

POLSCI 377-02 Special Topics:
Theories of International Relations
Fall 2015

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Class Meetings: Tues. & Thurs. 12:30–1:45 pm Location: McCormack M02-0214
Instructor Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 2-4pm (Wheatley Hall, 5th Floor, Room 102)

"The first lesson the student of international politics must learn and never forget is that the complexities of international affairs make simple solutions and trustworthy prophecies impossible. Here the scholar and the charlatan part company.
— Hans J. Morgenthau *Politics among Nations*, ch. 2

POLSCI 377 Special Topics: Theories of International Relations surveys the most prominent themes in philosophical and scientific thought about international politics. Its approach is both historical and analytical. It is historical in that this course explains the evolution of international relations thought as a stylized progression of "debates" over core political (and scientific) issues. It is analytical in that it emphasizes recurrent philosophical themes rather than their application to specific political contingencies. This course does not offer a review of diplomatic history, a summary of trade disputes and wars, or a compendium of foreign policy case histories. Its purpose is to give students the intellectual tools to understand the fundamental debates and broad patterns of international relations.

This course is an upper-level undergraduate course with commensurate expectations. It assumes a degree of familiarity with common approaches to the study of international relations. Students should already have taken other coursework in political science or international relations (including POLSCI 220) sufficient to demonstrate sophistication in their oral and written scholarship.

Course Requirements

Class Participation: This course heavily emphasizes student participation. Attendance and active involvement in class discussions are essential to success in the course. The assigned readings must be completed before coming to class. From time to time, you will be asked to summarize the readings in class, and there will also be brief, unannounced quizzes on the readings (usually at the beginning of class, so it is important to arrive on time). In the event that a class must be canceled, you are still responsible for the assigned readings. Do not assume that a class is canceled unless so informed by your professor or by a university representative *in person* (or through UMass Boston's automated emergency alert system).

Essay Examinations: This course requires three essay examinations that will cover lectures, classroom discussions, and reading assignments. The exams are cumulative, but each will emphasize a distinct part of the course. Each exam will consist of one or more essay questions and must be submitted at (or before) the beginning of class on the designated due date. The essays should be written in polished and grammatically correct English prose. They should be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins. Pages must be stapled together and should not otherwise be bound or put in a folder. Please note that no assignments will be accepted by email. Late essay exams will be accepted only at the professor's discretion and, except in the case of a medical emergency, will be penalized substantially.

Special Accommodations: Students with documented disabilities requiring assistive technology or other accommodations should contact the Ross Center (Campus Center, UL 211; 617-287-7430), and consult the Center's website: <http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/disability>. Students requiring accommodations for examinations should contact the instructor well before the date of the exam.

Extra Credit Exercise (optional): Students may receive up to 4 points of extra credit (added to the final course grade) for completing a brief essay comparing the positions of two scholars on the Theory Talks website. Several optional Theory Talks readings are indicated on the syllabus (and you may choose to compare other scholars if you wish). For this assignment only, the following grades and points will apply: A (4 extra credit points), B (3 points), C (2 points), D (1 point), and F (0 points). Like other assignments, this essay should be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins; it should be written in polished prose; and it may not be submitted by email. The extra credit essay must be submitted at (or before) the beginning of class, one week prior to the last class of the semester. This is the only form of extra credit available in this course. The Theory Talks website is: <http://www.theory-talks.org>.

Grading: Your grade will be determined on the basis of these course requirements

Class Participation and Quizzes 25%

Essay Exam 1 25%

Essay Exam 2 25%

Essay Exam 3 25%

As a guide to interpreting your grade, it may be helpful to keep the following in mind. Grades in the A range (90-92 = A-; 93 or greater = A) indicate varying degrees of excellence. Generally, this means that you have gone well beyond what is required for a given assignment, demonstrating particular creativity, diligence, or insight. Grades in the B range (80-82 = B-; 83-86 = B; 87-89 = B+) indicate satisfactory completion of all

required components of an assignment. Grades in the C range (70-72 = C-; 73-76 = C; 77-79 = C+) indicate that some components of an assignment were not adequately or appropriately completed, but that the overall effort is nevertheless of passing quality. Grades in the D range (60-62 = D-; 63-66 = D; 67-69 = D+) indicate work with significant flaws that is only barely passing. Grades in the F range (0-59) indicate work that does not meet course requirements or that is not of passing quality.

