

Introduction to International Relations

Fall 2011
46.121.216

T/Th 9:30-10:45 AM
Office Hours: by appointment
South Campus, Coburn 303

Ike Sharpless
(617) 913-4969 (cell)
ikesharpless@gmail.com

Course Description: Why do countries go to war? How do our views of human nature inform our view of international cooperation? What does it mean to say that we live in a state of international anarchy? This course is designed to answer these questions by introducing you to the core international relations (IR) theories and their applications. After an introductory module on the historical backdrop and the three main schools of IR thought (realism, liberalism, and constructivism), we will examine the following issues: international law and international regimes, human rights, environmental policy, gender policy, globalization, and international trade. Theory and practice are joined in the third module, on war, which focuses on humanitarian intervention, just war theory, terrorism, and the nature of war. The course closes with a focus on aid and development.

Course wiki: The website for this course is ikesharpless.pbworks.com

- All required info and related links will be posted to the course wiki on a regular basis. If in doubt about anything, check the website before contacting me. If you do need to contact me, the preferred method of communication is by email, preferably through my gmail account.

Required texts

You must have each of the following texts in class every day as required. I strongly recommend looking online to find discounted versions at abebooks.com, half.com, Amazon.com, or elsewhere. I recommend that you get the third edition of the Mingst & Snyder book—the bookstore will have the 4th edition, but I won't be assigning anything that's not in both versions.

- John Baylis, Steve Smith & Patricia Owens. *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations, Fifth Edition*. Oxford University Press: Oxford (2011). ISBN 978-1-19-956909-0
- Karen A. Mingst and Jack L Snyder, eds. *Essential Readings in World Politics, 3rd (or 4th) Edition*. W.W. Norton & Company: New York (2008). ISBN 978-0-393-93114-3

Grading

If you have any questions about whether and how a specific action will affect your grade—or about specific learning disabilities or religious holiday observance, etc.—send me an email or talk to me.

- Midterm (20%)
- Reading Response (15%)
- Position Paper (15%)
- Final Exam (30%)
- Attendance (variable, as much as -20%)
 - I will take attendance. Two unexcused absences will be permitted, but each additional absence will lower your grade by a third of a letter. This can seriously hurt your grade—think twice about taking this course unless you plan on showing up regularly.
- Participation (20%)

- 20% of this grade will be based on student uploads to the pbworks website (worth 2% each, due on most Tuesdays—you need to do 10 of 14 of these)
- Although there is no official percentage for in-class participation, strong participation will result in a potential boost to your grade if you're hovering between two grades, and weak participation will drop your grade down under similar circumstances.

Note on Grading Papers: Be sure to carefully check your work for spelling errors and grammatical flow. You can rewrite your papers and I will average the two grades. I will also dock your assignment grade by a third of a letter grade for every unexcused calendar day (*not* class day) a paper is overdue.

Reading Response Guidelines: Select one or more work/author to write a reading response to. Your reading response should demonstrate both an understanding of the thinker's key ideas and some critiques of their potential shortcomings. Each reading response should be 3-4 pages long; clarity is valued over length. Ideally, I would like you to compare and contrast the views of two of the authors discussed to date. If you choose to focus on only one author, I expect a greater level of detail and scrutiny. You are expected to learn from the comments and suggestions I provide on previous reading responses: in essence, what I am looking for is a balance between demonstrating that you've thoroughly read the works in question (and aren't just regurgitating the class notes) and an engagement with your critical views on those works—too much of your opinion and I can't tell that you've done the reading, and too much outlining the text and I don't get any sense that you've grappled with the text at all.

Position Paper Guidelines: Based on what you've learned to date defend the theoretical position that is most persuasive to you. Broadly, your response will likely fall under one of the three dominant categories: realism, liberalism, or constructivism. You are welcome to pick a more nuanced or subdivided position (for example—a critique of neoliberal economic globalization based on environmental advocacy for the 'global south' would fall under the constructivist umbrella), but you do need to be sure to define and provide examples of all three schools. Use specific authors, quotes, and examples to back up your position. More details on this assignment will be provided.

Student Upload Guidelines: You are expected to upload a relevant link, video, or other media source with a comment relating the ideas of the thinkers we are discussing to a pertinent current issue. The mechanism for logging on to the pbworks site will be explained in class. If, however, you are ever unable to upload a link to the website, just send me your link and comment and I will upload them for you. Ideally, the uploads are intended to connect the ideas we are studying to current events and issues. Unless I specify otherwise, the links should be related to the ideas covered in any class since the previous upload (i.e., the most recent two class sessions). If possible, you should also try to leave a comment on at least a few other students' posts throughout the semester—while not officially graded, I will consider giving you extra credit if you post a lot of comments.

Note on Upload Resources: In a course of this nature, it is essential that you follow a regular news source. On the first day of class, I will present to you a range of potential sources and methods for you to access information. I strongly recommend that you subscribe to a daily or weekly newspaper or journal, whether in print or electronic format. Here is a sampling of my media diet, so you can have an idea of where I find the links I post to the course wiki: I have print subscriptions to *The New York Times*, *The Financial Times*, *The Economist*, *New Scientist*, and *The New Yorker*, and I use Google Reader to filter around 350 select RSS feeds. A large part of doing well in this course will involve keeping current with what's going on in the world.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. If you have any questions about what does and does not constitute plagiarism, refer first to the UMass Lowell Undergraduate Catalogue under 'Academic

Integrity'. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me by email, phone, or in person. I would much prefer to clarify a small confusion than be forced to give you a failing grade in the class.

