MC 221 — International Relations II: The Politics of International Economic Relations

Michigan State University (MSU)  James Madison College of Public Affairs
Spring 2015  Syllabus  Prof. R. G. Pinto

CONTACT INFORMATION
-Course (Section 3): Tue. and Th. 12:40 - 2:00 p.m.
Total contact/credit hours @ 4
-Room @ 339 Case Hall
Course website @ https://D2L.msu.edu
-Instructor: Office hours @ Tue. 10-11am and Th. 2:15-4pm
Phone @ (517) 353-8602
Office @ 305 S. Case Hall
Email @ pintor[at]msu.edu

COURSE OVERVIEW

MC 221 is the second semester of a year-long introduction to the study of international relations (IR). The course builds upon the concepts and theories that MC 220 examined in the first semester, adding depth. The two parts of the introduction also complement one another in the breadth of their international affairs. In preparation for two respective tracks or columns of upper-level requirements in the IR major, the first course emphasizes the foreign policy of war and peace while the second goes on to emphasize the global governance of the economy and to a lesser extent the environment. The main question throughout this course echoes its subject of international political economy (IPE): How much and how do politics govern the global economy?

On the one hand of constancy, we steadily situate our semester as a competition among the three conventional IPE theories—mercantilist, liberal, and materialist—as well as consistently ground the course on place-based learning, which highlights our own location.

On the other hand of change, we shift over nine thematic varieties of the globalizing economy: trade, ideas, labor, production, finance, gender, development, peace, and environment with an emphasis on trade, production and finance as central issues.

On balance, in constant change, we rely on a ‘causal’ chain that revolves around three variables of global governance sequenced as cause, intervention, and effect. We start off our focus on global governance or international regimes with competition among the set of theories over whether the entire chain exists as causation or correlation. We then gravitate toward empirical methods to observe these three ‘causal’ variables of any regime. After these preparations, our attention turns to the three variables of international regimes in a reverse order from the bottom up. In that general order, we concentrate on the elements of what governance is in itself, the downstream effects of what governance may change in the world, and what upstream global changes may make governance emerge. In other words aligned with the terminology of our IPE methods, we initially weigh any overall causation with the set of competing observers and eventually observe governance or regime in its outlines as intervening variable, outcomes as dependent variable, and origins as independent variable.

As a whole, the course proceeds in the order of the five units or sub-questions featured below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How much?</th>
<th>How much and how do politics govern the global economy?</th>
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<tr>
<td>How much?</td>
<td>What is IPE and what global governance and trade do its theories examine (or not)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How much? Economy?</td>
<td>Do politics govern trends and challenges in global trade, production and finance?</td>
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<td>Politics?</td>
<td>Are the origins or originators of global issues, flows and governance Spartan?</td>
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<td>How? Govern?</td>
<td>Who governs or institutes global economic issues?</td>
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LEARNING PURPOSE

The course focuses more on how to learn than on what to learn, actively applying lessons learned in collective deliberations that are purposively carried out as interactive seminars. It encourages a search for long-term understanding—that is, learning skills—rather than fragmented knowledge. Our three
ultimate goals will be to (1) enhance skills in careful thinking, interpersonal communication and decision making; (2) understand and evaluate different ways of analyzing IPE so as to establish a foundation for further study; and (3) increase transferable and durable understanding of past, present and future international relations through the cross-checking of theory and evidence.

COURSE COMPONENTS (AND GRADE REQUIREMENTS)

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<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>(S)participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Final exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm brief: Who Are You Wearing?</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final brief: Who Governs the Globe?</td>
<td>25%</td>
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-Briefs (20% and 25%) (due on Friday February 13th by 4pm, on Friday February 27th by 4pm, and Friday May 1st by 4pm each on paper as well as online through D2L): The emphasis in these tasks is on consistent quality within a limited quantity. The outline listed below is required for each of them. The outline leaves you only the minor choice of whether to label headings explicitly or implicitly, as you see fit in limiting their length to the maximum. Each of these assignments must feature page numbers and total word counts at the top of its first page. Each of them is to be written in a double-spaced and one-inch margin format, and a 12-point and Times New Roman font. Scholarly sources are academic (peer-reviewed) journals and books. Each of the assignments should draw upon relevant course materials. Further guidelines will be circulated through handouts customized for each brief in turn.

