PSC 530.01: International Relations Seminar

Karen R. Adams

University of Montana - Missoula, karen.adams@umontana.edu

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International Relations Seminar

Course Description and Objectives
This course introduces graduate students to the major literatures in international relations and provides them with theoretical, methodological, and empirical tools to evaluate and advance arguments about the contemporary international system. By the end of the semester, you will be able to participate in scholarly debates about the structure, character, and future of the international system and about the 1999 war in Kosovo, the current war in Iraq, and the ongoing war on terrorism. You will also have developed issue-specific expertise in the two main fields of international relations, security studies and international political economy.

Prerequisite
Graduate standing. Seniors with 3.0 GPAs and a strong record of upper-division coursework in international relations may be admitted with my permission.

Required Texts
The following texts are required. The first two are available for purchase at the U of M Bookstore.

Various online readings, denoted by a plus sign (+). These readings are available on the World Wide Web, via the library catalogue, or on the course's Blackboard website.
Additional readings to be disseminated by arrangement, denoted by an asterisk (*).

Course Requirements and Grading
Students must read, analyze, and synthesize all of the assigned readings before class; attend and actively participate in class (20% of course grade); write and present 4 reviews of assigned readings (40%); and write an 18-20 page research paper (40%).

The plus/minus grading system will be used. Grades may be curved, but the following distribution is the lowest I will use (i.e., if you earn 93% of all possible points you are assured of an A in the course):

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For UM’s policy on incompletes, please see p. 21 of the Course Catalog.
Academic Honesty
All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the professor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the university.

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://www.unt.edu/sa/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321.

Make-Up Policy
I will excuse absences and accept late papers only from students directly involved in extreme, documented emergencies. If you find yourself in the midst of an emergency, you must notify me as soon as possible (in advance of the seminar or due-date if possible) that you will be unable to submit the work on time. To do so, call me or send me an email explaining the circumstances of your emergency and giving me a way to contact you. I reserve the right to deny any and all petitions for make-up work, and to administer makeup assignments substantially different from the regular ones.

Note: Because I accept make-up work only in the event of extreme, documented emergencies, if you fail to submit a paper for any other reason you will receive a 0 for the assignment. This will put you at risk of failing the course.

Drop Policy
February 10 is the last day to drop this class or change the grading option without my signature on an override form. If you wish to drop or change the grading option after February 10, you must provide documentation of an emergency or other serious situation in which you are directly involved that has made it impossible for you to complete the course.

Reading and Preparing for Class
International relations is a venerable and far-reaching field composed of many literatures, each with many arguments and contributors. To provide as intensive and extensive an introduction to the field as is needed for Master’s examinations and theses, this course has a significant reading load – an average of 200-250 pages per week. This means you need to set aside at least 6-8 hours per week to prepare for the seminar. To facilitate planning, weekly reading totals are noted on the reading schedule.

Reading the assigned books and articles is necessary, but insufficient, to prepare for seminar meetings. You must also analyze and synthesize the material and reflect on the questions it has raised for you:

A. Analysis
- What is the central question or problem addressed by the author, and what is his or her answer or argument?
- What is the logic of this answer or argument? Does it make sense? Is it plausible? Into what school/s of thought does it fall?
- What evidence does the author use to support his or her argument? Does the evidence support the argument? Is it convincing? Are you aware of other evidence that would support or weaken the argument?
- What is your overall position on this argument, and why?
B. Synthesis
- What are the overarching themes developed in these readings?
- To what extent, and how, do the readings compete with or shed light on one another?
- Which of these selections do you find most and least interesting and convincing?
- How do these themes and readings speak to those in other sections of the course?

C. Reflection
- What questions (theoretical, methodological, empirical, etc.) have these readings raised for you that you would like to resolve or discuss in class?
- What insights (about theory, methodology, history, current events, etc.) have you had in reading, analyzing, and synthesizing these selections? How did you arrive at these insights? What theoretical and/or policy implications do they have? Is this something you might want to pursue in future research? If not, why not? If so, how?

Making notes on these questions and bringing them to the seminar meetings will ensure that you have something to contribute to the seminar. It will also assist you in preparing for the department’s comprehensive examination in international relations and in your future research and teaching.

Participating in the Seminar
Students are expected to attend all seminar meetings and participate in seminar discussions by contributing informed questions and comments, and responding constructively to those of others. Participation will constitute 20% of the course grade and will be graded based on regular attendance, contributions to weekly seminars, and incidental assignments (e.g., an intellectual autobiography the first week).

