POL 208: Introduction to International Relations
Fall 2022
Professor Seva Gunitsky

**Course Description:** This course examines key themes and issues in global politics, including interstate war, state formation, nationalism, nuclear weapons, and the evolution of the global order.

**Lectures:** All lectures are in person. Lecture slides will be posted on Quercus after the lecture.

**Readings:** All the required readings will be posted on Quercus. No other materials are necessary for the course. Completing the readings ahead of time will be crucial both for understanding the lectures, writing the final exam, and participating in tutorials.

**Tutorial Instructors:** The TA assigned to your tutorial is your first point of contact for any questions regarding course logistics, assignments, missing work, requests for re-grade, general concerns, and any other administrative matters. The head TA, Isaac Lawther (isaac.lawther@mail.utoronto.ca) will also be available to help with these questions if necessary.

**Course Requirements:** You will be evaluated on the basis of an IR meme assignment, a 3-page essay, your participation in tutorials, and a final (in-class, in-person) exam. The breakdown of the course grade is as follows:

- IR Meme (due by October 17): 10%
- Short Essay (due Nov 25): 25%
- Tutorials: 15%
- Final Exam: 50%

**Short Essay:** A 3-page essay on a prompt that will be provided to you later in the semester. It is due by midnight, November 25 (double-spaced, size 12 font, 1 inch margins).

**Final Exam:** the exam will be in class and will consist of short response questions. More information about the final exam will be provided later in the semester.

**IR Meme:** make a meme based on any of the course materials (readings/lectures). This should be submitted to your TA by October 17, and it will be graded on a simple pass/fail basis (10 points if you turn one in and 0 points if you do not.)

**Tutorials:** Tutorials will meet starting after Session 2. There are no tutorials for Sessions 1, 9, 11-12. Your grade in tutorial is based on attendance (5%), participation (5%), and a 2-3-page reading response (5%, due at some point between Session 2 and Session 10 based on sign-up.)
Tutorial attendance: Your tutorial leader will discuss course themes and answer questions dealing with the readings and lectures. Tutorial attendance is therefore crucial to your success in this course. Each absence will decrease your attendance mark by 2.5%, so missing two or more tutorials will result in an attendance mark of zero. It will also negatively impact your participation mark (subject to the TA’s discretion) and your ability to successfully answer questions on the final exam. So don’t miss tutorials if you can help it!

**Accessibility Concerns:** The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility.

**Grade Appeals:** If you are unhappy with a grade on an assignment, you may submit a written appeal to your TA, explaining why you feel your grade on an assignment is unjustified. You must submit this written appeal no later than two weeks after your assignment is returned. Regrades do not mean an automatic increase, as assignments must be evaluated anew. Your grade may stay the same, go up, or go down.

If you are still unhappy after your TA’s regrade, you may contact the Head TA to request an instructor regrade. These regrades will be granted only in cases where a regrade is deemed necessary by the Head TA or instructor, and may improve or lower your grade.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

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**Course Outline**
Session 1 — September 12. Introduction.
[no tutorials]


Session 3 — September 26. Realism and Liberalism.

Session 4 — October 3. The Rise of the State.

Session 5 — October 17. Political Culture and Nationalism.


Session 7 — October 31. The Nuclear Revolution.

Session 8 — November 14. Domestic Theories of Global Politics.

Session 9 — November 21. MADDIE GUEST LECTURE
[no tutorials]

Session 10 — November 28. From the Global to the Local.

Session 11 — December 5. Future of the International System.
[no tutorials]

Session 12 — December 8. Final Exam.

Readings

Session 2 — September 19. Global Politics and ‘Human Nature’

• Chris Hedges (2002) Selections from War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning, p.1-7 [7p]
• Jared Diamond (2008) “Vengeance is Ours”, The New Yorker, April 21, 2008 [9p]
• Margaret Mead (1940) “Warfare Is Only an Invention – Not a Biological Necessity.”
  In Conflict After the Cold War, Pearson Longman, p.176-180 [5p]

Session 3 — September 26. Realism and Liberalism
• play around with http://ncase.me/trust/

Session 4 — October 3. The Rise of the State

• Joshua Keating (2020) The Decline of the Nation-State, Slate, April 29

Session 5 — October 17. Political Culture and Nationalism

• David McRaney (2011) Excerpt from “The Illusion of Asymmetric Insight” [5p]
• Excerpt from Henry V by William Shakespeare, c.1599 [1p]
• Wilfred Owen (1917) “Dulce et Decorum Est” [2p]
• Anthony Smith (1991) National Identity, Chapter 1. [18p]

Session 6 — October 24. The Evolution of the Global Order

• Tanisha Fazal and Paul Poast (2019) War is Not Over. Foreign Affairs Sep/Oct 2019
Session 7 — October 31. The Nuclear Revolution


Session 8 — November 14. Domestic Theories of Global Politics.

- Erich Maria Remarque (1929) *All Quiet on the Western Front*, p.220-27 [8p]
- Matthew White (2005) “Democracies Do Not Make War on One Another...or Do They?” [16p]
- Rachel Kleinfeld (2020) *Do Authoritarian or Democratic Countries Handle Pandemics Better?* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 31

Session 9 — November 21. Theories of Decision-Making in International Politics

Readings TBA

Session 10 — November 28. From the Global to the Local.

- Seva Gunitsky (2017) Selections from *Aftershocks: Great Powers and Domestic Reforms in the Twentieth Century*

Session 11 — December 5. New Challenges in Global Politics

[no tutorials this week]

• Ron Deibert (2019) “The Road to Digital Unfreedom” *Journal of Democracy*

Session 12 — December 8. Final Exam.