The student is responsible for providing satisfactory documented evidence to the instructor within one week of his or her absence to substantiate the reason for the absence. Deadline extensions and make-ups will be given ONLY in documented cases of serious illness or family emergency. Otherwise, short review papers and the take-home exam will be graded F if not turned in to me by the specified deadlines. The same applies for the failure to present a short paper in class as scheduled.

**Plagiarism Statement**
“Academic Misconduct” includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give an unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without permission of the instructors, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or attempts to commit such an act. Students should be familiar with the definition of academic misconduct and the Code of Student Conduct, available at [http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs/code.htm](http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs/code.htm) If a student is found to have committed an act of academic misconduct, s/he will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs and penalized appropriately.

**Students with Disabilities Policy**
If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office of Disability Services so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your Accommodation Letters, please meet with someone in that office to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible. For additional information, check the Office of Disability Services Faculty Handbook.

**Equal Opportunity Statement**
LSU’s PS 1 assures equal opportunity for all qualified persons without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, marital status, sexual orientation, or veteran’s status in admission to, participation in, and treatment or employment in the programs and activities that the University operates. This policy statement applies equally to the teaching and learning environment within all university recognized courses, curriculum and co-curriculum programs.

**Copyright Statement**
Unless otherwise noted, the handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By “handouts,” I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, web pages, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission.
Scholarly Journals

Students should be familiar with a few leading journals in the field:

International Organization
International Studies Quarterly
Journal of Conflict Resolution

in the conflict area, additionally:

International Interactions
Journal of Peace Research
International Security
Conflict Management and Peace Science

and articles on international politics in more general journals in the discipline:

American Political Science Review
American Journal of Political Science
Journal of Politics

All these journals (and relevant articles in the leading general ones) should be perused regularly and, if unfamiliar with some of them, you should then consult and read relevant articles for the course in the recent issues as well.
COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

Week 1: January 18
COURSE INTRODUCTION

Week 2: January 25
NEOREALISM VS. NEOLIBERALISM: THE DEBAT

Weeks 3-4: February 1-8
CLASSICAL, STRUCTURAL & NEOCLASSICAL REALISM(S)

Week 5: February 15
INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT: BARGAINING APPROACHES

**Week 6: February 22**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT & DOMESTIC POLITICS**


**Week 7: March 1**

**FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS**

Readings TBA

**Week 8: March 8**

NO CLASS: MAIRD GRAS HOLIDAY

**Week 9: March 15**

NO CLASS: THE PROFESSOR IS ATTENDING THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

**Week 10: March 22**

**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**


**Week 11: March 29**

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION: BARGAINING APPROACHES**


**Week 12: April 5**

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION & DOMESTIC POLITICS**


**Week 13: April 12**

**INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY**


**Week 14: April 19**

**NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK**
Week 14: April 26

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES


Week 15: May 3

STUDENT READING SELECTIONS

Each student will select and present in class one article published in the past 2-3 years in the listed journals on p. 3 of this syllabus. The article needs to be related directly to one or more topics in this course and its selection justified on the grounds of its theoretical relevance and research contribution to the select body of literature covered in this course. I have to be notified about the article selection by April 26 at the latest.

Take-home exam will be given in class on May 3 — it is due by 4 p.m. on May 10

~Have a Good Summer~