

PSCI 2223: Introduction to International Relations

Spring 2022

ECON 13 | W 5:00-6:30PM (MST)

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Office Hours: Tue & Wed 2-4
Virtual & **by appointment**

COURSE DESCRIPTION



This is an introductory course in the international relations (IR) subfield of political science. The world of international politics operates under much different conditions than domestic politics. If a neighbor damages your property, you may decide to take that neighbor to court or the police. If you want to reduce crime or create jobs in your town, you might ask your government to pass legally binding laws that attend to those issues. But who does a state call if they are invaded, cheated, or taken advantage of? Who can states call to solve global problems, such as climate change or an international pandemic? In short, there is no all-encompassing “world government” to legislate and centrally enforce decisions in international politics. This state of anarchy is unique to IR and forms the core of the many issues we will discuss in this course.

Since this course is intended as an introduction to the field of international relations, the class is designed to cover a wide range of issues, including violent conflict, international law, human rights, international trade, global financial flows, migration, development, and environmental cooperation. Considering the diverse array of topics we will cover, this course stresses foundational concepts and fundamental IR theories over more in-depth analyses of subject areas which are provided in upper-level courses within the Political Science department. At the conclusion of the semester, students will possess a sound understanding of the major questions within IR and should feel confident formulating answers to these questions through their writing.

FORMAT OF THE COURSE

This is a *hybrid* online course. Accordingly, you may choose to attend this lecture in person or virtually. Nevertheless, attendance is mandatory. Every Wednesday starting at 5PM MST, I will record a live lecture in [this Zoom room](#) (password: 1648). If you are attending this class virtually, please mute your microphone, but leave your camera on. During each lecture, I will periodically stop to ask questions or give students a chance to ask me questions. If you would like to participate, please raise your virtual hand (button located on bottom right of screen) and I will call on you. You can then unmute your microphone.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Frieden, Jeffrey, David A. Lake, and Kenneth A. Schultz. 2018. *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions (Fourth Edition)*. W.W. Norton. & Company: New York NY.
- For Homework Assignments 5 & 8, you will need to purchase/rent the movies, *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* and *Life and Debt*. These can each be rented for \$2.99 on various online platforms.
- I will post all other reading materials on Canvas. Otherwise, most of these readings are easily accessible through Google Scholar and/or the Norlin Library.

GRADING

Letter grades for the course are computed as follows: **A** = 94-100; **A-** = 90-93; **B+** = 87-89 ; **B** = 83-86; **B-** = 80-82; **C+** = 77-79; **C** = 73-76; **C-** = 70-72 ; **D+** = 67-69; **D** = 63-66; **D-** = 60-62; **F** = <60.

Your grade for the course is comprised of the following criteria:

Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Homework Assignments (10x)	20%
Attendance & Participation	15%
Policy Analysis Paper Outline	5%
Policy Analysis Paper	20%

Exams (20% Each; 40% total). There are two non-cumulative open-book exams for this course (each 20% of your final grade). Both exams will consist of three parts. For the first part, you will answer a series of multiple choice and true/false questions. For the second part, you will be given a set of terms and be asked to define them in 2-3 sentences. For the third part, you will be given a choice of two short response questions to answer in a few paragraphs. Generally, the exams will test your knowledge of key concepts in IR as well as your ability to relate the concepts and readings to real world problems. I will distribute a study guide prior to each exam. Both exams will take place virtually on Canvas (i.e., you do not need to be physically on campus these days).

Homework Assignments (2% Each; 20% total). During most weeks, I will distribute a set of 5-6 questions as homework. Each homework assignment will be unique, but you can generally expect to devote 1-2 hours per homework assignment. There are a total of 10 homework assignments, each weighted equally toward your final grade. The due dates for each homework assignment are noted on the Course Schedule. **Late assignments are penalized a full letter grade per calendar day late.**

Attendance and Participation (15%). You may choose to attend each class virtually or in person. Since we only meet once a week, attendance is essential for doing well in this course. You are permitted *one* absence (excused or unexcused) throughout the entirety of the semester. Following this, I deduct 10 percentage points from your attendance grade per every additional absence. In addition, the quality and quantity of your participation is factored into this portion of your grade. Generally speaking, students that attend class but do not participate can expect to receive a “C” for this portion of their grade.

Policy Analysis Paper (25% total). Each student is required to write a short analytical paper on a foreign policy of their choice. In no more than five double-spaced pages, you will have to provide background on a policy, develop a political argument for why that policy was chosen over proposed alternatives, and defend your argument using empirical evidence gathered from your research. You should refer to the separate assignment sheet (posted on Canvas) for more in-depth instructions.

