
PS 137
International Relations Theory

Spring 2025
TR 9:30 – 10:45pm
Bunche 2209A

Professor Arthur Stein

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Class web site:

<https://bruinlearn.ucla.edu/courses/209335>

Syllabus: Version 1.0

Assigned readings subject to change

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

International Relations is a broad and interdisciplinary field that addresses the bases of cooperation and conflict between countries even as it focuses on a broad range of actors that also include international organizations and non-state actors in shaping global politics. At its core, International Relations seeks to understand the causes and consequences of international events and how different actors interact with one another on the global stage.

This course focuses on approaches to the study of international politics, i.e., the different ways in which the foreign policies that result in war and peace have been explained. Although you will learn a great deal about current international issues and about the evolution of international politics, the focus of this course is analytic rather than substantive, on general arguments and how to analyze international politics rather than on specific events and details. As such, the course will teach you how to think in general, in addition to dealing with international politics.

We will discuss the ways in which international relations scholars have drawn on psychology, economics, sociology, history, and geography in developing their arguments about international politics. In addition, the field has also drawn on all the other subfields of political science, including American and comparative politics, as well as political theory. You will find that the course will help you to pull together quite disparate material from a variety of courses you may have taken.

Through readings, lectures, and class discussions, we will delve into the key concepts and debates within each theoretical perspective, and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses in explaining various aspects of international politics.

By the end of this course, you will have a solid foundation in the major theoretical perspectives in International Relations, as well as an understanding of how these perspectives have been used to explain historical events and how they can be applied to current international events and issues. You will be able to critically evaluate and engage with different theoretical approaches to international politics.

You will have a sense of the transformations occurring in international relations, from deglobalization to changes in the balance of power.

By the end of this course you will also have an appreciation of how the approaches we discuss pervade the social sciences and history.

Course requirements and assessment

First and foremost, doing the reading and coming to class (lectures and section). Taking this class means voluntarily entering into a social compact with your instructors and classmates. Being prepared and coming to class are the core obligations. The course will have a midterm, and requires that you write a course paper.

Section. Attendance and participation in a course section is a requirement and will count towards 20% of your grade. Sections provide an opportunity for discussing the course lectures and readings as well as your research paper. Your TA will provide more information on section policy. Please submit a statement of illness or injury if either prevents you from attending a section.

Midterm. There will be a midterm on Tuesday, April 29th and it will cover the material through session 8. It will count 30% toward your final grade. There will be no make-up midterm unless a student must be away from campus on university business or due to an emergency. The student must provide documentation.

Attendance. Attendance at lectures and sections is required. Please notify me and your TA if you cannot attend because of religious observance, illness or injury, an emergency, or if you are away on university business. Please provide documentation if possible. We will do what we can to make certain that the absence does not preclude you from completing the academic work in the course.

Feel free to ask questions in lecture. Lectures are not like seminars with extended discussion, but raise your hand if you have a question. I may defer answering or I may detour from my planned presentation. That will be my choice, but feel free to ask.

Research Paper. A paper, 12–15 pages in length will be due during finals week. It will count for 50% of your grade. You must provide your TA a short description of your topic by the third week and obtain approval for the topic (counts 5% of grade). You are required to submit an abstract by the end of the 7th week of the course. The abstract will be marked and returned (count 5% of grade). The final paper will deal with the comments on the abstract as well as include perspectives discussed in the last three weeks (count 40% of grade). The final version will be submitted through TurnItIn.

The point of the paper is to apply the approaches discussed in the course to some current international event. You need not pick a case in which the U.S. is a key actor.

Begin by selecting some issue. Follow the news about it. Read the newspaper. Keep digital copies of useful material so that you will be able to go back and reread them. Remember, you'll be coming across new perspectives each week of the course, so taking notes on what you find in news sources may not provide you with adequate information to deal with a perspective we have not yet covered. Keeping full texts of what you find will allow you to reassess in the light of new material discussed in the intervening weeks.

