

PSC 230: Introduction to International Relations

Spring 2023

Instructor: Dr. Sarwari

Classroom: Caudell Hall 222

Class Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 12:00-12:50 p.m.

Mode: Hybrid

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00-3:00 p.m. and by appointment

Office: 224 Cassety Hall

Contact: sarwarm@buffalostate.edu

Course Description and Objectives

This course introduces key theoretical arguments and concepts to the study of the International Politics. This is not a history course but rather, historical events will be analyzed using international relations theories. The primary objective will be to discuss and explain why political phenomena occurs, including conflict and cooperation using major theoretical approaches to the study of international relations (i.e., realism, liberalism, and neoliberalism).

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Understand and apply key concepts and major theories to the study of international relations orally and in writing
2. Evaluate existing schools of thought on international relations and discuss their strengths and weaknesses
3. Understand major empirical contributions and shortcomings in international relations research
4. Develop consistent and coherent written and oral arguments about political phenomena
5. Demonstrate an improvement in applying social scientific reasoning

Required Readings

For this course, readings are available online and/or posted on Blackboard. **You are expected to read the assigned readings listed before attending class.**

Course Requirements

I. Discussion Leader 20% (reading summary 10%; in-class discussion/lecture 10%): Every student will serve as a discussion leader once during the semester. Student run discussions will usually take place on Mondays (3-4 discussants per session). For the class session you are scheduled to serve as a discussion leader, you are expected to: 1) write a **1-2 page summary** of the readings assigned for that day and prepare **two (2) original discussion questions** based on the readings and 2) **lead a 10-15 minute discussion/lecture** on the readings. While this is not a group assignment, you may collaborate with the other student discussants scheduled for your particular

session to prepare discussion notes and reading summaries. Reading summaries are due at the start of your discussion session. You are required to submit an electronic copy via Blackboard the day that they are due. Late submissions will not be accepted. **If you fail to attend class the day you are scheduled to serve as a discussion leader, you will not be allowed to reschedule unless proper documentation is provided (medical documentation, military duty, etc...).**

II. Quizzes 25% (total of 5 quizzes; each quiz is worth 5% of your overall course grade). The quizzes will be multiple-choice in format (20-25 questions focusing on material from class lectures and assigned readings) and will be available on Blackboard from 9:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. on the dates listed in the course plan. You will have 50 minutes to complete each quiz. **The quizzes are non-cumulative. No make-up quizzes unless proper documentation is provided (medical documentation, military duty, etc...).** The last quiz will take place during CEP week (like the others, this quiz will be non-cumulative).

III. Documentary/Movie Reactions 20% (each documentary reaction paper is worth 5% of your overall course grade) I have assigned **four (4) movies/documentaries** to watch during the semester. You are required to watch each movie/documentary on the date that is listed in the syllabus. In addition to watching the documentaries, you must write a 1-2 page reaction for each one (12 point font, double spaced, 1 inch margins). In your reaction papers, 1) write a **brief summary (4-5 sentences)** of what the documentary/movie is about 2) discuss what you found interesting/surprising while watching it 3) relate content from the video to course reading material and your own personal thoughts and experiences. **Please do not submit a movie review that you found online as your reaction paper** (or I will throw virtual paper planes at you...or virtual water balloons...a virtual something). **Due dates for the reaction papers are listed in the syllabus. You are required to submit an electronic copy of your reaction paper via Blackboard the day that they are due. Late submissions will not be accepted.**

IV. European Union (EU) Simulation and Position Paper 15% (simulation participation 10%; position paper 5%): The class will engage in a 6-day European Union simulation during weeks 7 and 8 on an issue that is currently being discussed by the organization. Each student will serve as a delegate of an EU member state of their choice. EU country preferences must be submitted by week 5. During the first day of the simulation, each delegate will present their country's position on the assigned issue. **On days 2, 3, 4, and 5** delegates will continue to engage in debates and attempt to draft a resolution to address the issue at hand. **On day 6**, individual working groups will present their resolutions to the class. In addition to participating in the simulations, each student will hand in a **3-5 page draft resolution** on the issue at hand that is consistent with the policy positions held by their respective country. **Late submissions will not be accepted.** Draft resolutions should be uploaded via Blackboard's Turn It In no later than **2:00 p.m. on Monday, March 13th**. Further information on this assignment will be discussed in class and available on Blackboard. To help you become familiar with the EU and its workings, please see the following resources:

