GOVT132 Introduction to International Politics
Section 003 / Fall 2017
MW 1:30-2:45pm
Nguyen Engineering Building, Room 1101

Instructor: Dr. Peter Mandaville
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Schar School of Policy and Government
George Mason University
Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution

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Twitter: @pmandaville
Class hashtag: #govt132
Office: Research Hall, Room 331
Office Hrs: Mondays, 3-4pm…or by appointment.

Teaching Assistant
Christopher Kang (ckang4@gmu.edu); office hours TBC.

Course Introduction & Summary
This class will introduce you to the world of international politics and provide you with a solid grounding in all the major issues of our globalizing world. We will systematically survey the modern history of world politics (i.e. how did we get to where we are today?), a few of the major theories (and also a few of the less orthodox approaches!) that scholars have put forward to try and explain how international relations (IR) works. We’ll explore the major subfields of IR such as international security, international political economy, and international law & organization. We’ll learn about the key actors in the international system (e.g. states like the USA and China, international organizations such as the United Nations, nongovernmental groups such as human rights advocacy organizations and multinational corporations like Shell and Boeing). We’ll also review some of the most important issues and themes facing world politics today such as the global economic collapse, key regional conflicts, humanitarian intervention, terrorism, and the environment. We will be paying special attention to the changing structure of power and world order amidst the rise of new global players in the information age.

Everything we cover in class will be reinforced by continual reference to real world events and contemporary news stories—in other words, examples of what we study will unfold before us as the course progresses. Please note, however, that this is not simply a class about current events; to get that, all you need is to read a newspaper. Rather, my goal is to teach you how to be good analysts of international affairs—and, most importantly, how to think critically about what goes on in our world using the tools of
social science. When the class is over you will have a thorough understanding of how the world works (or doesn’t work!) as a political system, the major issues/dilemmas confronting foreign policy decision-makers, and the future direction of globalization in the 21st century. You’ll also have a better sense how you as an individual figure into it all—and how you can play a role in the new global politics.

**Class Format & Methods of Instruction**

Class sessions will generally involve lectures interspersed with discussion and Q&A. For a couple of class meetings we will break into smaller groups for discussion exercises, and the course will make use of an online environment to conduct parallel discussions about class material.

**Communications**

Outside the classroom I use e-mail as the primary form of communicating with you. As per university policy, I will only send official class communications to your Mason e-mail address. If you do not use your gmu.edu account as your main e-mail address, it is your responsibility to set up your GMU e-mail so that it forwards to whatever account you prefer to use. I accept no responsibility for the consequences of missed e-mail communications!

**Learning Management System (LMS)**

We will be using Blackboard as a supplementary online learning environment for this class. The course will appear on your Blackboard landing page and through this portal you will be able to access various resources connected with the class. You will also be able track your class progress and grades.

**Course Requirements**

It is **vital** that you complete your weekly reading assignments and show up to class ready to discuss the week’s material.

Your grade for this class will be determined by the following elements (please note that these are weighted differently):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Grade weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short Paper #1</td>
<td>Sept 25</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>Oct 16</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Paper #2</td>
<td>Nov 20</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Dec 13</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>10%</td>
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**Short papers**

You are required to write a short (750-1000 words) paper on the following topics:
1. Choose a current or recent event in world politics and then use one of the theories we have studied in class to provide an explanation of that event (due September 25).

2. How, if at all, is the role of the U.S. in world politics likely to change over the next twenty years. Provide your reasoning by reference to theories, themes, and topics we have studied in class. (due November 20).

Midterm exam
This exam will consist of approximately 50 multiple choice questions covering all material and readings from the first seven chapters of the textbooks. It will be a closed book exam taken in class on October 16 using a Scantron.

Final Exam
The Final exam will consist of approximately 75 multiple choice questions covering the material from Oct 11 until the end of the semester. It will be a closed book exam taken in class on the designated final exam day for this course, Dec 13. Scantron will be used.

Participation
Your participation grade will be derived primarily from your level of engagement with the class through classroom discussions, participation in the Blackboard discussion board, and Twitter. We will be looking for you to respond to questions posted on the discussion board and hopefully to initiate some of your own. The instructor and teaching assistants will be checking the discussion board regularly to assess your level of involvement. Please note that we expect your online interactions to be professional and courteous. Disagreement and debate is to be encouraged, but it needs to be civil.