You might want to start by addressing the following questions: Do the analyses you have read typically focus on one level of analysis more than others? Do debates about the current event reflect alternative levels of analysis or alternative arguments within the same level of analysis? What approaches are not reflected in the material you've come across? You may use the levels of analysis to write a critical examination of the sources and consequences of policy. Refer to course readings as you characterize arguments you've come across and arguments that seem not to play a role.

It is critically important that you get an early start. It is impossible to make the readings for each week the exact same number of pages. A light week of required readings means a week in which you should be reading for your paper and reading ahead in the course.

You should use resources available on the Web. An online guide with links to resources in international affairs can be found at <https://internationalaffairsresources.com/>. Use the google filter to search just scholarly material: <https://scholar.google.com>. Most news services, including the *Los Angeles Times* (<https://www.latimes.com/world/>), the *Washington Post* (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/>), and the *New York Times* (<https://www.nytimes.com/section/world>) are available on the Web. Some will let you search archives which go back varying lengths of time. Some now charge for archived articles but you can get these for free from Lexis/Nexis (available electronically through UCLA). Some news magazines are available on the Web.

Some electronic materials, which are not publicly available on the web, are available through UCLA's library (<https://www.library.ucla.edu/collections/access/>). Through this link you can get to newspaper articles in Lexis. Also the Expanded Academic ASAP database in the California Digital Library has full text of articles. You need not be at a campus machine to use most of these, but you do have to set up your web browser to use a proxy server. Doing your paper will be made easier and richer using the net, but you will also have to use a library.

Besides the newspapers mentioned above, there are many superb newspapers published overseas in English. Examples include *The Guardian* (<https://www.theguardian.com/world>), *Asia Times* (<https://asiatimes.com/>), *The Daily Star of Lebanon* (<https://lebanondailystar.com/>), and *Le Monde Diplomatique* (<https://mondediplo.com>). There are many organizations and institutions that provide analysis both online and in published form. There are current events series, including International Crisis Group (<https://www.crisisgroup.org>), the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (<https://carnegieendowment.org>) the Council on Foreign Relations (<https://www.cfr.org/>), Chatham House (<https://www.chathamhouse.org/>), International Institute for Strategic Studies (<https://www.iiss.org/>), Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) (<https://rusi.org/>), and Foreign Policy in Focus (<https://fpif.org/>). Journals that focus on current issues include *Foreign Affairs* (<https://www.foreignaffairs.org>), *Foreign Policy*, *The National Interest* (<https://nationalinterest.org>), *Washington Quarterly*, and *Orbis*. An excellent aggregator of reports from various institutes is ETH Zurich, Center for Strategic Studies, CSS Analyses in Security Policy (<https://css.ethz.ch/en/publications/css-analyses-in-security-policy.html>).

There are academic blogs devoted to making political science scholarship accessible, including Political Violence @ a Glance (<https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/>) and The Monkey Blog at the *Washington Post*. To search scholarly sources use <https://scholar.google.com>. There are university institutes that address international issues, for example, Harvard University's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs (<https://www.belfercenter.org/>); the Yale version is Yale Global Online <https://world.yale.edu/yale-global>). A good portal for defense and intelligence matters is <https://www.globalsecurity.org/>. There are sites devoted to particular areas of the world. Examples for the Middle East include Omphalos: Middle East Conflict in Perspective (<https://www.lawfareblog.com/omphalos>), Project on Middle East Political Science (<https://pomeps.org>), and Brookings Markaz Middle East Politics & Policy (<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/>). Examples of sites devoted to Asian security include South Asian Voices (<https://southasianvoices.org>), and The Diplomat (<https://thediplomat.com>). The Rising Powers Initiative is devoted to China and the rise of the rest (<https://www.risingpowersinitiative.org/>).

Finally, virtually all governments (and even most revolutionary movements) have websites and make documents available online. You can easily get reports, speeches, position papers, background papers online.

Note that the specific items mentioned above are examples and should not be treated as a complete or final list. You will learn that the modern problem is too much information and that material has to be filtered and processed.