- Official EU website: https://european-union.europa.eu/index_en
- History of the EU: https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/history-eu_en

- EU member state profiles: https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/country-profiles_en
- EU Voting Records: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/votes.html?tab=votes>
- European Parliament Multimedia Centre: <https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en>
- Readings:
 - Buonanno, Laurie & Neill Nugent. Policies and Policy Processes of the European Union. 2nd ed. Macmillan international.
 - McCormick, John (2020) Understanding the European Union: A Concise Introduction. 8th ed. Bloomsbury.
 - Axel Marx & Oliver Westerwinter (2022) An ever more entangled Union? The European Union's interactions with global governance institutions, Journal of European Integration, 44:5, 597-615, DOI: [10.1080/07036337.2022.2080819](https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2022.2080819)
- News sources:
 - <https://euobserver.com/>
 - <https://www.euronews.com/>
 - <https://www.euractiv.com/>

V. Research Project 20% Each student will work on a research project on an international politics issue of their choice. Example topics include: the Ukraine crisis, NATO intervention in Libya, Eritrea-Ethiopia relations, the Iran nuclear deal, terrorism in Nigeria, the strengths and weaknesses of international climate agreements, the U.S.' withdrawal from Afghanistan, United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), or the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar. **In the presentation, you are expected to discuss 1) a brief history of the issue, 2) the main actors involved and impacted by this issue (i.e., countries, non-state actors, international organizations, individual policymakers), 3) what contributing factors led to the emergence of this issue 4) which IR theory best explains the events under observation course and 5) why you selected this issue. The presentation should be 8-10 minutes long.** In addition to giving a presentation, you are expected to submit a works cited page via Blackboard (6-8 sources and no Wikipedia, please!). Get creative! Project topics are due on Friday, March 3rd. **Presentations will take place during weeks 14 and 15.**

Please see the “course expectations” section of syllabus for further directions regarding course assignments and quizzes. Please note that travel plans are not considered a valid excuse for not completing an assignment.

Extra Credit

For extra credit, students can earn up to **3 additional points towards their overall course grade** for active class participation (holy smoke, that's a lot of ec...an 89 average gets bumped up to a 92...sign me up). Please note that **attendance does not count as participation**. Rather, asking questions in class, addressing questions that the instructor asks, and participating in in-class group discussions will count as class participation. **Please note that this is the only extra credit opportunity I will offer in this course.**

Grading Scale

94- 100	A	77- 79	C+	61- 63	D-
90- 93	A-	74- 76	C	0-60	E
87-89	B+	70- 73	C-		
84-86	B	67-69	D+		
80-83	B-	64- 66	D		

Assessment

The course requirements help to evaluate each student's progress in satisfying the learning objectives of the course. The table below highlights the course's learning outcomes and the relevant course assignments that measure the achievement of each outcome.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Measure(s)
Understand and apply key concepts and major theories to the study of International Relations politics orally and in writing	Discussion leadership, IO Simulations, Reaction Papers, Quizzes, Research Project
Evaluate existing schools of thought on international relations and discuss their strengths and weaknesses	Discussion leadership, Reaction Papers, Quizzes, Research Project
Understand major empirical contributions and shortcomings in International Relations politics research	Discussion leadership, Reaction Papers, Quizzes, Research Project
Develop consistent and coherent written and oral arguments about political phenomena	Discussion leadership, IO Simulations, Reaction Papers, Quizzes, Research Project
Demonstrate an improvement in applying social scientific reasoning	Discussion leadership, Exam 1 and Exam 2, Reaction Papers, Quizzes

eMail Policy

eMail: Students can expect to receive a response to their email within 24 hours (except on weekends). **Please write PSC 230 and your full name in the subject line of your email.** In addition, please no 'hey,' 'yo,' 'sup' or any form of informal slang in your email.

