The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the different theories and concepts that scholars use to understand and explain world politics. The course examines the major theories in the field of International Relations (IR) and some of the central theoretical debates. Throughout the course the relevance of specific theories and theory in general for how we make sense of world politics will be critically assessed. The focus of this course will be theoretical rather than empirical. Thus, each class will be devoted to an in-depth discussion of a different theoretical perspective in IR, focusing on its key concepts, foundational assumptions, and central arguments. The reading list is extensive. Both the required and recommended reading lists are designed to help PhD candidates prepare in part for their first exams.

Requirements:

Students are expected to complete all of the assigned required readings prior to the class for which they are assigned and come ready to discuss them. That includes the readings for the first class. Students must be able to analyze the readings critically and draw connections and contrasts between readings not only with the other readings assigned for that week but also with readings from earlier in the course.

The recommended readings should be seen not only as a reading list to use in studying for the first exam in international relations but also as a list of potential starting points for future research projects in a given area. Also, if you have already read some of the required readings for a given week, you should substitute some of the recommended readings to replace them. Full cites are supplied for journal articles; only authors and titles are supplied for books. Obviously, even including the recommended readings the syllabus is only a limited listing of the important readings in the field. Searching for other IR field survey syllabuses on the internet will give you a sense of what a wide range of scholars believe is central to the field or a particular topic of inquiry. You also should note what sort of research gets into each journal so as to give you a sense of which outlets would give your own research the warmest reception.

Participation in class discussions will be part of students’ grades; thus attendance is mandatory. There are also two written assignments: a take home midterm and take home final. The grade will be broken down as follows:

- Participation: 10%
- Midterm: 30%
- Final: 60%
Late work will be penalized at least a full letter grade, more in instances of extreme lateness. There is no extra credit.

Academic Integrity:

The definition of plagiarism in the Graduate Center Policy on Academic Honesty is as follows. Each member of the academic community is expected to give full, fair, and formal credit to any and all sources that have contributed to the formulation of ideas, methods, interpretations, and findings. The absence of such formal credit is an affirmation representing that the work is fully the writer's. The term “sources” includes, but is not limited to, published or unpublished materials, lectures and lecture notes, computer programs, mathematical and other symbolic formulations, course papers, examinations, theses, dissertations, and comments offered in class or informal discussions, and includes electronic media. The representation that such work of another person is the writer's own is plagiarism.

Care must be taken to document the source of any ideas or arguments. If the actual words of a source are used, they must appear within quotation marks. In cases that are unclear, it is the responsibility of the writer to take due care to avoid plagiarism.

The source should be cited whenever:
(a) a text is quoted verbatim
(b) data gathered by another are presented in diagrams or tables
(c) the results of a study done by another are used
(d) the work or intellectual effort of another is paraphrased by the writer

Because the intent to deceive is not a necessary element in plagiarism, careful note taking and record keeping are essential in order to avoid unintentional plagiarism.

Student found engaging in plagiarism risk not only failing the assignment in question, but also the entire course, as well as potentially facing further academic sanctions from the Graduate Center included expulsion. Please see the Graduate Center’s guide on Avoiding and Detecting Plagiarism for more information:

https://www.gc.cuny.edu/CUNY_GC/media/CUNY-Graduate-Center/PDF/Publications/AvoidingPlagiarism.pdf?ext=.pdf

Students with Disabilities:

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Graduate Center offers assistance and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities consult the Vice President for Student Affairs who is the 504/ADA Coordinator (Room 7301; 212-817-7400). For more information (with confidentiality) contact Sharon Lerner or Elise Perram at the above number or via email at disabilityservices@gc.cuny.edu and consult the Graduate Center Student Handbook.
Course Materials:

Most of the assigned readings are available online through JSTOR or other journal databases which can be accessed through the Graduate Center Library website. They are also available on Blackboard. There are also two books which are available for purchase on the internet (ABEbooks.com has the best prices) and are in the Graduate Center library. They are:


Course Schedule:

August 31: Causation, Theories, Evidence, and Inference

Required:

Recommended:
- Brady, Henry E. and Collier, David. (eds.). *Rethinking Social Inquiry*.
September 7: Levels of Analysis

**Required**


**Recommended**
- Waltz, Kenneth. 1959. *Man, the State, and War*.

**September 14: Power**

**Required:**

**Recommended**

**September 21: Realism**

**Required:**
Recommended:


**September 28: The Assumption of Anarchy and the State System**

**Required:**

**Recommended:**
- Buzan, Barry. 2014. *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations*
- Howard, Michael. 1970. *War in European History*

**October 5: Neo-Liberalism**

**Required:**

**Recommended:**
October 19: Constructivism and Feminism  Midterm Handed Out

Required:

Recommended:
- Goldstein, Joshua. 2001. War and Gender.

October 26: Psychology and Perception  Midterm Due

Required:

Recommended:
- Larson, Deborah W. The Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation.

November 2: Rationalist Approaches

Required:

**Recommended:**
- Schelling, Thomas. 1966. *Arms and Influence*
- Schelling, Thomas. 1960. *Strategy of Conflict*
- Weisiger, Alex. 2013. *Logics of War*.

**November 9: Theories of War**

**Required:**

**Recommended:**
- Clausewitz, Karl von. 1832. *On War* (Michael Howard and Peter Paret translation)
- Shirkey, Zachary C. 2009. Is This a Private Fight or Can Anybody Join? The Spread of Interstate War.

November 16: State Building and Civil War

Required:

Recommended:

**November 23: Democratic & Capitalist Peace**

**Final Handed Out: Due by email on December 16—May be turned in earlier**

**Required:**

**Recommended:**
November 30: Audience Costs, Leader Accountability, and Reputation

Required:

Recommended:

December 7: International Political Economy

Required:

Recommended: