

SIS 601: International Relations Theory*

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Spring 2012

Office Hours: W, 2-5pm; R, 3-4.30 p.m.; or by appointment.

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Course Description and Objectives

Interdisciplinary perspectives; major paradigms of thought; definition of boundaries of the field; normative and analytic goals and definition of priorities.

Learning Objectives

- *Develop* a foundational understanding of competing schools of thought in IR.
- *Integrate* theory and practice through applying the IR theory to current events and historical cases via written work.
- *Understand* the sub fields within IR.
- *Examine* the philosophical traditions, ethical debates, and concepts of service that emerge from different schools of thought.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

- *Compare* and contrast major schools of thought in IR.
- *Explain* current events and historical cases drawing on IR theory.
- *Identify and discuss* the diverse subfields within IR.
- *Define* major historical trends in the development of the international system.

*Syllabus ©2011-12, Nathan A. Paxton. This syllabus has benefited from the syllabi of similar courses given by Profs. Steven Walt, Boaz Atzili, Henry Farrell, and Charles Glaeser.

Academic Integrity

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University's Academic Integrity Code, which can be found in the University catalog. By registering, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code, and you are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur. Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general or as they relate to particular requirements for this course. You can read the University's full Academic Integrity Code here: <http://www.american.edu/provost/registrar/regulations/reg80.cfm>

Emergency Preparedness

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (<http://www.prepared.american.edu>) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/ college-specific information.

Academic and Disability Support Services

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please don't hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

- Academic Support Center (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities. Writing support is available in the ASC Writing Lab or in the Writing Center, Battelle 228.
- Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.
- Disability Support Services (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities.

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a *timely* manner with a letter from the Academic Support Center or Disability Support Services so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

Assignments

This is a professional-school course in international relations theory. As a result, there are not a lot of assignments or make-work. You will be primarily evaluated upon your ability to apply the theories, ideas, and concepts to real-world cases.

Table 1: Assignments

Assignment	Percentage
Class Participation	20%
Midterm Paper	35%
Policy Memo	45%

Students will receive detailed information about what all these assignments will specifically comprise as we proceed through the semester.

1. **Participation** (see also “Attendance and Participation” below): This is a seminar class, rather than a lecture (although it will be a combination sometimes), and therefore the students’ active participation is crucial. The discussion will be based on the reading material, and your evaluation will be assessed on a weekly basis. You are expected to contribute substantive comments, debate the meaning, contributions, and pitfalls of the readings and the ideas behind them.
2. **Midterm paper**: This will be a take-home, time-limited assignment.
3. **Policy Case Memo**: This will be a ~10 pp. paper, and students will examine a case of international politics in light of the logic and predictions of three different theories of international relations. More details will be forthcoming in about one month.

Policies, Expectations, and Rules

Grading

No written work will be accepted for credit which you cannot verbally explain and defend in a cross-examination with the instructor, should he deem it necessary.

You will earn grades according to the criteria in Table 2.

I expect that American University students, on average, will be able to perform at roughly a B level.

Table 2: Grading Criteria

A	Superior, outstanding scholarship and intellectual achievement
B	High attainment and notable degree of scholastic performance
C	Satisfactory performance, average level of achievement. Understands the essential elements.
D	Deficient but passing. A grade of D indicates a bare minimum performance.
F	Failure to meet minimum standards.

Attendance and participation

You should attend all meetings of the course. I will assess participation based upon your in-class participation.

Students must, of course, participate in seminar each week. This requires actively contributing to our discussions, but quality is prized over quantity. Students will have to orally participate in each session to do their best, but I am more interested in excellent comments than in multiple comments. *Talking a lot is no guarantee of a high grade, but speaking not at all or infrequently will guarantee a low grade.*

While students can do very much to affect their overall participation grade, the determination of their performance level is ultimately mine.

Please note: if you need to miss class for a religious holiday observance, please simply inform me. We will work out alternative means for you to make up any assignments or material.

Computers

I highly prefer that you do not use computers during seminar, as the temptation to check one's e-mail, sports scores, IM, and so forth is often too great for even the most hearty of us.

If you wish to use a computer in class or seminar, I will require you to use the computer for *note-taking only*. Should I discover that you are using the Internet, playing games, or any other activity that is not directly related to our work in the classroom, you will lose all in-class computer privileges for the rest of the term.

