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 International Relations’ main traditions that are realism, liberalism, the English School, the International Political Economy, and to more recent theories such as social constructivism, post-colonialism and feminism.

Course Objectives
The aim of this course is to foster and develop the students’ capacity to approach and analyze international relations with theoretical and critical tools.

Learning Objectives
By the end of the course the students will be able to apply the main IR theories in order to create their own interpretation and analysis of concrete international relations issues. Conversely, they will be able to identify the underlying rationale of various foreign policies in terms of theoretical traditions and in terms of attachment to empirical social values such as states’ sovereignty, security, freedom, order and justice, and welfare. They will also be able to restate, explain and evaluate scholarly arguments developed in international relations academic journal and reviews.

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 paper they have found that illustrate the issues debated from a theoretical point of view. The second part of the session is a lecture 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 and e-mail boxes are off; however, web browsers may remain switched on to the extent that they may serve the class’ learning purposes.

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 paper they have found likely to illustrate the issues discussed in the lecture. Such papers can essentially be searched through the textbook online resource centre: [http://global.oup.com/uk/orc/politics/intro/jackson_sorensen5e/](http://global.oup.com/uk/orc/politics/intro/jackson_sorensen5e/)

There is no required length for the outline as it depends on the paper that was found; it is important is that students can restate the paper’s main argument and can 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 that is how the argument is articulated? The answer includes a) a description in one paragraph of the structure of the article (the article includes n sections: an introduction (pp.); a section 1 entitled … (pp.); a section 2 entitled … (pp.); etc…); b) a restatement of each section’s contents and argument. If the article contains no explicit divisions, the students need to provide their own organization of the article into sections with titles. 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 between different opinions and should force to weigh evidence and comparison of those opinions. It should include a thesis that is the kind of argument the student hopes to make. At least two bibliographical sources that are likely to address your question should be reported (with precise 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 will be made 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 its articulation; 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** of the sources that you have used.

**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 that were asked and to present the newspaper article you have found.

**Participation grading**

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

**FINAL GRADES CONVERSION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92.5 – 100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>90.0 - 92.4</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87.5 – 89.9</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82.5 – 87.4</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.0 – 82.4</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75.5 – 79.9</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.5 – 77.4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.0 – 72.4</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.5 – 69.9</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>Poor 1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.0 – 67.4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.00 – 59.9</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failing 0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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; Millennium; Security Studies; Perspectives on Politics; Foreign Affairs; Foreign Policy; International Studies Perspectives;British Journal of Politics & International Relations

ONLINE ACADEMIC IR RESOURCES
http://global.oup.com/uk/orc/politics/intro/jackson_sorensen5e/
Conversations with History at http://conversations.berkeley.edu/
Theory Talks at http://www.theory-talks.org/

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATABASES
Academic Search Complete - JSTOR
COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

Monday 19 September 2016
   ➢ Introduction
      Why Study International Relations

Monday 26 September 2016
   ➢ Students’ presentation of their answers to the possible following questions (indicative)
     o We expect states to sustain a number of core values: security, freedom, order, justice, and welfare. Do states meet our expectations? What are the effects on developing countries of integration into the global economy? Should we strive to preserve the system of sovereign states? Why or why not? Explain the main differences between strong, substantial states and weak quasi-states; great powers and small powers. Why is there such diversity in the state system?

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

Monday 03 October 2016
   ➢ Students’ presentation of their answers to the possible following questions (indicative)
     o Which are the established theoretical traditions in IR? How can they be seen as established? Seen over the long term, realism is the dominant theoretical tradition in IR. Why? Why do scholars have pet theories? What are your own theoretical preferences?

   ➢ Lecture
      Realism

Monday 10 October 2016
   ➢ Students’ presentation of their answers to the possible following questions (indicative)
     o What are the reasons for realist theorists’ pessimism about human progress and cooperation beyond the boundaries of the nation-state? Outline the main arguments for or against NATO expansion. State your own position including supporting arguments. Does the concept of a soft balance of power make sense? What is the emancipatory critique of realism? Does it make sense?

   ➢ Lecture
      Liberalism

Monday 17 October 2016
   ➢ Students’ presentation of their answers to the possible following questions (indicative)
     o Has international history been as progressive as liberals claim? Use examples. What arguments can you make, for and against, the assertion that democracy has made striking progress in the world during the past decade? Realists argue that anarchy cannot be transcended. Strong liberals say it can. Who is right and for which reasons? Identify the tensions in the liberal view of world order. How can these tensions be mastered?

   ➢ Lecture
      The English School

Monday 24 October 2016
   ➢ Students’ presentation of their answers to the possible following questions (indicative)
Is there a more basic structure of international relations that underpins both the system of states and the society of states as some international society scholars argue? 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? Explain the main differences between pluralist international society and solidarist international society. International Society theorists are sometimes accused of being realists in disguise. Is that accusation warranted?

- Lecture
  *International Political Economy: Classical Theories*

**Monday 31 October 2016**
- Mid-Term Exam
  - TBA a journal article to be reviewed and to be the base for the essay question

**Monday 07 November 2016**
- Students’ presentation of their answers to the possible following questions (indicative)
  - What is IPE and why is it important? Give the core arguments made by the three main theories of IPE: mercantilism, economic liberalism, and Marxism. Which theory, if any, is the best one? Why? 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 correct?

- Lecture
  *International Political Economy: Contemporary Debates*

**Monday 14 November 2016**
- Students’ presentation of their answers to the possible following questions (indicative)
  - 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? What is economic globalization? What are the benefits and drawbacks of economic globalization? What are the implications for sovereign statehood?

- Lecture
  *Constructivism*

**Monday 28 November 2016**
- Students’ presentation of their answers to the possible following questions (indicative)
  - Social constructivists argue in favour of an ideational view and against a materialist view of the world. They claim that the international system is constituted by ideas, not by material forces. Explain the distinction and discuss whether it is valid. Alexander Wendt says that ‘if the United States and the Soviet Union decide they are no longer enemies, “the Cold War is over”’. Do you agree? Why or why not?

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

**Monday 05 December 2016**
- Students’ presentation of their answers to the possible following questions (indicative)
Identify the major post-positivist approaches. Outline the substantial contributions that post-positivist analyses make to the study of IR. There can be no “objective” observation says Steve Smith. Discuss. What is the relationship between knowledge and power, according to post-positivists? Is the discipline of IR dissolving into different camps that have little to say to each other?

- General overview

**Monday 12 December 2016**

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

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