INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS I: WORLD POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Course overview and objectives: MC 220 is the first half of a year-long introduction to the field of International Relations. We will be examining many of the central concepts, theories, and analytical tools used in contemporary social science to understand and explain international politics, with an emphasis on security. The course will focus on the strengths and weaknesses of different theoretical approaches in explaining the causes of war and of war termination, just means and ends for war, and the use of force including humanitarian intervention. We will use case studies to illustrate the use of competing theoretical approaches and concepts. The course is designed to enhance students’ abilities to think critically and analytically about current problems and challenges in international politics.

This course has five main objectives:

1) To familiarize yourself with key theories and approaches in the field of international relations. This will include Realism, Neo-Realism, Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism, Constructivism, Feminism, and Political Psychology.

2) To be able to apply these different theories and approaches to explaining particular cases of conflict and cooperation. In doing so, we will explore the strengths and weaknesses of these various approaches: the valuable insights each perspectives can give, to what extent the approaches are complimentary and to what extent they are contradictory, as well as the limits of these approaches in fully being able to explain patterns of conflict and cooperation.

3) To give you the concepts you will need to evaluate both theory and empirical cases of conflict and cooperation, and to understand the contested nature of the concepts. These concepts include war, power, balance of power, the security dilemma, collective security, foreign policy, security, anarchy, humanitarian intervention, globalization, and ideology.

4) To better understand the particular cases of conflict and cooperation we will study, as well as understand changing conceptions of international security and ways to promote international cooperation.

5) To provide you with opportunities to improve your critical thinking, reading, writing, and speaking abilities. Particular attention will be given to developing argumentation skills, both orally and in writing, through written assignments, in class discussions and weekly discussions on ANGEL, in class debates, and simulations. We will focus on the use of logic and evidence to build an argument, and address weaknesses and exceptions in order to determine the limits of an argument.
**Course organization:**

The course is organized so that case studies can illuminate a better understanding of international relations theory. We begin with an introduction to international relations theory and to different levels of analysis used to explain war and war termination. Moving to our first case study, we will examine the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the U.S. in WWII. This initial case study will serve as an object of analysis to which we will return over the next several weeks: as we examine each of the various theories of international relations in turn, we will apply them to the case of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to see how each would provide different explanations and insights into the case. Is this a just another case of war among great powers that traditionally international relations theory tried to explain? How can this be explained through the balance of power? If Japan had been a democracy, would the war with Japan have been avoided? Did race play a role in comparing civilian casualties in American bombardments in Japan as opposed to Europe? Could further negotiations or different conditions for surrender have avoided the bombings? Can and should international law limit the goals and means for war? What role do ideology, culture, and the worldviews of leaders play in these decisions? This case study will culminate with a policy memo that you write taking on the position of one of the decision-makers to this case. You will use international relations theory to weigh alternative policy options and make a recommendation which you will persuasively argue for in our simulation of decision-making at that time.

Our next case study will be the causes of the genocide in Rwanda, and the failure of the international community to stop the genocide. This case study will particularly enable us to examine the strengths and limits of theory. It gives us the opportunity to examine intra-state rather than inter-state war, war that involves a small state rather than a great power, the causes of the genocide, the role of international law and UN peacekeeping/peacemaking in stopping genocide, and the reasons for the failure of the international community to stop the genocide. We will examine the construction of race by Belgian colonialists and their privileging the Tutsis as an underlying condition for later conflicts, as well as race as one of several factors that may have played into the abandonment of Rwanda by the international community. We will also examine the extent to which powers should be motivated by values/interests in decisions for humanitarian intervention, how civil war in one country can lead to regional war, and how democratization is a delicate process that can lead to violence. We will also compare and contrast the causes for the Rwandan genocide and the lack of international intervention to the causes for the genocide in Darfur and obstacles to international effective intervention.

