

INTL 3200: Introduction to International Relations

University of Georgia, Department of International Affairs

Course Instructor Information:

Dr. Andrew Owsiak
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Office hours: Tues/Thurs 11:00am-noon & by appt.

Course Meeting Information:

Fall 2022
Tues/Thurs 12:45-2:00pm
514 Journalism

Course Description:

Global interdependence continues accelerating. As it does, events in one part of the world—for example, earthquakes, wars, terrorist attacks, human rights violations, trade wars, oil price fluctuations, and immigration (to name just a few)—increasingly have profound effects on those living in other parts of the globe. This course introduces students to the interdependence underlying international relations, the issues derived from it, and theoretical frameworks and arguments to help make sense of it and its effects. In general, the course has three broad goals: (i) to teach students how to study international relations through a scientific approach, (ii) to introduce students to the myriad topics that fall within the general field of international relations, and (iii) through the first two goals, to prepare students for their upper-division classes.

Students often become international affairs (i.e., political science) majors because they like politics (or current events) and dislike (or prefer to avoid) math. This course, I hope, encourages students to rethink any such motivations. We will use contemporary and past events to illustrate processes and patterns; yet the field of international relations moves beyond these events, seeking to *explain, analyze, and predict*—through both theory and evidence. When we confront any current event, we want to know *why* it happened and *what* it means. In addition, math and international relations converge more than one might think. Much research—and more importantly, many jobs—in the field of international relations require a willingness to engage numbers, data, and math. Through the course, we will explore how this works.

Course Objectives:

At this conclusion of this course, students will be (better) able to:

- Use a theoretical framework to explain various interstate interactions (e.g., conflict, cooperation, terrorism, economics, law, human rights practices);
- Define, explain, and apply the key concepts used frequently in international relations courses, including—for example—anarchy, interdependence, interstate conflict, alliances, democratic peace, terrorism, international trade, exchange rates, international law, and human rights;
- Express an informed opinion (in speech and writing) on several contemporary international relations topics and debates (e.g., the value—or not—of free trade, whether the global order will persist, and so on), using both theoretical arguments and evidence in the process;
- Identify their own areas of interest within the broad field of international relations; and
- Have a greater appreciation for the complexity of international events, as well as a better understanding of how experts see, interpret, and research these events.

Course Reading Material:

For the course to function smoothly, students should complete all assigned readings *before* the class meeting for which they are assigned (see schedule below). Completing these readings, in conjunction with attending class consistently, will best help students succeed in the course.

There required textbook for this course is:

- McFall, Kelly. (2022) *The Needs of Others: Human Rights, International Organizations, and Intervention in Rwanda, 1994*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

All other required readings—behind those found in the textbook listed above—are available electronically through the course’s eLearning Commons website. Log-in at: <https://uga.view.usg.edu>, with UGA MyID and Single Sign-On password.

Please note: Students are responsible for all required material, even if the material is not explicitly discussed in the classroom. The instructor reserves the right to replace part of the participation grade with additional, unannounced quizzes if students are not prepared for and contributing to class discussions.

Course Requirements:

The following are the requirements for this course:

1. Participation (20%, as divided below)
 - a. In-class contribution (10%): Students will be evaluated on (i) (in-person) attendance, (ii) contributions to class discussions (quality and quantity), and (iii) participation during in-class activities. Each of these is *required*. Thus, attending class, but not joining into our discussions and activities, may still adversely affect a student’s participation grade. There is no extra credit for low participation.
 - b. Talking points (10%): To enhance discussion, each student will also write six talking points during the semester. The top five (5) of these will each count 2% towards the final course grade (i.e., a total of 10%). Instructions for talking points appear on the eLC course website. In general, these are short (i.e., <200 word) paragraphs in which the student makes an argument/observation/critique, and then uses that to raise a question for further discussion. Students must submit talking points to the appropriate eLC assignment dropbox *and* post them to the appropriate eLC discussion board at least twenty-four hours before the class in which we will discuss the reading. Two final notes: (i) Engagement with other students’ discussion points on the discussion board can contribute to the participation grade, and (ii) Students who submit talking points that merely repeat what a classmate said earlier will not fare as well as those who submit original insights.
2. Quizzes (40%): We will have ten (10) brief, unannounced, in-class quizzes. These will cover the assigned reading for the day on which the quiz occurs. Of these, a student’s top eight (8) scores will each count for 5% of the final course grade.
3. Rwandan Intervention Simulation (20%, as divided below)
 - a. Participation. This is included in the participation grade above. The instructor will survey each student’s simulation teammates for additional feedback.
 - b. Role-Specific Assignments (10%): As the simulation activity approaches, each student will receive a specific role to play within it. These roles have specific written assignments that students must complete during the exercise. The instructor will give the parameters for these assignments in class. Students should submit these assignments via the eLC assignment dropbox (for grading), in addition to distributing them as the game roles require.
 - c. Reflection (10%): Students will write a two-page paper that connects the simulation activity to other course content. The instructor will give the prompt and instructions in class. This assignment is due November 1 via the eLC assignment dropbox (in PDF format).

