Objectives of the Seminar

This course is required for students majoring or minoring in International Relations. The objectives of this course are: (1) to understand the scope and breadth of the theoretical literature that has defined the study of international relations; (2) to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the theoretical paradigms represented in that literature; (3) to define specific research questions and issues that must be addressed by future research; and (4) to prepare students for preliminary examinations in international relations.

It is impossible to provide a comprehensive review of the entire field of international relations in a single semester. The readings and discussions in this course seek to strike a balance between traditional works that define the evolution of the field and contemporary works that highlight the development of our knowledge and possible directions for future research. Some of the materials in this course rely on technical tools (such as econometrics or formal theory). You are not expected to be familiar with these tools prior to enrolling in the course. However, you will be expected to become familiar with them during the semester.

Course Requirements

Summary & Response (25%): Each week, each seminar participant will write a brief response to the set of readings assigned for the week. We will discuss the details of these responses on the first day. In short, for each reading your brief should: 1) identify the central puzzle or question the piece addresses; 2) provide a brief (1-2 sentence) summary of the argument/thesis; 3) develop 3-4 questions or critiques about each reading. These summaries should be emailed to me by 5:00 PM on the Monday prior to class.

Literature or Book Review (25% of the final grade): The readings on this syllabus can only serve as a starting point from which students will engage additional important literature. Students will therefore write a literature or book review on a topic of interest to them that relates to one of the subjects addressed by this course. A book review will generally focus intensively on one or two related books; a literature review will examine the development of a theme or problem through time and a larger number of readings. Either type of analysis should be ~5,000 words. Students should consult with me before selecting a review topic. I have listed several articles that you might consider as models for your review at the end of the syllabus. *Note: your topic must be explicitly related to international relations. Due Monday 4/18.
**Written Final Examination** (25% of the final grade): Students will take a one-day examination that will be patterned on the preliminary examinations that graduate students must pass before they may advance to the dissertation stage of the PhD program. **Due Friday 4/29 by 5:00pm.**

**Participation** (25%): Students are expected to complete the assigned readings each week. Student-led discussion of the readings will occur in each class meeting. All students should come prepared with comments regarding the assigned readings.

**Required Books**


**Week 1 (1/12): Thinking Theoretically about International Relations Research**


**Week 2 (1/19): Definitions and Core Concepts**


**Week 3 (1/26): International Relations as Social Science**

Chapter 1


Week 4 (2/2): Realist Perspectives


***Strongly Recommended:


Week 5 (2/9): Liberal Institutionalism/Neo-Liberalism (and its Limits)


***Strongly Recommended


**Week 6 (2/16): Constructivism and Feminism**


**Week 7 (2/23): Psychological Approaches to IR**


**Week 8 (3/1): The Rational Choice Perspective on International Relations**


**Spring Break (3/8)**

**Week 9 (3/15): Bargaining War**


**Week 10 (3/22): The Liberal Peace**


**Week 11 (3/29): Domestic Politics and International Relations**


**Week 12 (4/5): Civil War and Insurgency**


Lars-Erik Cederman, Nils Weidman, Kristian Gleditsch. 2011. “Horizontal Inequalities and


**Week 13 (4/12): Civil War and Insurgency (International Dimensions)**


**Week 14 (4/19): Terrorism**


Week 15 (4/26): International Mediation, Peacekeeping, and Conflict Management


Literature Review Examples