Our third case will expand the examination of international relations theory as it relates to the NATO intervention in Libya in 2011, as well as debates as to whether and how the international community and/or the U.S. should intervene in Syria now that 100,000 people have been killed in Syria over the past two years, and apparently 1000 civilians in August, 2013 due to the use of chemical weapons. What should the criteria for humanitarian intervention be? What were the multiple and varied motives of NATO members for intervention in Libya? Is the NATO
intervention more effective than UN peacekeeping efforts in previous cases we have studied? What light does this case shed on the ability of IR theories to explain the causes and effects of the intervention? We will engage in a formal debate, grounded in the assumptions of International Relations theories, as to whether and how the U.S. should intervene in Syria. What are the Realist assumptions behind concerns over either “losing” Syria to Iran and to Russia by not aiding the opposition or to concerns over some elements of the opposition eventually turning against the U.S.? What are the criteria for humanitarian intervention and weighing the human costs of not intervening v.s. the possibilities of further casualties through air strikes? Should states intervene to affirm the international norm against the use of chemical weapons?

Our next case study analyzes the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – the causes of the conflict, possibilities for its resolution, as well as its role in regional conflict in the Middle East, and in U.S. national security interests. Israel and the Palestinian Authority are currently engaged in negotiations that are supposed to lead to a final peace agreement with U.S. mediation. As with the previous cases, this case will serve as a real-world example in which to ground the various theories we have studied. The main emphasis will be on the ability of the theories to explain efforts at cooperation and the difficulties of reaching successful peace negotiations. We will be focusing on the Camp David Negotiations led by President Clinton and the varied reasons for the failure to reach an agreement, the subsequent peace negotiations at Taba. We will study the Clinton Parameters, Bush Road Map, and Saudi 2002 peace plan. We will not only be looking at issues of power and the relevance of democracy as highlighted by realist and liberal approaches, but will also be looking at the importance of culture, ideology, personality, and domestic constraints on efforts at cooperation. Therefore we will also apply constructivism and political psychology in this case study. No matter what the immediate effects, a peace agreement will have to entail negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority over Jerusalem, refugees, borders, and security. After conducting research concerning the interests, goals, and past negotiating stances of the actor with whom you are least empathetic, you will represent that actor’s interests and proposed solutions in our simulation of the negotiations. Some of you will also take on the role of mediators in the simulation, after having researched the past mediation efforts of the United States and have proposed your own peace plan. The research papers will also embed the articulation of interests and goals of the actors in the logic and assumptions of international relations theory. After reading and discussing Daniel Kurtzer’s, The Peace Puzzle: America’s Quest for Arab-Israeli Peace, 1989-2011 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), he will join us in a video-conference to discuss current negotiations and answer your questions regarding his book. He is a professor at Princeton University and former Ambassador to Egypt and to Israel.

Finally, we will end the semester with revisiting the strengths and limits of theory to explain patterns of conflict and particular instances of conflict and cooperation. How can we use these approaches in a complementary fashion to explain these phenomenon? How has the study of security issues, the concept of security and security threats, and the nature of conflict changed since the end of the Cold War? What role does nationalism, ideology, democratization, globalization, and non-state actors play in both influencing conflict and cooperation? How does globalization effect health issues and should they be included in a broadened definition of
security? How does it influence traditional causes of conflict concerning competition over resources? Finally, how does the genuine complexity and contingent nature of international relations limit the explanatory power of international relations theories which strive to separate independent causes from their effects and find universal truths?

Evaluation:

The final grade will be based on the following:

1) In class participation: 25%
Students must faithfully complete a close reading of assigned readings before class and must regularly participate in class based on an analysis of these readings and an engagement with other student viewpoints. Participation also includes full engagement in and preparation for formal in class debates and simulations.

Thursday, September 19 – simulation of decision-making on dropping the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Club Sparta
Thursday, October 24 – formal debate on intervention in Syria in class
Thursday, November 14 and Tuesday, November 19 – simulations of peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, mediated by American mediators. You will try to negotiate the outlines and specifics of a peace agreement and then present it to the class. In Club Sparta.