The first brief is a shorter (1,500-word maximum) writing assignment labelled “Who Are You Wearing?” with a triple pun intended, extending the single Oscars meaning where the question only concerns fashion designers. This place-based brief examines global economic governance through a complementary pair of experiential case studies. One case on the global issues of finance and ideas features two films that have gone global from the Midwestern U.S. as they adapted The Wonderful Wizard of Oz. The other case study on the global issues of trade, production, and labor involves three global supply chains of MSU sportswear. The brief gives a new meaning to our question as a theoretical pun: Who among the set of competing IPE ‘designers’ or theorists would you be wearing with the films and the sportswear on? It also gives the question a new meaning as an empirical pun: Who, if anyone, are the factual populations you might dress into fictional costumes as you play these films and the workers you might wear out as they produce your sportswear?

A second and longer brief (3,000-word maximum) labelled “Who Governs the Globe?” examines a ‘global governor’ of a key global economic issue in an arena that builds on our place-based learning. This brief analyzes and characterizes the transnational relations of a government, a for-profit business or a non-governmental non-profit. It focuses on how such an actor governs the global issue(s) of trade, production and/or finance. The brief situates an actor in one of the following competitive arenas, which grow out of our place-based learning and prepare for conference panels that present and discuss briefs with related research. Proposals and proposal peer reviews are due two months ahead of the ultimate due date to prepare us for these research briefs and their conference panels. The arenas that fit in as settings for the governing competitor are: a Fordist and/or post-Fordist system of production; the agricultural, automotive and/or biofuel industries; fair trade markets; global regulation in fiction from The Wizard of Oz or fact from Karl Polanyi; the World Economic Forum (WEF) and/or the World Social Forum (WSF); and relations among the G-20 and/or BRICS economies.

While handouts will customize the outline of the briefs, the general organization is:

(1) Ask and briefly answer a question about your ‘global governor’ or your films and sportswear (executive summary/thesis/“what?”).
(2) Explain why the question and answer are intelligible and important (background/”why care?”).
(3) Offer your analytical reasoning from question to well-supported answer (argument/”why?”).
(4) Identify which of the three IPE theories studied in the course most governs or fits to be worn by your ‘governor’ or your films and sportswear, and anticipate the three strongest objections to the ‘governor’ or sportswear as raised by two competing theories and perhaps from within the governor’s or sportswear’s own theory (”put in perspective”/”however”).
(5) Suggest further research that would respond to these three objections (comeback/”what else?”).
-Exams (20% each) (in class on March 19th and April 16th): These exams will test your understanding of all the material analyzed up to their respective points with an emphasis on untested material. Each exam will consist of short and long essay questions. The short-answer, identification questions will ask for items such as key concepts, trends, patterns, events, actors etc. A review guide to help you prepare for the exams will be posted on the course web site prior to the exams. The exams are closed-book (no notes or materials allowed).

-(S)participation (15%): Your participation includes constructive contributions to the participation of your fellow students in and beyond the classroom. You are to post at least 3-4 sentences of questions, comments, and/or reactions on the proper D2L discussion list before every other classroom meeting at a minimum. This online participation will be due by 11:59pm on Monday and Wednesday nights. Your participation grade for your contributions individually and in teams is based on the criteria below.

4.0 = Highly effective participant; informed questions/comments; clearly does the reading assigned for the classroom meeting. The student is a consistently excellent colleague who is always present and prepared for the classroom, and brings interesting and relevant questions/comments to bear on the materials. S/he is also a good listener and shows a genuine interest in the thoughts of her/his fellow students. The participant fully commits to the course and improves it through her/his contributions.

3.0 = Consistent participant; thoughtful questions/comments; does the reading assigned for the meeting. The student’s performance fits somewhere between two patterns. One type misses three classroom meetings, but is generally an active and enthusiastic participant. Another type is in the classroom/discussion forum and prepared for every classroom meeting, but occasionally talks without being aware of the direction of the conversation; that is, without listening to colleagues’ earlier ideas.

2.0 = Occasional participant; regularly attends the classroom, sporadic involvement in discussions, based more on personal opinion than analysis of course material. The student’s performance fits somewhere between three patterns. One type misses more than three meetings or comes to several meetings without having fully read and understood the assigned materials. Another type is generally prepared for the classroom and is present in every meeting, but shies away or holds back from discussion. A third type of student occasionally dominates classroom discussion and uses stifling rhetorical devices.

1.0 = Observer; regularly attends the classroom but does not get involved in discussion. The student misses more than four classroom meetings or comes to several meetings without preparing through work on the assigned materials. S/he avoids participating or occasionally dominates the classroom.

0.0 = Occasional observer; fails to attend hence participate in at least two-thirds of our class meetings.

