Course: International Relations (Pols 351/Inst 342)  
Credits: 3 credits  
Instructor: Dr Bernard Gbikpi, PhD (gbikpi@gonzaga.edu)

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment  
SCHEDULE: Monday 3:35 – 6:30 pm

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course introduces the students to the academic discipline of International Relations through its main traditions that are realism, liberalism, the English School, the International Political Economy, each of which focusing on one specific social value states are expected to foster and uphold that are security, freedom, order and justice, and welfare; more recent theories are studied too such as social constructivism and other post-positivist theories like post-colonialism and feminism. Further, the course also introduces to the study of international practices such as foreign policy.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
The aim of this course is to develop the students’ capacity to think international relations critically by providing them with a basic knowledge of the main theories and practices in that field.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
By the end of the course the students should understand the main IR theories and the values implicit in each of these different ways of looking at the world. They also should be able to relate them to concrete current international issues, and to read, understand, and analyze articles of varying complexity on international events and processes.

TEACHING METHOD
Sessions consist in two parts. The first part consists in the presentation by students of their answers to questions about the preceding lecture and of the newspaper articles they have found that illustrate the issues debated from a theoretical point of view. All the students are required to hand their answers and article. The second part of the session is a lecture part that is based on Power point presentations of the textbook chapters and on watching and discussing interviews of IR scholar from sources available online such as Conversations with History.

TEACHING COMMITMENT
I aim for successful interactive discussion in class on the basis of everybody’s actual knowledge of the reading of the same material and answering to the same questions, on the one hand, and on the finding of articles of students’ personal interest. In my experience, this is an efficient and most of the time successful pedagogical tool to learn about a discipline, namely that of political science, its methods, its concepts, and about International Relations in particular. Not the least, when successful, each class becomes an agreeable time and nice record for everybody.

DECORUM
Cell-phones, e-mail boxes, and web browsers are off.

ATTENDANCE POLICY
Students are presumed to have sufficient maturity to recognize their responsibility for regular class attendance. Gonzaga University’s standard policy on absences stipulates that the maximum allowable absence is two class hours (100 minutes) for each class credit. My course being a three credit course and being scheduled to meet for 3 hours each class the maximum allowable absence is two classes in the semester. The grade given for exceeding absences is a “V”, which has the same effect as “F” (Fail) and is counted in the GPA. This outcome can be appealed to the Dean. Please, I need you to give me the precise reason for any of these two absences. For any absence that is not due to illness or extraordinary event the participation grade for the missed class will be 0.

**Course Grading**
Weekly questions and article finding count for 25% of the total grade.
Oral participation counts for 25% of the total grade.
The mid-term exam and the final exam contribute each to 25% of the total grade. Each consists in two parts: a take-home review paper and an essay in class.

**Steadiness in your involvement in all aspects of the course and all over the semester is the only A strategy.**

**The Weekly Questions**
All students are required to hand every week their answers to questions about the preceding lecture and an outline of a newspaper article they have found likely to illustrate the issues discussed in the lecture. There is no required length for the outline as it depends on the article that was found; it is important is that they explain its relevance respect to the topic and issues of the lecture. Answers and outlines are due at the beginning of the class.

**Mid-term and Final Exam**
They consist in two parts. The first is a take-home review paper of an assigned journal article on International Relations. The second part is an in-class essay that elaborates upon the argument provided in that reviewed assigned journal article.

**The Review Paper**
The review paper is a thoughtful account of a reading that students have been assigned. The point of the review is to analytically restate the argument(s) and the contents of the reading, to discuss it, and to propose a research question and bibliographical sources for addressing it. The review paper should have the following structure:

1) The **complete bibliographical reference** of the piece that is reviewed: author(s), year of publication, title of the article, *name of the journal*, volume number, issue number, page numbers, and the author(s)’s professional position.

2) The **issue and main argument(s)**: a. What is the issue discussed in the writing? b. A restatement of the argument in a few sentences. Or what is the author trying to convince us of?

3) How does the author lead the argument? or What the **demonstration** consists in? a. A description in one paragraph of the structure of the article; (the article includes *n* sections: an introduction (pp.); section 1 entitled (pp.); section 2 entitled (pp.); etc… b. A restatement of the contents of the article section by section. If the article contains no explicit sections, the student’s own identification of sections in the article. The scope of this exercise is to follow and restate the author’s reasoning step by step.

4) We aim to make an **assessment** of the argument in two parts in terms of its **strengths** and **weaknesses**. Indicative questions toward such assessment are: Does the argument convince us? Is only part of it convincing? Why? Is it cogent/logical? Do we think it helps us understanding something fundamental about the issue at stake? Is there any particular assumption that is important for the argument that we think should be strengthened? Are the empirical facts reported by the author relevant, accurate? Are they any alternative or counter-arguments mentioned by the author her/himself? Does the author use particular words or concepts that are particularly important
for his/her argument/demonstration? What does s/he mean by these words or concepts? Is s/he consistent in her/his use of them?

