

# PLSC S111E / GLBL S268E: Introduction to International Relations

Nick Lotito

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E-mail: [nicholas.lotito@yale.edu](mailto:nicholas.lotito@yale.edu)

Web: [nicklotito.com](http://nicklotito.com)

Office Hours: [calendly.com/nicklotito](https://calendly.com/nicklotito)

Class Hours: M/W 10:00-11:30am

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## Course Description

This course introduces students to the causes of conflict and cooperation among (and sometimes within) states and their effects on security, prosperity, and equality. We critically examine various theories of international politics by drawing equally on security and economic affairs from across different historical eras. Historically, we will focus on the making of the contemporary world from World War I onwards. The course also introduces primary documents from different historical eras and engages with diverse theoretical perspectives. The goal of the course is not to advance any one particular theory of world politics. Instead, the course aims to help students develop and refine their own theoretical frameworks for understanding different aspects of world politics. Through instruction and individual feedback, the course aims to develop analytical writing skills with broad utility across the social sciences and beyond.

## Learning Objectives

- Identify and classify major historical events, actors, and institutions that have shaped international security and economic affairs.
- Apply diverse theoretical lenses to interpret and explain global affairs across temporal (historical and contemporary) and spatial contexts (in and beyond the West, *between* and *within* states).
- Assess and critique claims about causes and effects in international politics, and argue persuasively for your interpretation in both speech and writing.
- Develop the analytical writing skills to frame a research question, critically review the scholarly literature, describe and execute an appropriate research design, and persuasively articulate your position.

## Required Book

- Karen A. Mingst, Jack L. Snyder, and Heather Elko McKibben, eds., *Essential Readings in World Politics*, Seventh Edition (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2019), ISBN: 978-0-393-66461-4, \$65.35.

The textbook may be purchased or rented in paperback from any bookseller, *but please note the correct edition.*

## Course Policies

### Assignments & Grading

- Participation (30%)
  - Attendance and active participation is required in every live course session. Students are expected to prepare for class discussions by completing all assigned reading and viewing the related lecture videos *before* each class.
- Policy Memo (30%) – Due Friday, June 24<sup>th</sup>
  - Apply one of the themes from the course to a case of your choosing (8 pages). A one-page proposal is due June 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Final Exam (40%) – Wednesday, June 29<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM (final course meeting time)

*Students must complete all assignments to receive a passing grade.* Submissions received after the deadline will be penalized by one-third of a letter grade (e.g. B+ to B) for each day late. Yale College policy does not allow for “technology excuses” (e.g., my internet went out right before the deadline) – plan accordingly and submit assignments in advance.

### Attendance

The course meets online for two 90-minute seminars per week. Your attendance in all sessions is required. The quality of your participation in discussions will count for 30% of your final grade.

### Contacting Your Instructors

The Teaching Fellow for this course is Michael Goldfien ([michael.goldfien@yale.edu](mailto:michael.goldfien@yale.edu)).

We will be using Ed Discussion for class discussion and Q&A. The system is designed to get you help quickly and efficiently from classmates, the TF, and myself. Rather than emailing general questions to the teaching staff, I encourage you to post your questions on Ed Discussion. Access Ed Discussion through Canvas.

To contact me directly, email is the best option. While I typically respond to emails quickly, please allow 48 hours for a response. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours, follow up with a reminder. This article is recommended reading about how to draft an effective email: Laura Portwood-Stacer, “How to Email Your Professor (without being annoying AF),” <https://goo.gl/Aqg5h6>.

If you email me the night before a deadline with a last minute request, please do not expect a response; it is imperative that you look at the assignments early to ensure I can answer any questions you may have in a timeframe that is useful to you. Longer questions – for example, those dealing with your performance in the course or substantive questions about the course material – are better asked in person.

I will hold regular office hours throughout the semester. Please sign up in advance at: <https://calendly.com/nicklotito/officehours/>. Other appointments can be made on an individual basis via email (please suggest a few meeting times when requesting an appointment). At our meeting time, connect to my Zoom meeting room at: <https://yale.zoom.us/my/nlotito>.

## **Academic Integrity**

As a student at Yale, you have joined an academic community. In this community, our intellectual honesty is our currency. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the school's standards of academic integrity. It means, among other things, truth in presentation, diligence and precision in citing works and ideas we have used, and acknowledging our collaborations with others. Please review the section on “General Conduct and Discipline” in the Undergraduate Regulations.

