

**POL 109H1F - Might and Right: Power and Justice in International Relations  
Fall 2023**

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Office hours: By appointment  
Location: By phone or on Zoom  
Course website: Quercus

**Course Description:**

Welcome to POL109 – Might and Right: Power & Justice in International Relations! This course will introduce you to two key characteristics of global politics – the use of might and power, and the pursuit of rights and justice. In the first unit of this course, we will focus on might and power, examining why states go to war, the causes of civil war, how states fight, and how states repress and control their populations. Each week in this unit we will analyze important current and historical cases of the use of might and power and explore their relationship with the pursuit of rights and justice.

In the second unit of this course, we will focus on the pursuit of rights and justice by examining the origins of the global human rights system, the creation of the International Criminal Court, humanitarian intervention, the work of human rights NGOs, and the impact of “the state” on rights and freedoms. As we examine these rights and justice-related topics, we also investigate the extent to which they relate to might and power.

To explore each week’s topics, we will draw not only from current research in Political Science, but also from the insights of some of the most profound, influential and controversial thinkers, including ancient Babylonian, Greek, and Hindu philosophers, as well as more modern Kurdish, Italian, Indigenous, Scottish, Spanish, and Swiss intellectuals.

**Course Objectives:**

This course has four main objectives:

- 1) To give you an opportunity to learn about some key issues and events in global politics, as well as the ideas of a number of influential thinkers and scholars
- 2) To provide you with an opportunity to engage in a fair and open-minded way with some of the most pressing questions and controversies surrounding global politics today
- 3) To give you an opportunity to develop and improve your reading, analytical, writing and presentation skills
- 4) To provide you with an opportunity to see how a degree in Political Science is useful for variety of different professions, including working in academia, advocacy, consulting, government, and law, among many others.

## Course Format – Lectures & Tutorials

This course will consist of twelve (12) weekly 2-hour lectures as well as ten (10) 1-hour tutorials. Tutorials will begin in week #3 and conclude in week #12. To learn more about your tutorial group and schedule, please consult ACORN.

## Marking Scheme & Course Requirements

Evaluation for this course will be based on the following four components:

Assignment Name	Value	Deadline
Tutorial Participation	20%	Throughout the term
Written Essay	20%	October 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
Video Essay	25%	November 28th, 2023
Exam	35%	To be held during the final exam period

### *Tutorial Participation (20%)*

Some of the issues and readings we will be discussing throughout this course might be new and confusing to you, but rest assured you are not alone and help is available! Weekly tutorials are small discussion groups led by a Teaching Assistant (TA) and designed to improve your understanding of the course material. In each tutorial you will have a chance to learn more, and clarify questions you have, about the week's topics, lecture and readings. Attendance and active participation at each tutorial are essential to achieving your learning goals, getting to know your fellow students, and receiving high grades on each assignment.

Each tutorial is worth 2% of your final grade. Your TA will assess your performance in each tutorial session according to the following scale:

- 0 = student did not attend tutorial
- 1 = student attended tutorial but did not contribute to discussion
- 1.5 = student attended tutorial and participated in discussion but showed little evidence of preparatory work (i.e. did not come prepared with thoughts and questions based on their reading and lecture notes)
- 2 = student attended tutorial and participated in discussion in a way that demonstrated that they had reviewed week's materials and came prepared to discuss them.

### *Written Essay (25%)*

For this assignment, you will write a short 5-page (double spaced) paper that answers the following question:

In the first half of this course, it has been argued that ancient and classical thinkers, writing hundreds, and in some cases thousands, of years ago can tell us important things about the use of might and power in global politics today. Is this true? Is it still worth

reading and understanding what these thinkers have to say? Why or why not? Answer these questions as best as you can using concrete examples discussed in class, tutorial and in the course readings.

The purpose of this assignment is to test your knowledge and understanding of the core themes and issues discussed in unit #1 of this course. It will also test your ability to use complex material to develop a clear and easily understood argument.

For this assignment, please use the following formatting guidelines:

- Times New Roman or Garamond font, 12 point
- Normal margins
- Footnotes in any accepted scholarly style
- No bibliography needed
- 5 page double-spaced maximum, any content beyond 5 page will not be read

A grading rubric for this assignment will be provided and posted on Quercus.

#### *Video Essay (25%)*

For this assignment, you will record a 3-5 minute video essay that answers **one** of the following four questions discussed in unit #2 of this class.