You are permitted 2 absences from the class during the semester except on days where we have simulations, formal debates, or exams. You can take these absences for being sick, having to go to a wedding, extra-curricular trips such as Model UN or debate, job interview, etc... Use them wisely and only when you absolutely need to. Any absence beyond these two, and/or during a simulation, will require medical notification from a doctor. Otherwise, any additional absences will negatively impact your participation grade.

The atmosphere for constructive discussions must be one in which we all speak respectfully to one another and treat one another’s ideas and contributions with respect. That does not mean that we cannot critique each other’s ideas respectfully. Critical analysis of the readings and their arguments requires us to challenge one another as to the logic, evidence for, and exceptions to a variety of arguments. This helps us discover how to better build our arguments, as well as recognize their limits.

2) Participation in weekly web discussions: 15%
Discussion question(s) regarding each week’s reading will be posted for your response. The questions based on the coming Tuesday’s readings will be posted on ANGEL the previous Friday. You have until 10pm Monday to make your initial post and respond to other posts. Any posts or responses after Monday at 10pm will not be counted. Try to make your initial posts as early as possible so that others have time to read them and respond. Participation in web forums will enable you to come to class better prepared for deepening the discussion, and will give you an opportunity to discuss the material outside of class. I will be checking, and at times
participating in these discussions. You will have the opportunity to engage the viewpoints of other students, make connections among the readings and link theory with empirical examples, and ask clarifying questions.

2) 5 page policy memo: 15% due at the beginning of class Thursday, September 19th
Write a memo, from the perspective of the office/position of the decision-maker that you are representing for our first simulation of decision-making on the dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Weigh three different policy alternatives, providing the rationale for recommending one of the three options. For example several of many possibilities might be recommending negotiating conditional surrender, providing an example of the damage one of the bombs could do in an unpopulated area, or replicating what U.S. decision-makers actually decided. Use two theories of international relations to bolster your recommendation. Assess a third theory in your assessment of a counter-argument, or assessment of the reasons for why the other alternatives are less desirable. For this assignment, you must stick to the 5 page limit (double spaced) because part of the exercise is learning how to write concisely as often policymakers do not have the time to read longer memos.

4) Research paper: 20%
You will be assigned to represent Israel, the Palestinian Authority, or the United States (as mediator). You will write an 8 page research paper (in this assignment you can go over the 8 page minimum), outlining your interests and the broad outlines of what you would expect in terms of a peace agreement in regard to the three main issues of borders, refugees, and Jerusalem. In writing your paper, you will be expected to explain your interests and expectations both in terms of your knowledge of this particular case, and international relations theory. The American negotiator will of course have to show an understanding of both Israeli and Palestinian interests, and offer creative compromises. Use theory to support your articulation of interests.

5) Final Exam: 25%
The final will be comprehensive. It will consist of short answer questions, and a choice between two longer essay questions. You must take the exams at the designated time, unless you have been given permission from me prior to the exam due to an emergency.

Evaluation Criteria: I use the following criteria for assessing work:
4.0 – Your work is excellent relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements; you not only make strong, organized arguments that make good use of evidence and link theory to empirical cases, but also are able to recognize the limits of those arguments through thoughtful assessments of alternative explanations. Your work is probing, perceptive, and well expressed.
3.0 – Your work is good relative to the level of course requirements; it demonstrates very good command of the materials, is well written, and insightful.
2.0 – Your work meets requirements of the assignment, demonstrates adequate command of materials, and is fairly well expressed. Please note that an average grade is a 2.5.
1.0 – Your work meets minimum requirements for credit but shows weaknesses in the mastery of material and expression.
0.0 – Your work is unsatisfactory for credit because of major problems in understanding and
expressing that understanding of course material.

Required to attend lectures and films related to class

Office Hours and Availability: I strongly encourage everyone to take advantage of the four and a half hours a week I have devoted to office hours. Please do contact me if you cannot make the office hours due to your class schedule, and I will be happy to make an appointment with you at another time. Please come with questions concerning lectures, readings, or assignments, or if you would just like to discuss the reading, relate the reading to what you are doing in another class or your past experiences. I encourage you to come to office hours with outlines for all written assignments, so that we can discuss your ideas and so that I have the opportunity to advise you. I also encourage you to write outlines for answers to possible essay questions on the final, and I would be happy to discuss those with you in office hours as well. My door is open to you, and I look forward to having stimulating discussions with you outside class (over lunch and in office hours), as well as in class. I would like everyone to succeed, and am available to help you do so.