Submitted Work

All final written work must and will be turned in as PDF files. I will not accept Microsoft Office, Apple iWork, OpenOffice, or any other proprietary format. Why? First, these formats are proprietary software, requiring the recipient to have the exact same software (or operating system!) as you used to prepare them; this is neither considerate nor financially feasible. In addition, these file formats have often been used by invidious people to transmit all sorts of computer maladies, and I prefer not to infect my computer with whatever infections yours may have. I will not look at work turned in using those formats and I will consider subsequent PDF files late work.

Syllabus changes

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus—whether in schedule, readings, or other details—but will make all such changes public and will provide them to students as soon as such

determination occurs.

Required Materials

You will need the following books for this course. They are widely available and you should find no barriers to accessing or purchasing them.

- Kenneth N. Waltz (2001). *Man, the State, and War*. New York: Columbia University Press
- Michael W. Doyle (1997). *Ways of war and peace: realism, liberalism, and socialism*. 1st ed. New York: Norton
- Michael E Brown (2000). *Rational choice and security studies: Stephen Walt and his critics*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press

If you have little background in International Relations theory, I highly suggest the following book to you. I will not *require* reading assignments from it, but I will most strongly suggest them to you.

John Baylis, Steve Smith, and Patricia Owens (2011). *The globalization of world politics: an introduction to international relations*. 5th ed. New York: Oxford University Press

Finally, I will assign case studies (TBD) from several sources.

Schedule of Topics, Readings and Assignments

January 19, 2012: Introduction

Readings:

- Stephen M. Walt (1998). “One world, many theories.” In: *Foreign Policy* 110, pp. 29–46
- Stephen M. Walt (2005). “The relationship between theory and policy in international relations.” In: *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 8, pp. 23–48

January 26, 2012: Alternatives to the “-isms”

Readings:

- Kenneth N. Waltz (2001). *Man, the State, and War*. New York: Columbia University Press, Chaps. 2, 4, 6 (At minimum—read the rest of the book if possible.)
- J. David Singer (1961). “The level-of-analysis problem in international relations.” In: *World Politics: A Quarterly Journal of International Relations* 14.1, pp. 77–92

February 2, 2012: Realism

Readings:

- Doyle: Part I Intro (p.41), Ch. 1–3
- Thucydides: “Introduction” (I.20–24), “The Dispute over Corcyra” (I.30–55), “The Debate at Sparta and Declaration of War” (I.66–88), “Pericles Funeral Oration” (II.34–46), “The Plague” (II.47–55), “Mytilene Debate” (III.36–50), “Melian Dialogue” (V.84–116)

February 9, 2012: Realism II

Readings:

- Robert O. Keohane, ed. (1986). *Neorealism and its critics*. New York: Columbia University Press, Chaps. 3, 4, 5
- Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik (1999). “Is anybody still a realist?” In: *International Security* 24.2, pp. 5–55. (You should also examine the response in Peter D. Feaver et al. (2000). “Brother, Can You Spare a Paradigm? (Or Was Anybody Ever a Realist?)” In: *International Security* 25.1, pp. 165–193.)

February 16, 2012: Liberalism, antecedents, and descendents

Readings:

- Doyle: Part II Intro, Ch. 7, 8
- R. Jervis (1999). “Realism, neoliberalism, and cooperation: understanding the debate.” In: *International Security* 24.1, pp. 42–63
- Robert O. Keohane (1984). *After Hegemony: Cooperation and discord in the world political economy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, Chaps. 6, 7

February 23, 2012: Constructivism

Readings:

- Alexander Wendt (1992). “Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics.” In: *International organization* 46.2, pp. 391–425
- Judith Goldstein and Robert O Keohane (1993). *Ideas and foreign policy: beliefs, institutions, and political change*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, Chap. 1
- Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink (1998). “International norm dynamics and political change.” In: *International organization* 52.4, pp. 887–917
- Richard Ned Lebow (2002). “Thucydides the Constructivist.” In: *American Political Science Review* 95.3, pp. 547–560

March 1, 2012: Rationalism and games

Readings:

- Michael E Brown (2000). *Rational choice and security studies: Stephen Walt and his critics*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press
- James D. Fearon (1995). "Rationalist explanations for war." In: *International Organization* 49.3, pp. 379–379

March 8, 2012: NO CLASS — Spring Break

You will receive your midterm assignment this week.