1. What is the global human rights system and why did it emerge?
2. What is the International Criminal Court and why was it created?
3. What is humanitarian intervention and can it ever be justified?
4. How are data on human rights violations collected and under what conditions can they be trusted?

The purpose of this assignment is to not only test your understanding of one week's course material but also to give you an opportunity to develop your public speaking skills.

For this assignment, please upload your video directly to Quercus. For assistance in doing so, please consult this link: <https://utm.library.utoronto.ca/students/canvas/submitting-assignments/video-submission#record-audio-video>

A grading rubric for this assignment will be provided and posted on Quercus.

#### *Exam (30%)*

For this assignment, you will write a 2-hour exam that tests that your knowledge of all the material covered throughout this course from weeks 2 to 12. The exam will take place during the exam period. Further details about the exam will be provided during the term.

#### **Course Readings & Materials:**

The readings for this class are designed to be both accessible *and* challenging. Some of the readings you might find hard to understand, and at times even incomprehensible. This is all part of the plan! Academic writing can often be complicated and it can take time fully understand

what an author is trying to say. This is more often the case with some of the historical writings with which we will be engaging. Each week review and make sense of the readings as best as you can, giving yourself lots of time and making notes on key points made and any questions that arise. In lectures and tutorials, our discussions will be centered around these readings in order to enhance your understanding of them.

To access the readings, you do not need to purchase any articles, books or textbooks. All readings will be posted on our course's Quercus page under the section entitled "Pages." Links to other materials, including documentaries and short films, will also be provided on Quercus.

### **Assignment Submission & Plagiarism Detection:**

All assignments that will be graded must be submitted on time via Quercus. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Use of the plagiarism detection tool is voluntary and students do have the right to opt-out. If you would like to opt-out, please come speak to me directly so we can determine an alternative assignment submission method.

### **On the Use of Generative AI (i.e ChatGPT)**

In this course, the use of ChatGPT and other related tools for all assignments is prohibited. If its use is detected in any form, its use may constitute an academic offense.

### **Late Penalties**

The penalty for late assignments is 5% per day. If the assignment is not submitted within one week (7 days including the weekend) after the due date, a mark of zero will be assigned. Late work must also be submitted to directly via Quercus. Students are strongly advised to keep draft work and hard copies of their assignments until the marked assignments have been returned and grades posted online.

### **Extensions:**

To be fair to all students in the course, extensions on assignments will rarely be granted. However, if you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, consult me right away. Normally, I will ask you for documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. This documentation can be an Absence Declaration (via ACORN) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. If you cannot submit a VOI due to limits on terms of use, you can submit a different form (like a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI (including dates, academic impact, practitioner's signature, phone and registration number).

For more information on the VOI, please see <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>.

For information on Absence Declaration Tool for A&S students, please see: <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence>. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

### **Re-Grading Policy**

If you believe that an individual item of term work has been unfairly marked, you may ask the person who marked the work for re-evaluation. You have up to 2 weeks from the date of return of the item of term work to query the marking. If you are not satisfied with this re-evaluation, and it has been done by a TA, you may appeal to the course instructor in charge of the course. Such re-marking will involve the entire piece of work, and may raise or lower the mark.

Any appeal of a mark provided by the course instructor may only be made for an item worth at least 20% of the course mark. Such appeals must be made in writing to the Undergraduate Director within 2 weeks after the work was returned, explaining in detail why the student believes that the mark is inappropriate. The appeal must summarize all previous communications between the student and previous markers of the work. You must submit the original marked piece of work plus a clean, anonymous copy along with the assignment/essay topic.

If the department believes that re-marking is justified, the department will select an independent reader. You must agree in writing to be bound by the results of the re-reading process, or abandon the appeal.

Where possible, the independent reader will be given a clean, anonymous copy of the work. Without knowing the original assigned mark, the independent reader will determine a mark for the work. The marking of the work should be considered within the context of the course of instruction for which it was submitted. If the new mark differs substantially from the original mark, the department will determine a final mark, taking into account both available marks.

### **Office Hours**

For this course, your TA is your first point of contact and will be available over email and during office hours to address any questions you have. I will also be available to meet in-person, over Zoom and or the phone. If you would like to speak with me, please email me and we can set up a convenient time to connect.

### **Email Policy:**

You can contact me anytime via email and I will get back to you within 24 hours from Monday to Friday. I will not be checking email on the weekend. While I am happy to correspond via email, please note that discussions with me are often a more productive use of time.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:**

The University and this course treat cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences.