All students must approve a topic with me by submitting a typed bullet-point 1-2 page (double-spaced) outline by 5PM MST, Wednesday, February 23rd. The outline is worth 5% of your final grade. Your outline should address the following bullet points:

- What is the foreign policy that your paper seeks to explain? Examples could include the decision to go to war, signing an alliance or international treaty, raising tariffs, instituting a new refugee policy, entering into an IMF program, etc.
- Why is this policy important, interesting, or worth analyzing? For instance, maybe a country is pursuing a trade policy that is very different from its neighbors. Alternatively, maybe the policy represents an abrupt change from a country’s past policies, such as joining an alliance or abandoning a nuclear weapons program.
- What was a proposed alternative (or alternatives) to the policy that was ultimately chosen?
- In your view, who were the relevant *actors* and what were their *interests* surrounding the policy? For instance, will you focus on the interests and motivations of states? Or will you focus more on the interests of domestic actors, such as voters, multinational corporations, the military, non-governmental organizations, political parties, branches of government, etc.? Note that you probably want to restrict your focus to two or three different actors.
- In a short paragraph, what is your argument for why the policy was chosen over proposed alternatives? Your argument must be *political* in nature by elaborating on why only some (or no) actors got their way. In other words, “policy A was chosen because it was better than policy B” is not a convincing political argument.
- A preliminary works cited page.

Ideally, students at the end of the semester will have a polished writing sample that they can use for applying to internships, jobs, and other opportunities beyond their time at CU. The word limit for the final papers is five double-spaced pages. All papers should use 1-inch margins and 12pt Times New Roman font. Papers that exceed the page limit or do not follow these directions will be penalized. **The deadline for papers is 5PM MST, Wednesday, April 13.** All papers and paper outlines must be submitted through Canvas.

OFFICE HOURS

I am always happy to provide additional help to students outside of class during office hours. Office hours for the term are virtual and by appointment between 2-4PM MST every Tuesday and Wednesday. Please use [this link](#) to book me for an office hours appointment. If none of these time slots work for you, please send me an email with some of your available times and we will set up a meeting. Note that any grade disputes cannot be discussed over email and will require a virtual appointment on Zoom.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. For more information, see the policies on classroom behavior and the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution policies on CU's website.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

I take cheating and plagiarism very seriously. All written assignments must be submitted electronically through Canvas. The penalty for plagiarism — purposeful or accidental — carries the penalty of a “0” for the assignment. A second violation automatically results in an “F” for the course. If you have any questions concerning the ground rules for what qualifies as plagiarism, please consult me in advance.

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found online.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Requirements for COVID-19

As a matter of public health and safety due to the pandemic, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements and all public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. Students who fail to adhere to these requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. For more information, see the policy on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct. If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please follow the steps in the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

As of Aug. 13, 2021, CU Boulder has returned to requiring masks in classrooms and laboratories regardless of vaccination status. This requirement is a temporary precaution during the delta surge to supplement CU Boulder’s COVID-19 vaccine requirement. Exemptions include individuals who cannot medically tolerate a face covering, as well as those who are hearing-impaired or otherwise disabled or who are communicating with someone who is hearing-impaired or otherwise disabled and where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication. If you qualify for a mask-related accommodation, please follow the steps in the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus. In addition, vaccinated instructional faculty who are engaged in an indoor instructional activity and are separated by at least 6 feet from the nearest person are exempt from wearing masks if they so choose.

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19, have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for or had symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home. In this class, if you are sick or quarantined, please notify me over email and we can make necessary arrangements to ensure that you do not fall behind in the course.

Accommodation for Disabilities

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, students with disabilities should ask for “reasonable and timely” accommodations. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries under Quick Links at Disability Services website and discuss your needs with me.

Preferred Student Names and Pronouns

CU Boulder recognizes that students’ legal information doesn’t always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors’ class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student’s legal name.

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Students in this situation can ask for “reasonable and timely” accommodations. Please review the syllabus closely and try to find out whether you have time conflicts with any of the assignments. I encourage you to do so in the first two weeks of the semester and inform me about your concerns either during my office hours or after lecture.

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, or protected-class discrimination or harassment by or against members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or email cureport@colorado.edu. Information about OIEC, university policies, reporting options, and the campus resources can be found on the OIEC website.

Please know that faculty and graduate instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, dating and domestic violence, stalking, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about their rights, support resources, and reporting options.

COURSE SCHEDULE & READINGS

*Note: "FLS" refers to the textbook (i.e., Frieden, Lake, and Schultz). All readings for a given week should be completed **before** lecture begins. Be aware that the schedule and assigned readings are subject to change throughout the semester.*

Week 1 (January 19) — Introduction and the Foundations of IR

Key Questions: What makes IR different from studying domestic politics? What makes cooperation harder or easier to achieve in IR?