Required Readings:

You are asked to purchase the following three books at the book store. They will also be available at the Madison library and in the reserve reading section. All other articles and chapters assigned in this syllabus, which are not designated as being in one of these three books, are in the course packet for the class. All students are required to read the New York Times, or a comparable newspaper, on a daily basis (it is readily available around the College).


4) Course Packet, available at Collegeville, 321 E. Grant River (922-0013).

Academic Integrity: James Madison College and Michigan State University policies on academic integrity and plagiarism will be strictly enforced in this course. See the James Madison College Handbook section, Standards and Expectations, and the MSU Academic Programs catalogue, for further information. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.
Honors Option:

In the Honors Option we will be meeting outside of class to discuss and analyze the book by Michael Walzer, *Arguing About War* (Yale University Press, 2006). The book discusses just war theory and then applies it to the first Gulf War, Kosovo, Israel/Palestine conflicts, and the war in Iraq. Students in the honors option will also write a 5 page critique of this book. A 3.5 must be maintained in order to receive Honors credit. The honors designation for this course requires outstanding work in all aspects of the class, in addition to satisfactory completion of the additional work that is required of those participating in the honors option sessions.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Contending Theories of International Relations

August 29, TH: Introduction to the course and to the dominant theories of international relations

Reading: All readings for today are in *Essential Readings*
- Snyder, “One World, Rival Theories,” 2-9
- Thucydides, “Melian Dialogue,” 10-11
- Immanual Kant, “To Perpetual Peace” *Essential Readings*, 12-15

First Case Study: Rules of War and the Dropping of the Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

September 3, T: Alternative means and goals available for U.S. decision makers

Reading: All the readings for today are in the course packet:
- Fussell, *Thank God for the Atom Bomb and Other Essays*, pp. 14-44.
- Statement by President Truman, August 6, 1945.

September 5, TH: No class, Rosh Hashanah

Make up classes
- September 8, S: Viewing clips from the film *The Fog of War* at my home, and start of semester get together/dinner, 5pm
- September 24, T: I am introducing, viewing, then leading discussion of the film “The Gatekeepers” 147 Comm Arts Building, 7pm
- October 7, M: Lecture by Professor Daniel Byman 12:40-2:00 Club Sparta
- October 15, T: 12:40-2:00 lecture by Professor Moshe Maoz, JMC library
- November 19, T: 7pm Movie, “The Other Son,” 147 Comm. Arts Building.

September 10, T: Realism, Neo-Realism and limitations to war
   Reading:

September 12, TH: Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism
   Reading:
   Michael Doyle, “Liberalism and World Politics,” Essential Readings, 50-63
   Hedley Bull, “Does Order Exist in World Politics?” Essential Readings, 105-109
   Theories of International Politics and Zombies, 47-60

September 17, T: Constructivism and Feminist Perspectives
   Reading:
   Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of It,” Essential Readings, 64-88
   Ann Tickner, “Man, the State, and War: Gendered Perspectives on National Security,” Essential Readings, 89-97

September 19, TH: Policy Memos Due at the beginning of class.
   Simulation of Decision-Making on Dropping the Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Club Sparta

Second Case Study: Humanitarian Intervention: Learning from the Genocide in Rwanda

September 24, T: Cases of non-intervention by superpower
   Reading:
   Samantha Power, “Bystanders to Genocide: Why the United States Let the Rwandan Tragedy Happen” Essential Readings 233-252

7pm I am introducing, then we will be watching, and leading discussion of the movie “The Gatekeepers” 147 Comm Arts Building. Documentary based on telling interviews

September 26, TH: Roots of the genocide
Reading:
*Eyewitness to a Genocide*, pp. 1-73

