

**Making Sense of World Politics**  
Government 1817 (Fall 2025)

Malott Hall 228, Bache Auditorium; T, Th: 10:10-11:25am

**1. Overview: Miscellanea, Course Objectives, Grading (Official-External and Unofficial-Internal), Lectures and Sections:**

Teaching Staff:

Peter Katzenstein [pjk2@cornell.edu](mailto:pjk2@cornell.edu) [Instructor], Jonathan Katz [jmk489@cornell.edu](mailto:jmk489@cornell.edu) [Head TA] Jacob Batinga, [jb2782@cornell.edu](mailto:jb2782@cornell.edu), Carmine Couloute, [cc2879@cornell.edu](mailto:cc2879@cornell.edu), Zorana Knezevic, [zk97@cornell.edu](mailto:zk97@cornell.edu), Hah Yeon (Hailey) Lee, [h12524@cornell.edu](mailto:h12524@cornell.edu), Noah Wunanyun [ww549@cornell.edu](mailto:ww549@cornell.edu).

PK Office:

White Hall 321

Office hours: Sign-up sheets are posted on my office door by each Friday afternoon for the coming week.

TA Offices:

TAs will post their office number (located in the basement of White Hall) and office hours on Canvas and also announce them in section.

Prerequisites: There are none for this four-credit course.

Course website Canvas:

To log in, go to [canvas@cornell](mailto:canvas@cornell). You should regularly consult this website. It will contain information about lecture outlines, readings, sections, labs, exams, writing assignments, and other relevant information. Your normal contact for anything related to this course is your TA. If your TA cannot help you, s/he will tell you to contact the Head TA.

Objectives:

I try to teach students, and myself, how to think critically. I hope you will enjoy learning how to do this. If you do, you will have gotten to the core of your liberal arts education at Cornell by mastering a number of different skills: comprehending what you hear in lecture and what you read; applying what you learn by taking notes and writing papers; learning how to analyze what you hear and read; learning how to evaluate critically your own arguments and those of others; learning how to craft your own arguments in written and oral form in class, in section, and in labs.

Specifically, this course introduces you to some important theoretical approaches to the analysis of international relations and applies these approaches to a number of historical and contemporary issues. The course seeks to convince you of the importance of paradigms and theories for describing and explaining international relations. This involves (a) distinguishing among different explanations as illustrated in lectures, sections and readings; (b) evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of different explanations; and (c) developing your own explanation for any given issue.

If used properly, Large Language Models such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Co-pilot etc., are a way of enhancing your

critical thinking skills. I am a strong supporter of their proper use in teaching and research. You can of course short-change your education by using them as a substitute for thinking. My strong advice is that you resist that temptation.

#### Grading:

Grade inflation at Cornell is a serious issue. You may find this article published in the Cornell Sun (January 2024) helpful: <https://cornellsun.com/2024/01/25/schwarz-sparacio-the-issue-of-grade-inflation/>. In the past, and increasingly so in recent years, many students have told me that they would be very interested in taking this course. But they simply cannot afford to do so because they “need to get an A grade in this course.” Last year almost as many pre-registered students dropped this course as took it. This figure is way out of line with the other Introductory courses in the Government Department. After several years of reflection and discussion with my colleagues and former students enrolled in this course, I have decided to initiate this year a new dual grading system without changing either the content of the course or my expectation as a teacher.

Your *official-external (inflated)* grade, reported on your transcript, is based on a four-point scale (A+, A, A-, B+), with one quarter of the class each receiving one of the four grades. When asked by anybody or in my letters of recommendations I will explain the logic of this grading system in the era of grade inflation and refer to the four grades assessing your work as “outstanding” (A+), “excellent” (A), “very good” (A-), and “good” (B+). The official-external grade will be computed at the end of the semester by converting your unofficial-internal grade. If your work is sub-standard, that is less than “good,” I reserve the right to accord you a grade lower than a B+, including a failing grade.

