Introduction to International Relations  
POLS 270  Spring 2016  
Stephen Shulman  
Department of Political Science  
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

Classroom: Faner 1526  
Meeting Times: 2:00-2:50 MWF  
Office: 3163 Faner Hall  
Office Hours: MWF, 11:00-12:00, 1:00-2:00  
Email: shulman@siu.edu

Course Description

This is an extremely exciting time to study international relations. The bloodiest century in human history ended more than a decade ago, and for many there is great hope that the 21st century will be one of growing democracy, prosperity, and peace. The great ideological battles of our time seem to be over, as liberal democracy emerged victorious over fascism and communism in the aftermath of WWII and the Cold War. Since the end of the US-Soviet confrontation, the United Nations has taken on new life in trying to promote stability and resolve conflicts. The march of technology drives processes of globalization that truly do make the world a smaller place, as trade, travel, and communications link different peoples and cultures as never before. The prospect of a United Europe symbolizes the possibilities for peace and cooperation in a world that has learned the folly of its past mistakes. On the other hand, September 11 and the subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq remind us that war is still very much part of the global political landscape. More broadly, human nature has not changed, states still dominate international affairs, authoritarian political systems are still common, and hundreds of millions of people remain mired in unimaginable poverty. Growing economic interdependence may lead to growing exploitation, and globalization may promote environmental harm, economic inequality, and cultural imperialism. The entrenchment, and in many cases intensification, of ethnic and religious identification over the last century lead to the frightening possibility that Syria, Crimea, and the Islamic State, not the European Union, represent the shape of things to come in much of the world.

In an effort to make sense of where the world has been and where it is heading, this course provides a basic introduction to the concepts, processes and theories of international relations. A challenge for us throughout the course is to try to discover the degree of continuity versus change there has been, and will be, in global politics. Debate over the possibilities for a more harmonious and peaceful world has been going on for centuries. We will discuss the arguments and relative merits of the optimistic and
pessimistic viewpoints—the liberal and realist paradigms. This course seeks to equip you with basic factual (empirical) knowledge of international relations, as well as acquaint you with some theoretical frameworks for understanding IR.

**Course Objectives**

This course has three core goals:

1) The student should acquire a fundamental factual knowledge of the conduct of international relations since the beginning of the 20th century.
2) The student should become familiar with key concepts and theories in the study of international relations.
3) The student should understand the grand debate between realism and liberalism in international affairs and how past, current, and future empirical events support one or another of these paradigms.

**Course Grades**

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<th>Exam</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>Exam 3</td>
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Each exam consists of two parts. Part I is based on multiple-choice questions from the textbook. Part II is based on short answer questions from the class lectures. Part I is weighted to be 35% of the exam, while Part II is weighted to be 65% of the exam.

**Course Textbook**


Lectures are designed to highlight and supplement, not summarize and explain, the textbook.

**Important Course Policies**

**Missed Exams**

Students who cannot take an exam at the scheduled date and time must inform me beforehand, and the sooner the better. Students who fail to follow this procedure will not be permitted to take a make-up exam. I will use my discretion to determine whether
students who do follow the procedure will be permitted to take a make-up exam without penalty.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be checked randomly approximately 25 times during the semester. You are allowed three absences without penalty. For every absence thereafter, your grade on the third exam will be reduced 6 points. (E.g. If your grade on the third exam is an 85, and you were caught absent 6 times, your penalty is 3 X 6=18 points. Thus your third exam grade changes from an 85 to a 67. As a positive incentive to not skip class, if you are caught absent one or zero times, your third exam will increase by 5 points.

WARNING: If you arrive late, or leave early, you will be considered absent. It is your responsibility to make sure you sign the attendance sheet on days when I take attendance. I will not accept the excuse that the attendance sheet did not make its way to a student.

Absence Policy: There is no such thing as an excused absence in this course. All absences after the first three will be penalized, REGARDLESS OF THE REASON FOR YOUR ABSENCE, INCLUDING ILLNESS. However, there is a way to erase the penalty for each absence you earn. You may write a two-page synopsis (double-spaced, 12-point Times font, with separate cover sheet) of a journal article on any topic related to the course and turn it in within seven days of the absence. Synopses will be evaluated “pass/fail”: if you write a coherent and accurate summary, your absence will be excused. Otherwise, the penalty will remain. Sometimes a student turns in a synopsis that suggests to me that he or she has read very little of the article. These putative “synopses” will not receive any credit. The journal article must be at least fifteen pages in length, and you should attach a copy of the article to your synopsis when you turn it in. Some journals you may wish to consult to find articles for the synopses include World Politics, International Security, International Organization, International Studies Quarterly, Ethics & International Relations, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Global Society, Orbis, Foreign Policy, and Foreign Affairs.

WARNING: If you are caught absent ten or more times, you will automatically receive an F for the course. This holds true regardless of whether you erase the penalty for absences applied to the final exam.

Exceptions to these policies on penalties for absences will be made only in rare circumstances where there is a prolonged illness, death of a loved one, or other chronic problem that I am informed about in a timely manner.

Grading Scale

All exams will be graded on a standard 100-point scale (with 90-100 an A, 80-89 a B, etc.). If you do not take an exam, your score is a 0.
Course Outline and Schedule of Readings

I. Core Concepts and Issues in International Relations  Jan. 20, Jan. 22

Chapter 1: The Globalization of International Relations

II. Power and Interests in International Relations  Jan. 25, 27, 29

Chapter 2: Realist Theories

III. The Paradigm Debate: Realism versus Liberalism  Feb. 1, 3, 5

Chapter 3: Liberal and Social Theories

IV. International Conflict and War  Feb. 8, 10, 12, 15, 17

Chapter 5: International Conflict

EXAM 1 – February 19

V. Military Statecraft and the Quest for National Security  Feb. 22, 24, 26, 29, Mar. 2

Chapter 6: Military Force and Terrorism

VI. International Organizations and the Quest for Peace & Cooperation  Mar. 4, 7, 9, 11

Chapter 7: International Organization, Law, and Human Rights

VII. International Law and the Quest for Peace & Cooperation  Mar. 21, 23, 25, 28, 30

Chapter 4: Foreign Policy

EXAM 2 – April 1

VIII. The Global Economic System: Trade  April 4, 6, 8, 11, 13

Chapter 8: International Trade

IX. The Global Economic System: Capital and Investment  April 15, 18, 20, 22
Chapter 9: Global Finance and Business

X. Economic Statecraft: Foreign Aid  April 25, 27, 29

Chapter 12: The North-South Gap

XI. Economic Statecraft: Sanctions  May 2, 3, 5

Chapter 13: International Development

EXAM 3 – Monday, May 9, 2:45-4:45 p.m.

Note: See the Syllabus Attachment Spring 2016 on the course website for information on university policies you should be aware of.