October 1, T: Genocide and the failure of the United Nations
Reading:
*Eyewitness to a Genocide*, pp. 74-129

October 3, TH: Norms and Criteria for Humanitarian Intervention
Reading:
*Eyewitness to a Genocide*, pp. 130-181

October 7, M: Lecture by Professor Daniel Byman 12:40-2:00 Club Sparta "Israeli Counterterrorism: Successes, Failures, and Challenges Ahead." He is a Professor at Georgetown University, Security Studies; Senior Fellow and Research Director of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institute; author of *A High Price: The Triumphs and Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism* (2012)

October 8, T: Lessons not learned for Sudan:
Reading: All readings for today are in the course packet:

**Third Case Study – Humanitarian Intervention – Libya and Syria?**

October 10, TH: Universal Jurisdiction
Reading: All readings for today are in *Essential Readings*
Kenneth Roth, “The Case for Universal Jurisdiction,” 270-273
Kenneth Rodman, “Is Peace in the Interests of justice? The Case for Broad Prosecutorial Discretion at the International Criminal Court,” 274-291
John Mearsheimer, “The False Promise of International Institutions,” 308-319

October 15, T: Debates on Intervention in Syria
Reading:
Current think tank, journal, and news articles will be posted on ANGEL

12:40-2:00 lecture by Professor Moshe Maoz, “The Arab Spring Upheavals, Syria and Israel,” JMC library. Professor Emeritus of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, Hebrew University, Visiting Fellow, Frankel Jewish Studies Center at the University of Michigan.

October 17, TH: Criteria for Humanitarian Intervention
Reading: Gareth Evans, “When Is It Right to Fight?” Essential Readings 444-458
G. Finnemore, “From The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force” in Essential Readings, 459-483

October 22, T: Arguments For and Against NATO Intervention in Libya
Reading: All readings for today are posted on ANGEL under Libya file under lessons and are from Foreign Affairs
Micah Zenko, “They Mythology of Intervention,” March 28, 2011, pp. 1-4
“What Qaddafi Said,” June 4, 2011, pp. 1-4
David Kaye, “Who’s Afraid of the International Criminal Court?” May/June 2011, pp. 1
Dirk Vandewalle, “Rebel Rivalries in Libya,” August 18, 2011, pp. 1-4

October 24, TH: Formal Debate on Possible Intervention in Syria

Fourth Case Study – Conflict and Cooperation Between Israelis and Palestinians

October 29, T: The Peace Process in the 1990’s and its Collapse
Reading: Amos Oz, “Between Right and Right” in How to Cure a Fanatic, in the course packet, pp. 122-139.

October 31, TH: Debates Over American Mediation and Varied Perceptions of Methods of Promoting Cooperation
Reading: 

November 5, T: Lessons Learned and Obama’s Efforts
Reading: 

November 7, TH: What can international relations theory contribute to understanding this case of conflict and cooperation?
Reading:
Robert Jervis, “Cooperation under the Security Dilemma,” Essential Readings, 335-348
Carl Von Clausewitz, “War as an Instrument of Policy,” Essential Readings, 322-325

November 12, T: Video conference with Professor Daniel Kurtzer, Professor of Middle Eastern Studies at Princeton University, and former Ambassador to Egypt and to Israel. South Case seminar room, 319L. Come with three questions regarding to his book that you read as well as current negotiations.

November 14, TH: Papers Are Due at the beginning of class
Simulations of peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority held at Club Sparta.

November 19, T: Simulation of peace negotiations between Israelis and the Palestinian Authority held at Club Sparta.


Conclusion: Strengths and Weaknesses of International Relations Theory/Future Trends
November 22, TH: Defining and Protecting Human Rights, International Non-Governmental
Organizations

Reading:
Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, “Transnational Advocacy Networks in International Politics,” *Essential Readings* 253-264

Reading:

November 28, TH: No class, Thanksgiving

December 3, T: Political Psychology and International Relations
Reading: Readings in course pack

December 5, TH: Review for the final exam

December 12, TH: 7:45-9:45am Final Exam