Your *unofficial-internal (deflated)* grade is reported only to you. It is based on the older, conventional system (ranging from an A+ to D-, A+=4.3, A=4.0, A-=3.7. . . D+=1.3, D=1.0, D-=0.7). This gives you a more realistic assessment of yourself and your performance. In Lake Wobegon, everybody is “above average.” Not so around Lake Cayuga. Comparable to other large social science courses at Cornell, your *unofficial-internal* grade is curved, with the median grade somewhere between an A- and a B+. Each TA will grade on the same curve. You are therefore not advantaged or disadvantaged by being assigned to a particular section.

The *unofficial-internal* grade will consist of five components: mid-term (15%); five writing assignments each counting for 5 percent (25%); final examination (25%); section attendance and participation (17.5% -- each TA will decide how many unexcused absences they will accept in their sections); and lecture and lab attendance (17.5% --PK will accept three unexcused absences during lecture for the semester; five of seven lab attendances are mandatory). If your writing assignments are late, you will be graded down by one grade for every 24 hours (for example from an A- to a B+). You may appeal any of your grades only after you have handed the head TA a two-page, double-spaced, neatly typed memorandum that explains why you think that you have been treated unfairly. As you will soon discover, the Government Department has some of the best TAs who are regularly winning coveted teaching awards in the Arts College. Your TA is your best teacher, advocate and mentor. The chances are very small indeed that you will feel aggrieved. Putting aside extremely rare, failing grades, at the end of the course your *unofficial-internal* grade will be converted into the *official-external* four-point scale.

#### Lectures and Sections:

Lectures will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:10am-11:25am. On many days, lectures will start with about 10 minutes of open mic in which we will seek to apply the approaches and concepts that we are learning to current topics and events. Each lecture will also have a couple of clicker polls about readings or lectures. You need to bring your clickers to each class. Sections start after the first lecture; there will be no Monday sections

on August 25 and on Labor Day (September 1). In regular consultation with the entire teaching staff, each TA is in charge of running their own sections.

Government 1817 is taught in a computer- and phone-free lecture-hall. I have learned over the years that the advantages of this rule outweigh its disadvantages. The TAs and I will enforce this rule strictly. Please spare all of us the embarrassment of asking you to leave the lecture hall. The TAs will decide how to handle this issue in the sections they teach. Lecture outlines will be posted by Sunday evening for the coming week. I encourage you to download and print the outlines so that you can take notes in the margins rather than scribbling furiously during class.

For you to succeed in this course you must attend lectures and sections. Both are vital for understanding the different theories, applying the theories to different issues, and evaluating different readings. Repeating these steps many times is important for the success of the course. That means attending lectures that develop different lines of arguments and being present when theories are applied in section while discussing readings.

## **2. Reading Assignments and Managing the Reading List:**

All readings are available on Canvas [CV]. My experience in teaching this course in the past leads me to one unambiguous conclusion – students read more carefully when they work with hard copies and underline, take notes etc. It is too easy to scan and think one has absorbed the material when reading on a computer screen. This is especially true of the readings in this course. Readings are difficult and many require careful study and reflection. I URGE YOU TO PRINT OUT ALL READINGS AND TO WORK WITH HARD COPIES.

Acknowledging that printing takes time and money, I appeal here only to your own self-interest in making the most of this course. If you think that you can substitute reading summaries from ChatGPT for reading, you will be sadly disappointed. Those summaries are easy to print out and impossible to memorize for the simple reason that you have not internalized them.

Many of the readings are intellectually demanding and some will require more than one reading. I expect that you will spend *at least* as much time reading this material as the average 2,000 pages that are typically assigned in many other upper-level social science courses at Cornell. The most effective way for keeping up with the work in this course is to read the material for a particular week before I lecture on the assigned topic. Although lectures may refer to particular readings, I will assume that you have done the necessary work ahead of time. Lectures will very rarely discuss readings explicitly. The course is thus designed to make readings, sections and lectures cumulative not repetitive. Before section, you should reread the material and review lecture notes so that you are well-prepared for discussion. Since you are expected to absorb a large number of concepts, ideas and theories — not just facts — it is important that you keep up with the readings on a week-by-week basis. This is not a course you can master by cramming most of the work into a few days at the end of the semester.

Reading and taking notes is a skill that you need to learn in college. TAs will help you do so in section, especially in the early weeks of the semester. After readings for a given topic have been covered in all sections, I will put on Canvas my notes of all the required readings. They may be useful for you to add to your notes from lecture and section for the eventual reviewing at the end of the semester. It goes without saying that you do *not* have to rely on them at all. We all read differently and absorb different things from what we read. That creates the magic of conversation about what readings and ideas mean to us.

There are two books that you should buy for this course. Robert McMahon's *The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction* is a simple, descriptive historical narrative that you need to read in preparation for the second part of the course. Neither I nor the TAs will teach this book in lecture or sections. One part of the mid-term exam will deal with this reading. Daniel Drezner's *Theories of International Politics and Zombies* [DD] is a deliciously irreverent "text." I promise that this is the funniest and shortest textbook you will encounter in your college career. I am assigning different chapters for different days, but I would urge you to take a couple of hours to read the whole thing at the outset. It will give you an overview of Part 1 of the course and some belly laughs to boot. You can purchase both books at the Campus store, around town, or online. [Henry Nau's *Perspectives on International Relations*, (CQ Press) is a fine, conventional textbook. There are others. If you find reading conventional textbooks helpful, by all means use what you can find in the library. But this is not what this course is about, and I doubt that you will have the time to do so].

You must also buy an iClicker at the Campus Store and bring it to every class. When using the clicker in class, your answer will be recorded anonymously and your presence in the hall will thus be recorded. Should you forget to bring your clicker to class, please make sure that you hand your TA or another member of the teaching staff a written note indicating that you attended the lecture. We will use the iClicker remote, not the student app version. A description of how to download the app has been put on the 1817 Canvas site. Here is another link: <https://teaching.cornell.edu/classroom-polling/using-iclicker-canvas>

### 3. Reading Matrix and Class Schedule:

#### PARADIGMS

Realism    Liberalism    Critical Theories    Constructivism    Domestic Politics

#### TOPICS

- 1 Presentations
- 2 World War I
- 3 9/11, Iraq, Afghanistan
  
- 4 Cold War Origin
- 5 Cuba
- 6 Cold War End
  
- 7 Weapons
- 8 Interventions
- 9 Ukraine and ISIS
  
- 10 Trade and Investment
- 11 Globalization/Finance
- 12 Energy and Climate Change
  
- 13 Regions
- 14 Eclecticism and Spaghetti
- 15 Good-Bye

If you can classify, compare, and contrast the readings in this matrix, you will have a good command of the material in this course. To help you in that task **I URGE YOU TO REGULARLY USE THIS MATRIX.**

CLASS SCHEDULE  
(CV-Canvas; DD-Drezner)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
8/26	1. Overview	Syllabus. DD:1-29.CV:1-2.
8/28	2. Theory	CV:3.
9/2-9/4	3-4. Realism (1) and (2)	DD:31-42.CV:4-6.
9/5	<i>LAB 1</i>	<i>LAB R-1: Brooks</i>
9/9	5. Liberalism	DD:43-54.CV:7-9.
9/11	6. Marxism	DD:79-80.CV:10-12.
<b>First Writing Assignment Due 9/12</b>		
9/16	7. Post-Colonialism and Feminism	DD:63-78.CV: <i>either 13-15 or 16-18.</i>
9/18	8.Constructivism (1)	DD:55-63,103-10.CV:19-22.
9/19	<i>LAB 2</i>	<i>LAB R-2: Schanzer</i>
9/23	9.Constructivism (2)	DD:55-63,103-10.CV:19-22.
9/25	10.Domestic Politics	DD:81-102.CV:23-24.
<b>Second Writing Assignment Due 9/26</b>		
9/30	11.World War I	CV:25-28.
10/2	12.9/11, Iraq, Afghanistan	DD:111-24.CV:29-30.
10/3	<i>LAB 3</i>	<i>LAB R-3: Bruni</i>
10/7	13.Open Forum (1): Students	CV:31.
<b>10/9</b>	<b>14. Mid-Term Examination</b>	
10/14	FALL BREAK	
10/16	15.Origin of the Cold War	CV:32-34.
10/17	<i>LAB 4</i>	<i>LAB-R4: Dans</i>
10/21	16.Cuba	CV:35-39.
10/23	17.End of the Cold War	CV:40-42.
<b>Third Writing Assignment Due 10/24</b>		
10/28	18.Nuclear Weapons	CV:43-47.
10/30	19.Interventions	CV:48-49.
10/31	<i>LAB 5</i>	<i>LAB-R5: Levitsky, Way and Ziblatt</i>
11/4	20.Ukraine and ISIS	CV:50-54.
11/6	21.Trade and Investment	CV:55-57.
<b>Fourth Writing Assignment Due 11/7</b>		
11/11	22.Globalization and Finance	CV:58-59.
11/13	23.Energy and Climate Change	CV:60-62.
11/14	<i>LAB 6</i>	<i>LAB-R6: Gibson</i>
11/18	24.Open Forum (2): TAs	
11/20	25.Global and International Regions	CV:63-65.
<b>Fifth Writing Assignment Due 11/21</b>		
11/25	No Lecture	
11/27	THANKSGIVING	
12/2	27.Eclecticism and Spaghetti	CV:66.

12/4  
12/5

28.Good-Bye  
LAB 7

DD:.CV:67.

#### 4. Mid-Term, Final Examination, and Lab Sessions:

There are several occasions during the semester when you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your mastery of the course material. Just before fall break, on October 9, there will be a two-part, in-class mid-term examination. The first part is based only on the McMahon reading. All the questions on this part of the exam will be factual. The second part of the exam will ask you to apply some combination of different analytical perspectives to the topics covered in class 11 (World War I).

The final examination is scheduled by the Registrar's Office during the exam period (December 12-20). The exam will test your familiarity with the reading list. You can expect three kinds of questions on the final examination: Questions may ask you to (1) simply summarize the main points of particular readings; (2) contrast the arguments of different authors and evaluate them; and (3) develop a synthetic and coherent presentation of some of the material in the course. To answer the first two types of questions, you must learn to summarize each reading selection's main arguments accurately and concisely. To answer the third kind of question, you need to develop your own approach to the analysis of international politics.

PK has scheduled seven "lab sessions" on alternate Fridays for a free-wheeling discussion of a very short article, but also to discuss lectures, readings, and general issues of American and world politics. Each article is specially labelled in the syllabus to set it apart from the regular course readings. (LAB-RE1) is particularly relevant for you, (LAB-RE2) for me, and (LAB- R3-6) for all of us. These short articles are included for discussion purpose only and will not be part of any exams or discussions in sections. They are included because American society is going through a once-in-a-lifetime regime transformation that demands an open airing. These "lab sessions" will meet in White Hall 106 from 8am to 9am on September 5, 19, October 3, 17, 31, November 14, and December 5 (visitors are welcome just as they are in my lectures). You must attend five of the seven sessions. Requiring PK's explicit consent, one option for occasional conflicts -- because you may have other meetings scheduled at that time or because you are out of town -- is a later hour on Friday (9-10am) when I meet in the same room with students enrolled in Govt 2817. The other option is meeting me during my office hours for 15 minutes of free-wheeling discussion. It is your responsibility to schedule those meetings by signing up for office hours and to come prepared to talk about a question that interests you.