Finally, if you do not use a research and reference manager, you should learn to use Zotero <https://www.zotero.org/>. You will have to provide a bibliography of the sources you used and provide citations for quotations, paraphrasing others, and evidence that is not common knowledge.

UCLA has an Undergraduate Writing Center that provides free feedback and support on writing. See their site <https://wp.ucla.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-writing-center/> and sign up for an appointment at <https://uwc.ucla.edu/>.

Grades. The final letter grade will reflect the total number you receive from section, midterm, and paper. Late submissions of the final paper will result in a loss of one full letter grade (10%) for each 24 hours after the deadline.

Regrade requests for the midterm or final paper must involve a specific potential error. They cannot be general appeals for a second look, involve issues of illegible writing, or objections to the assignment or exam.

Requests for regrades should be submitted to your TA. The request should (1) be submitted within 72 hours of the work being returned, (2) include the original graded work, and (3) come with a memo at least one paragraph long but no longer than one page that presents the rationale for the regrade. Don't use the appeal memo to present material that wasn't there in your original work. The work will be graded by another TA or Professor Stein, and this new grade will be final. Keep in mind your grade may fall, stay the same, or rise.

Score	Letter Grade	Score	Letter Grade	Score	Letter Grade
$x \geq 97$	A+	$80 \leq x < 83$	B-	$67 \leq x < 70$	D+
$93 \leq x < 97$	A	$77 \leq x < 80$	C+	$63 \leq x < 67$	D
$90 \leq x < 93$	A-	$73 \leq x < 77$	C	$60 \leq x < 63$	D-
$87 \leq x < 90$	B+	$70 \leq x < 73$	C-	$x < 60$	F
$83 \leq x < 87$	B				

Course Policies and Practices

General Conduct. I assume a basic sense of civility, courtesy and respect. Arrive to class on time. Your emails should be civil and professional and written out (no emojis or text message shorthand). So too for your written assignments. Similarly, comments in class should be respectful. Express your arguments and disagreement with reason and evidence rather than hostility and condescension. Harassment or discrimination on any basis in any form is not acceptable.

Faculty are required under the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment to inform the Title IX Coordinator—a *non-confidential resource*—should they become aware that you or any other student has experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Academic Misconduct. UCLA has a *Student Conduct Code* which can be found at <https://deanofstudents.ucla.edu/individual-student-code>. Section 102.01 details academic dishonesty which include “all forms of academic misconduct or research misconduct, including, but not limited to, cheating, fabrication or falsification, plagiarism, multiple submissions or facilitating academic misconduct which occurs in academic exercises or submissions”. The Code gives additional details of each form of dishonesty. Note that the UCLA Student Conduct Code specifically states, “Unless otherwise specified by the faculty member, all submissions, whether in draft or final form, to meet course requirements (including a paper, project, exam, computer program, oral presentation, or other work) must either be the Student’s own work, or must clearly acknowledge the source.” The use of ChatGPT or other AI tools for course assignments is akin to receiving assistance from another person and raises the same concern that work is not the student’s own.

Office Hours. I am always happy to meet with you to talk about course materials, to discuss something else on your mind, or just to say hello. On most weeks, office hours will be right after lectures on Tuesday and Thursday from 11am to 12:30pm.

E-mails. At the top of the syllabus you will find two emails for me. One is an email address I’ve created specifically to deal with course related emails. Please send course related emails to that address. During the week, I will try to respond within 24 hours. I try to take email free weekends and will only deal with personal emergencies (so put PERSONAL EMERGENCY in caps in the subject line if you are sending such an email on a weekend). Note that e-mails are only appropriate for brief questions or comments. Anything more substantive should be discussed in person during office hours. Before sending a question about the course itself, review the syllabus to make sure that the answer is not already provided.

