

MC 220 – International Relations I: World Politics and International Security

James Madison College
Michigan State University
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Hours: Tuesday 3-4, Thursday 10-11, by appointment, and open door

Class meetings: Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30-9:50 a.m.

Class location: 340 Case Hall

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce you to the field of international relations. While current events are important and interesting to study, and while I hope you will become significant consumers and evaluators of international relations, this is not what the course is explicitly about. Its primary purpose is to introduce you to the systematic study and evaluation of world politics and international security. Thus, some of the course material will be highly theoretical and it requires you to think conceptually. However as a means to helping you understand the material and see its relevance for real-world international relations, we will be paying attention to current and past events with an eye towards explaining and understanding why things turned out as they did and then trying to speculate on how the future will play out.

IR is an exciting, varied, and dynamic field – only a portion of which we can cover here. This course tries to sample the range of themes in international relations while providing you with a common language to put everything together. This course emphasizes the political and military side of international relations, while MC 221 examines international political economy. As you will see, however, the two courses are not always neatly separable, and your hard work this semester will help you throughout your career as an IR major and future practitioner.

We begin with you reading a book on the Rwandan genocide, with a focus on the (lack of) response from the international community. The book and the accompanying writing assignment will get you thinking about the actors, interests, issues, and values that exist in international relations. By examining a more recent event, we can see how international relations has developed and what, if anything, has changed over the last few centuries of the state system. The first part of the course will discuss what international relations is all about and provide the roots of a vocabulary that we can use to analyze international relations.

Part 2 examines some of the major theoretical traditions used to understand international relations. These sessions will provide the basic assumptions and implications of the various theories. We will then use these theories to evaluate different aspects of international politics throughout the semester. Your term paper assignment is designed for you to show how well one of these theoretical traditions helps us understand a real-world event.

Part 3 of the course focuses on the traditional understanding of international security. Our goal here is to understand the causes of war and how states behave once conflict arises. Part 4 examines theoretical explanations for and empirical examples of forms of international cooperation. Even though conflict is an ever-present possibility of the international system, it is

important to examine the various attempts to mitigate its outbreak. We will conclude the course with a series of short units looking at specific new issues and problems in international relations, including the post-Cold War international system, emergent security threats, human rights, and the environment. We want to be able to see both continuity and change in international relations.

There is some flexibility built into the schedule, especially near the end of the course, so there is the possibility of spending a bit more time on certain topics and rearranging some topics as student interests and current events may warrant. I'll announce any changes in class, giving you enough time to adjust your schedules. I will send out email to the class periodically – be sure to check your accounts regularly. Please note that this syllabus and the writing assignments are also posted on ANGEL should you misplace them.

Feel free to come see me at any point if you wish to talk more about the course or other concerns. I am generally around and available even outside of office hours – feel free to stop in if my door is open or set up an appointment. I will answer email questions, but I will also ask to talk with you in person for subjects that cannot be treated appropriately electronically. My expectation, as befits the standards of the JMC course instructional model, is that we will talk one or more times individually or in groups outside of class hours to discuss your term paper and/or other aspects of the course.

Required Readings (please use the appropriate editions)

Make sure to do the reading for the session for which it is assigned. While I know that the reading load is heavy at times, it is very important to keep on track with it. I recommend doing the reading in the order listed. For some topics it may not matter, but for others some readings provide a foundation and others provide a critique or extension. The reading includes both theoretical and empirical material. In the first class and throughout the semester, we will discuss strategies to master the reading.

1. Michael Barnett. 2002. *Eyewitness to a Genocide*. Cornell University Press. (either hard or soft cover is fine)
2. Paul Gordon Lauren, Gordon A. Craig, and Alexander L. George. 2007. *Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Challenges of Our Time*. 4th edition. Oxford University Press {noted as LCG in syllabus}
3. Richard W. Mansbach and Edward Rhodes (editors). 2006. *Global Politics in a Changing World: A Reader*. 3rd edition. Houghton Mifflin. {noted as MR in syllabus}
4. Karen A. Mingst and Jack L. Snyder (editors). 2004. *Essential Readings in World Politics*. 2nd Edition. W.W. Norton. {noted as MS in syllabus}
5. A number of articles as marked on the syllabus. They will all be on reserve in the Madison Library and most are also available on-line. The syllabus posted on ANGEL will have the direct link to those readings.
6. Regular reading of a periodical with good international coverage. *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and/or the *Economist* are preferred. *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *Survival*, and *International Security* are also recommended journals with more sustained coverage of many of the topics we are studying. They are also good resources for your term paper. Knowledge of current events is expected for the exams.
7. Any other readings as assigned – these would typically be short newspaper articles on a topic pertinent to the course.