Citation Policy for Short Papers: If you are drawing only from course material, parenthetical citation, such as (Locke 87) is fine. If you use additional sources, use whichever standard citation format works for you (i.e., MLA, Chicago, etc.), but use the same throughout your work and be sure that all relevant information is included. If possible, include a web citation in addition to—but not instead of—a text citation. While useful for in-class queries and quick references, *Wikipedia is not a valid citation source*.

Course Outline

nota bene – reading assignments are subject to revision any time up to the class prior to their assignment. If you miss a class, verify the next day's readings by checking the pbworks website. For days with heavier reading loads, I will specify (either in class, online, or both) areas of focus.

Thur. Sept. 1 – Introductions, Course Expectations, and Pbworks Tutorial

Tues. Sept. 6 – Introducing the 'big three' – Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism

- Baylis, Smith, and Owens (hereafter BSO) – Introduction (1-13)
- Mingst and Snyder (hereafter MS) – Jack Snyder, “One World, Rival Theories” (4-11)
- First pbworks upload

Thur. Sept. 8 – Understanding Globalization, Part 1

- BSO, chapter 1, Anthony McGrew (16-30)
- MS, Moses Naim, “The Five Wars of Globalization” (535-542)

Tues. Sept. 13 – Setting the Stage: The Historical Context

- BSO, chapters 2 and 3, Len Scott and Michael Cox (52-79)
- MS, George F. Kennan (“X”), “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” (28-33)
- Second pbworks upload

Module I – Theoretical Perspectives

Thur. Sept. 15 – Realism

- BSO, chapter 5, Tim Dunne and Brian Schmidt (86-98)
- MS, Thucydides, “The Melian Dialogue” (12-13)
- MS, Hans Morgenthau, “A Realist Theory of International Politics” (56-60)
- (skim if necessary) MS, John Mearsheimer, “Anarchy and the Struggle for Power” (60-79)

Tues. Sept. 20 – Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism

- BSO, chapters 6 and 7, Tim Dunne and Steven Lamy (102-129)
- MS, Michael Doyle, “Liberalism and World Politics” (80-92)
- Third pbworks upload

Thur. Sept. 22 – Constructivism

- BSO, chapter 9, Michael Barnett (150-164)
- MS, Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of It” (93-117)

Tues. Sept. 27 – Other Perspectives: Marxist, Post-Colonial, Feminist

- BSO, chapters 8 and 11 (132-145 and 184-194)
- MS, J. Ann Tickner, “Man, the State and War: Gendered Perspectives on National Security” (118-125)
- Fourth pbworks upload

Thur. Sept. 29 – Recapitulation and the Clash of Civilizations

- MS, Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” (203-209)
- Position papers due

Module II – International Issues

Tues. Oct. 4 – The Structural Framework: International Law and International Regimes

- BSO, chapter 17 and 18, Christian Reus-Smit and Richard Little (278-309)
- Fifth pbworks upload

Thur. Oct. 6 – In-Class Movie: *Commanding Heights*

- I will be in DC for a conference on this date, so will be having you watch a movie in class: (I will distribute an attendance sheet). Episode 1 of the film (available in segments here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jf9AtkD4T2s>) will be required as homework, and you will watch episode 2 in class.
- Website for the film: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/commandingheights/>

Tues. Oct. 11 – Human Rights

- BSO, chapter 30, Jack Donnelly (494-509)
- MS, Amartya Sen, “Universal Truths: Human Rights and the Westernizing Illusion” (598-600)
- Sixth pbworks upload

Thur. Oct. 13 – Environment

- BSO, chapter 21, John Vogler (346-363)

Tues. Oct. 18 – Gender Policy

- BSO, chapter 16, J. Ann Tickner (262-277)
- Midterm study guide to be distributed
- Seventh pbworks upload

Thur. Oct. 20 – International Trade / Prep for Midterm

- BSO, chapter 27, Matthew Watson (444-457)
- Come prepared to ask me any questions about the midterm

Tues. Oct. 25 – Midterm

Thur. Oct. 27 – Focus on Globalization, Part 2

- BSO, chapter 32, Andrew Linklater (528-543)

Module III – Focus on War

Tues. Nov. 1 – The Changing Character of War

- BSO, chapter 13, Michael Sheehan (216-225)
- MS, Carl von Clausewitz, “War as an Instrument of Policy” (334-337)
- Eighth pbworks upload

Thur. Nov. 3 – Understanding Security

- BSO, chapter 14 (232-244)
- MS, Thomas Schelling, “The Diplomacy of Violence” (338-346)

Tues. Nov. 8 – Humanitarian Intervention

- BSO, chapter 31, Alex J. Bellamy and Nicholas J. Wheeler (510-524)
- Ninth pbworks upload

Thur. Nov. 10 – Just War Theory

- Readings from Michael Walzer's *Just and Unjust Wars* and other sources to be provided online at the pbworks site

Tues. Nov. 15 – Terrorism

- BSO, Chapter 22, James D. Kiras (364-381)
- Tenth pbworks upload

Module IV: Focus on Development

Thur. Nov. 17 – Global Justice

- BSO, chapter 12, Richard Shapcott (198-210)

Tues. Nov. 22 – Poverty and Development

- BSO, Chapter 29, Caroline Thomas and Tony Evans (458-477)
- MS, William Easterly, “The Healers: Triumph and Tragedy” (570-585)
- Eleventh pbworks upload

Tues. Nov. 29 – Special Focus on Global Food Politics

- Readings to be provided on the course website
- Twelfth pbworks upload
- Reading Response Due

Thur. Dec. 1 – Human Security (and Revisiting Human Rights)

- BSO, chapter 29, Amitav Acharya (480-492)

Tues. Dec. 6 – Focus on Uploads and Current Events

- Thirteenth pbworks upload

Thur. Dec. 8 – Course Recapitulation and Prep for Final