March 15, 2012: Domestic Politics and Psychological Theories

Readings:

- Peter Gourevitch (1978). "The second image reversed: the international sources of domestic politics." In: *International Organization* 32.4, pp. 881–912
- Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1998). *Activists beyond borders: transnational advocacy networks in international politics*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, Chap. 1
- Yuen Foong Khong (1991). "The Lessons of Korea and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965." In: *Learning in US and Soviet Foreign Policy*. Ed. by George Breslauer and Philip Tetlock. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, pp. 302–344
- James M. Goldgeier and Philip E. Tetlock (2001). "Psychology and International Relations Theory." In: *Annual Review of Political Science* 4, pp. 67–92
- Robert Jervis (1968). "Hypotheses on Misperception." In: *World Politics* 20.3, pp. 454–479

March 22, 2012: Sovereignty and the State

Readings:

- Stephen D. Krasner (1999). *Sovereignty: organized hypocrisy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, Chaps. 1, 2
- Hendrik Spruyt (1994). *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors: An Analysis of Systems Change*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, Chaps. 3, 4, 8
- Daniel Philpott (2001). *Revolutions in sovereignty: how ideas shaped modern international relations*. Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, Chaps. 4, 6 (5 recommended)

March 29, 2012: Institutions in International Politics

Readings:

- Robert O. Keohane (1988). “International institutions: two approaches.” In: *International Studies Quarterly* 32.4, pp. 379–396
- John Gerard Ruggie (1982). “International regimes, transactions, and change: embedded liberalism in the postwar economic order.” In: *International Organization* 36.2, pp. 379–415
- John J. Mearsheimer (1994). “The false promise of international institutions.” In: *International Security* 19.3, pp. 5–49
- Michael N. Barnett and Martha Finnemore (1999). “The politics, power, and pathologies of international organizations.” In: *International Organization* 53.4, pp. 699–732. DOI: [10.1162/002081899551048](https://doi.org/10.1162/002081899551048)
- Doyle: Ch. 6

April 5, 2012: No class. Religious observance

April 12, 2012: International Conflict: Religion, Alliances, Terrorism

Readings:

- Robert Jervis (1978). “Cooperation under the security dilemma.” In: *World Politics: A Quarterly Journal of International Relations* 30.2, pp. 167–214
- Stephen M. Walt (1985). “Alliance formation and the balance of world power.” In: *International Security* 9.4, pp. 3–43
- Moises Naim (2003). “The five wars of globalization.” In: *Foreign Policy* 134.1, pp. 28–36
- Robert A. Pape (2003). “The strategic logic of suicide terrorism.” In: *American Political Science Review* 97.3, pp. 343–361
- Michael C. Horowitz (2009). “Long Time Going: Religion and the Duration of Crusading.” In: *International Security* 34.2, pp. 162–193

April 19, 2012: Intrastate conflict: Ethnic and civil conflict, humanitarian relief

Readings:

- Doyle: Ch. 11
- Gary J. Bass (2008). *Freedom’s battle: the origins of humanitarian intervention*. New York: Knopf, Chaps. 2, 25–28
- David M. Edelstein (2004). “Occupational hazards: Why military occupations succeed or fail.” In: *International Security* 29.1, pp. 49–91. DOI: [10.1162/0162288041762913](https://doi.org/10.1162/0162288041762913)
- Barry Posen (1993). “The security dilemma and ethnic conflict.” In: *Survival* 35.1, pp. 27–47

- Stathis N. Kalyvas (2001). “” New” and” Old” Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?” In: *World Politics* 54.1, pp. 99–118. DOI: [10.1353/wp.2001.0022](https://doi.org/10.1353/wp.2001.0022)

April 26, 2012: Trade, Finance, Globalization

Readings:

- Robert (with the assistance of Jean M. Gilpin) Gilpin (2001). *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, Chaps. 4, 10, 15
- Robert O. Keohane (2009). “The old IPE and the new.” In: *Review of International Political Economy* 16.1, pp. 34–46. DOI: [10.1080/09692290802524059](https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290802524059)
- Benjamin J. Cohen (2007). “The transatlantic divide: Why are American and British IPE so different?” In: *Review of International Political Economy* 14.2, pp. 197–219. DOI: [10.1080/09692290701288277](https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290701288277)
- Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye Jr (2000). “Globalization: What’s new? What’s not? (And so what?)” In: *Foreign Policy* 118, pp. 104–119