Evaluation (every assignment must be successfully completed to pass the course)

1. Short paper (2-3 pages) on the Barnett book. Specific details will be given in class, but this assignment is intended to get you thinking about some of the critical issues currently playing out in international relations, especially the role of morality in international politics. This book is intended to be a fairly quick read, and your goal is to try to capture the images of the situation that Barnett is portraying. Make sure you identify the various issues, actors, and interests involved in this episode, and think about what this case can teach us about global politics in the current era. Due **Tuesday, September 11** at the beginning of class. Late papers will be marked down for each day they are late. **10% of course grade**
2. Term paper (10-12 pages). This paper will combine research on a decision or event related to international relations with an analysis of how different IR theories can help us understand that event. I will provide more details early in the semester concerning topic selection and the structure of the paper. That handout will also present a timeline for when different aspects of the paper (like the topic selection and preliminary bibliography) are due. The final draft of the paper will be due in class on Tuesday, November 20. Late papers will be marked down for each day they are late. Please see me throughout the semester to discuss your progress on various stages of the project. **25% of course grade for total project**
3. Midterm Exam. An in-class exam after Part 3 of the course that includes all material up to that point. The exam will be on Thursday, October 18. **25% of course grade**
4. Final Exam. An exam during the assigned time of finals period (Thursday, December 13). **30% of course grade**
5. Participation. I expect that there will be ample opportunities for discussion in class. While at certain times there will be more lecturing than at others, I will make time in each session for questions and discussion. Attendance is important and excessive absenteeism will hurt your grade. Additionally, your performance on exams will suffer if you don't both attend lectures and read the required material. I expect that while we might all disagree on certain issues throughout the semester that all discussions will be civil and everyone should respect each other. **10% of course grade**

For the exams, you are responsible for both the lecture material and the assigned readings (even those not discussed in class). There will be no make-ups without *prior* permission based on an *extremely* good and documented reason.

Honors Option: For those interested in an Honors Option, please see me by the end of the first week of classes to make arrangements. There will be extra meetings and assignments (reading and written), and a 3.5 must be maintained in order to receive Honors credit.

The topic for the Honors Option will be on war and the state. One book will form the basis for much for our discussions:

- Philip Bobbitt. 2002. *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History*.

Academic Honesty: Of course, no form of academic misconduct (on papers and exams) will be tolerated. All violations will face the harshest penalties allowed under MSU policy (which, at the minimum, is a 0.0 for the course). In part, the JMC's Student Handbook reads:

The faculty recognize that it is the responsibility of the instructor to take appropriate action if an act of academic dishonesty is discovered. It is further understood that a student may appeal a judgment of academic dishonesty to the Student-Faculty Judiciary. The Faculty Assembled recommend that in cases involving proven academic dishonesty, the student should receive, as a minimum, a 0.0 in the course and that a record of the circumstances, sanctions, and any appeal, be placed in the student's confidential file. (In accordance with University policy, the record may be made available to faculty if such information is deemed necessary in the discharging of their respective responsibilities). The individual faculty member or the Dean may recommend further action, including dismissal from the University, to the Student-Faculty Judiciary. If a second case of academic dishonesty should occur, the recommendation is that the faculty, through the Office of Academic Affairs, should seek the student's dismissal from the College and the University.

That said, virtually all violations can be avoided if you speak to me first. Not waiting until the last minute to finish assignments helps to avoid most problems.

Schedule

Please read the material before the class meeting for which it is assigned. Lectures and discussions will inevitably run over the listed dates, but we will catch up quickly. The different topics appear neatly defined, but we will soon see how they are all linked together. I will announce any changes in readings or assignment due dates in class and with enough time for you to make the appropriate adjustments to your schedules.