#### 5. Writing Assignments

There used to be a term paper in this course as the main writing assignment. Conventional paper writing is rapidly being replaced for all of us as we are learning how to use chatbots in our work. Critical thinking includes good writing, but what and how we write (and ultimately how and what we think) is dramatically altered by chatbots. Large Language Models (LLMs) are parrots. They spew back at us what has been said before – but to an amazing extent, with amazing speed, with amazing results, and with a deeply annoying sycophantic voice that exudes emotion where there is only an algorithm. Participating in the technology race between the production of chatbot texts (by students) and chatbot detection (by teachers) is not what I am interested in doing. Instead, we all need to learn how to use chatbots – primarily how to develop intelligent prompts so that this technology can provide the text that suits our interests and purposes. I have put on Canvas a recent, quick one so that you can see what I have in mind. Take a look: Admin 1817 PK Questioning ChatGPT about Acharya's Book\_07-24-25. And here is a useful comparison of different AI platforms: Admin 1817 PK AIPlatforms\_07-24-25.

TAs will be free, together with your input, to develop creative uses of this technology in sections. Here are some examples that may help us start thinking:

- Ask for a brief summary of PK's, your TA's and your own life and work. Make it short and fun. (I will share the funniest ones about PK in lecture and/or Canvas 😊) – as in sonnet or limerick form, or in the form of a Greek tragedy, or....., or.....
- Ask for an evaluation of something, like an article in the *Economist*, published last week, last month and last year and watch how the chatbot gets better the further back you go; then ask for an evaluation of something written 10 years, 100 years and 1000 years ago and see how the pattern changes as chatbots have to give answers without adequate textual input.
- Ask for a summary and/or evaluation of something written in English or in a language you are familiar with.
- Ask the chatbot to produce text in a foreign language you know or something very esoteric – like one of Indonesia's 6,000 or so dialects or ancient Norse....
- Ask for a summary and/or evaluation that is explicitly focusing on the standpoint (implicit or explicit ideological preference) of the chatbot.
- Use your own biography or experience, in this class, in college, and at home and see whether chatbot can produce useful or illuminating text.
- Write a conventional memo in which you use chatbots for some parts but not others; record the prompts you used to get the chatbot to produce text and show how different prompts create different texts; be explicit why you made the choices you made.
- Ask the chatbot to produce text with and without footnotes and reference list following different formats.
- Ask the chatbot to do annotated outlines vs bullet point outlines.
- Ask the chatbot to develop contrasting arguments – those developed in this course and/or others that you come up with.
- Test your emotional reaction if/when your TA or professor tells you that they are happy to write a letter of recommendation for you but that it will be produced by a chatbot. Test your intuition about the emotional reaction of your TA or professor should they learn that you have used chatbots simply to cut your workload.
- Write a two-page memo about some reading or aspect of the course; ask the chatbot to do the same; apply chatbot detection technology to both memos; report what you have found.
- Do the same as in the previous bullet and then critique the chatbot essay relying on your own knowledge and insights.
- Have the chatbot develop the same text for different audiences: kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, high school, college, graduate school, old age homes, athletic clubs, scuba divers, balloon pilots, etc.

The sky of your imagination is the only limit in the kind of assignment that is possible... in consultation with and backed by the express approval of your TA. TAs are in charge of determining in their section how many assignments will be the same for everybody and how many will be individualized.

You will be asked to produce five written assignments, which will typically be the same across all sections. Each of these assignments will count for 5 percent of your final grade. You will *not* be allowed to use LLM to generate your answers on assignments 1 and 4. Assignments should be free of grammatical, spelling, and typographical errors. Completed papers should be in 12-point font and double spaced. Papers should be

submitted at 5PM on the day they are due. Papers which are handed in or sent in after the deadline will be graded down one grade for every 24 hours that the paper is late (for example from an A- to a B+ for the first 24 hours, and to a B for the next 24 hours etc).

