This course introduces theories of international politics and seeks to use them to understand patterns of conflict and cooperation, the rise of the postwar liberal international order, and broad trends in interdependence and globalization. This is a “problem oriented” course, looking to theoretical literatures in the field to help illuminate global challenges. In the second half of the course, specific policy issues will be explored, including topics such as the challenge of rogue states, the international consequences of the Euro crisis, the Arab Spring and democracy promotion, the rise of China, and the reform of global institutions.

All students will be expected to participate actively in class discussions. Each student will write a discussion paper, circulated to the class before one of the sessions in the first six weeks of the course. In the second half of the term, each student will be part of a project team that prepares a brief report (not more than 1500 words) analyzing a major policy issue and discussing the relevance of international relations theory and history to it. The report will be circulated in advance. Well in advance of the class, the project team will research the issue they are studying and, in consultation with the professor, assign 50-75 pages on it. There will be a final examination.

Course Assignments and Grading

Short Paper: 20 percent
Group presentation (written and oral): 20 percent
Class participation apart from the paper and presentation: 20 percent
Final examination: 40 percent
Articles will be available on Blackboard. The following books will be used extensively and are available for purchase in the bookstore:


Part I: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND HISTORICAL CASES

Week One: Critical Problems and Theoretical Debates: Can the World Be Governed?


Charles Kupchan, Chapter 5 (“Alternatives to the Western Way”) in No One’s World: The West, the Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn (Oxford, 2012).

Debate: The Return of Revisionist Great Powers?


Week Two: Realism: Anarchy, Balance of Power, and Use of Force

Kenneth Waltz, “The Anarchic Structure of World Politics,” Art and Jervis


Debate: The West, Russia, and the Ukraine Crisis: Who is At Fault?


Week Three: Liberalism: Democracy, Economic Interdependence, and Institutions

Michael Doyle, “Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs,” Art and Jervis.


Stanley Hoffmann, “The Uses and Limits of International Law,” Art and Jervis.

Supplemental:


Debate:  Are Democracies Really More Peaceful?


Week Four:  Power, Institutions, and International Order

Ikenberry, *After Victory*, chapters 1-3, 5-7 (pp. 3-79; 163-256).


Debate:  How Does the Obama Administration Think about Institutions and Order?


Week Five: Information, Misperception, and Miscalculation


Steve Van Evera, “Why States Believe Foolish Things,” manuscript.


Debate: What Went Wrong? Explaining the Intelligence Failure in Iraq


Week Six: Foundations of International Political Economy


Debate: Responses to the 2008 Financial Crisis: Did the System Work?


[suggested readings for policy teams announced]

Part II: GLOBAL CHANGE AND POLICY DEBATES

Week Seven: Rising Non-Western States and Reform of Global Order


[plus readings from project group]
Week Eight: Transnational Actors and Networks

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, “Transnational Activist Networks,” Art and Jervis.

Phil Williams, “Transnational Organized Crime and the State,” Art and Jervis.

Josh Busby, Moral Movements and Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), Chapter One.


[plus readings from project group]

Week Nine: Dealing with Rogue States


Chapter 3, pp. 87-127: developing strategies to change or engage outlier regimes; Iraq and Libya case studies.

Chapter 4, pp. 138-75: North Korea and Iran.

[plus readings from project group]

Week Ten: Climate Change and the Challenge of Global Cooperation


[plus readings from project group]

Week Eleven: Coping with the Rise of China


[plus readings from project group]

Week Twelve: The Shape of the Future

The National Intelligence Council, “Individual Empowerment and Demographic Patterns,” Art and Jervis.


Alan Dupont, “The Strategic Implications of Climate Change,” Art and Jervis.


[plus readings from project group]