General email communication: Please do not send vague emails such as "what can I do to improve my grade on a quiz/discussion board post/ in the course?" or "how should I study for the quiz?" Also, please do not send an email requesting extra credit. Finally, please do not attempt to negotiate final course grades and request that I give a higher grade due to x reason (I need to graduate, I am not doing well in my other courses, I have never received grade x before).

Office Hours

Prior to coming to office hours, please send me an email notifying me that you will be coming in to see me and please state the question(s)/issue(s) that you would like to discuss during the meeting.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to fully adhere to the academic integrity regulations set forth by the SUNY Buffalo State. Any violation of the regulations will result in appropriate disciplinary action as set forth in University policy. Additional information regarding University policy is available at: <http://academicstandards.buffalostate.edu/>.

Americans with Disabilities Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination law that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. The legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact me immediately.

Classroom Etiquette

Students are expected to follow the University Classroom Conduct regulations. **Cell phone use during class time will not be tolerated (in-class use can result in a grade reduction).** Additional information regarding classroom etiquette is available at: <http://academicaffairs.buffalostate.edu/viii-student-conduct>.

Ok, enough with the lecturing about course rules and on to the fun stuff....(I know, I know, you're probably thinking...playing Gran Turismo is fun...binge watching a show on Netflix is fun...this is not fun). Well make it fun...or at least pretend, pretty please.

Course Plan

Week 1

Week 1: Introduction; Why Study International Relations?

Monday, January 30th-

Read course syllabus

Wednesday, February 1st-

Introduction to social science concepts

Friday, February 3rd-

Introduction to social science concepts

Watch the following videos (no reaction paper due for these videos):

Video on Research Methods

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9duJchhAWIQ>

Watch Gapminder videos:

Human rights & democracy statistics

- <http://www.gapminder.org/videos/human-rights-democracy-statistics/>

Hans Rosling on CNN: US in a converging world

- <http://www.gapminder.org/videos/hans-rosling-on-cnn-us-in-a-converging-world/>

Week 2: Introduction; Why Study International Relations?

Monday, February 6th-

Group activity: applying social science concepts to real world events

Wednesday, February 8th –

Group activity: applying social science concepts to real world events

Friday, February 10th-

Online activity: applying social science concepts to real world events

Week 3: Theories, Theories, and More Theories. Theories in International Relations: Realism and Neo-Realism

Monday, February 13th-

Read

- Walt (1998) “International Relations: One World, Many Theories,” Foreign Policy 110: 29-46
- Kegley and Raymond (2010): “Theories of World Politics” pp.27-33

Discussion leadership group # 1

Wednesday, February 15th-

Read

- Drezner 2010) “Night of the Living Wonks: Toward an International Relations Theory of Zombies.” Foreign Policy. July/August 2010

Friday, February 17th-

Watch PBS Documentary: *Bitter Rivals: Iran and Saudi Arabia* (reaction paper due 02/20)

**Week 4: Theories, Theories, and More Theories.
Theories in International Relations: Liberalism**

Monday, February 20th-

President's Day-no class.

Wednesday, February 22nd-

Read

- Kegley and Raymond (2010): "Theories of World Politics" pp. 33-40
- Fahnbulleh (2020) "The Neoliberal Collapse Markets Are Not the Answer." Foreign Affairs (January/February 2020)
 - <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-kingdom/2019-12-10/neoliberal-collapse>

Discussion leadership group # 2

International Cooperation Activity: "Negotiating a Climate Change Treaty"

- http://iti.oupssupport.com/9780190454357/DB/1_lisbon_protocol_p1.html

Friday, February 24th-

Quiz # 1

**Week 5: Theories, Theories, and More Theories.
Theories in International Relations: Constructivism, Feminist,
and Alternative Approaches to International Relations**

Monday, February 27th-

Read

- Kegley and Raymond (2010): "Theories of World Politics" pp. 40-53
- Nagar (2016): Feminism in International Relations: Conceptual Analysis
 - <https://oaji.net/articles/2016/1115-1480921760.pdf>

Discussion leadership group # 3

Wednesday, March 1st-

Read:

- Forsberg and Olsson (2021) "Examining Gender Inequality and Armed Conflict at the Subnational Level, Journal of Global Security Studies" 6(2).
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogaa023>
 - <https://academic.oup.com/jogss/article/6/2/ogaa023/5858328>

Friday, March 3rd-

Paper topics due. Students will share topics in class and receive feedback.