Personal Issues. We understand that life can intercede and pose challenges of various kinds that make it difficult to focus on schoolwork. Reach out to us and to various university services that are available to help you through what you are dealing with. Please do not wait until the end of the quarter or after the quarter ends to talk about issues that impacted your academic performance. Speak with me if you are experiencing a personal problem that is affecting your participation in this course. Note that I am not a therapist and you should know that services exist to address student wellness, equity, sexual harassment, financial stress, and more. See the services listed at <https://www.studentaffairs.ucla.edu/about/leadership-student-mental-health-services>. Counseling is available through the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at <https://www.counseling.ucla.edu> and through CAPS’s 24-hour crisis line at (310) 825-0768.

To repeat a point made above: faculty are required under the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment to inform the Title IX Coordinator—a *non-confidential resource*—should they become aware that you or any other student has experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Notification of Changes. Although this syllabus provides specific dates for particular lectures and their required readings, I reserve the right to make changes. I may substitute readings, I may drop readings, I may spend more time on some topic and less time on another. If I make any changes, I will notify students in class and/or via email and will endeavor to provide reasonable time for students to adjust to any changes.

Exhilarating and fun. Learning is a major focus of attending a university, and learning should always be challenging and exhilarating and fun. It often entails questioning what we know and what we believe, and confronting what we don't as yet know. The point of an education is not teaching you what to think, but how to think critically.

At the frontiers of a field, there are debates and disagreements, uncertainty and ambiguity. In learning about competing perspectives and the current disagreements in our field, you will hopefully develop a tolerance for ambiguity, a degree of skepticism, and an appreciation both for new knowledge claims to be developed and existing ones that remain essentially contested.

Readings and Website

Readings

Available for purchase at ASUCLA:

Stein, Arthur A. 1990. *Why Nations Cooperate: Circumstance and Choice in International Relations*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

All the other readings below are available at the course website. **Read only the pages assigned.** I've specifically excised the important analytic material and want you to skip extraneous detailed historical examples or statistical assessments. Most weeks have 150 pages or less of assigned reading.

Website

The website has all the readings assigned from journal articles. It will also have the slides for each lecture. I will make every effort to post lecture slides online before each lecture so that you can take additional notes on them during lecture. Slides will be available in the appropriate folder according to week and lecture on BruinLearn. Note that I may make changes by the time of the lecture, in which case I will post the updated slides after the lecture. NOTE: I often add material to lectures extemporaneously and this will not be on the slides (i.e., looking at the slides is not even a close substitute for coming to lectures).

Course Schedule:

1. Introduction (April 1, 2025)

Questions: Why is international relations important? What are different approaches to explaining international politics? What are the different questions the field asks? What are the levels of analysis?

2-3. Individuals, Groups, and Generations (April 3 and 8, 2025)

Questions that will be addressed and to keep in mind as you read:

In what ways do leaders matter? What is assumed about international politics by focusing on individuals? Do individual characteristics explain the decision to use force? What individual attributes or experiences matter for foreign policy? Does personality explain foreign policy? What are the roots of personality? Is international conflict a clash of personalities? Does gender affect the propensity towards conflict and violence? Does racism affect the propensity towards conflict and violence? What are the generational, rather than personal, experiences that can shape attitudes and thus foreign policy? What role does cognition play in explaining behavior? What role do emotions play? What is the impact of small groups making critical decisions? Is international relations simply interpersonal relations and whether leaders trust one another in face to face interactions?

Individuals

Etheridge, Lloyd. 1978. Personality Effects on American Foreign Policy, 1898–1968: A Test of Interpersonal Generalization Theory. *American Political Science Review* 72: 434–451. Skim.

Fitzsimmons, Scott. 2022. Personality and Adherence to International Agreements: The Case of President Donald Trump. *International Relations* 36(1): read pp. 42-47, glance at pp. 48, 50, the bottom of 51, and 54-55.

Barnhart, Joslyn N. and Robert F. Trager. 2023. How Women Make the World Safe for Democracy. *Journal of Democracy*, website.

Generations

Roskin, Michael. 1974. From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: Shifting Generational Paradigms. *Political Science Quarterly* 89: 563–588.

Beinart, Peter. 2006. The Isolationist Pendulum: Expect a Cyclical U.S. Retreat From World Affairs After the Iraq War. *Washington Post*, 22 January.