The first writing assignment will ask you to *compare and contrast two of the three major paradigms discussed in both lecture and in section*. After detailing the major claims of your paradigms of choice **without using any LLM**, detail by page and fully listed source what makes these paradigms operationally different. What are their strengths and weaknesses? What kind of questions are they more/less suited to answer? You will also be expected to discuss in what ways these paradigms are (dis)similar and (in)compatible with one another. This assignment is intended to help you begin to think critically about major schools of thought in international politics. Your finished assignment should be 3-5 pages, double spaced.

The second assignment will ask you to **use a LLM** to describe and analyze an issue of international politics of interest to you. Justify your choice of LLM first. Then, having provided the LLM's response, you should detail its strengths and weaknesses in its analyses and descriptors. You will be expected to do some research outside of this response to properly challenge the LLM's analysis. Did it discuss all relevant actors? Are there other motivations/reasons for this issue that it failed to note? What surprised you about its response? Do any recent events in the world challenge the veracity of the LLMs response? What did the LLM do well, and why do you think so? This assignment should help inform you of the powers and perils of using LLMs in your academic work, priming you for the rest of the assignments in the semester. The completed assignment should be 2-4 pages (excluding the A.I.-generated text), double spaced.

The third assignment will challenge you to make an evidence-based claim about an issue of international politics, informed by a paradigm learned in this course. A good formula to follow when constructing your claim is: *Paradigm X is necessary for understanding topic Y*. Some examples include:

- *The nature of recent tensions between the United States and China are consistent with Realist / Neorealist thought.*
- *Liberalism / Neoliberalism is the best lens for interpreting security issues in proliferation and deployment of nuclear weapons.*
- *Imperial expansionism by great powers can be best explained by Marxism.*
- *To fully capture the current power dynamics of major multilateral organizations, like the United Nations, postcolonial and feminist theories are best.*

You should synthesize a number of readings from class, including those that do not directly support your claim, footnoting precisely, by page, your claims and arguments. Collect sufficient evidence from real-world events to substantiate your argument. **Relying on a LLM of your choice**, develop and probe counterargument to your claim, and rebut it, or else explain why rejecting the counterargument is impossible. Add an Appendix to your paper which reproduces your prompts and exchanges with your LLM. This assignment should be 5-6 pages, double spaced text. The Appendix should be added with a separate pagination A1, A2 etc.

The fourth assignment tickles your imagination in asking the counterfactual “what-if” question to track alternative courses of world politics if at some crucial moment a small, contingent event had occurred differently. If Archduke Ferdinand had been killed in a hunting accident in November 1913, as he nearly was, there might not have been a World War I or II, no rise of fascism, no holocaust, no rise of America to preeminence in 1945, no decline of American power after 2000 etc. If Deng had not risen to power, defeating the Gang of Four in the 1970s, China’s rise to a global economic power would not have occurred, global

warming would have been much slower, climate-induced migration would have been much less of an issue. The course of American and world politics would have been different if the assassination attempt of John F. Kennedy had failed in 1963 and the one of Donald T. Trump had succeeded in 2024. There are many small and large events that could have occurred but did not and that would have changed world politics decisively that all paradigms and theories all too confidently explain with the benefit of 20/20 hindsight. **Use a LLM of your choice** to see how its hallucinations might spur your imagination and reflect critically on what you learn from writing this memo. This assignment should be 3-5 pages, double spaced text. The Appendix should be added with a separate pagination A1, A2 for your prompts and exchanges with your preferred LLM.

The fifth assignment will give you a choice. You could **use a LLM of your choice** to create a fictional story or poem that illustrates a particular aspect of world politics, possibly using the Drezner high-brow book, Barbie and Ken -- Calvin and Hobbes low-brow books, or any fairy tale that strikes you as a good take-off point. Alternatively, for the techy and venturesome, you can **use your preferred version of AI to visualize** a particular aspect of world politics you have encountered in this course and then to analyze in your own words why you chose the images / videos and what they do or do not convey accurately. This assignment should be 3-5 pages, double spaced text. The Appendix should be added with a separate pagination A1, A2 for your prompts and exchanges with your preferred LLM.