5) Further research: we want to write down a research question that we are genuinely curious about. A research question should reflect an underlying tension and should force to weigh evidence and compare different opinions. It should include a thesis that is the kind of argument the student hopes to make. At least two sources that are likely to address your question should be reported (with precise bibliographical references) and explained. Such sources must, preferably, be found among those reported by the article under review for this is one main sign that the research question copes with the author’s argument.

NB: Specific questions for writing the assessment and/or the research question may also be assigned by the instructor.

A template of a review paper is available for you on Blackboard.

Review paper grading

Full point (FP): the work well addresses each point of the review.

¾ of the point (3/4 pt): some point of the review is addressed wrongly, superficially or not at all.

Half point (HP): many points of the review are addressed wrongly, superficially or not at all.

¼ of the point (1/4 pt): there are more points of the review addressed wrongly, superficially or not at all than points that are well addressed.

0 point: The work was not done

The Essay

The essay should be structured like the review paper but with your argument, that is: a title of yours; the issue and argument of your essay; an outline of it; the unfolding of your argument along entitled sections; a conclusion that reassesses your point and that provides bibliographical clues for further reflection. It should include a bibliography.

NB: A specific questions for writing your essay may also be assigned by the instructor.

Essay grading

The essay will be evaluated along the clarity of its argument, the clarity of its structure, the consistency of its follow-up, its engagement with the literature of the field, and the perspectives it opens for further reflection.

Oral Participation

Oral participation consists in participating to the discussion. It basically consists in “voicing” your answers to the questions asked and to present the newspaper article you have found.

Participation grading

The point on participation (FP) is granted if you have expressed your opinion on any point of the argument (HP) and engaged somebody else’s argument (HP).

Final Grades Conversion

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<th>GPA</th>
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<tr>
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Exceeding absences V Failing 0.0
ACADEMIC HONESTY
Academic honesty is essential to education and represents the bond of trust between the university, the instructor and the student. Academic dishonesty is any action by which a student seeks to claim credit for the intellectual effort of another person or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic exercise. It includes unauthorized assistance in tests and examinations; intentionally impeding or damaging the academic work of others; submitting another person’s work as your own, or providing work for this purpose; submitting work of your own that has been substantially edited and revised by another person, or providing such an editing and revision service for others; submitting material from a source (books, articles, internet sites) without proper citation and bibliographic reference; paraphrasing material from a source without appropriate reference and citation; submitting substantially the same piece of work in more than one course without the explicit consent of all the instructors concerned; assisting other students in any of the above acts; plagiarism, defined as claiming intellectual property on somebody else's work, in other words as cultural theft. Written assignments will be submitted to the plagiarism detection procedures of TurnItIn.com., activated on Blackboard. Students who are academically dishonest will receive “0”, zero on the work in question or a failing grade for the course as a whole, depending on the importance of the work to the overall course grade and the judgment of the instructor. A plagiarized assignment/paper, research project, etc will be graded 0 (zero) and sent to the Main Campus accompanied by a report.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES
Documented learning disabilities or other medically certified problems that need special accommodation for any of the student's expected academic performances will be treated with the due attention.

TEXTBOOKS
- Robert Jackson and Georg Sorensen, 2013 (5th ed.), Introduction to International Relations. Theories and Approaches, Oxford, OUP (online research centre) (this is our required textbook).
- John Baylis, Steve Smith, and Patricia Owens, eds., 2011 (5th ed.), The Globalization of World Politics. An Introduction to International Relations, Oxford, OUP, (online research Centre)
- Andrew Heywood, 2011, Global Politics, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan


JOURNALS: International Studies Quarterly; Review of International Studies; International Relations; Millenium; Security Studies; Perspectives on Politics; Foreign Affairs; Foreign Policy; International Studies Perspectives;British Journal of Politics & International Relations

ONLINE ACADEMIC IR RESOURCES
Conversations with History at http://conversations.berkeley.edu/
Theory Talks at http://www.theory-talks.org/

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATABASES
Academic Search Complete - JSTOR

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COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

Monday 21 September 2015
➤ Introduction
   Why Study International Relations

Monday 28 September 2015
➤ Students’ presentation of their answers and newspaper article
   o Possible questions (from the textbook): What did the political change from medieval to modern basically involve? What were the driving forces behind Western imperial expansion? What were the driving forces behind decolonization and the emergence of new states in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East? What is the distinction between juridical statehood and empirical statehood? How important is it? In the future relationship between globalization and state sovereignty do you expect one side to prevail over the other side, or do you expect the relationship of mutual adjustment to continue at least for the foreseeable future? Explain.
   o Find a newspaper article that illustrates one of your answers.

➤ Lecture
   IR as an Academic Subject and The Debates between Theories

Monday 05 October 2015
➤ Students’ presentation of their answers and newspaper article
   o Possible questions (from the textbook): Three sources of IR thinking are listed in box 2.1. Discuss their relative importance. What matters most to your own thinking? Why do scholars have pet theories? What are your own theoretical preferences? Think of ways of evaluating a theory: which criteria are the most important?
   o Find a newspaper article that illustrates one of your answers.