Potential offences in papers and assignments include:

- using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor;
- making up sources or facts;
- obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams cheating includes:

- using or possessing unauthorized aids;
- looking at someone else's answers;
- misrepresenting your identity, or falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

If you have concerns about plagiarism, please come speak to me directly. As you prepare your essays, please make sure to review this link for useful guidance:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>.

### **Accessibility:**

I am committed to creating a course environment that is accessible for all students. If you require accommodation for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please feel free to discuss this with me and get in touch with Accessibility Services as soon as possible:

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/>

### **Harassment & Discrimination**

The University of Toronto is a diverse community and as such is committed to providing an environment free of any form of harassment, misconduct, or discrimination. In this course, I seek to foster a civil, respectful, and open-minded climate in which we can all work together to develop a better understanding of key questions and debates through meaningful dialogue. As such, I expect all involved with this course to refrain from actions or behaviours that intimidate, humiliate, or demean persons or groups or that undermine their security or self-esteem based on traits related to race, religion, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, disability, receipt of public assistance or record of offences.

### **Mental Health & Wellbeing**

Mental health is a growing concern among students. If you are in need of some assistance, please feel free to come speak to me. The University has also a number of services available to help you with your emotional wellbeing. Visit Health & Wellness for more information:

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/health-wellness/>

### **Educational Supports**

If you require any assistance with the course material and assignments, please come speak with me and I will do my best to help you. For additional support, you may want to visit one of U of

T's writing centres (<https://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/>) as well as U of T's Academic Success Centre (<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/academic-success/>).

### Course Schedule & Readings

#### **Week #1 (September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023) – Course Introduction and a Brief Overview of Might & Right in International Relations**

\*\*\*\*\*In preparation for our first class, please review the course syllabus. You might also want to review this article on reading skills: <http://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtoread.pdf>

#### *Unit 1: Might in International Politics*

#### **Week #2 (September 19<sup>st</sup>, 2023) – Why do states fight? The case of Russia-Ukraine (total reading =41 pages)**

- Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book I Sections 1-23 & 66-88.
- Taras Kuzio, "Imperial Nationalism as the Driver Behind Russia's Invasion of Ukraine," *Nations & Nationalism* Vol. 29 (2023), pp. 30-38.
- John Mearsheimer, "The Causes and Consequences of the Ukraine War," *Horizons* No. 21 (Summer 2022), pp. 12-27.

#### **Week #3 (September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023) – Why does civil war happen? The case of Syria (total reading = 20 pages)**

#### \*\*\*\*\*Tutorials begin

- Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book III Section 69-85. Available here: <https://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~klio/tx/gr/corcyra.htm>
- Kristian Skrede Gleditsch *et al.*, "Transnational Dimensions and the Myth of Civil Wars as National Events," *CSCW Policy Brief* (2010). Available at: <https://www.prio.org/download/publicationfile/252/Transnational-Dimensions-Myth-Civil-War-CSCW-Policy-Brief-1-2010.pdf>
- Christopher Phillips, "The International and Regional Battle for Syria," in Raymond Hinnebusch & Adhama Saouli (eds.), *The War for Syria: Regional and International Dimensions of the Syrian Uprising* (London: Routledge, 2020), pp. 37-49.

#### **Week #4 (October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023) – How do states fight? The cases of Russia's Wagner Group and US nuclear bombing of Japan (Total reading = 47 pages)**

- Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1513), Chapter XII
- Joshua Yaffa, "The Making of a Mutiny: How the Wagner Group Went From Fighting in Ukraine to Staging an Armed Uprising at Home," *New Yorker* (August 7, 2023), pp. 28-48.
- Richard Hartigan, "Francesco de Vitoria and Civilian Immunity," *Political Theory* Vol. 1 No. 1 (Feb 1973), pp. 79-91.
- Henry Stimson, "The Decision to the Use the Atomic Bomb," *Harper's Magazine* (February 1947).



**Week #5 (October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023) – How do states repress? The cases of Middle Eastern monarchies and Spyware (total reading = 40 pages)**

- Roger Boesche, “Aristotle’s ‘Science’ of Tyranny,” *History of Political Thought* Vol. 14 No. 1 (Spring 1993), pp. 1-25.
- Sean Yom, “How Middle Eastern Monarchies Survived the Arab Spring,” *Washington Post’s Monkey Cage* (July 29, 2016). Available at: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/07/29/the-emerging-monarchies-club-in-the-middle-east/>
- Ronald Deibert, “The Autocrat in Your iPhone: How Mercenary Spyware Threatens Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2023).