Watch: *The Reckoning* (reaction paper due on 03/06)

Week 6: International Law

Monday, March 6th-

Read

- Shimko (2010) “International Law” pp. 216-230
- Pert (2017) “International Law in a Post-Post-Cold War World—Can It Survive?” *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* 4: 362– 375.
 - <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/app5.174>

Discussion leadership group # 4

Wednesday, March 8th-

Readings from Monday continued...

International Organizations Activity: “Stopping an Epidemic”

- http://lti.oupsupport.com/9780190454357/DB/4_stopping_an_epidemic_p1.html

Friday, March 10th-

Quiz # 2

Week 7: IO Simulations

Monday, March 13th-

Day 1 of IO simulations- delegates give opening speeches

Wednesday, March 15th-

Day 2 of IO simulations- formal and informal caucuses (in-person)

Friday, March 17th-

Day 3 of IO simulations- formal and informal caucuses (online)

Week 8: IO Simulations

Monday, March 20th-

Day 4 of IO simulations- formal and informal caucuses (in-person)

Wednesday, March 22nd-

Day 5 of IO simulations- formal and informal caucuses (in-person)

Friday, March 24th -

Day 6 of IO simulations- formal and informal caucuses; resolution presentations (in-person)

Week 9

Spring break-no classes this week

Week 10: International Political Economy

Monday, April 3rd-

Read Mansbach and Rafferty (2008): “International Political Economy” pp. 499-545

Discussion leadership group # 5

Wednesday, April 5th-

Readings from Monday continued...

Listen to the following podcast:

- Soumaya Keynes and Chad P. Brown, “Trade Talks: Happy 70th GATTiversary – The Origins of Multilateral Trade”
 - <https://tradetalkspodcast.com/podcast/episode-9-happy-70th-gattiversary-the-origins-of-multilateral-trade/>

Friday, April 7th-

Watch: DW Documentary: *How the Pandemic is Changing Globalization* (reaction paper due on 04/10)

Week 11: Nonconventional Weapons and International Security

Monday, April 10th-

Read:

- Wolfsthal, Jon. 2017. “How to Reason With a Nuclear Rogue,” Foreign Policy
 - <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/07/12/north-korea-nukes-icbm-test-nuclear-weapons/>

- Kegley and Raymond (2010): “Military Power and National Security in a Turbulent World” pp.203-340
- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

Discussion leadership group # 6

Wednesday, April 12th-

Readings from Monday continued...

Preventing World War Online Activity

- http://lti.oupssupport.com/9780190454357/DB/5_preventing_world_war_p1.html

Friday, April 14th-

Quiz # 3

Week 12: 04/17-04/21

Reset and refresh week (instructor chaperoning SPS club’s trip to Washington D.C.)

Week 13: Terrorism, Failed States, and International Security

Monday, April 24th-

Read:

- Baylis, Smith, and Owens (2014) “Terrorism and Globalization” pp. 357-371
- Baylis, Smith, and Owens (2014) “International and Global Security” pp. 229-242 and “Humanitarian Intervention in World Politics” pp. 479-493

Discussion leadership group # 7

Wednesday, April 26th-

Readings from Monday continued...

Keeping the Peace Online Activity: “Keeping the Peace in Guinea-Bissau”

- http://lti.oupssupport.com/9780190454357/DB/2_keeping_the_peace_p1.html

Friday, April 28th-

Watch PBS Documentary: *Afghanistan Undercover* (reaction paper due on 05/01)

Week 14: Democratic Peace and Research Presentations

Monday, May 1st-

Read:

- Shimko (2010) “War and Democracy” pp. 89-114
- Owen, John. 2005. “Iraq and the Democratic Peace.” *Foreign Affairs* (Nov/Dec).

