

PSC 346: Individuals and World Politics

F.C. Zagare
Department of Political Science
University at Buffalo, SUNY

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Description: This course surveys and evaluates the field of international politics from the vantage point of individual decision-makers. Theories and models of international behavior that examine international politics at this level of analysis are grouped into three categories: decision-making, micro-level, and rational choice approaches.

One purpose of the course is to evaluate the “great man” theory of world history, that is, the claim that individuals *qua* individuals largely shape the world we live in. An equally important purpose is to establish criteria by which this and similar assertions about causality are evaluated.

Required Texts:

- Zagare, Frank C. *The Games of July: Explaining the Great War*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011.

Requirements:

There will be two in-class exams. The first is October 10; the second, December 3. Unless there is a major emergency, you will be expected to take these two examinations at the time they are scheduled. Make-up examinations will *not* be given.

All lectures, however, will be posted on UB Learns and will be made available to you over time. Once they are posted, they will remain so until the semester is over. There are 7 segments to the course. After each one my plan is to have a Zoom meeting to answer any questions you might have. Please consult the course schedule for the dates. All of this is subject to change.

Participation in the Zoom sessions is highly recommended. The only time you will be expected to be present is on the first day of class and on the two days scheduled for the in-class examinations.

From time to time, additional assignments will be posted on the class web page that can be reached at: <http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~fczagare/default.htm>.

You will be notified of these assignments by e-mail. Please make sure that you are receiving messages from the PSC 346 broadcast list.

Students are strongly encouraged to read the *New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, or another reputable national/international news source during the course of the semester. Students are assumed to have a basic understanding of world affairs and current events.

| Learning Outcome | Assessment Measures: |
|---|--|
| Be able to identify, discuss, and apply key concepts and major approaches to international politics | Participation in class discussion; in-class exams |
| Demonstrate the ability to think theoretically about international politics | Participation in class discussion; in-class exams |

Academic misconduct: Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this course. A student with a documented case of plagiarism, cheating, or another form of academic dishonesty will receive the grade of “F” for the course and might face other disciplinary action under University regulations.

Students with disabilities policy: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. This 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 notify the instructor immediately.

All materials prepared and/or assigned by me for this course are for the students’ educational benefit. Other than for permitted collaborative work, students may not photograph, record, reproduce, transmit, distribute, upload, sell or exchange course materials, without my prior written permission. “Course materials” include, but are not limited to, all instructor-prepared and assigned materials, such as lectures; lecture notes; discussion prompts; study aids; tests and assignments; and presentation materials such as PowerPoint slides, Prezi slides, or transparencies; and course packets or handouts. Public distribution of such materials may also constitute copyright infringement in violation of federal or state law. Violation of this policy may additionally subject a student to a finding of “academic dishonesty” under the Academic Integrity Policy and/or disciplinary charges under the Student Code of Conduct.

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The following is a chronological list of topics and suggested readings covered in this course.

= available at <http://www.jstor.org/>

* = available from instructor

I. Approaches to the Study of International Politics

1. Liberalism v. Realism

- Paul R. Viotti and Mark V. Kauppi (1999). *International Relations Theory*. 3rd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 55 – 93.*
- John A. Vasquez (1997). “The Realist Paradigm and Degenerative versus Progressive Research Programs: An Appraisal of Neotraditional Research on Waltz’s Balancing Proposition.” *American Political Science Review*, 91: 899 – 912.#
- Zagare, pp. 19 – 29.
- Henry Kissinger, “Teaching the Limits of Power,” *Boston Sunday Globe*, August 3, 1980.

2. What is Theory?

- Zagare, Chapter 1.

