PS 674-001 Proseminar in International Relations Theory (Spring 2009)

**Instructor:** Dr. Clayton Thyne  
**Course Time:** MW 2:00 – 3:15PM  
**Location:** Rm. 0128-NNRH  
**Office:** 1651 Patterson Office Tower  
**Office Hours:** MW 10-11:30AM or by appointment  
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**Phone:** 859-257-6958

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is the field seminar in international relations designed primarily for students in the political science department. The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with many of the broad themes and theoretical approaches in the international relations research literature, including Realism, Neorealism, Liberalism, Neoliberal Institutionalism, Rational Choice, Constructivism, and Feminism. This course will also further your ability to conduct research in international relations by examining specific international relations research issues, studying the state of current academic research, exploring data currently available for research, and by each student conducting their own original research. In the end, this class will give you a broad theoretical grounding in the international relations literature, which will prove extremely useful when you take other courses in the field of international relations, and when you take your preliminary exams.

**COURSE TEXTS** (all required)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance and Participation (25%)
Since this is a graduate seminar, students are required to attend each class. Students may only miss classes if they have a legitimate excuse and documentation (note from a doctor). Students will lose 5% of their Attendance and Participation grade for every unexcused absence.

This class is discussion oriented. Students must do ALL of the assigned readings before class and be prepared to discuss the readings. Discussion will be evaluated on both the quality and quantity of comments from the student. Attendance is not enough to earn the points for this course requirement, students who do not participate in the class discussion will receive no attendance and participation points. Students should come prepared to answer questions as well as ask questions regarding each of the readings.

Examples of questions students should consider when doing the readings include, but are not limited to:

1) What is the research question?
2) What is the researcher’s theoretical argument? What assumptions underlie this theory?
3) Is the theory interesting? How does the argument fit into the literature? What does it tell us that we don’t already know?
4) Evaluation of the theory:
   a. If the theory is tested, what consequences are tested, how are concepts measured, and what methods are employed? Do these make sense?
   b. Is there any evidence (other than anecdotal) that supports the theory? Is there evidence that falsifies it? What might you expect to see that would make you think the theory might be ‘wrong’? Does the author provide you with enough of a structure to say this (in other words – is the theory falsifiable)?
5) What conclusions does the researcher draw? Does the researcher fully examine the implications of the theory? What are the most significant research findings?
6) To what degree do you think the researcher has answered his/her question? Is this a good example of research? Why or why not? What are the possibilities for related research? How can the research be extended or applied elsewhere?
7) How do the selections we read this week fit together? How do they fit into the course as a whole?

Dataset Presentations
Part of your participation grade includes a presentation on one or more datasets, which are listed for each week in the course schedule. Nothing formal need be written in regards to the assignment. The student’s job will be to explain the dataset and demonstrate how one can/should use the dataset. This discussion should take around 10 minutes and will be completed at the beginning of each discussion. I will present the first dataset as an example. Datasets will be assigned on the first day of class.
Research Paper (50%)
Each student is required to write an original research paper on any topic in international relations. The paper should be a maximum of 30 pages in length. The topic and approach are irrelevant to the grade; rather it is the completeness of the argument, the rigor of the research, and the presentation of the argument that are important. Examining articles from class will give students a good idea of the format of political science research.

The paper will be due in several stages according to the schedule below:

Friday, February 6th (by 3:00 p.m. in my mailbox):
Research design, 5-7 pages identifying your research question, a brief description of the literature relevant to your question, the method of analysis you intend to employ, and any data or historical sources you will use to evaluate your hypotheses.

Friday, March 20th (by 3:00 p.m. in my mailbox):
First draft, at least 15 pages in length with initial drafts of all of the front-end elements in the paper (i.e., the research question, literature review, and theory should be well-developed). This should include a good start on your empirical tests.

Friday, April 17th (by 3:00pm; 1 hard copy in my mailbox and email me a draft):
Second draft, with all required elements of the paper, should be distributed to the instructor. I will post the papers on the course website for everyone else to read. Students should read each other’s papers and come prepared with at least three questions per paper for class on April 29th.

Wednesday, April 29th:
Presentation of paper in class. Each presentation should last 10-15 minutes, leaving 5-10 minutes for questions.

Monday, May 4th: Final paper due (by 5:00pm in my mailbox):
You should address questions and comments raised during in-class presentations when preparing your final paper. The paper is due in multiple stages so that I and other students in the class will have an opportunity to give you some feedback along the way. The paper will be given a final grade when I read the final draft, but I will take into consideration the quality of the research design, first draft, second draft, and in-class presentation when determining the final paper grade.