Absences are justified based on appropriate validating documentation such as a doctor’s note or religious observance. To use any technical device (e.g., laptops, tablets, cell phones) during class without being considered absent on that day, a student must sit in a position that allows the instructor to observe that use to be for a purpose that the instructor perceives to be self-evidently educational. There is a balancing act of method to that mad vigilance and visibility (i.e. high-tech student sitting in the front row and/or next to the instructor). On the one hand, some students understandably prefer to use technology to transport articles and take notes. On the other hand, every student is discouraged from using technology during class because it risks making both him/her and nearby classmates absent minded.

COURSE LOGISTICS
-Office hours: If you have a schedule conflict at those times, we can set an appointment to meet once you send your instructor an e-mail including all possible times that work for you toward a reply with a match.

-Reading materials: The two books and the course pack in the following list are required readings that you will need to obtain for use throughout the semester. Other assigned materials—listed below in the schedule section of this syllabus—will be available to students from our website on D2L and/or from the MSU Library course reserves (observing “fair use” intellectual property).


Various authors. Course Pack for Section 3 (Pinto) of MC 221. East Lansing: MSU Libraries Course Materials Program. MC below.
-**Academic honesty:** You must observe the rules of the General Student Regulation 1.00 on Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and the all-University policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades. As an MSU instructor at Madison, I am required to bring all suspected violations to the appropriate offices.

-**Students with special needs:** Every effort will be made to accommodate students with special needs who are registered with MSU’s Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) and who provide the instructor with an RCPD accommodation form within the first two weeks of the semester.

**HONORS OPTION**
Honors credit for this course may be earned by writing a post-semester book review and facilitating discussion in two semester gatherings of the open event series named BRICS Broadcast: Brazilian Bay (B4). We analyze the mercantilist, liberal and materialist theories of IPE as Jorge Amado and to a lesser extent Mario Vargas Llosa each fictionalized them in three novels. The fictional books in each of these trios share a similar setting and author but differ in their theoretical priorities—respectively on security, liberty and justice. The writing assignment applies these three theories to a book review of how Amado prioritizes his literary accounts in part through a reading guide to his novel *The Violent Land* (New York: Penguin Books, 2013 [1943]) and in full through two of his novels: *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon: Chronicle of a Provincial City* (New York: Vintage International, 2006 [1958]) and *The Golden Harvest* (New York: Avon Books, 1992 [1944]). Our semester discussions focus on the guide to his first novel (2013[1943]) and on the entire second novel (2006[1958]) alongside three films that resemble his novels: *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon* (1983), *Tieta of Agreste* (1996), and *The Burning Season* (1994). As for Vargas Llosa, the written assignment applies the competing theories to a review of how he prioritizes his literary accounts in a fuller film adaptation of his novel *The Time of the Hero* (1962) and in part through descriptive summaries of his novels *The Storyteller* (1987) and *The Green House* (1965). Our semester discussions also focus on the film adaptation of his first novel and on the summaries of his second and third novels. The MC 221 honors option meets on February 5th and April 23rd as part of the longer B4 series on several Thursday afternoons from 4pm to 4:45pm. We will pinpoint an integrated schedule and a routine classroom location according to the number of student participants. If you are considering the honors option, please inform your instructor in person and by e-mail during the first week of the term.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**What is IPE and what global governance and trade do its theories examine (or not)?**

**1/13 (Tue.): Introductions**

**1/15 (Th.): Overview and Disciplinary Fit**

**1/20 (Tue.): Competing Pre-Analytic Priorities of Analytic Theories**

**1/22 (Th.): Theoretical Competition over Knowledge of IR and Trends of Trade**
University of Pittsburgh Press, pp. 165-170. 


Excerpt from DJ, Ch. <1: A Movement or a Market?, pp. 11-17 excerpt.

1/27 (Tue): Safe Priority of Mercantilist Theory—on Governance and ‘Fair’ ‘Trade’ in a World Economy


Excerpt from DJ, Ch. <1: A Movement or a Market?, pp. 17-24 excerpt.


1/29 (Th): Free Priority of Liberal Theory—on Governance and Fair Trade in a World Economy


Excerpt from DJ, Ch. <1: A Movement or a Market?, pp. 24-35 excerpt.


2/3 (Tue): Fair Priority of Materialist Theory—on Governance and Fair Trade in a World Economy


DJ, Ch. 2+: Coffee, Commodities, Crisis; and Epilogue excerpt, pp. 36-57; 269-274.


2/5 (Th): Theories Compete over Governance of the Oz World (Simulation)


What outlines and outcomes of a globalizing governance do IPE methods observe?

2/10 (Tue): (Rationalist) Methods to Study the Procedural and Ruling Outlines of International Regimes

OW, Ch. <2 heading—Methodological Issues, pp. 27-33.