II. Richard Snyder’s Decision-Making Approach (The Original Formulation)

- Richard Snyder, H.W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin, “The Decision-Making Approach to International Politics,” in James Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, rev. ed. New York: Free Press, 1969, pp. 199 – 206.*
- Glenn D. Paige, “The Korean Decision,” in James Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, rev. ed. New York: Free Press, 1969, pp. 461 – 472.*
- James E. Campbell (2000). “The Referendum that Didn’t Happen: The Forecasts of the 2000 Presidential Election.” *PS*, 35: 33 – 38.*

III. Other Decision-Making Approaches

1. *The Synoptic Ideal v. Disjointed Incrementalism*
 - Herbert Simon (1987). “A Life Spent on One Problem,” *New York Times*, (Nov. 26).*
 - David Braybrooke and Charles E. Lindbloom, “Types of Decision-Making” in James Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, rev. ed. New York: Free Press, 1969, pp. 207 – 216.*
 - Sidney Verba, “Assumptions of Rationality and Non-Rationality in Models of the International System,” in James Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, rev. ed. New York: Free Press, 1969, pp. 217 – 231.*
2. *Do Different Models Make A Difference?*
 - Graham T. Allison (1969). “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis.” *American Political Science Review*, 63: 689 – 718.#

IV. Micro-Level (Non-logical) Approaches

1. *Instinct Theories*
 - Greg Cashman, *What Causes War?* New York: Lexington Books, 1993, ch. 2.*
2. *Personality Studies*
 - Alexander and Juliette George, *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House: A Personality Study*, in Nelson W. Polsby, Robert A. Dentler and Paul Smith, *Politics and Social Life*, 1963, pp. 192 – 208.*
 - Joseph de Rivera, “Interpersonal Relations: Commands and Communication,” in William Vocke, *American Foreign Policy*, New York: Free Press, 1976, pp. 38 – 63.*
 - Walt Anderson (1976). “Looking for Mr. Active-Positive,” *Human Behavior* (October).*
 - “Carter and Reagan: Clues to Their Character,” *US News & World Report*, (October 27, 1980).*
 - Charles F. Hermann and Margaret G. Hermann (1967). “An Attempt to Simulate the Outbreak of World War I,” *American Political Science Review*, 61: 400 – 16.#
 - Cashman, *What Causes War?* pp. 36 – 49.*
 - [Janice Gross Stein](#), “Psychological Explanations of International Conflict” in Walter Carlsaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons, eds., *Handbook of International Relations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002, pp. 292 – 308.*

3. *Images and Perceptions*

- Cashman, *What Causes War?* pp. 49 – 76.*
- David M. Lampton (1973). “The U.S. Image of Peking in Three International Crises.” *The Western Political Quarterly*, 26: 28 – 49.#
- Urie Bronfenbrenner (1986). “The Mirror Image in Soviet-American Relations.” *Journal of Social Issues*, 16: 45 – 56. Excerpt from Ralph K. White, *Psychology and the Prevention of Nuclear War*. New York, NYU Press, 1986, pp. 71 – 81.*
- Ole R. Holsti (1962). “The Belief System and National Images: A Case Study.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 6: 244 – 52.#
- Ole R. Holsti, Richard A. Brody, and Robert C. North (1964). “Measuring Affect and Action in International Relations Models: Empirical Materials from the 1962 Cuban Crisis.” *Journal of Peace Research*, 1: 170 – 89.#

V. **Rational Choice Approaches**

1. *Expected Utility Models (Decision Theory)*

- Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, New Haven: Yale, ch 2.*
- Bueno de Mesquita, “The Contributions of Expected-Utility Theory to the Study of International Conflict.” In Manus Midlarski, ed., *Handbook of War Studies*. Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989.*
- Frank C. Zagare and D. Marc Kilgour, *Perfect Deterrence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000: pp. 16 – 24.*
- Zagare, pp. 29 – 38.

2. *Game Theory*

- Robert Gibbons, “An Introduction to Applicable Game Theory,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 11: 127 – 49.*
- Zagare, section 1.6.

3. *Deterrence*

- Waltz, Kenneth (2012). “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb: Nuclear Balancing Would Mean Stability.” *Foreign Affairs*, 91 (2012): 2 – 5.*
- Kugler, Jacek (2012). “A World beyond Waltz: Neither Iran nor Israel Should Have the Bomb.” <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tehranbureau/2012/09/opinion-a-world-beyond-waltz-neither-iran-nor-israel-should-have-the-bomb.html>
- Jacek Kugler and A.F.K. Organski, “The Power Transition: A Retrospective and Prospective Evaluation.” In Manus Midlarski, ed., *Handbook of War Studies*. Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989.*
- Zagare, Chapters 3 – 8.