Referencing
We do only a minimum of writing in this class, so conventions regarding references and citation are less relevant here. But they are always worth mentioning. Anytime you use the words or ideas of another author, you must provide a reference. Whenever another author’s exact words are used, they must be set apart from your text "in quotes," with a proper foot/endnote or parenthetical citation included. Learning to use a citation apparatus correctly is an important skill to develop in higher education. If and where you do use citations, I require you to use the American Political Science Association (APSA) system, which is based on the Chicago Manual of Style. A useful overview of the system is available at:

http://www.csuchico.edu/lref/pols/APSA.pdf

Other requirements for papers

- Short papers MUST be typed with single line spacing
- Make sure your name and course/section number are on the paper!

The two short papers will be submitted by uploading them via the online learning environment. Further details will be provided in class.
**Required Texts**

**News sources & current events**
Given the nature of this course, **familiarity with current events is essential** for full comprehension of the topics and themes we will cover. It is therefore expected that you will get into the habit of reading the foreign news section of a quality newspaper every day (e.g. *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Financial Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *International Herald Tribune*). Many of these are available online, and many can be taken at a special student subscription rate if you prefer print editions or full-online access.

I would also like you to get into the habit of reading non-American news sources. *Global Voices* (http://globalvoicesonline.org) and the *World Press Review* (http://www.worldpress.org) are excellent sources of diverse perspectives from around the world. Many other non-American newspapers have English editions available online.

Finally, I would suggest that you start paying regular visits to some of the main online world affairs news and commentary sites such as *Foreign Policy* (http://www.foreignpolicy.com) and the *Council on Foreign Relations* (http://www.cfr.org). Both have a variety of blogs available focused on particular themes in world politics.

If you are a Twitter user, most of the sources referenced above have Twitter feeds that you can follow to keep you abreast of new stories and developments in current events.

**Attendance**
Attendance at each class session is mandatory (see University policy in your *Student Handbook*). Students are expected to inform the instructor before any anticipated absence or as soon as possible afterwards in emergency situations. Absence from class does not relieve you of the obligation to complete any graded work or assignment associated with that particular class. Exam make-ups are not routinely offered, and you must have a seriously good reason for missing them—as well as supporting documentation.

If you are having problems—academic, medical, or personal—please let me know as soon as possible. I will do my best to help you and be sympathetic, *but only if you are forthcoming with me sooner rather than later*. In other words, don’t suddenly tell me at the end of the semester that you have been experiencing personal problems for several months.
Honor Code
As in all other aspects of community life at George Mason University, the Honor Code applies in this class. I take it extremely seriously and will enforce it with a zero tolerance policy. The policy endorsed by the members of the Department of Public and International Affairs relative to the types of academic work indicated below is set out in the appropriate paragraphs below. The Honor Code in its entirety can be found in your Student Handbook.

“Quizzes, tests and examinations. No help may be given or received by students during the taking of quizzes, tests, or examination, whatever the type given or wherever taken, unless the instructor specifically permits deviation from this standard.

Course requirements: All work submitted in fulfillment of course requirements is to be solely the product of the individual(s) whose name(s) appear on it. Except with permission of the instructor, no recourse is to be had to projects, papers, lab reports or any other written work previously prepared by another student, and except with permission of the instructor no paper or work of another type submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of another course may be used a second time to satisfy a requirement of any course in the Department of Public Affairs. No assistance is to be obtained from [or given to] commercial organizations which sell, lease [or otherwise provide] research help or written papers. With respect to all written work as appropriate, proper footnotes and attribution are required.”

Talk to me!
Please feel free to contact with me comments, questions and other course feedback. I enjoy interacting with students regarding class material—after all, that’s what I’m here for—and your input can only help to make the class better.
## SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS, TOPICS & REQUIRED READINGS

*EIR* = *Essentials of International Relations* by Mingst & Arreguín-Toft  
*ERWP* = *Essential Readings in World Politics* edited by Mingst & Snyder