4. Writing assignments (20% total; 10% each): Students will complete two short writing assignments during the semester.
 - a. Assignment #1 (due September 20): Follow-up to our in-class data exercise. Your group will submit one group lab report via the eLC assignment dropbox (in PDF format).
 - b. Assignment #2 (due November 22): The instructor will give the prompt and instructions in class. Each student will work alone and submit their individual assignment through the eLC assignment dropbox (in PDF format).

Course Guidelines:

The following guidelines govern the requirements for this course:

1. Students should attend *all* class meetings (*on time*) and participate actively within in-class activities and discussions. Much of the in-class discussion will supplement course readings, rather than simply repeat it. Regardless of attendance, students are responsible for the material we cover in class, which may show up on course assessments.
2. Assignments are due on the dates given at the *beginning* of the regular class period for which they are assigned. Late assignments receive a penalty of one full letter grade (10 percentage points) for the first day, as well as an additional half-letter grade (5 percentage points) for each additional day they are late. After 10 days, students may submit a late assignment for half-credit until the final class meeting (December 1 at 12:45pm). Note that some excuses (e.g., broken printers) do not justify missing deadlines. It is also inappropriate to come to class late on the dates on which assignments are due; anything submitted after the beginning of class may not earn full credit.
3. Students who are unable to attend a class meeting are responsible for obtaining the notes for that meeting from another student. The instructor will not provide slides or notes for class meetings.
4. Failure to complete an assignment or in-class quiz will result in a failing grade for that assignment or quiz (a score of 0). Make-up quizzes *may* be offered, but *only* with the approval of the instructor—generally for documented, emergency situations. The instructor will administer any approved make-up quizzes during the course’s regularly scheduled, semester final exam period—on Thurs, December 8 from 12:00-3:00pm.
5. Students should keep class notes, graded papers, and copies of submitted work until they receive the final course grade in Athena. The instructor agrees to grade all assignments and quizzes fairly and objectively. During the semester, students may contact the instructor if they have questions about a received grade. Students wishing to appeal a grade should contact the instructor no sooner than 48 hours—but no later than two weeks—after receiving the grade in question. The former permits time to think about any comments received and formulate the justification for the inquiry. The latter ensures that the student and instructor address concerns together in an expeditious manner.
6. In order to foster a respectful learning environment, students enrolled in this course agree to:
 - a. use respectful language that does not insult others or their point of view;
 - b. keep cell phones and other devices silenced/turned off *and* put away during class; and
 - c. **not** use laptops during class meetings, unless the instructor informs you that they are needed for a classroom exercise. (If, however, you require special accommodations, please discuss this with the instructor and provide documentation from the Disability Resource Center.)

The instructor reserves the right to ask any student that does not follow these parameters to leave the class meeting, so as not to affect other students’ learning negatively. Those that violate the

parameters more than once may be administratively removed from the course.