DJ, Appendix: Research Methods, pp. 271-287.
2/12 (Th): Constructivist Methods to Study Normative and Principled Outlines of International Regimes


OW, Ch. <13 heading--The rise and stall of the Washington Consensus, pp. 267-270.


2/13 (Fri.), 4pm: Due date for midterm brief—Who Are You Wearing? (E_1-2)

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<tr>
<th>OW, Ch. 9: Global Division of Labour, pp. 182-199.</th>
<th>Excerpt from OW, Ch. &lt;13: Ideas, pp. 261-265 excerpt.</th>
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2/17 (Tue.): Outlines of Global Regimes Governing (Fair Trade) Coffee


DJ, Ch. 3: One Region, Two Markets, pp. 58-92.

2/19 (Th.): (Economic) Outcomes of (Fair Trade) Governance


DJ, Ch. 4+: The Difference a Market Makes—Livelihoods and Labor; and Epilogue excerpt, pp. 93-132; 275-282.

2/24 (Tue.): Ecological Outcomes of (Fair Trade) Governance with Competing Priorities


DJ, Ch. 5+: A Sustainable Cup? Fair Trade, Shade-Grown Coffee, and Organic Production; and Epilogue excerpt, pp. 133-164; 282-291.

2/26 (Th.): (Social) Outcomes of (Fair Trade) Governance

DJ, Ch. 6: Eating and Staying on the Land: Food Security and Migration, pp. 165-198.


2/27 (Fri.), 4p: Due date online and on paper to propose a final brief—Who Governs the Globe? (E_4-5)


3/3 (Tue.): Globalization Baseline as Political Economy Turns Worldwide from 1400 to 1800

Due date to submit—online and on paper—anonymous peer reviews of two proposals headed toward other panels with the briefs that most differ from your own.

OW, Ch. 3: Forging a World Economy, pp. 43-66.

3/5 (Th.): U.S. Midwest as the World Political Economy Transforms, 1800-1945
OW, Ch. 4: Industry, Empire and War, pp. 67-90. * Who Are You Wearing? *
Walt Disney Studios. 1944. The Amazon Awakens. 4 minutes.

3/10; 3/12 (Tue.; Th.): Spring break at mid-semester

3/17 (Tue.): U.S. Midwest as the World Political Economy Globalizes, 1945-2013
OW, Chs. 5 and <13: Growing a Global Economy and Ch. 13 heading--Ideas, interests and the global financial crisis, pp. 91-106 and 273-276.

3/19 (Th.): Midterm exam (E_1-2)

Do politics govern trends and challenges in global trade, production and finance?

3/24 (Tue.): International Trade

3/26 (Th.): Do (U.S. Midwestern) Politics Regulate International Trade or Laissez it Faire?
DJ, Epilogue excerpt, pp. 297-300.

3/31 (Tue.): Business Investment and Supply Chains in Transnational Production
OW, Ch. 7: Transnational Production, pp. 132-153.
DJ, Ch. 7: Dancing with the Devil?, pp. 199-231.

4/2 (Th.): Do (U.S. Midwestern) Politics Regulate Transnational Production or Laissez it Faire?
OW, Ch. <13 heading--The Information revolution and the information society, pp. 265-267.
DJ, Epilogue excerpt, pp. 291-297.

4/7 (Tue.): Global Finance
OW, Ch. 8: The Global Financial System, pp. 154-181.

4/9 (Th.): Do (U.S. Midwestern) Politics Regulate Global Finance or Laissez it Faire?

4/14 (Tue.): Do (U.S. Midwestern) Politics Regulate Global ‘Fair’ Trade, Production and Finance?
DJ, Conclusion and Epilogue excerpt, pp. 259-266 and 300-325.

4/16 (Th.): Final exam (E_3)

Are the origins or originators of global issues, flows and governance Spartan?

4/21 (Tue.): Gender and Development Issues of the Global Political Economy

4/23 (Th.): Spartan Originators (as Global Issues) Go Green (in Ecology); Go White (in Peace)
OW, Chs. 14 and <12: Security and Ch. 12 headings—IPE debates; Major developments; Climate change negotiations, pp. 277-294 and 245-247; 249-253; 257-259.

4/28 (Tue.): Spartan Origins or Originators of Economic Flows and Governance Globally

Who governs or institutes global economic issues?

4/30 (Th.): The Actors Who Govern or Institute Global Economic Issues
OW, Ch. 15: Governing the Global Political Economy, pp. 295-311.


5/1 (Fri.), 4pm: Due date on paper, online for final brief—Who Governs the Globe? (E_3-5)


5/4 (Mon., 12:45 - 2:45pm) (scheduled exam period): Spartan conference on who governs the globe
Reflections on team-based learning (TBL) due on paper.