Part I: What is IR? Major Concepts of International Politics

Tuesday, August 28: Introduction to the course and subject

Reading: Start reading Barnett

Thursday, August 30: The Development of the Sovereign State System

Reading: LCG, chapters 1-3 (p. 3-69)

Tuesday, September 4: Anarchy, Order, Power, Interests, and Levels of Analysis

Reading: Bull, "Does Order Exist in World Politics" in MS (p. 120-124)
[Singer, "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations."](#)
[World Politics, 14\(1\): October 1961, p. 77-92.](#)

Part II: Theoretical Approaches to IR

Thursday, September 6: Theory, Morality, and Science in Studying IR

Reading: Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories"
 in MS (p. 4-11)
[Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories" Foreign Policy.](#)
[November/December 2004: 52-62.](#)

Gaddis, "History, Theory, and Common Ground" in MS (p. 11-18)
 LCG, chapter 7 (p. 137-151)

Tuesday, September 11: Realisms

Assignment Due: Short Paper on Barnett book

Reading: Morgenthau, "A Realist Theory of International Politics" in MS (p. 49-51)
 Thucydides, "Melian Dialogue" in MS (p. 18-19)
 Mearsheimer, "Anarchy and the Struggle for Power" in MS (p. 54-72)

Thursday, September 13: Liberalisms

Reading: Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics" in MS (p. 73-86)
 Kant, "To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch" in MS (p. 20-24)
 Wilson, "The Fourteen Points" in MS (p. 26-28)
 Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions" in MS (p. 283-294)

Tuesday, September 18: Constructivism

- Reading: Finnemore, "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention" in MS (102-118)
 Fierke, "Constructivism" chapter 9 in Dunne, Kurki, and Smith (eds) *International Relations Theories*. (on reserve in JMC library)

Thursday, September 20: Feminist Approaches

- Reading: Tickner, "Man, the State, and War: Gendered Perspectives on National Security" in MS (p. 94-101)
 Enloe, "The Personal is International" in MS (p. 202-206)
 Wilmer, "Women, The State, and War: Feminist Incursions into World Politics" in MR (p. 413-423)
 Hudson and Den Boer, "A Surplus of Men, A Deficit of Peace" in MR (p. 426-430)

Tuesday, September 25: Marxist and Other Approaches

- Reading: Frank, "The Development of Underdevelopment" in MS (p. 86-93)
 Wallerstein, "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis" in MS (p. 130-138)

Part III: Understanding International Security

Thursday, September 27: The Uses of Force and Causes of War

- Reading: Clausewitz, "War as an Instrument of Policy" in MS (p. 297-300)
 Schelling, "The Diplomacy of Violence" in MS (p. 301-309)
 LCG, chapter 10 (p. 198-219)

Tuesday, October 2: Causes of War: Crises, Perceptions, and the Role of Individuals

- Reading: Hermann and Hagan, "International Decision Making: Leadership Matters" in MS (p. 182-188)
 Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception" in MS (p. 189-202)
 LCG, chapter 11 (p. 220-242)

Thursday, October 4: The Balance of Power and Alliances

- Reading: Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma" in MS (p. 309-322)
 Morgenthau, "The Balance of Power" in MS (p. 124-129)
[Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power."](#)
International Security. 9(4): Spring 1985, p. 3-43.

*****Movie – Dr. Strangelove: Thursday, October 4 – 7pm, 340 South Case Hall**

Tuesday, October 9 and

Thursday, October 11: The Cold War and the Logics of Deterrence and Containment

Reading: LCG, chapters 5 and 9 (p. 88-109, 175-197)
 Kennan (“X”), “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” in MS (p. 28-33)
 Gaddis, “The Long Peace: Elements of Stability in the Postwar
 International System” in MS (p. 33-47)
[Wohlforth, “Realism and the End of the Cold War.” *International Security*. 19:3 \(Winter 1994/1995\), p. 91-129.](#)

Tuesday, October 16: The Strategic Value of Nuclear Weapons

Reading: Sagan and Waltz, “Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Weapons: For Better of
 For Worse?” in MS (p. 322-341)
 Mueller, “The Essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons: Stability in the
 Postwar World” in MS (p. 341-347)
 MR, chapter 3, “Weapons of Mass Destruction: The New Challenge”
 (p. 74-96)

Thursday, October 18: Midterm Exam

Part IV: Views on Cooperation

Tuesday, October 23: International Organizations: Roles in Managing Conflicts

Reading: LCG, chapter 4 (p. 70-87)
 Simmons, “Learning to Live with NGOs” in MR (p. 208-214)
 Economist, “NGOs: Sins of the Secular Missionaries” in MR (p. 214-220)
 Ikenberry, “Is American Multilateralism in Decline?” in MS (p. 262-282)

Thursday, October 25: The UN System: Hopes and Challenges in the Provision of Order