Interpersonal interactions

Hall, Todd and Keren Yarhi-Milo. 2012. The Personal Touch: Leaders' Impressions, Costly Signaling, and Assessments of Sincerity in International Affairs. *International Studies Quarterly* 56 (3): read 563-571.

Cognition and Emotions

Snyder, Jack L. 1978. Rationality at the Brink: The Role of Cognitive Processes in Failures of Deterrence. *World Politics* 30: 345-65.

Hardie, Iain, Dominic Johnson and Dominic Tierney. 2011. Psychological Aspects of War. In *The handbook on the political economy of war*, edited by Christopher J. Coyne and Rachel L. Mathers. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar. Read pp. 72-88

Kahneman, Daniel and Jonathan Renshon. 2007. Why Hawks Win. *Foreign Policy*, January-February: 34-38.

Mercer, Jonathan. 2006. Human Nature and the First Image: Emotion in International Politics. *Journal of International Relations and Development* 9(3). Read pp. 288-300.

Mercer, Jonathan. 2023. Racism, Stereotypes, and War. *International Security* 48(2). Read 7-10, 45-48.

Group Decision Making

Janis, Irving L. 1982. *Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Decisions and Fiascoes*. 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. Read 7-13, 242-254.

4-5. States: Wealth-seeking, Economic Interdependence, and International Relations (April 10 and 15, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: How do economic forces, such as industrialization and modernization, affect foreign policy? Are commerce, economic interdependence, and globalization the bases of peace? Are the consequences of industrialization always benign? What are other implications of modernization and globalization? Do they strengthen nationalism or internationalism? Does the growth of communications (the information superhighway) assure peace? Can globalization also be the basis for conflict? What drives deglobalization and what are its implications for conflict and cooperation?

The Road to Globalization and the Hope of a Richer more Peaceful World

- Rosecrance, Richard. 2017. Trade and Power. In *Conflict after the Cold War: Arguments on causes of war and peace*, fifth edition, edited by Richard K. Betts, 304-317. New York: Routledge.
- Brawley, Mark R. 2005. The Rise of the Trading State Revisited. In *Globalization, security, and the nation-state: paradigms in transition*, edited by Ersel Aydinli and James N. Rosenau, 67-80. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Wolf, Martin. 2003. Is Globalisation in Danger? *The World Economy* 26(4): 393-411.
- Ortiz-Ospina, Esteban. 2017. Is Globalization an Engine of Economic Development? Our World in Data, August 01.
- Obstfeld, Maurice. 2021. Globalization and Nationalism: Retrospect and Prospect. *Contemporary Economic Policy* 39(4): 675-690.

The Dark Side of Globalization (Conflict and the Prospect of Deglobalization?)

- Colantone, Italo and Piero Stanig. 2019. The Surge of Economic Nationalism in Western Europe. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 33(4): 128-151.
- Lobell, Steven E and Jordan Ernstsen. 2021. The Liberal International Trading Order (LITO) in an Era of Shifting Capabilities. *International Affairs* 97(5). Read 1489-1496, 1500-1504.
- North, Robert C. 1977. Toward a Framework for the Analysis of Scarcity and Conflict. *International Studies Quarterly* 21 (4): read 578-591.
- Homer-Dixon, Thomas F. 1994. Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence From Cases. *International Security* 19 (1): read pp. 5-9.
- Muller, Jerry Z. 2003. Is Culture Destroying Trade? *The Globalist*, October 6.
- Ostry, Jonathan D, Prakash Loungani and Davide Furceri. 2016. Neoliberalism: Oversold. *Finance & Development* 53(2): 38-41.

Barma, Naazneen H., Ely Ratner and Regine A. Spector. 2009. Open Authoritarian Regimes: Surviving and Thriving in the Liberal International Order. *Democracy and Society* 6(2): 8–11.

Morgan, T. Clifton, Constantinos Syropoulos and Yoto V. Yotov. 2023. Economic Sanctions: Evolution, Consequences, and Challenges. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 37(1): Read 3-11.