7. Debate and discussion are essential to critically evaluating arguments and perspectives in international relations. The point, however, is to use criticism and contrasting opinions to *sharpen* each other's ideas and *unearth* hidden assumptions—not to “win” (e.g., destroy other ideas or look better than colleagues). Towards this end, the spirit of discussion must remain open, honest, respectful, inclusive, and non-personal.
8. The course material—including (but not limited to) all documents provided in the eLC course website, quizzes, graded assignments, handouts, and in-class lectures—are copyrighted. Students may therefore **not** record lectures (audio or video), distribute materials beyond those enrolled in the course, or post any content from the course online *without the instructor's express, written permission*. For the sake of student privacy, students may also not record our class sessions (audio or video). Exceptions will be made automatically for those registered with the Disability Resource Center and who, through it, require an accommodation to record course meetings (see below). Those students, however, agree not to distribute the recordings (including online) *and* to destroy the recordings when the course concludes.
9. It is the policy and practice of the University of Georgia to create an inclusive learning environment. Students requiring accommodations (concerning the course meetings, material, exams, or assignments) should discuss such matters with the instructor at the outset of the course. Any student needing accommodations must register with and provide documentation from the Disability Resource Center (706-542-8719, <http://www.drc.uga.edu>).
10. Any exceptions or modifications to the above rules (or syllabus, more broadly) are at the instructor's discretion, only with prior approval and only under instances of extreme emergency or serious illness. The student must supply appropriate documentation in any event of exception. (Note: Please schedule routine medical visits around our class meetings, where possible.)

Grade Distribution:

A	93.00-100.00	C	73.00-76.99
A-	90.00-92.99	C-	70.00-72.99
B+	87.00-89.99	D+	67.00-69.99
B	83.00-86.99	D	63.00-66.99
B-	80.00-82.99	D-	60.00-62.99
C+	77.00-79.99	F	Below 60.00

Note: Any student that does not attend the first week of the course may be administratively removed from the course to open space for other potential students.

Academic Dishonesty:

All University of Georgia students agree to follow the University's academic honesty policy (“A Culture of Honesty”) and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty”, including policies that cover plagiarism and unauthorized assistance (for more information, <https://honesty.uga.edu/>). Students are responsible for informing themselves about these standards before performing any academic work and should direct specific questions they have regarding the policy (or its application) to the instructor *before* submitting coursework.

Schedule/Topics:

The following pages contain a general plan for the course. Please note: (i) the instructor, if necessary, may announce deviations to the schedule *in class*; (ii) all readings are required unless otherwise noted; (iii) everything listed under a given date should be completed before the start of that date's course meeting; and (iv) an asterisk (*) denotes days where electronic devices will be helpful to have on hand.

I. Course Introduction

- a. What is International Relations (IR)? (August 18)
 - i. Discussion: grand theory, mid-range theory, and the development of IR
 - ii. Skill: Distinguishing between levels of theory, path dependence
 - iii. *Optional*: Thakur and Vale, Chapter 2; Henderson (2013), "Hidden in Plain Sight"; Lake (1996), "Anarchy, Hierarchy, and the Variety of International Relations"

II. Foundational concepts

- a. How do we study IR? (August 23)
 - i. A theoretical framework: interests, institutions, and interactions (III)
 1. Discussion: Building blocks of theory
 2. Read: Frieden, Lake, & Schultz (FLS), Chapter 2
 3. Skill: Analyzing and explaining political behavior theoretically
 - ii. How do we apply a theoretical framework? (August 25)
 1. Discussion: Using theory to understand events
 2. Read: Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics*, Chapter 1
 3. Skill: How to apply a theory to increase our understanding
 - iii. Causal arguments (August 30)
 1. Discussion: Necessary and sufficient conditions
 2. Read: Mahoney & Vanderpoel (2015), "Set Diagrams and Qualitative Research"
 3. Skill: Identifying theoretical connections between cause and effect
 - iv. Formal models: why war? (September 1)
 1. Discussion: Reasons for suboptimal outcomes
 2. Read: Fearon (1995), "Rationalist Explanations for War"
 3. Skill: Reading formal models
 4. *Optional Background*: FLS, Chapter 2, pp. 82-87 (appendix on game theory)
 - v. Quantitative research: why war? (September 6)
 1. Discussion: Multicausality
 2. Read: Senese & Vasquez (2005), "Assessing the Steps to War"
 3. Skill: Reading coefficients & working with data
 - vi. Skill: Working with data (September 8)*
 1. Discussion: Descriptive statistics
 2. Complete: Writing Assignment #1
 3. *Optional*: Blalock, excerpts as assigned
 - vii. Qualitative research: why did the most vulnerable remain behind? (September 13)*
 1. Discussion: Finding the proper data to evaluate an argument
 2. Read: Carpenter (2003), "Women and Children First"
 - viii. What have we learned so far? (September 15)
 1. Read: Goertz (2021), "The Semantics of Causal Mechanism Figures"

