Overview and Objectives

Despite the lack of a formal world government, international politics is relatively orderly. How are these orders built and maintained? What are the costs and benefits to global and regional powers to lead an order, or to challenge one? What are the costs and benefits to developing and middle powers to participate? This course explores the underpinnings of world order, brought about by the interactions among international status and authority, international institutions and norms, and material power, across a variety of interconnected issue areas, such as economics, security, and law. Students are introduced to the literature in a broad way, to make them familiar with the main theoretical approaches and empirical tools, related to the study of political order.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Describe analytical approaches to studying political order.
- Critically read and evaluate scholarly work.
- Apply empirical results to current cases and make educated predictions.
- Conduct and present an independent research project.

Required Texts

There is no required textbooks for this class. All books/chapters are available on Quercus and all articles through the library. To find articles, search the article title and verify it is correct with the author’s name.
Grading

Grades are based on class participation and a multi-stage research project. All required readings should be completed prior to class. Late assignments without an approved excuse are deducted 10 percentage points of their value per day. The course follows the standard university grading scale. Final grades are rounded to the nearest whole number.

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<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>Class contribution</td>
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<td>Weekly Quizzes</td>
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<td>Research question and annotated bibliography</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Research design</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Research paper</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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Class contribution

The class contribution component is dependent on providing a positive, thoughtful contribution to our weekly class discussion. This is a 400-level class and is treated as a seminar. This means that students are required to have read the week’s assigned readings prior to class, are expected to describe the readings’ theory and findings, and are able to critically discuss all readings (and complete occasional in-class assignments) to demonstrate a mastery of the material. While I may interject to ask follow-up questions or provide background, the class will be much more valuable if you as a collective body do most of the talking.

Students that are uncomfortable or unable to participate in the class setting can earn class contribution points by writing short critical response papers of the assigned readings (no more than 2 pages). Response paper should engage the ideas from the readings in a critical way (critical does not necessarily imply negative), and not simply be a summary. Response papers are to be uploaded to Quercus by midnight the Sunday after class.

Weekly Quizzes

Students complete ten open-book, open-note quizzes, through Quercus. Quizzes are due before class on Wednesday at 11:59am. Quizzes are composed of five multiple choice questions based on the readings for that week, and are issued for weeks 2–11.
Research Project

Students are expected to take what they have learned in class and apply it in the form of an empirical research paper. Students can (a) identify a shortcoming in one of the articles discussed in class and build on this work by addressing its shortcoming, (b) take the theory of one of the articles in class and apply and evaluate it for a new set of cases, or (c) create an original project related to one of the topics covered in class that better suits their interests.

The project is due in several stages (upload to Quercus by the start of class).

1. Research Question and Annotated Bibliography (Due October 6)

Submit a one-page description of your research question, and explain how it fits with the general themes of the course. The research question must be analytical (i.e. not normative) and able to be evaluated empirically (i.e. using cases and/or available data, nor prospective). The annotated bibliography with least 10 sources related to your research question. This should include a brief description of each source’s theory and expectations (1–3 sentences), research design and findings (1–3 sentences, if applicable), and how it relates to the research question (1–3 sentences).

2. Theory and Hypothesis (Due October 27)

Develop a theory that explains why we observe difference outcomes related to your research question. You should clearly identify your dependent and independent variables (be sure that one of these emphasizes some aspect of international organization), the causal mechanism (i.e. the process in which the independent variables causes the dependent variable), and a testable hypothesis (i.e., what do you think is the effect of an increase/change in the independent variable on the dependent variable?).

3. Research Design and Data Sources (Due November 17)

Describe how you intend to evaluate your theory and test your hypotheses. Explain your research methods (quantitative, comparative case study, process tracing, etc) and why it is appropriate to test your hypotheses. Specify the level of analysis of your data (how are the data aggregated in space and time), and detail how you conceptualize and measure your dependent and independent variables, including naming the key data sources.

4. Research Paper (Due December 8)

Submit a completed research paper. The final product should take the form of a conference paper or journal article (i.e. written in a professional style). The research paper must: [a] clearly identify your research question (5% of paper grade), [b] briefly discuss the current state of the discipline (i.e. literature review) (10%), [c] propose how you are advancing our knowledge on the topic (i.e. your theory and hypothesis) (35%), [d] discuss and present your evidence (40%), and [e] conclude by re-evaluating the literature in light of your evidence (10%).
Schedule

September 15: What is Order in World Politics?

Required:
Laubepin, Frederique. “How to Read (and Understand) a Social Science Journal Article.”
Rosenberg, Karen. “Reading Games: Strategies for Reading Scholarly Sources.”

Additional:

September 22: Hegemonic Stability

Required:

Additional:

September 29: Effects of Hegemony

Required:
Additional:


October 6: Authority and Contractual Hierarchy

Project: Research Question and Annotated Bibliography due.

Required:


Additional:


October 13: Microfoundations of Hierarchy

Required:


Additional:


October 20: Hegemon–Protégé Relations

Required:


Additional:


October 27: Interactions Within and Across Hierarchies

Project: Theory and Hypothesis due.

Required:


Additional:


November 3: International Status

Required:


Additional:


**November 10: No Class—Reading Week**

**November 17: International Organizations as Institutions**

Project: Research Design and Data Sources due.

**Required:**


**Additional:**


**November 24: International Organizations as Independent Actors**

**Required:**


December 1: International Treaties and Law

Required:


Additional:


December 8: Norm Adoption

Project: Research Paper due.

Required:


Additional:

Course Policies

*Student Responsibilities in the Learning Process*: Students are expected to complete all required readings on a topic prior to completing that topic’s assessment. Students are also expected to complete all assessments on time. This means accessing the materials with sufficient time to complete assessments prior to deadlines. In the event that a student has questions concerning the material, they should formulate specific questions to ask the professor via office hours or email with sufficient time for a response prior to assessment deadlines (i.e. emailed questions should be sent at least 24 hours prior to a deadline, excluding weekends).

*Classroom Conduct*: Students are expected to participate in class in a thoughtful and respectful manner while in the pursuit of knowledge accumulation. Generally, this means engaging with one another’s ideas and treating others as you would like to be treated as well as not treating others how you would not like to be treated. Please see university policies on [freedom of speech](#) and [discrimination and harassment](#).

*Accommodations*: Please discuss any special needs with the instructor start of the semester, for example to request reasonable accommodations if an academic requirement conflicts with your religious practices and/or observances. Those seeking accommodations based on disabilities should complete the appropriate documentation with [Student Life Programs and Services](#).

*Academic Misconduct*: All acts of dishonesty in any work constitute academic misconduct. The [Student Disciplinary Regulations](#) will be followed in the event of academic misconduct.

A special note on plagiarism: plagiarism is the act of representing directly or indirectly another person’s work as your own. It can involve presenting someone’s speech, wholly or partially, as your; quoting without acknowledging the true source of the quoted material; copying and handing in another person’s work with your name on it; and similar infractions. Even indirect quotations, paraphrasing, etc., can be considered plagiarism unless sources are properly cited.

*Copyright*: Course materials, including recorded lectures and slides, are the instructor’s intellectual property covered by the Copyright Act, RSC 1985, c C-42. Course materials posted on Quercus are for registered students only and may not be posted to other websites or media without the express permission of the instructor. Unauthorized reproduction, copying, or use of online recordings will constitute copyright infringement.

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus to reflect the pace of the course.