International Politics
(draft)

GOVT 540-003
Fall 2017
Tuesday: 7:20-10 pm
West 1001

Prof. Ming Wan
Research 340
Tel: 703-993-2955
Email: mwan@gmu.edu
Office hours: T: 6:30-7:10 pm;
R: 1:30-2:30 pm

Course Description:
This graduate course examines in depth international relations theory. It offers a survey of major approaches to IR scholarship and examines some prevailing questions and concepts. The course is designed to help students develop a critical view of international relations theories, engage in extensive class discussions, conduct research and present research findings. While primarily focused on theory, the course also discusses the methodologies IR scholars in different approaches use and how research is actually conducted.

Grading:

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Short essays (3 X 4-5 double-spaced pages)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation (discussions and attendance)</td>
<td>Weekly 30%</td>
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<td>Panel Presentation (7 minutes)</td>
<td>Nov. 28 and Dec. 5 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research paper (20-25 double-spaced pages)</td>
<td>Due December 5 45%</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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1. **Short essays**: Write three 4-5-page short essays summarizing and critiquing the assumptions and one or two signature theories of realism, liberal institutionalism and constructivism.

2. **Discussions**: Each weekly session starts with discussions. Discussion questions are distributed in advance. Students should sign up for questions to lead discussion of those questions in class. Performance is based on how many times students sign up (counting only one question per session) and how prepared they are for the questions. Theoretical thinking is valued. In addition, performance is based on participation in discussion of questions students have not signed up for.

3. **Panel presentation**: Students should sign up to be part of 3 panels (about 3 students each). I will ask for your top two picks and will try my best to accommodate your preferences. Members belonging to a panel should work as a team and strategize early on how to present at the end of the semester (each presenter responsible for one dimension of the issue, for example).

Three panels:
1) The Brexit

2) The North Korean Nuclear Crisis

3) President Trump’s foreign policy

4. Research paper: Your research paper should answer a specific research question. Your research paper proposal, due on September 26, should have the following elements: a clear question, a hypothesis or what you think might be the answer to your question, and a preliminary literature review.

You can use your research paper as the basis for your panel presentation if they are similar.

You can use any citation system as long as it is consistent.

Late work policy: Request for extension and incomplete has to be made in writing 24 hours before due time. Request will be granted by the instructor if there is a legitimate reason such as family emergency and illness.

Required books:

This course requires four books. There are additional readings that can be downloaded from GMU library database or will be put on electronic reserve or sent to you by me. Reading is due before class. I have suggested some additional important readings for each topic for your reference. You may read them now or in the future. Suggested readings do not have to be read before class.


Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics (Waveland, 2010).


Alexander Wendt, Social Theory of International Politics (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Those who need to have a better understanding of International Relations and Political Science may want to read the following books.


**Reading Assignments**

**August 29: Introduction**


**September 5: Realism: Assumptions and Power**

Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Chapters 1, 5-6.


**September 12: Realism: Structuralism**


**September 19: Realism: Wars**


**September 26: Realism: Alliances**


**September 26:** First short essay due

**September 26:** Research paper proposal due

**October 3: Liberal Institutionalism: Assumptions and Preferences**


**October 10: Columbus Day. No Class**

**October 17: Liberal Institutionalism: Structuralism**


**October 24: Global Financial Crises**


**October 24:**  Second short essay due

**October 31: Constructivism: Assumptions and Theories**

Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), Chapters 1, 3-4, 6.


**November 7: Norms and Identities**


**Suggested readings:** Samuel Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity* (Simon & Schuster, 2006).


**November 7: Third short essay due**

**November 14: Rational Choice Theory**


**Suggested readings:** James D. Morrow, *Game Theory for Political Scientists* (Princeton University, 1994).


**November 21: Evolutionary Theory**


**Suggested readings:** William R. Thompson, ed., *Evolutionary Interpretations of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

**November 28: Panel Presentations**

**December 5: Panel Presentations**

**December 5: Research Paper Due**
**HONOR CODE POLICY**

The Honor Code 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:

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

2. **Course Requirements**: All work submitted to fulfill course requirements is to be solely the product of the individual(s) whose name(s) appears 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 any 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 and International Affairs. No assistance is to be obtained from commercial organizations which sell or lease research help or written papers. With respect to all written work as appropriate, proper footnotes and attribution are required.