Final Exam (25%)
The exam is take-home and will consist of three or four questions. Each student will answer 2 of the questions, with a maximum length of 10 pages per question. The exam will be similar to the format for preliminary exams administered by the Political Science Department. The exam will be distributed via email on Thurs, May 7 at 5pm. It is due via email on Friday, May 8 at 5pm.
Writing Requirements
All assignments for this class are all to be typed; no hand written copies will be accepted. Each assignment should be double spaced, use 12 point Times Roman Font, and have 1 inch margins. Citations should follow the standards set by the American Political Science Review and each work should include a bibliography. Each assignment is to be well written. Any paper with significant errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation will receive a grade reduction (up to 20% of the total value of the assignment). I strongly encourage everyone to have their papers proof read by another person prior to submitting them to me or the class.

Plagiarism and Cheating
Students are advised to retain all notes and drafts for all work until after they receive their final grade. Students should also be aware that the instructor takes matters of plagiarism and cheating very seriously and is prone to imposing the most severe penalty allowed by university rules, which includes, but is not limited to, issuing an automatic grade of 0.0 for the entire course.

SPECIAL NEEDS
If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the disability Resource Center (Room 2, Alumni Gym, 257-2754, jkarnes@email.uky.edu).

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS
I expect all students to behave professionally in this class. If you miss a class you are still responsible for the information covered, and the instructor will not provide you with notes. I expect all students who attend class to arrive on time and ready to start class. It is disrespectful to the instructor and your classmates to show up late. During class please refrain from all disruptive behavior, including (but not limited to) reading newspapers, sleeping, talking during lecture, cell phone and pager use, and insulting classmates or the instructor.

READINGS
Unless otherwise noted, the reading can be accessed from www.jstor.org. You will need to be on a UK computer or internet connection to gain access to jstor. Once on jstor you may search by title or author and limit the search to political science journals under the advanced search option. You may need to use EBSCO Host or a similar cite for some of the more recent readings.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Below is a preliminary schedule of topics and readings for this course. The schedule is subject to change based on the pace of the class. The instructor will clearly announce any alterations to the course schedule (if any occur).

01/14/09: Course introduction

01/19/09: No class (MLK Day)

Week 1 (01/21/09): Thinking Theoretically About International Relations
  - Download EUgene and play around with it (http://www.eugenesoftware.org/). Be sure you know the difference between monadic, directed dyads, and non-directed dyad. Be sure you can load these data into Stata once you’ve generated them.
  - Presenter: Clayton

Week 2 (01/26-01/28): Realism and Neorealism
- Waltz, Neorealism and Its Critics, Chapters 3-5.
- DATA SET: National Capabilities.
Week 3 (02/02-02/04): Neoliberal Institutionalism I

- DATA SET: Intergovernmental Organizations
  - Presenter: ________________

Week 4 (02/09-02/11): Neoliberal Institutionalism II

- DATA SET: COW International War
  - Presenter: ________________

02/16-02/18: No Class (ISA conference)

Week 5 (02/23-02/25): Liberalism

- DATA SET: International Conflict
  - Presenter: ________________
Week 6 (03/02-03/04): Democratic Peace Theory

- DATA SET: Polity IV

Presenter: __________________

Week 7 (03/09-03/11): Rational Choice

- Snidal, Duncan. “Rational Choice and International Relations.” In *Handbook of International Relations*.
- DATA SET: Issue Correlates of War (ICOW)
  - [http://www.paulhensel.org/icow.html](http://www.paulhensel.org/icow.html)

Presenter: __________________

03/16-03/18: No class (Spring Break)
Week 8 (03/23-03/25) Disputing Rationality

- DATA SET: Events Data (hand-coded)

Presenter: __________________

Week 9 (03/30): Feminism

- DATA SET: Events Data (machine-coded)

Presenter: __________________

04/01: No Class (MPSA conference)
Week 10 (04/06-04/08): Constructivism

- Alder, Emanuel. 2002. “Constructivism and International Relations.” In Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth A. Simmons, eds Handbook of International Relations. Pages 95-118.
- DATA SET: TIES
  - http://www.unc.edu/~bapat/TIES.htm
- Presenter: ____________________
Week 11 (04/13-04/15): Domestic Politics


DATA SET: Alternative Conflict Data


Week 12 (04/20-04/22): Bargaining Theories


DATA SET: Formal Alliances

Week 13 (04/27): The English School

- DATA SET: none

Week 13 continued (04/29): Paper Presentations

- See instructions earlier under “Research Paper”