### *Plagiarism*

You must document all of your source material. If you take any text from somebody else, you must make it clear the text is being quoted and where the text comes from. You must also cite any sources from which you obtain numbers, ideas, or other material. If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, *ask!* Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. Fortunately, it is also easy to avoid. Take care to give credit where credit is due, and you will not run into any problems. For guidance on how to properly cite your sources, please visit the Writing Center (<http://ctl.yale.edu/writing/using-sources>).

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

This is a course about the way people with marginalized identities and/or beliefs have used violence to pursue their visions of justice. The material raises powerful ethical and moral questions, and it can inspire uncomfortable conversations about identity, privilege, and right. Our critical engagement with these questions requires introspection on our own positionality and biases. The diversity of our community enriches this exchange when we genuinely engage with each member's perspectives and ideas, respectfully at all times.

## **Accessibility**

Your success in this class is important to me. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or that form barriers to your inclusion, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we can develop strategies to allow you to succeed in the course. You are also welcome to contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) to begin this conversation or to establish accommodations for this or

other courses. I encourage you to take advantage of educational resources on campus, including the [Writing Center](#), [Residential College Tutors](#), and [Academic Strategies](#). I welcome feedback that will assist me in improving the usability and experience for all students.

## **Class Schedule**

Reading assignments refer to Mingst, Snyder, and McKibben, *Essential Readings in World Politics*.

### **Session 01 (5/30), Approaches to IR**

Chapter 1:

- Snyder, One World, Rival Theories
- Thucydides, The Melian Dialogue
- Hobbes, Leviathan
- Kant, Perpetual Peace
- Hopf, The Promise of Constructivism

### **Session 02 (6/1), Historical Context**

*Memo Proposal due Friday.*

Chapter 2:

- Wilson, The Fourteen Points
- Fukuyama, The End of History?
- Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations?
- Ikenberry, The End of Liberal International Order?

### **Session 03 (6/6), Theories of IR**

Chapter 3:

- Morgenthau, A Realist Theory of International Politics
- Mearsheimer, Anarchy and the Struggle for Power
- Doyle, Liberalism and World Politics
- Wendt, Anarchy is What States Make of It

### **Session 04 (6/8), Levels of Analysis**

Chapter 4:

- Morgenthau, The Balance of Power
- Yarhi-Milo, In the Eye of the Beholder
- Christensen, The China Challenge

Chapter 5:

- Putnam, Diplomacy and Domestic Politics

### **Session 05 (6/13), War and Nuclear Security**

Chapter 6:

- Clausewitz, War as an Instrument of Policy
- Schelling, The Diplomacy of Violence
- Fearon, Rationalist Explanations for War
- Waltz, Why Iran Should Get the Bomb

## **Session 06 (6/15), Terrorism and Cyberwar**

Chapter 5:

- Posen, The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict

Chapter 6:

- Fortna, Do Terrorists Win?
- Borghard & Lonergan, The Logic of Coercion in Cyberspace

Chapter 9:

- Power, Bystanders to Genocide

## **Session 07 (6/20), Cooperation and Organizations**

Chapter 7:

- Jervis, Cooperation under the Security Dilemma
- Axelrod & Keohane, Achieving Cooperation under Anarchy

Chapter 9:

- Keohane, After Hegemony
- Mearsheimer, The False Promise of International Institutions
- Keck & Sikkink, Transnational Advocacy Networks
- Barnett & Finnemore, The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations

## **Session 08 (6/22), Political Economy**

*Policy Memo due Friday*

Chapter 8:

- Gilpin, The Nature of Political Economy
- Alden, Failure to Adjust
- Zakaria, Populism on the March

Chapter 11:

- Hardin, The Tragedy of the Commons

## **Session 09 (6/27), Law and Human Rights**

Chapter 7:

- Guzman, International Law
- Koh, How is International Human Rights Law Enforced?

Chapter 10:

- Sen, Human Rights and Capabilities
- Donnelly, Human Rights and Cultural Relativism
- Simmons, Mobilizing for Human Rights

**Session 10 (6/29)**

**FINAL EXAM**