Extra credit points are added to the final grade calculated in the above manner.

Academic Integrity

Be certain that you are familiar with the University's rules concerning academic misconduct as described in the UMass Boston Code of Conduct. Cheating or other forms of misconduct can result in severe penalties (which, according to University policy, may include a failing grade and/or expulsion from the University). See the UMass Boston Student Handbook, the Undergraduate Catalog, or the following website: http://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/policies/community/code.

To avoid plagiarism, keep in mind that all references to someone else's ideas—whether a direct quotation or simply an indirect summary—must be properly cited. A "proper citation" should typically identify the author, the work, the publisher, the place and year of publication, and the page number. Direct quotations must be placed in quotation marks. For more information, see the guide on the Healey Library website to plagiarism prevention (<http://umb.libguides.com/plagiarism>). The Purdue University Online Writing Lab also has excellent online resources to help you understand and avoid plagiarism (see <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>).

Textbooks

The required texts for this course are:

- Robert Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics*
- Charles Lipson and Benjamin Cohen, *Theory and Structure in International Political Economy*
- Additional readings, available on the course website (see below)
In addition to the required readings, optional online "Theory Talks" interviews with major IR scholars are also indicated on the syllabus for many topics, particularly in the latter part of the course. Although not required, I recommend that you buy William Strunk and E. B. White's *The Elements of Style* (New York: MacMillan). It is an excellent, inexpensive guide to good writing. The answers to

many stylistic questions can also be found in Kate Turabian et al, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

You are encouraged to buy the required books, but copies will be placed on library reserve for students who prefer not to purchase their own copies.

Course Website

The course website is located in the Blackboard Learn environment on the UMass Boston computer system: <https://umb.umassonline.net>. Here, you will find the information contained on this syllabus (including reading assignments and exams), as well as readings not contained in the textbook and other supplementary course material. The site also features a moderated forum on which you may discuss course-related topics. Posts should maintain a professional and respectful tone.

Twitter

Students may follow @Joseph_M_Brown for news items and occasional comments relevant to the course readings and class discussions. Feel free to tweet back, or to send me news items that you think are relevant to the class. (I may retweet them or use them as concrete examples in the next class — with a hat-tip to you.) Twitter is not a course requirement, but it is an opportunity to continue our discussion outside of class and relate the course to current events.

Questions? Problems?

You are welcome to discuss this course or other academic issues with me during my office hours, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-4pm. To make an appointment (not necessary during office hours, but preferable), please email me at Joseph.Brown@umb.edu

Syllabus

1. **Tuesday, September 8** — Introduction
Overview of course.
2. **Thursday, September 10** — Scope, Methods, and Theory
Singer, "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations," on course website.
Waltz, "Laws and Theories," in Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ch. 2.

I. REALISM VS. IDEALISM

3. **Tuesday, September 15** — Early Statements of Political Realism
Machiavelli, *The Prince*, on course website.
4. **Thursday, September 17** — Wilsonian Idealism
Wilson, "Address to Congress Asking for Declaration of War," on course website.
Wilson, "The Fourteen Points," on course website.
5. **Tuesday, September 22** — Carr's Classical Realism
Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, chs. 3 & 5 (skim ch. 4), on course website.
6. **Thursday, September 24** — Utopian Marxism
Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," on course website.
Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, on course website.
7. **Tuesday, September 29** — Morgenthau's Classical Realism
Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, chs. 1 & 5 (skim chs. 2 & 8), on course website.
8. **Thursday, October 1** — **FIRST ESSAY EXAMINATION DISTRIBUTED**
The First Debate Continues
Ray, "The Abolition of Slavery and the End of International War," on course website.

II. REALIST HISTORICISM VS. REALIST BEHAVIORALISM

9. **Tuesday, October 6** — **FIRST ESSAY EXAMINATION DUE**
Reductionist and Systemic Theories
Waltz, "Reductionist and Systemic Theories," in Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ch. 3.
10. **Thursday, October 8** — Waltzian Neorealism
Waltz, "Political Structures," in Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ch. 4.
Online: Theory Talk #40, Kenneth Waltz, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2011/06/theory-talk-40.html> (optional).

