POLI 4048: International Conflict and Cooperation  
Fall 2014

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Classroom: 220 Stubbs Hall  
Course Hours: T/TH 9:00-10:20  
Office Hours: T/TH 10:30-11:30 and by appointment

Course description
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to some of the major theoretical approaches in the systematic study of international conflict. The emphasis of this course is on theory, not current events. The semester begins with an introduction to the theoretical and methodological foundations of the international relations subfield, which includes an in-depth treatment of how to evaluate theoretical arguments. This introduction becomes the backdrop for our discussions of several relevant topics in the study of international conflict, such as the role of military power and alliances, the sources of threat credibility in deterrence and coercive bargaining, and other theories. We conclude the class with an examination of issues such as U.S. grand strategies, the problem of terrorism, the ethics of force, and peacekeeping and peacemaking. The goal is not only to familiarize you with the theoretical approaches to international conflict and cooperation, but also to develop the skills to analytically and critically approach the literature in this area.

Reading Materials
There is no required textbook for this course. The required readings are articles and book chapters that are available as PDF files available on Moodle.

Course Requirements and Grading Scheme
The final grade in this course will be based on three main components: (1) two in-class examinations, (2) Four in-class quizzes, and (3) class participation.

1. Two in-class midterm examinations (70% total; 35% each)
   • The exams will be a combination of short-answer identification/definition questions and essay questions. Each exam will be worth a total of 35% of the student’s final grade. Questions will be based on the student’s comprehension of both the assigned reading materials and the class lectures.

2. Four in-class quizzes (20%)
   • The quizzes are multiple choice and the questions will be based on the class readings and lectures. The dates of the quizzes are not announced, so if you know in advance that you will be missing a class for a university excusable reason, let me know early.

3. Class participation (10%)
   • Class participation is based on active participation in class discussions. The students are expected to come to class having read the material and able to answer questions and/or engage in informed discussion. This can only be done if you conduct yourselves in a professional manner and are tolerant of other students’ ideas, even if they directly contradict you own personal views.
The breakdown for final grades is as follows:

90-100 % = A
80-89.9% = B
70-79.9% = C
60-69.9% = D
< 60% = F

Deadline Extensions and Make-Up Exams
Deadline extensions and make-up exams will not be granted except in properly documented situations of serious illness or major family emergency. The request needs to be made in a timely manner and not later than the second day after the missed deadline or exam. Otherwise, the extension/make-up will not be granted.

Electronic Communication
I encourage students to visit me during my office hours for any questions and inquiries. If the circumstances necessitate it, you can also e-mail me on weekdays. The project assignments must also be submitted initially through e-mail. Please adhere to the following courtesy policy for this course when e-mailing me: (1) use only your LSU e-mail address; (2) do address me properly in the message and sign it with your full name; (3) keep your message brief and, when submitting the project, provide the information about the project’s topic and the files you are attaching; (4) do not forget to attach the project files and make sure to wait for my confirmation (see “Project” file on Moodle for further details). To protect the privacy of each student, please note that I do not provide any grade or similar personal information through e-mail or by phone, regardless of who is requesting it.

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 the prior 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: http://saa.lsu.edu/code-student-conduct. 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.

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.
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.
Course Schedule and Readings

PART I: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

January 16
CLASS INTRODUCTION

January 21-23
THEORY AND EVALUATING THEORY
— Read Chapter 2 (pp. 51-81).
— Read pp. 238-251.

PART II: THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

January 28-30
(NEO)REALISM AND THE BALANCE OF POWER
— Read Ch. 1: “A Realist Theory of International Politics”.

February 4
ALLIANCES AND WAR

February 6-11
POWER TRANSITION AND HEGEMONIC STABILITY
— Read Chapter 8: “The Abacus of Power”
— Read Chapter 5: “Hegemonic War and International Change”
— Read Chapter 1: “Power Transition Theory for the Twenty-First Century”
February 13-18

CRISIS BARGAINING
—Read Chapter 1: “The Diplomacy of Violence”

February 20-25

STRATEGIC BARGAINING AND DETERRENCE
—Read Chapter 1: “Introduction” and Chapter 3: “Deterrence and Conflict”
—Read Chapter 2: “The Art of Commitment”

February 27-March 11

DOMESTIC POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT
—Read Chapters 1 and 2

NOTE: NO CLASS ON MARCH 4 (HAPPY MARDI GRAS)

EXAM #1
Thursday, March 13

March 18-20

DOCUMENTARY TBA

March 25-27

NO CLASS: THE PROFESSOR IS ATTENDING THE ISA ANNUAL MEETING

April 1

GRAND STRATEGY
April 3-8

TERRORISM AND COUNTERTERRORISM

April 10-22

ETHICS AND FORCE

NOTE: NO CLASS APRIL 15-17 (HAPPY SPRING BREAK)

April 24-29

PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEBUILDING

May 1

NEW SOURCES OF CONFLICT?

FINAL EXAM
Friday, May 9
7:30-9:30 AM

~ Have a Good Summer Break ~