Reading: Weiss, Forsythe, and Coate, “The United Nations and Changing World
 Politics” in MR (p. 167-176)
 IISS, “The Future of the UN Security Council” in MR (p. 176-180)
 Economist, “The UN’s Missions Impossible” in MR (p. 180-184)
 Glennon, “Why the Security Council Failed” in MS (p. 208-222)

Tuesday, October 30: International Law, Negotiation, Ethics, and the Regulation of Conflict

Reading: LCG, chapters 8 and 12 (p. 152-174, 245-268)
 Slaughter, "Courting the World" in MR (p. 247-249)
 Economist, "For Us or Against Us?" in MR (p. 253-255)
 Kissinger, "The Pitfalls of Universal Jurisdiction" in MS (p. 253-258)
 Roth, "The Case for Universal Jurisdiction" in MS (p. 258-261)

Part V: Contemporary Issues in International Politics: New Challenges to Understanding Security?

Thursday, November 1: Systemic Changes after the Cold War – U.S. Hegemony/Unipolarity?

Reading: LCG, chapter 6 (p. 110-133)
 Jervis, "The Compulsive Empire" in MS (p. 138-141)
 Slaughter, "The Real New World Order" in MS (p. 149-156)

Tuesday, November 6: Terrorism and New Uses of Force

Reading: Cronin, "Behind the Curve: Globalization and International Terrorism" in MS (p. 367-381)
 Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism" in MS (p. 382-401)
 MR, Chapter 2, "Out of Control? The Rise of Postmodern War and Terrorism" (p. 32-69)

Thursday, November 8: Peoples, States, and War

Reading: Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" in MS (p. 163-169)
 Said, "The Clash of Ignorance" in MS (p. 170-173)
 Fuller, "The Future of Political Islam" in MS (p. 173-180)
 Buruma, "Final Cut" in MR (p. 392-402)

Tuesday, November 13: Democratization and International Security

Reading: MR, Chapter 4, "Democracy: A Global Institution?" (p. 98-128)

Thursday, November 15: Civil War, Failed States, Intervention, and Nation-Building

Reading: MR, Chapter 5, "Failed States" (p. 129-165)
 Doyle, "International Intervention" in MS (p. 347-357)
 Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict" in MS (p. 357-366)

Term Paper Due: Tuesday, November 20

Tuesday, November 20: Globalization, Sovereignty, and Political Identities

- Reading: Krasner, "Sovereignty" in MR (p. 13-20)
 Rosenau, "Turbulence in World Politics" in MR (p. 20-25)
 Denison, "A Virtual Visa?" in MR (p. 25-28)
 Hamid, "International Relations" in MR (p. 28-30)
 Economist, "A World of Exiles" in MR (p. 403-408)
 Foer, "Soccer v. McWorld" in MR (p. 461-464)
 Davidson, "Loves Microsoft, Hates America" in MR (p. 464-468)
 Economist, "My Continent, Right or Wrong" in MR (p. 191-194)
 Steinberger, "Eastward, Whoa: The European Union is Getting Too Big
 for Its Britches" in MR (p. 194-196)

Thursday, November 22 – Thanksgiving Day: No Class

Tuesday, November 27: The Idea of "Soft Security"

- Reading: MR, Chapter 9 "The Problem of Soft Security: Crime, Migration, and
 Disease" (p. 257-287)

Thursday, November 29: Human Rights

- Reading: Keck and Sikkink, "Transnational Activist Networks" in MS (p. 222-233)
 Sen, "Universal Truths: Human Rights and the Westernizing Illusion" in
 MS (p. 477-480)
 Franck, "Are Human Rights Universal?" in MR (p. 235-243)
 Economist, "Taming Leviathan" in MR (p. 243-246)
 Weiss, "No Daughters Need Apply" in MR (p. 424-425)
 Hinrichsen, "Ladies, You Have No Choice" in MR (p. 430-434)
 Economist, "Is It Crime or Culture?" in MR (p. 434-436)

Tuesday, December 4: Environment

- Reading: MR, Chapter 12, "Environmental Issues and the Global Commons"
 (p. 340-374)

Thursday, December 6: Conclusion: Where is the international state system going?

- Reading: Held and McGrew, "Globalization" in MS (p. 462-471)
 Mathews, "Power Shift" in MR (p. 199-207)

Final Exam: Thursday, December 13, 7:45-9:45 am