➤ Lecture
   Realism

Monday 12 October 2015
➤ Students’ presentation of their answers and newspaper article
   o Possible questions (from the textbook): Why do realist theorists doubt and even deny that progressive change is possible in international relations? Are they right or wrong? How important is security in world politics? Explain the core argument of one of the following classical realists: Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes. What are the most important similarities and differences between Morgenthau's neoclassical realism and Waltz's structural realism? What is the emancipatory critique of realism? How plausible is it?
   o Find a newspaper article that illustrates one of your answers.

➤ Lecture
   Liberalism

Monday 19 October 2015
➤ Students’ presentation of their answers and newspaper article
   o Possible questions (from the textbook): Has international history been as progressive as liberals claim? More intense relations across borders between people lead to mutual understanding and cooperation - so the sociological
lifers claim. Can they also lead to conflict? If yes, does that invalidate the ideas of sociological liberals? Interdependence liberals claim that there is more focus on 'low politics' of economic and social affairs today, than on 'high politics' of security and survival. Is that a valid claim? Identify the tensions in the liberal view of world order. How can these tensions be mastered?

- Find a newspaper article that illustrates one of your answers.

Lecture

The English School

Monday 26 October 2015

- Students’ presentation
- of their answers and newspaper article

- Possible questions (from the textbook): How far do modern international organizations, such as the United Nations, reveal the validity of the international society approach to IR? What is the difference between order and justice in world politics? If you were obliged to choose between order and justice in international relations, which value would you choose? State the reasons for your choice. International Society theorists are sometimes accused of being realists in disguise. Is that accusation warranted? What are the most important responsibilities that state leaders in international society must take into consideration when deciding their course of action? How far does the answer depend on one's approach: i.e. whether the approach is realist or rationalist or revolutionist?

- Find a newspaper article that illustrates one of your answers.

Lecture

International Political Economy: Classical Theories

Monday 02 November 2015

- Mid-Term Exam

- TBA a journal article to be reviewed and to be the base for the essay question

Monday 09 November 2015

- Students’ presentation of their answers and newspaper article

- Possible questions (from the textbook): What is IPE and why is it important? What should be the role of the state according to economic liberalism? Is Ricardo's theory of comparative advantage confirmed when looking at today's international trade? Are the advanced industrialized countries characterized by class struggle as the Marxist view assumes? Economic liberals argue that economic exchange is a positive-sum game. In the Marxist approach the economy is a site of exploitation and inequality. Who is right? Will the capitalist world-economy always be a hierarchy as Wallerstein says?

- Find a newspaper article that illustrates one of your answers.

Lecture

International Political Economy: Contemporary Debates

Monday 16 November 2015

- Students’ presentation of their answers and newspaper article

- Possible questions (from the textbook): Should we support the claim that a hegemon is needed in order to create a liberal world economy? What is 'soft power' and which countries have it? Define the development problem in the
Third World and discuss how it should be analyzed: which theory is most helpful?
  o Find a newspaper article that illustrates one of your answers.

➤ Lecture

Constructivism

Monday 23 November 2015

➤ Students’ presentation of their answers and newspaper article
  o Possible questions (from the textbook): Different ‘cultures of anarchy’ are set forth in box 8.6. Discuss the appropriate place of the current international system in the table. ‘Anarchy need not lead to self-help’ according to constructivists; explain whether or not you agree. International norms will always be set aside by strong states if their interests dictate it says Stephen Krasner. Is he right? How serious is this problem for constructivist analysis?
  o Find a newspaper article that illustrates one of your answers.

➤ Lecture

Post-positivism in IR: feminism, post-structuralism, and post-colonialism

Monday 30 November 2015

➤ Students’ presentation of their answers and newspaper article
  o Possible questions (from the textbook): Identify the post-positivist view of knowledge and power as spelled out by Steve Smith. Do you support his view? Why or why not? How do discourse and identity influence international relations according to post-colonialists? Discuss the contributions of Feminist IR to the discipline. Are conventional approaches biased by gendered thinking?
  o Find a newspaper article that illustrates one of your answers.

➤ Lecture

Foreign Policy

Monday 07 December 2015

➤ Students’ presentation of their answers and newspaper article
  o Possible questions (from the textbook): Which level of foreign policy analysis makes the more sense: the systemic level, the level of the nation-state, or the level of the individual decision-maker? Why? Should foreign policy be confined to foreign ministries or state departments (as realists and International Society scholars argue) or should it extend to groups in society as well (as liberals argue)? Can theories of foreign policymaking be applied in making foreign policy decisions or can they only be used to explain those decisions after they have been made?
  o Find a newspaper article that illustrates one of your answers.

➤ General overview

Monday 14 December 2015

➤ Final exam
  o TBA a journal article to be reviewed and to be the base for the essay question

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