Writing and Presenting Reading Reviews
Students are required to write and present 4 short papers, each on one week’s reading assignment. Assignments will be made in consultation with the instructor. Together, the papers and presentations will constitute 40% of the course grade.

Papers should be analytic and synthetic, focusing on the questions elaborated in the section on Reading and Preparing for Class (especially parts B and C). They should be in essay form, with an overarching argument developed over 3-5 pages (double-spaced, with 10-12 point font) and proper footnote or endnote citations. We will follow the International Security style sheet, available at http://bcsia.ksg.harvard.edu/publications.cfm?program=ISP&pub=IS&pb_id=187&gma=14&gmi=37. Papers are due at the beginning of class on the day of the presentation. Papers that do not conform to the stipulated length and format will be marked down at least one grade.

Presentations should be clear, concise, and informative, and they should raise questions for the class as a whole to discuss, preferably in a logical, sequential order. To ensure that your presentation is polished and conversational and that it fits within 10 minutes, practice your remarks in advance.

Research Paper
Preparing, writing, and presenting an 18-20 page research paper will constitute 40% of the course grade. Early in the semester, each student will develop a research question (due 2/16) and research proposal (due 3/23) for review by the professor, who will provide comments and suggestions. Students will then write the paper and present it to the class during one of the last several seminars, which will be conducted like American Political Science Association panels (with a chairperson and discussants). Papers must have both theoretical and empirical elements and must apply one or two theories to understand a significant contemporary or historical issue or problem. Detailed assignments for both the proposal and the paper are posted on the Blackboard website.
Course Outline and Schedule

Readings marked (+) are online. Those marked (*) will be disseminated by arrangement. All other readings are either in the books by Jennifer Sterling-Folker (JSF) or the book by Art and Jervis (A&J).

To access online readings, go to the U of M library homepage (http://www.lib.umt.edu/), click on “Journals,” type in the name of the newspaper or journal, select the electronic index that contains the issue in which the article appeared, and search for the article using the title and/or author’s name.

Once you have accessed an electronic article or reserve, I recommend printing it out immediately or downloading it to a diskette or emailing it to yourself to print later. To minimize the number of pages you have to print, print two pages per page and/or double-sided (duplex).

I. Course Organization (1/26; 46+ pp.)
Due to my attendance at the American Association of Colleges and Universities conference in Washington, DC, we will not meet today. Instead, please read the following selections and, by 5:00 pm on Monday, 1/30, leave a copy of your intellectual autobiography (described below) in my mailbox in LA 350.

Jennifer Sterling-Folker in JSF, Chapter 1, pp. 1-17; Chapter 11, pp. 327-331; and Appendix, pp. 333-342 (29 pp).
+International Security Style Sheet, posted on Blackboard.
+Kosovo Information, posted on Blackboard.

In your intellectual autobiography, explain what you have studied, what you have learned, and what you would like to know about international relations. In particular, let me know which (if any) of the families of IR theory - realist, liberal, or critical – you are familiar with and tend to favor, and why. Also discuss three topics upon which you may be interested in writing your research paper, and describe your goals for graduate study and beyond. Finally, please rank the following security and international political economy topics (separately) in order of their interest to you (1 = most interested).

Security Studies
Conflict prevention and mediation
Arms control and disarmament
Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction
Human Rights
Rise of new great powers

International Political Economy
Globalization and the Future of the State
International Trade and Finance
Regional Integration
North-South Relations
Environmental Challenges and Opportunities

Your autobiography should be in essay form, with an overarching argument developed over 5-10 pages (double-spaced, with 10 or 12 point font) and proper footnote or endnote citations.
II. Idealism & Realism: Levels of Analysis; Theory & Application; Research Methods (2/2; 244 pp.)
Today we will divide up and plan the work for the semester. Come to class prepared to discuss your intellectual autobiography, current international events, and the following reading. Please also bring your calendar, as we will be setting the presentation schedule.

+Woodrow Wilson, "The World Must Be Made Safe for Democracy" (Address to Congress Asking for Declaration of War, April 2, 1917) and Woodrow Wilson, "Fourteen Points" (Address to Congress, January 8, 1918) available at the World War I Document Archive, http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/ (select year, then scroll down to dates) (9 pp).

*Kenneth N. Waltz, Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), Ch. 1 (16 pp).