6-7. States: Domestic Politics (April 17 and 22, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: Are there differences in the foreign policies of democracies and dictatorships? Are democracies more peaceful? Toward whom? Why? Is there such a thing as a democratic peace? Does the process of democratization generate international conflict? Can a cooperative or conflictual foreign policy be explained by the stability or instability of the regime? Do leaders use conflictual foreign policy as a diversionary mechanism to boost their support? Do state/society relationships (weak versus strong states) explain foreign policy? What are the consequences of failed states?

Regime Type: Democracies and Autocracies

Feierabend, Ivo K. 1962. Expansionist and Isolationist Tendencies of Totalitarian Political Systems: A Theoretical Note. *Journal of Politics* 24 (4): 733–742.

Andreski, Stanislav. 1980. On the Peaceful Disposition of Military Dictatorships. *Journal of Strategic Studies* 3 (December): 3–10.

Gat, Azar. 2007. The Return of Authoritarian Great Powers. *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August): 59–69.

Mansfield, Edward D. and Jack Snyder. 2007. Turbulent Transitions: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War. In *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World*, edited by Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela R. Aall, 161-176. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Hyde, Susan D. and Elizabeth N. Saunders. 2020. Recapturing Regime Type in International Relations: Leaders, Institutions, and Agency Space. *International Organization* 74(2). Read 363-373.

Kreps, Sarah. 2020. *Social Media and International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Read pp. 21-44.

State Strength and Stability

Krasner, Stephen D. 1978. Policy-Making in a Weak State. In *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Read part of chap. 3, 55-70

Hagan, Joe D. 2017. Diversionary Theory of War in Foreign Policy Analysis. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. Read pp. 1-5, 12-22.

Alrababa'h, Ala' and Lisa Blaydes. 2021. Authoritarian Media and Diversionary Threats: Lessons From 30 Years of Syrian State Discourse. *Political Science Research and Methods* 9(4): read pp. 1-6 and p. 14.

Theiler, Tobias. 2018. The Microfoundations of Diversionary Conflict. *Security Studies* 27(2). Read pp. 332-340 on Putin and Crimea.

Patrick, Stewart. 2006. Weak States and Global Threats: Fact or Fiction? *The Washington Quarterly* 29. Read pp. 27-47.

Krasner, Stephen D. 2013. Seeking 'Good-Enough-Governance' — Not Democracy. blogs.reuters.com, September 22.

Leeds, Brett Ashley and Michaela Mattes. 2022. *Domestic Interests, Democracy, and Foreign Policy Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Read pp. 6-10.

8. Culture and International Relations: Ethnicity, Religion, Ideology (April 24, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: What is culture? What constitutes a cultural explanation for foreign policy? Are ethnic, religious, ideological, and even civilizational differences the bases for international hostility and conflict?

Tismaneanu, Vladimir and Bogdan C. Iacob. 2022. Ideological Origins of World War II. In *The Oxford handbook of World War II*, edited by G. Kurt Piehler and Jonathan A. Grant. New York: Oxford University Press. Read pp. 38-41, 50-51.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1993. The Clash of Civilizations? *Foreign Affairs* 72 (3): 22-49.

Lewis, Bernard. 1998. Memorandum for the President: What You Should Know About Islam. In *America and the Muslim Middle East: Memos to a President*, edited by Philip D. Zelikow and Robert B. Zoellick, 5-18. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.

Fukuyama, Francis. 1989. The End of History? *The National Interest*, no. 16: 3-18.

Ajami, Fouad. 2008. The Clash. *New York Times*, January 6.

Kagan, Robert. 2008. The End of the End of History. *New Republic*, April 23.

Fukuyama, Francis. 2006. After Neoconservatism. *New York Times*, February 19.

9. MIDTERM (April 29, 2025)

10. Structural Realism: The International System as the Source of Conflict and Cooperation (May 1, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: What is a structural or systemic argument? What are the assumptions of this perspective? What are the implications of thinking of the international system as anarchic?

