

# POL 208: Introduction to International Relations

Fall 2023

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 will be posted on Mondays on Quercus.

**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 key for understanding the lectures, writing the final exam, and participating in the 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, Moses Karanja ([moses.karanja@utoronto.ca](mailto:moses.karanja@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 (at-home) exam. The breakdown of the course grade is as follows:

IR Meme (due Sep 29)	10%
Short Essay (due Nov 13):	25%
Tutorials:	15%
Final Exam:	50%

*Short Essay:* A 4-page double-spaced essay on a prompt that will be provided to you later in the semester. It is due by midnight, November 13 (double-spaced, size 12 font, 1 inch margins).

*Final Exam:* the exam will be online, in a short-essay online format. You will have 48 hours to write and return the essays once you receive the essay questions, and you can have access to all notes and course materials during the exam. 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 Sep 29, and it will be graded on a simple pass/fail basis (10 points if you turn one in, 0 points if you do not.)

**Tutorials:** Tutorials will meet beginning after Session 2. There are no tutorials for Sessions 10-12. 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 9 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!

**Office Hours:** You can sign up for my office hours via Calendly (I'll share a link on Quercus.) Currently my office hours will be held Fridays 10-12, though that may be subject to change based on student availability.

**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:**

See [www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize).

## Course Outline

Session 1 – September 11. Introduction.

Session 2 – September 18. Global Politics and ‘Human Nature’.

Session 3 – September 25. Realism and Liberalism.

Session 4 – October 2. The Rise of the State.

Session 5 – October 9. Political Culture and Nationalism.

Session 6 – October 16. The Evolution of the Global Order.

Session 7 – October 23. The Nuclear Revolution.

Session 8 – October 30. Domestic Theories of Global Politics.

Session 9 – November 13. From the Global to the Local.

Session 10 – November 20. In Conversation: Topic TBA

Session 11 – November 27. In Conversation: Topic TBA

Session 12 – December 4. The Future of Global Politics.

## Readings

Session 2 – September 18. Global Politics and ‘Human Nature’

- Steven Pinker (2007) “A History of Violence” *The New Republic*, March 19 [5p]
- 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 25. Realism and Liberalism

- Philip Ball (2006) “Raising Leviathan: The Brutish World of Thomas Hobbes,” pp. 23-29 and “Order in Eden: Learning to Cooperate,” pp. 410-428 in *Critical Mass: How One Thing Leads to Another*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

- Robert Axelrod (1984) “The Live-and-Let-Live System in Trench Warfare in World War I” in *The Evolution of Cooperation*. Basic Books, p.73-87.
- Ikenberry, G. John, ‘Liberal Internationalism 3.0’, *Perspectives on Politics* 7.1 (2009): 71-87.
- play around with <http://ncase.me/trust/>

#### **Session 4 – October 2. The Rise of the State**

- Selections from Robert Bates (2001) *Prosperity and Violence: The Political Economy of Development*. W.W. Norton, p.50-51, 56-69, 77-83. [15p]
- Olson, Mancur (1993) “Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development.” *American Political Science Review* 87.03: 567-576. [9p]
- Krasner, Stephen D. (1999) *Sovereignty: Organized hypocrisy*. Princeton University Press, Ch. 1, page 1-25 [26p]
- Joshua Keating (2020) *The Decline of the Nation-State*, Slate, April 29

#### **Session 5 – October 9. Political Culture and Nationalism**

- David McRaney (2011) Excerpt from “The Illusion of Asymmetric Insight” [5p]
- Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris (2003) “The True Clash of Civilizations” *Foreign Policy* 135, p.62-70 [8p]
- 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]
- Sheri Berman and Mariya Snegovaya (2019) “Populism and the Decline of Social Democracy” *Journal of Democracy* 30(3)

#### **Session 6 – October 16. The Evolution of the Global Order**

- G. John Ikenberry, “The Myth of Post-Cold War Chaos” *Foreign Affairs*, May 1996 [5p]
- John Mueller (1989) “The Obsolescence of Major War”, p.146-157 in Richard Betts, ed., *Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Pearson Longman [10p]
- Jeff Colgan (2019) “Three Visions of International Order.” *The Washington Quarterly* 42(2)
- Tanisha Fazal and Paul Poast (2019) *War is Not Over*. Foreign Affairs Sep/Oct 2019

#### **Session 7 – October 23. The Nuclear Revolution**

- Thomas Schelling (2005) Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech [11p]

- Kenneth Waltz (2012) “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb” *Foreign Affairs* July/August 2012, p.2-5 [4p]
- Eric Schlosser (2013) *Command and Control: Nuclear Weapons, The Damascus Incident, and the Illusion of Safety*. New York: Penguin. Pages 167-72, 192-93 [8p]
- John Harris and Bryan Bender (2017) “Bill Perry is Terrified. Why Aren’t You?” *Politico*, January 6 [14p]
- Nina Tannenwald (2018) “How Strong is the Nuclear Taboo Today?” *The Washington Quarterly* 41:3

### **Session 8 – October 30. Domestic Theories of Global Politics.**

- Erich Maria Remarque (1929) *All Quiet on the Western Front*, p.220-27 [8p]
- Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder (1995) “Democratization and War” *Foreign Affairs* 74.3, p.79-97 [19p]
- Matthew White (2005) “Democracies Do Not Make War on One Another...or Do They?” [16p]
- Azar Gat (2005) Selections from “The Democratic Peace Theory Reframed: The Impact of Modernity” *World Politics* 58.1, p.73-88, 97-100 [20p]
- Rachel Kleinfeld (2020) *Do Authoritarian or Democratic Countries Handle Pandemics Better?* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 31

### **Session 9 – November 13. From the Global to the Local.**

- Samuel Huntington (1991) Selections from “Democracy’s Third Wave”, *Journal of Democracy*, p.1-16 [16p]
- Lucan Way (2011) “The Lessons of 1989.” *Journal of Democracy* 22(4):17-27[9p]
- Seva Gunitsky (2017) Selections from *Aftershocks: Great Powers and Domestic Reforms in the Twentieth Century*

### **Session 10 – November 20. In Conversation: Topic TBA**

### **Session 11 – November 27. In Conversation: Topic TBA**

### **Session 12 – December 4. New Challenges in Global Politics**

- Selections from “Out of Order? The Future of the International System.” *Foreign Affairs* January 2017. (16p)
- Fareed Zakaria (2019) “The Self-Destruction of American Power” *Foreign Affairs*
- Joshua Busby (2019) “A Warming World.” *Foreign Affairs*
- Ron Deibert (2019) “The Road to Digital Unfreedom” *Journal of Democracy*