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 28</td>
<td><strong>Class Introduction and Syllabus Review</strong></td>
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<td>August 30</td>
<td><strong>Approaches to International Relations</strong></td>
<td><em>EIR</em>, pp. 3-19</td>
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<td><em>ERWP</em>, pp. 3-30</td>
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<td>September 6</td>
<td><strong>Historical Context of International Relations (I)</strong></td>
<td><em>EIR</em>, pp. 21-44</td>
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<td><em>ERWP</em>, pp. 32-34</td>
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<td>September 11</td>
<td><strong>Historical Context of International Relations (II)</strong></td>
<td><em>EIR</em>, pp. 44-69</td>
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<td><em>ERWP</em>, pp. 35-52</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 13</td>
<td><strong>International Relations Theories (I)</strong></td>
<td><em>EIR</em>, pp. 71-89</td>
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<td><em>ERWP</em>, pp. 55-92</td>
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<td>September 18</td>
<td><strong>International Relations Theories (II)</strong></td>
<td><em>EIR</em>, pp. 89-105</td>
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<td><em>ERWP</em>, pp. 93-122</td>
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<td>September 20</td>
<td><strong>Levels of Analysis: The International System</strong></td>
<td><em>EIR</em>, pp. 107-131</td>
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<td><em>ERWP</em>, pp. 124-171</td>
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<td>September 25</td>
<td><strong>Levels of Analysis: The State (I)</strong></td>
<td><em>EIR</em>, pp. 133-151</td>
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<td><em>Short paper #1 due!</em></td>
<td><em>ERWP</em>, pp. 173-207</td>
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<td>September 27</td>
<td><strong>Levels of Analysis: The State (II)</strong></td>
<td><em>EIR</em>, pp. 151-179</td>
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<td><em>ERWP</em>, pp. 208-221</td>
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<td>October 2</td>
<td><strong>Levels of Analysis: The Individual</strong></td>
<td><em>EIR</em>, pp. 181-207</td>
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<td><em>ERWP</em>, pp. 223-260</td>
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<td>October 4</td>
<td><strong>Intergovernmental Organizations and International Law</strong></td>
<td><em>EIR</em>, pp. 209-245</td>
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<td><em>ERWP</em>, pp. 263-309</td>
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October 9  
NO CLASS – COLUMBUS DAY RECESS

October 10  
Nongovernmental Organizations  
*EIR*, pp. 246-259  
*ERWP*, pp. 310-342

October 11  
War and Strife (I)  
*EIR*, pp. 261-291  
*ERWP*, pp. 345-349; 359-373; 402-444

October 16  
MIDTERM EXAM

October 18  
War and Strife (II)  
*EIR*, pp. 291-315  
*ERWP*, pp. 445-466

October 23  
International Political Economy (I)  
*EIR*, pp. 317-338  
*ERWP*, pp. 468-495

October 25  
International Political Economy (II)  
*EIR*, pp. 339-359  
*ERWP*, pp. 511-544

October 30  
Human Rights (I)  
*EIR*, pp. 361-377  
*ERWP*, pp. 546-596

November 1  
NO CLASS

November 6  
Human Rights (II)  
*EIR*, pp. 377-395  
*ERWP*, pp. 597-635

November 8  
Transnational Issues (I)  
*EIR*, pp. 397-417  
*ERWP*, pp. 638-659

November 13  
Transnational Issues (II)  
*EIR*, pp. 418-441  
*ERWP*, pp. 660-688

November 15  
Issue Focus 1: Reducing Global Poverty and Inequality  
Bill Easterly and Jeff Sachs, “Foreign aid face-off”  
http://www.latimes.com/la-op-sachseasterly8may8-htmlstory.html

November 20

**Issue Focus II: Governing the Internet**  
**Short paper #2 due!**

Mark Raymond, “The Internet as Global Commons?”
https://www.cigionline.org/publications/internet-global-commons

Mark Raymond, “The Rules of the (Online) Game”
https://www.cigionline.org/publications/rules-online-game


November 27

**Issue Focus III: The Iran Nuclear Deal**


Shadi Hamid, “Was the Iran Deal Worth It?”
https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/07/iran-nuclear-deal-consequences-obama/398780/

*ERWP*, pp. 398-401

November 29

**Issue Focus IV: Human Trafficking**

Michelle Sicignano, “A Primer on Human Trafficking”
http://www.socialjusticesolutions.org/2012/10/02/human-trafficking/


December 4

**Thinking About the Future of World Order**

G. John Ikenberry, “The Future of the Liberal World Order,”
https://www.dropbox.com/s/mr2g2ijdlmov254/Ikenberry_Future-Liberal-World-Order.pdf?dl=0
Pankaj Mishra, “The western model is broken,”
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/14/-sp-western-model-broken-pankaj-mishra


December 6  Final Exam Review Session

December 13  FINAL EXAM