Mearsheimer, John J. 2001. Anarchy and the Struggle for Power. In *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 29-54. New York: Norton.

Eckstein, Arthur M. 2006. Realist Paradigms of Interstate Behavior. In *Mediterranean anarchy, interstate war, and the rise of Rome*, chap. 2, 12-36. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate*. Read pp. 3–24.

11. The Balance of Power and Stability (May 6, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: What is the balance of power? How do we know when a balance of power exists? What does a balance of power explain? How would we evaluate balance-of-power theory against historical data? Are some distributions or balances of power, such as bipolarity or multipolarity, more stable?

Sheehan, Michael. 1996. The Meaning of the Balance of Power. In *The Balance of Power: History and Theory*, chap. 1, 1-23. New York: Routledge.

Deutsch, Karl and J. David Singer. 1964. Multipolar Power Systems and International Stability. *World Politics* 16 (3). Read 390-400.

Mearsheimer, John J. 1990. Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War. *International Security* 15 (1). Read pp. 5-21, skim pp. 21-31.

Larson, Deborah Welch and Alexei Shevchenko. 2014. Russia Says No: Power, Status, and Emotions in Foreign Policy. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 47. Read pp. 269-272, 273 (starting at section 5)-277.

12. Unipolarity, the Rise of New Powers, and Power Transitions (May 8, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: What are the implications of hegemony or unipolarity? Does it make for stability or instability? Was the “unipolar moment” momentary or sustainable? Did the US squander the moment or was it not sustainable regardless? Are the implications of unipolarity different for economic and security issue? What is the relationship between balance-of-power theory and unipolarity/hegemony? What are the implications of the power transition from one hegemonic power to another? Is the emergence of nonpolarity, bipolarity, or multipolarity simply a transitional period to Chinese hegemony?

Tammen, Ronald L. 2008. The Organski Legacy: A Fifty-Year Research Program. *International Interactions* 34(4). Read 314-323, skip 323-332.

Ikenberry, G. John, Michael Mastanduno and William C. Wohlforth. 2009. Introduction: Unipolarity, state behavior, and systemic consequences. *World Politics* 61(1). Read pp. 1-24.

Haass, Richard N. 2008. The Age of Nonpolarity: What Will Follow U.S. Dominance? *Foreign Affairs* 87 (3): 44–56. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20032650>

Lind, Jennifer. 2024. Back to Bipolarity: How China’s Rise Transformed the Balance of Power. *International Security* 49(2). Read 7-15, 17-20, 25-29, 39-47.

Kennedy, Paul. 2023. The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers Redux. *The New Statesman* Sept. 20. 13pages.

13. Structural Balance of Networks of Relationships (May 13, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: What is structural balance theory? How are the conceptions of balance and stability in structural balance theory different from those in balance of power theory?

Harary, Frank. 1961. A Structural Analysis of the Situation in the Middle East. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 5 (2): 167–178. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/172784>

Maoz, Zeev. 2011. Social Networks Analysis and the Study of World Politics. In *Networks of nations: the evolution, structure, and impact of International Networks, 1816-2001*. Structural analysis in the social sciences. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Read pp. 3-15, 21-27.

Hafner-Burton, Emilie M., Miles Kahler and Alexander H. Montgomery. 2009. Network Analysis for International Relations. *International Organization* 63(3). Read 559-574.

Kinne, Brandon J. 2013. Network Dynamics and the Evolution of International Cooperation. *American Political Science Review* 107(4). Read 766-773.

14-15. Geopolitics, Technology, and International Politics (May 15 and 20, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: What geopolitical factors explain foreign policy choices and involvement in war? What technological factors explain foreign policy choices and involvement in war? Can international stability be explained by the nature of weapons systems?

Dougherty, James E. and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr. 1981. Environmental Theories. In *Contending Theories of International Relations: a Comprehensive Survey*. 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Row. Read pp. 60-68, 71-76.

Van Evera, Stephen. 1998. Offense, Defense, and the Causes of War. *International Security* 22 (4): 5-43. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2539239>

Van Creveld, Martin. 2000. Technology and War I: To 1945. In *The Oxford history of modern war*, edited by Charles Townshend. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Read pp. 214-223.