III. Realism: Classical, Structural, Offensive, and Neo-Classical (2/9; 244 pp.)
Jennifer Sterling-Folker, “Realist Approaches,” in JSF, Ch. 2.1, pp. 13-17 (4 pp).
Review Morgenthau readings from last week.
IV. Classical Liberalism (2/16; 164 pp.) – Research Paper Questions due to day

Economic Liberalism (27 pp)

Political Liberalism (20 pp)

Cultural & Ideological Arguments (53 pp)

Applications (58 pp.)
+Francis Fukuyama, “The west has won: Radical Islam can’t beat democracy and capitalism, We’re still at the end of history,” Guardian (London), October 11, 2001 (2 pp).
V. Neoliberalism (2/23; 252 pp.)
International Organizations and Law (25 pp.)


Integration and Interdependence (77 pp.)


Regimes and Other Avenues of Cooperation (62 pp)


Applications (88 pp)


Sean Kay, “Neoliberalism: Institutions at War,” in JSF, Ch. 3.2, pp. 62-74 (12 pp).


Jennifer Sterling-Folker, “Game Theory Approaches,” in JSF, Ch. 4.1, pp. 93-97 (4 pp).

Stephen L. Quackenbush & Frank C. Zagare, “Game Theory: Modeling Interstate Conflict,” in JSF, Ch. 4.2, pp. 98-114 (16 pp).


VI. Marxism-Leninism, Dependency Theory, World Systems Theory, Historical Materialism (3/2; 213 pp.)

Theories (134 pages)

Jennifer Sterling-Folker, “Historical Materialism and World System Theory Approaches,” in JSF, Ch. 7.1, pp. 199-208 (9 pp).


Applications (79 pp.)


VII. Constructivism, Postmodernism, and Critical Theory (3/9; 218 pp.)
Constructivism (76 pp)
Jennifer Sterling-Folker, “Constructivist Approaches,” in JSF, Ch. 5.1, pp.115-122 (7 pp).
Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics,”
*Alexander Wendt, "Why a World State is Inevitable: Teleology and the Logic of Anarchy,"
Matthew J. Hoffman, “Social (De)Construction: The Failure of a Multinational State,” in JSF, Ch. 5.2,
+Daniel McCarthy, “Images of Terror: What We Can and Can’t Know about Terrorism, by Philip Jenkins,”

Postmodernism and Critical Theory (142 pp.)
Jennifer Sterling-Folker, “Postmodernism and Critical Theory Approaches,” in JSF, Ch. 6.1, pp. 157-167
(10 pp).
Zalewski, eds., International Theory: Positivism & Beyond (Cambridge: Cambridge University
*David Campbell, Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity, revised ed.
168-181 (13 pp).
182-197 (15 pp).
(11pp).

VIII. Feminism, Biopolitics, and the English School (3/16; 221 pp.)
Feminism (130 pp.)
+Sandra Whitworth, “Feminist Theories: From Women to Gender and World Politics,” in Peter R.
Beckman and Francine D’Amico, eds., Women, Gender, and World Politics: Perspectives,
+Marysia Zalewski, “Old Wine in New Bottles?” (review of Charlotte Hooper, Manly States:
Masculinities, International Relations, and Gender Politics), International Studies Review 4:1
(Spring 2002), pp. 161-165, available through Academic Search Premier (note: in ASP, one
document called “reviews” contains all of the reviews in this issue of the journal) (4 pp.).
*Cynthia Enloe, “Margins, silences and bottom rungs: how to overcome the underestimation of power in
the study of international relations,” in Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski, eds.,
International Theory: Positivism & Beyond (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996),
*Christine Sylvester, “The contributions of feminist theory to international relations,” in Steve Smith,
Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski, eds., International Theory: Positivism & Beyond (Cambridge:

Biopolitics (17 pp.)
Vincent S.E. Falger and Johan M.G. van der Dennen, “Biopolitics: Evolutionary History and Modern Conflict,” in JSF, Ch. 9.2, pp. 288-301 (13 pp.)

The English School (74 pp.)

**Paper Proposals Due (3/23)**

The schedule for the remainder of semester will be as follows. Readings will be announced as soon as possible, based on student interests and research papers.

X. Security Issues (4/6)

XI. International Political Economy (IPE) Issues (4/13)

XII. First draft of research paper due; first set of research paper presentations (4/20)

XIII. Second set of research paper presentations (4/27)

XIV. Revised research paper due (5/4)

Note for students in the PSC Masters’ program: The Comprehensive Exam in International Relations will be a take-home exam. It will be handed out on Thursday, May 4 and is due in my mailbox by 3:00 pm on Thursday, May 11.