- **Readings:**
 - Course Syllabus
 - FLS, Chapter 2
- **Assignments Due:**
 - None

Week 2 (January 26) — The Puzzle of War

Key Questions: If violent conflict is costly, why do states sometimes prefer war to peaceful dispute resolution? What types of factors affect bargaining between states?

- **Readings:**
 - FLS, Chapter 3
- **Assignments Due:**
 - Homework Assignment 1 — *Explaining Major Historical Events in IR*

Week 3 (February 2) — The Domestic Origins of Conflict and Peace

Key Questions: How does domestic politics shape international bargaining? Are democracies less likely to go to war than autocracies?

- **Readings:**
 - FLS, Chapter 4
 - Brooks, Risa, Jim Golby, and Heidi Urben. "Crisis of Command: America's Broken Civil-Military Relationship Imperils National Security." *Foreign Affairs*. May/June 2021.
- **Assignments Due:**
 - Homework Assignment 2 — *Bargaining and the Chile-Peru Pacific Dispute*

Week 4 (February 9) — Civil War & Terrorism

Key Questions: What causes citizens to take up arms against their own government? Is there a logic to terrorism?

- **Readings:**
 - FLS, Chapter 6

- **Assignments Due:**

- Homework Assignment 3 — *Who is Making U.S. Foreign Policy?*

Week 5 (February 16) — Global Governance and Violent Conflict

Key Questions: Can international institutions prevent war? Does peacekeeping keep the peace?

- **Readings:**

- FLS, Chapter 5 & pp. 465-475

- **Assignments Due:**

- Homework Assignment 4 — *Sorting Through Violent Conflict Data*

Week 6 (February 23) — Weapons of Mass Destruction

Key Questions: Why do states acquire (and sometimes get rid of) nuclear weapons? Is the eradication of WMDs an achievable goal in IR?

- **Readings:**

- FLS, pp. 593-606
- Hagel, Chuck, Malcolm Rifkind, Kevin Rudd, and Ivo Daalder. “When Allies Go Nuclear: How to Prevent the Next Proliferation Threat.” *Foreign Affairs*, February 12, 2021.

- **Assignments Due:**

- Policy Paper Outline

Week 7 (March 2) — From Sovereign Rights to Human Rights

Key Questions: What makes something a “human right”? How should international institutions be designed to promote human rights abroad?

- **Readings:**

- FLS, Chapter 12

- **Assignments Due:**

- Homework Assignment 5 — *Dr. Strangelove Through an IR Lens*

Week 8 (March 9) — MIDTERM EXAM

- **Readings:**

- Study Guide (to be released March 2)

- **Assignments Due:**

- None

Week 9 (March 16) — Making Sense of International Trade

Key Questions: If free trade is so good, why do states sometimes engage in protectionism? How do international institutions structure and govern global trade?

- Readings:
 - FLS, Chapter 7
- Assignments Due:
 - Homework Assignment 6 — *The International Criminal Court: On Paper and in Practice*

Week 10 (March 23) — No Class (Spring Break)

Week 11 (March 30) — The Virtues and Hazards of Global Capital

Key Questions: What causes states to promote or discourage foreign investment? What are the advantages and disadvantages of different types of foreign capital?

- Readings:
 - FLS, pp. 346-377
- Assignments:
 - Homework Assignment 7 — *Prisoner's Dilemma Competition*

Week 12 (April 6) — International Migration & Refugee Policy

Key Questions: Why do most voters oppose open immigration policies? What explains the lack of international cooperation on international migration?

- Readings:
 - FLS, pp. 377-382
 - Greenhill, Kelly M. 2010. *Weapons of Mass Migration: Forced Displacement, Coercion, and Foreign Policy*. Cornell University Press: Chapter 5.
- Assignments Due:
 - Homework Assignment 8 — *The IMF in Jamaica*

Week 13 (April 13) — Development and the North-South Divide

Key Questions: Why are some countries poor and some countries rich? Is globalization compatible with economic development in the Global South?

- Readings:
 - FLS, Chapter 10
- Assignments Due:
 - Policy Analysis Paper Due
 - Homework Assignment 9 — *Francis Ngannou's Migration Story*

Week 14 (April 20) — Global Environmental Cooperation

Key Questions: What factors have made environmental cooperation difficult to achieve at the global level? What does the "ideal" international environmental regime look like?

- Readings:
 - FLS, Chapter 13
- Assignments:
 - Homework Assignment 10 — *Peer Review*

Week 15 (April 27) — FINAL EXAM

Key Questions: "How do I not fail the final exam?!"

- Readings:
 - Study Guide (to be released April 20)
- Assignments Due:
 - None