Orme, John. 1997-98. The Utility of Force in a World of Scarcity. *International Security* 22 (3). Read pp. 145-156, 165-167.

Van Creveld, Martin. 2000. Technology and War II: Postmodern War? In *The Oxford History of Modern War*, edited by Charles Townshend. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Read pp. 341-354.

Ding, Jeffrey and Allan Dafoe. 2023. Engines of Power: Electricity, AI, and General-Purpose, Military Transformations. *European Journal of International Security* 8(3): 377-394.

Fettweis, Christopher J. 2018. Geopolitics, Geography, and War. In *The Oxford encyclopedia of empirical international relations theory*, edited by William R. Thompson. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Read pp. 3-7.

Miller, Steven V., Jaroslav Tir and John A. Vasquez. 2020. Geography, Territory, and Conflict. *Oxford Research Encyclopedias, International Studies*. Read pp. 2-12.

16-17. Strategic Interaction (May 22 and 27, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: Is strategic interaction another level of analysis? Are conflict and cooperation products of the strategic setting (and what explains that)? Why are the strategic settings (or games) of prisoners' dilemma and chicken the focus of so much attention and what do they teach us about international politics and the nature of international conflict and cooperation? What are the requisites of cooperation in international politics? Is misperception the source of conflict in international politics?

Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate*. Read pp. 55–111, 113–145, 151–169, 172–210.

18. The Promise of International Institutions and the Challenge of Subconventional Warfare (May 29, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: What are the prospects for international politics? Does the growth of international institutions portend a transformation of world politics? What are the implications of the growing importance of subnational actors? What is terrorism about and what are its implications?

Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate*. Read pp. 25–54.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1973. Transnational Organizations in World Politics. *World Politics* 25 (3): 333–368.

Van Creveld, Martin. 2000. Technology and War II: Postmodern War? In *The Oxford History of Modern War*, edited by Charles Townshend. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Read pp. 354–359 (on unconventional warfare).

Wright, Robert and Robert Kaplan. 2001. Mr. Order Meets Mr. Chaos. *Foreign Policy*, no. 124: 50–60.

19. No class and no office hours today (June 3, 2025)

20. Conclusion: Whither the World? Continuity and Change (June 5, 2025)

Questions to keep in mind as you read: Are we witnessing the end of war? Or the transformation of war? Or the return of war, including great power war? Is the liberal international order collapsing? What were scholarly expectations about the age and how have they come a cropper?

In lecture, I will also discuss. What have you learned? What do you still not know but know that you do not know? Can we combine competing perspectives on how the world works (and specifically, about international politics)? How should we handle theories at different levels of analysis? Are our models too general or ethnocentric? Can they deal with culturally distinctive conditions? What are the intellectual frontiers for the field? How do we react to the ambiguities and uncertainties associated with the current state of knowledge? What do the different theories discussed in the course imply about the future?

Pinker, Steven and Andrew Mack. 2014. The World is Not Falling Apart: Never Mind the Headlines. We've Never Lived in Such Peaceful Times. *Slate* Dec. 22.

Jervis, Robert. 2002. Theories of War in an Era of Leading-Power Peace. *American Political Science Review* 96(1): 1–14.

Adler-Nissen, Rebecca and Ayşe Zarakol. 2021. Struggles for Recognition: The Liberal International Order and the Merger of Its Discontents. *International Organization* 75(2). Read 611-622.

Mello, Patrick A. 2010. In search of new wars: The debate about a transformation of war. *European Journal of International Relations* 16(2): 297-309.

Allison, Graham. 2015. The Thucydides Trap: Are the U.S. And China Headed for War? *Atlantic* September 24:

Beckley, Michael and Hal Brands. 2024. How Primed for War Is China? *Foreign Policy*, February 4.

Posen, Barry. 2022. Hypotheses on the Implications of the Ukraine-Russia War. *Defense Priorities* June 7: 6 pp.