PSC 544 International Relations Theory

Course Syllabus
Spring 2012

Classroom: 502 Park Hall
Class schedule: Tuesday 12:30-3:20 p.m.
Office hours: TR 11a.m.-noon

Professor: Dr. Vesna Danilovic
Department of Political Science
University at Buffalo, SUNY
Office: 505 Park Hall

Course description
This advanced graduate seminar in international relations provides an in-depth coverage of past and recent developments in international relations theory. We will examine general approaches to international relations (realism, neorealism, neoliberalism, critical theories) and their variants, major disciplinary debates, topics and controversies in the areas of conflict and cooperation, and evaluation of the scientific progress in the field. The readings include both the classic and recent literature with different theoretical and methodological orientations. The course format fits an advanced seminar that expects active participation and discussion from all students.

Reading materials
All required readings for the course consist of selected book chapters and journal articles. If not available through the UB electronic journal holdings (http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/e-resources/ft.html), they can be accessed on UBLearns for this course (marked with *UBLearns in the schedule below). You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to download all materials.

Course Requirements
Final grades will be based on three components: class participation (20%), two short papers (30%), and a final exam (50%).

• Class participation: Students are expected to complete the assigned readings each week according to the topic covered. For this part of the grade, students will be expected to perform consistently well both when participating on a voluntary basis as well as when called upon to discuss the readings. Class participation will count for 20% of the final grade.

• Two short papers: Beyond regular attendance and active participation in class discussion, each student is expected to make two brief (10-15 minute) in-class presentations on the weekly topics, followed by a discussion guided by the presenter, which should be based on a short paper to be e-mailed to me by 4 p.m. one day before the scheduled class for that topic. Any papers attempted to be submitted after 4 pm will automatically default into F grade. These papers and presentations should highlight the principle points of all the week’s readings, provide the points of comparisons across the readings (similarities, differences, etc.), and critically evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. They should not be simple summaries of the readings or annotated bibliographies; suggestions on how to analytically and critically evaluate the readings will be detailed in an additional handout. The papers
should be approximately 6 pages double-spaced; the 7th page should list the total of five talking points for discussions that are clearly grounded in the specific readings (that is, they need to refer to specific pages from the readings, but without using up space with quotes). As for their in-class presentations, they are meant to help focus the class discussion on the week’s topic readings. Each short paper/presentation will count for 15% of the overall course grade, for a total of 30%.

- **Final exam:** The take-home final exam is similar in format to the comprehensive exams in international relations, although it will be shorter and with an extended time of one week. It will be distributed in class on April 24 and will be due by 4 p.m. on May 1. Although both hard copy and electronic versions are preferable, an electronic version is required and must reach me by e-mail by the deadline. The final exam will count toward 50% of the final grade.

Written assignments (short papers & final exam) should follow the Chicago Style Manual: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

**Excused Absences and Deadline Extensions**
This is a graduate-level seminar, and students are expected to be regularly prepared for and attend all classes. If the student is seeking an excused absence, s/he must notify me at least one day before the absence and provide full documentation no later than by the end of the second working day after the absence. The deadline extensions for short papers and the exam will not be granted, except ONLY in documented cases of serious illness. Otherwise, the failures to submit short review papers and the exam by the deadline will be graded F. The same applies for a failure to present a short paper and guide the discussion in class as scheduled. I will not grant an Incomplete grade for the course.

**Plagiarism Statement**
As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one’s own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another person. In accordance with the definition, a student is committing plagiarism if s/he copies the work of another person and turn it in as his/her own, even if s/he should have the permission of the person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated. I will not tolerate any form of plagiarism and any case of scholastic dishonesty will result in an automatic grade F for the course. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism and general academic dishonesty issues, please consult the UB pages and policy on these issues as a starting point, such as: http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml, http://www.grad.buffalo.edu/policies/academic_integrity.pdf, and http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/asl/guides/plagiarism.html.

**Students with Disabilities Policy**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please notify me as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester.
Copyright Statement

Unless otherwise noted, the handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By “handouts,” I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, web pages, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission.

Scholarly Journals

Students should be familiar with the primary journals in international relations:

*International Studies Quarterly*
*Journal of Conflict Resolution*
*International Organization*

specialized in the conflict area, additionally:

*International Security*
*Conflict Management and Peace Science*
*International Interactions*
*Journal of Peace Research*
*Security Studies*

and articles on international politics in more general journals in the discipline:

*American Political Science Review*
*American Journal of Political Science*
*Journal of Politics*
*World Politics*
*British Journal of Political Science*

All these journals should be perused regularly and, if unfamiliar with some of them, a good start would be to read those articles that are relevant for the topics in this course.
COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

Week 1: January 17
COURSE INTRODUCTION
No readings.

Week 2: January 24
SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS & RESEARCH PROGRESS

PART I: RESEARCH PROGRAMMES/PARADIGMS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Week 3: January 31
NEOREALISM VS. NEOLIBERALISM: THE DEBATE

Week 4: February 7
CLASSICAL, STRUCTURAL & NEOCLASSICAL REALISM(S)


**Week 5: February 14**

**LIBERALISM & NEOLIBERALISM**


*M*UBLearns


**Week 6: February 21**

**BEYOND THE ‘MAINSTREAM’ DEBATES**


**PART II: INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT**

**Week 7: February 28**

**INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT: STRUCTURAL ANARCHY & HIERARCHY**


Week 8: March 6
BARGAINING APPROACHES TO CONFLICT

Week 9: March 13
NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK

Week 10: March 20
DOMESTIC CONTEXT

PART III: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
Week 11: March 27
INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT: REGIMES & INSTITUTIONS

Week 12: April 13
BARGAINING APPROACHES TO COOPERATION

Week 13: April 10
DOMESTIC CONTEXT

Week 14: April 17
A (SMALL) SAMPLE OF RECENT THEORETICAL ADVANCES


Week 15: April 24

STUDENT READING SELECTIONS

Each student will select and present in class one article published in the past 2-3 years in the listed journals on p. 3 of this syllabus. The article needs to be related directly to one or more topics in this course and its selection justified on the grounds of its theoretical relevance and research contribution to the select body of literature covered in this course. I have to be notified about the article selection by April 10 at the latest. An article proposal has to be accompanied by a brief paragraph justifying the selection (your view – not the author’s abstract - on what kind of contribution it makes to which specific topic(s) in this course, and how).

Take-home exam will be given in class on April 24 — it is due by May 1 at 4 p.m.

~Have a Good Summer~