
PS 239

Selected Topics in International Relations: Where is the World Headed?

Syllabus v. 1.0
Winter 2018

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<https://moodle2.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/18W-POLSCI239-1>

Most fields, including international relations, embody a contest between synchronic and diachronic approaches. Synchronic arguments are often reinforced by the presumption of constancy and universality. The assumption, for example, that anarchy has been a constant is used to argue that the balance of power is a universal law that has not changed with time. In contrast, diachronic analysis focuses on the role of change, and that will be our focus in this course. More specifically, we will focus on where the world is headed? On whether violence is on the decline, on changes in the nature of the state and territoriality, on globalization and its impact on inequality, and on the transformative role of ideas and international law.

Requirements: Course attendance, reading, in-class presentations, and a couple of short papers. [If possible, you should attend international relations talks.]

Meetings and Readings (this schedule is tentative, and subject to change):

Introduction: IR as subfield ; Where is the World Headed? (Jan. 8, 2018)

We will discuss synchronic versus diachronic scholarship and the issue of change in world politics. I will introduce the course readings. Finally, we will introduce ourselves.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday (Jan. 15, 2018)

Violence and War (Jan. 22, 2018)

Pinker, Steven. 2011. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*. New York: Viking.

Inequality (Jan. 29, 2018)

Milanovic, Branko. 2016. *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Territoriality

Maier, Charles S. 2016. *Once Within Borders: Territories of Power, Wealth, and Belonging Since 1500*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

International Law (Feb. 12, 2018)

Hathaway, Oona A. and Scott J. Shapiro. 2017. *The Internationalists: How a Radical Plan to Outlaw War Remade the World*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Presidents' Day (Feb. 19, 2018)**The State** (Feb. 26, 2018)

Fukuyama, Francis. 2014. *Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Rubin, Jared T. 2016. *Rulers, Religion, and Riches: Why the West Got Rich and the Middle East Did Not*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 and 2.

Blaydes, Lisa Chaney, Eric. 2013. The Feudal Revolution and Europe's Rise: Political Divergence of the Christian West and the Muslim World Before 1500 CE. *American Political Science Review* 107(1): 16-34.

Ko, Chiu Yu, Mark Koyama and Tuan-Hwee Sng. 2018. Unified China and Divided Europe. *International Economic Review*, forthcoming.

The Asian Century? (Mar. 5, 2018)

The interaction between changing state capacity and globalization raises different prospects for domestic and international politics, especially regarding the rise of China and Asia. Reading:

Auslin, Michael R. 2017. *The End of the Asian Century: War, Stagnation, and the Risks to the World's Most Dynamic Region*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Technology (Mar. 12, 2018)

Modern technology makes possible new methods and forms of warfare: robotic war, drone warfare, and cyberwarfare. Readings:

National Intelligence Council. 2017. Global Trends: Paradox of Progress. NIC 2017-001, January. www.dni.gov/nic/globaltrends. Read pp. 3-61.

Wittes, Benjamin and Gabriella Blum. 2015. *The Future of Violence: Robots and Germs, Hackers and Drones : Confronting a New Age of Threat*. New York: Basic Books. Read pp. 1-44, 233-266 (Introduction, Chapters 1, 9, and Conclusion).

Brundagel, Miles, Shahar Avin, Jack Clark, Helen Toner, Peter Eckersley, Ben Garfinkel, Allan Dafoe, Paul Scharre, Thomas Zeitzoff, Bobby Filar, Hyrum Anderson, Heather Roff, Gregory C. Allen, Jacob Steinhardt, Carrick Flynn, Seán Ó hÉigeartaigh, Simon Beard, Haydn Belfield, Sebastian Farquhar, Clare Lyle, Rebecca Crotoof, Owain Evans, Michael Page, Joanna Bryson, Roman Yampolskiy and Dario Amodei. 2018. The Malicious Use of Artificial Intelligence: Forecasting, Prevention, and Mitigation. Future of Humanity Institute, University of Oxford, Centre for the Study of Existential Risk, University of Cambridge, Center for a New American Security, Electronic Frontier Foundation, and OpenAI, February.