11. **Tuesday, October 13** — The Balance of Power and Its Consequences
Waltz, "Anarchic Orders and Balances of Power," in Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ch. 5.
12. **Thursday, October 15** — Extensions of Neorealism: Threat
Walt, "Explaining Alliance Formation," on course website.
Online: Theory Talk #33, Stephen Walt, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2009/08/theory-talk-33.html> (optional).
13. **Tuesday, October 20** — Extensions of Neorealism: Game Theory and Cycles
Keohane, "Theory of World Politics," in Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ch. 7.
14. **Thursday, October 22** — Extensions of Neorealism: The Security Dilemma
Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma" (excerpts), on course website.
Online: Theory Talk #12, Robert Jervis, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2008/07/theory-talk-12.html> (optional).
15. **Tuesday, October 27** — Extensions of Neorealism: Post-Cold War IR
Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future," on course website.
Online: Theory Talk #49, John Mearsheimer, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2012/06/theory-talk-49.html> (optional).
16. **Thursday, October 29** — The Second Debate
Bull, "International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach," on course website.
17. **Tuesday, November 3** — The Second Debate (continued)
Ashley, "The Poverty of Neorealism," in Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ch. 9.
18. **Thursday, November 5** — **SECOND ESSAY EXAMINATION DISTRIBUTED**
The Second Debate (continued)
Waltz, "Reflections on *Theory of International Politics*," in Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ch. 11.

III. REALISM VS. LIBERALISM AND POSTMODERNISM

19. **Tuesday, November 10** — **SECOND ESSAY EXAMINATION DUE**
Neorealism and Neoliberalism
Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation," in Lipson and Cohen, *Theory and Structure in International Political Economy*, p. 9-31.

20. **Thursday, November 12** — Neoliberalism and Ideology
Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously," in Lipson and Cohen, *Theory and Structure in International Political Economy*, p. 33-73.
Online: Theory Talk #1, Michael Doyle, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2008/04/theory-talk-1.html> (optional).
21. **Tuesday, November 17** — Neoliberalism and Regimes
Keohane, "The Demand for International Regimes," in Lipson and Cohen, *Theory and Structure in International Political Economy*, p. 147-177.
Online: Theory Talk #9, Robert Keohane, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2008/05/theory-talk-9.html> (optional).
22. **Thursday, November 19** — Neomarxism
Cox, "Social Forces, States, and World Orders," in Keohane, *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ch. 8.
Online: Theory Talk #13, Immanuel Wallerstein, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2008/08/theory-talk-13.html> (optional).
23. **Tuesday, November 24** — Postmodernism
Der Derian, "Post-Theory," on course website.
Doty, "The Logic of *Différence* in International Relations," on course website.

Thursday, November 26 — THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY, NO CLASS

24. **Tuesday, December 1** — Feminism
Tickner, "Man, the State, and War: Gendered Perspectives on National Security," on course website.
Online: Theory Talk #54, Ann Tickner, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2013/04/theory-talk-54.html> (optional).
25. **Thursday, December 3** — Constructivism
Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It," in Lipson and Cohen, *Theory and Structure in International Political Economy*, p. 75-109.
Online: Theory Talk #3, Alexander Wendt, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2008/04/theory-talk-3.html> optional).
26. **Tuesday, December 8** — **OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT ESSAY DUE**
The Third Debate
Lapid, "The Third Debate," on course website.

27. Thursday, December 10 — THIRD ESSAY EXAMINATION DISTRIBUTED

Is Anybody Still a Realist?

Legro and Moravcsik, "Is Anybody Still a Realist?" on course website.

Schweller, "Brother, Can You Spare a Paradigm?" on course website (pp. 174-178).

Online: Theory Talk #21, Stephen Krasner, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2008/10/theory-talk-21.html> (optional).

28. Thursday, December 11 — THIRD ESSAY EXAMINATION DUE

Reprise

Hoffmann, "An American Social Science: International Relations," on course website.

Online: Theory Talk #32, Miriam Elman, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2009/07/theory-talk-32.html> (optional).

Online: Theory Talk #15, Peter Katzenstein, <http://www.theory-talks.org/2008/08/theory-talk-15.html> (optional).