**Week #6 (October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023) – How do states exert control? The cases of the American media and US foreign policy, and Israel’s Occupation of the West Bank (total reading = 61 pages)**

**\*\*\*\*\*Tutorial this week will include a “Peer Review” session**

- Allan Bloom, *The Republic of Plato* (Basic Books, 1991), pp. 63-96.
- Watch as much of *Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media* (1992) as you can. This film can be accessed online through the Robarts Library Catalogue.
- Hillel Cohen, “Marketing the Occupation to the Palestinians of the West Bank: Shabak Facebook Pages in Historical Context,” *Israel Studies* Vol. 27 No. 1 (Spring 2022), pp. 1-29.

***Unit 2: Rights in International Politics***

**Week #7 (October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023) – What is the global human rights system and where did it come from? (total reading = 49 pages)**

**\*\*\*\*\*Written Essay Due**

- *The Code of Hammurabi* (~1750 BCE). Available at: <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/ancient/hamframe.asp>
- Aryeh Neier, *The International Human Rights Movement: A History* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012), chapter 1.
- Ann Taket & Fiona McKay, “The Global Human Rights System,” in Fiona McKay & Ann Taket (eds.), *Health Equity, Social Justice and Human Rights* (Routledge, New York: 2020), pp. 8-29.

**Week #8 (October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023) – What is the International Criminal Court and why was it created? (total reading = 60 pages)**

- Surya Subedi, “The Concept in Hinduism of ‘Just War’,” *Journal of Conflict & Security Law* Vol. 8 No. 2 (October 2003), pp. 339-361.
- Christopher Hall, “The First Proposal for a Permanent International Criminal Court,” *International Review of the Red Cross* No. 322 (March 1998), pp. 57-74.
- William Schabas, *An Introduction to the International Criminal Court* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 1-20.



## READING WEEK (November 6<sup>th</sup> to November 10<sup>th</sup>) – NO CLASS OR TUTORIAL

### Week #9 (November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023) – What is humanitarian intervention and can it ever be justified? (total reading = 46 pages)

- Edwin van de Haar, “David Hume and Adam Smith on International Ethics and Humanitarian Intervention,” in Stefano Recchia and Jennifer M. Welsh (eds.), *Just and Unjust Military Interventions: European Thinkers from Vitoria to Mill* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 154-175.
- Sean Richmond, “Why is Humanitarian Intervention So Divisive? Revisiting the Debate Over the 1999 Kosovo Intervention,” *Journal on the Use of Force and International Law* Vol. 3 No. 2 (2016), pp. 234-259.

### Week #10 (November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023) – How are data on human rights violations collected and under what conditions can they be trusted? (total reading = 24 pages)

#### \*\*\*\*\*Tutorial this week will include a “Peer Review” session

- Timandra Harkness, “John Graunt at 400: Fighting Disease with Numbers,” *Significance* (August 2020), pp. 22-25.
- Human Rights Watch, “Our Research Methodology.” Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/our-research-methodology#7>
- Gary Dagorn, “War in Ukraine: Why is it so hard to estimate the number of dead?” *Le Monde* (September 22, 2022).

### Week #11 (November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023) – Was the advent of “the state” a positive or negative development for human rights? (total reading = 46 pages)

#### \*\*\*\*\*Video Essay Due

- Colin Ward, *Anarchism: A Very Brief Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 1-13.
- John Lanchester, “The Case Against Civilization: Did Our Ancestors Have it Better?” *New Yorker* (September 11, 2017).
- Jeff Corntassel & Marc Woons, “Indigenous Perspectives on International Relations Theory,” *E-International Relations* (January 23, 2018). Available at: <https://www.e-ir.info/pdf/72490>
- Cengiz Gunes & Cetin Gurer, “Kurdish Movement’s Democratic Autonomy Proposals in Turkey,” in Efraim Nimni & Elcin Aktoprak (eds.), *Democratic Representation in Plurinational States: The Kurds in Turkey* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 159-175.

### Week #12 (December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023) – Course Conclusion & Review: What is the future of might, right, power and justice in international relations? (total reading = 12 pages)

- Watch “The Future of War,” *The Economist* (July 4<sup>th</sup> 2023). Available to watch at: <https://www.economist.com/films/2023/07/04/the-future-of-war>
- Human Rights Watch, “Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of China (July 27, 2023). Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/07/27/submission-universal-periodic-review-china>