Instructor will review of regime type datasets:

- Polity IV
- Freedom House
- V-Dem

Watch Presidential Addresses on Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Ukraine

Discussion leadership group # 8**Wednesday, May 3rd-**

Day 1 of research presentations

Friday, May 5th -**Quiz # 4****Week 15: Research Presentations****Monday, May 8th-**

Day 2 of research presentations

Wednesday, May 10th-

Day 3 of research presentations

Friday, May 12th-

Day 4 of research presentations

Wrap up

* **Please note:** course readings, requirements, assignments, and schedule may be modified at the instructor’s discretion.

Campus Resources

FREE and UNLIMITED academic support for all students is available, both in-person and online. Students can get assistance through the Math Center, Writing Center, and Tutoring Services located in Butler Library. After-hours online support is available through STAR-NY. Students in EOP may also seek support through the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) in Butler Library. Schedule your appointment today on the [Bengal Success Portal](#) (Find us under Your Services)!

Questions? Email Faherty Nielsen, Interim Coordinator of Tutoring Services, at nielsefl@buffalostate.edu. For more details check our website: <https://academicsuccess.buffalostate.edu/tutoring>.

Services Provided by the Dean of Students

The Dean of Students Office helps students navigate the college experience, particularly during difficult situations such as personal, financial, medical, and/or family crises. If you or someone you know is in need of support, services are available. For a list of support services and information, please visit <http://deanofstudents.buffalostate.edu/>, 716-878-4618 or stop by 311 Campbell Student Union during business hours.

The campus offers an Emergency Relief grant program for students. More information on parameters of the grant and application requirements can be found [on line](#). Please share this information with matriculated undergraduate and graduate students who are in need of emergency funding.

The [Students of Concern Care Team](#) meets regularly throughout the semester to provide support for students who raise concern about their potential for harm to themselves or others. The Care Team will assess the potential risk to personal and campus safety that might result from the actions of individual students, will connect students in need with appropriate resources and will monitor compliance with required support plans. To report a concern you have please go to the following website: <https://pavesuite.com/BuffaloState/PublicPortal/ConcerningIncident> If you have any questions feel free to outreach to me at (716) 878-4618 or at youngsm@buffalostate.edu. In early fall semester the Care Team will be moving under the supervision of Rock Doyle. If you would like to outreach to Dr. Doyle you can email him at doylerd@buffalostate.edu or, call him at (716) 878-6711.

The [Milligan's Food Pantry](#) is an excellent resource for students on campus. Milligan's provides students who are food insecure with the opportunity to get non-perishable food from a campus source. Please remind students of the availability of our Food Pantry. Our Student Resource Coordinator, Kristen Helling, can respond to questions regarding Milligan's or the Emergency Relief Fund and is available at catalakj@buffalostate.edu or at 716-878-3069.

For other [resources](#) to share with students:

[Student Conduct and Community Standards Office](#): Phone: (716) 878-3051

[Weigel Health Center](#): Phone: (716) 878 – 6711

[Weigel Health Promotions](#): Phone: (716) 878-6711, *Health Promotions also provides in class presentations. You can find out more at: <http://weigel.buffalostate.edu/node/254>*

[The Counseling Center](#): Phone: (716) 878-4436

Student Resources Page: <http://deanofstudents.buffalostate.edu/resources-students>

Sexual Violence Prevention Information and Resources

<https://deanofstudents.buffalostate.edu/sexual-violence-prevention>, Sexual Violence Prevention also provides in class presentations. You can contact Nina Pierino for more information, pierinn@buffalostate.edu or, at (716) 878-3069.

Buffalo State Equity and Diversity Office Statement of Principle on Diversity

Buffalo State supports diversity of thought, diversity of experience, and diversity of values. The college is dedicated to a visible commitment to these ideals by affirming and respecting differences in all interactions. Toward this goal, the college provides equitable opportunity and access through innovative recruiting, professional development and education programs that enrich the total academic experience and enhance the quality of life.