III. Conflict

- a. What is conflict, and why does it happen? (September 20)
 - i. Discussion: Conflict and conflict trends
 - ii. Read: Lake (2010), “Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory”
 - iii. **Writing Assignment #1 due @12:45pm via eLC assignment dropbox**
- b. What tools exist for ending conflict? (September 22)
 - i. Discussion: International conflict management tools
 - ii. Beber et al. (2017), “Peacekeeping, Compliance with International Norms, and Transactional Sex in Monrovia, Liberia”
 - iii. Skill: Identifying policy substitutes
- c. Normative constraints on conflict behavior (September 27)
 - i. Read: Schenoni et al. (2022), “The Saavedra Lamas Peace”
 - ii. *Optional*: Klotz (1995), “Norms Reconstituting Interests”

IV. Rwanda, 1994: A Simulation Exercise

- a. International organizations/law, non-state actors, and Rwanda (September 29)
 - i. Read: McFall, pp. 1-76
- b. Theories of humanitarian intervention (October 4)
 - i. Read: McFall, pp. 76-146
- c. Round 1 (October 6)
 - i. *Optional*: Abbott & Snidal (2000), “Hard and Soft Law in International Governance”
- d. Round 2 (October 11)
 - i. *Optional*: Mearsheimer (1994), “The False Promise of International Institutions”
- e. Round 3 (October 13)
- f. Round 4 (October 18)
- g. Round 5 & Postmortem (October 20)
- h. Postmortem (October 25 & 27)
 - i. Watch: *Ghosts of Rwanda*, Frontline/PBS
 - ii. Read: Wood et al. (2009), “Humanitarian Intervention”
 - iii. Complete reflection assignment (**due November 1**)

V. International Political Economy

- a. Is free trade better than restricted trade? (November 1)
 - i. Discussion: Trade and trade restrictions
 - ii. Read: Milner & Kubota (2005), “Why the Move to Free Trade?”, and On Washing Machines (2019), and On the Futility of Trade War with China (2018)
 - iii. **Simulation reflection assignment due @ 12:45pm via eLC assignment dropbox**
- b. How do monetary relations work? (November 3)
 - i. Discussion: Money supplies, monetary policy, and exchange rates
 - ii. Read: Nelson & Katzenstein (2014), “Uncertainty, Risk, and the Financial Crisis of 2008”

- c. Is development possible, and what progress has the world made? (November 8)
 - i. Discussion: Development
 - ii. Read: Hickel (2016), “The True Extent of Global Poverty and Hunger”
 - iii. *Optional:* Doner & Schneider (2016), “The Middle-Income Trap”
 - d. Who lends to states in need, and what effect does it have? (November 10)
 - i. Discussion: Foreign aid
 - ii. Read: Dreher & Gassebner (2012), “Do IMF and World Bank Programs Induce Government Crises?”
 - e. Is international political economy too “Western”? (November 15)
 - i. Discussion: Underlying influences on international relations
 - ii. Read: Wallerstein (1974), “The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System”
 - iii. *Optional:* Singh (2021), “Race, Culture, and Economics”
 - iv. Skill: Briefing
- VI. Terrorism (November 17)
- i. Discussion: Why does terrorism happen?
 - ii. Read: Kydd & Walter (2006), “The Strategies of Terrorism”
- VII. Environment (November 22)
- a. What might the world do about the climate, if anything?
 - i. Discussion: Public goods and bargaining problems
 - ii. Read: Busby (2018), “Why Climate Change Matters More Than Anything Else”, and Falkner (2016), “The Paris Agreement and the New Logic of International Climate Politics”
 - iii. **Writing Assignment #2 due @ 12:45pm via eLC assignment dropbox**
- VIII. Debates: are democracies more peaceful, and if so, why? (November 29)
- i. Discussion: Overlapping concepts
 - ii. Mousseau (2009), “The Social Market Roots of Democratic Peace”
 - iii. Skill: Critique, using data to understand alternative arguments
- IX. Course Conclusion: Tying It All Together (December 1)
- X. Other Readings and topics
- a. Hegemons: Finnemore (2009), McDonald (2015); Interstate relationships: Colaresi et al. (2007), Goertz et al. (2016); Civil war: Walter (1997); Political psychology: Jervis (1968); Transnational advocacy networks: Cheng et al. (2021); Drone Warfare: Horowitz et al. (2016); Cyberwarfare: Lindsay (2013); International law: Helfer and Voeten (2017)