Plagiarism is a serious offense. We will try to minimize it by having the TAs build a trustful relationship with you in section. The links below provide some useful examples on how to cite correctly and what counts as plagiarism. When in doubt talk to your TA. For more detailed information, here is the address for Cornell's policy on academic integrity: <https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/dean/academic-integrity/code-of-academic-integrity/>. And here is the site for Cornell's statement on plagiarism: <https://guides.library.cornell.edu/c.php?g=168160&p=1105341>

The teaching staff will discuss various issues and choices about your writing assignments in our weekly staff meetings, informed by what you and the TAs come up with in section. We all have to learn how to use and deal with LLMs; we are all neophytes learning together.

## 6. More Miscellanea:

### Scheduling:

The mid-term and final examination will each have one make-up exam. To take the make-up examination you will need the head TA's (not your TA's) written permission. Make-ups are offered only once, within seven days after the main exam; the Head TA will coordinate to find a time slot that is workable for all students. This course adheres to the policy that instructors in classes with smaller enrollments should adjust to the exam schedule of courses with larger enrollments. I will of course accept a physician's report as a legitimate reason for seeking to reschedule an examination or missing a paper deadline. Incompletes will be given only because of circumstances beyond the student's control, such as serious illness or family emergencies. (A non-refundable airline ticket does not constitute "a circumstance beyond the student's control" 😊). It is extremely unwise to book your travel before you know the exam date.

### News:

Students acquire most of their news from different sources on social media. This is fine as long as you verify your source and do not send unverified, suspect information around thus further stoking the anger brewing in our polity. I find that verification process too time consuming and thus rely on the *Financial Times* (with its

truly global coverage), *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, National Public Radio, *The Economist* and *Der Spiegel*, and occasionally *The Straits Times* as my regular sources of news. *Foreign Affairs* has excellent coverage of mainstream views and a useful book review section organized by region. There are a number of political science columns that contain topical discussions such as Monkey Cage, Foreign Policy, and The Interpreter. And a number of political scientists have established their own websites or podcasts with sizable followers such as Drezner, Fazal, Narang, Nexon, Saunders and Staniland. It is too easy to spend hours and hours on the news. I never forget Schopenhauer's apocryphal reminder that newspapers are the second hands of history, they always tell the wrong time. The same holds in my opinion for most current events TV talk shows, blogs, podcasts etc. We are drowning in a tsunami of information and instant analysis while losing the capacity to step back and think on our own. Hosts are condemned to talk and talk and rarely say anything of lasting value. They just serve as another echo chamber. The main exception is Fareed Zakaria on CNN. If you can, catch his weekly show. He is smart and has good guests.

#### Covid:

For most of us, for now, this is done with – until the next pandemic. (Even though we do not like to think about it, pandemics, like extreme weather, are likely to become more frequent occurrences). But some of us are highly susceptible to virus infections or for other reasons want to or need to be careful. This course will follow university health guidelines. Please talk to your TA, the Head TA and/or me about health concerns you may have. I will do everything in my power to accommodate your needs. If members of the teaching staff fall ill, lectures and sections will be taught via zoom.

#### Guests:

I welcome in my sections and labs guests whom you may want to invite – parents, relatives, friends. Please stop by before class and introduce your guest(s). After the beginning of class I will welcome them, perhaps briefly chat with them publicly, and then the class, collectively, will greet them with a round of applause. For the duration of their visit, they are part of our learning community.

#### Academic Integrity and Other University Policies:

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University *Code of Academic Integrity*. This means that any written work you submit in this course will be your own. The Code of Academic Integrity and Acknowledging the Work of Others is found in the Policy Notebook for the Cornell Community. See <https://cornell-classic.univcomm.cornell.edu/provost/docs/0814-academic-integrity.pdf>. An additional document you may want to consult is posted at <http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/aic.cfm>. A Cornell tutorial called Recognizing and Avoiding Plagiarism can be found at <http://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm>. If you are in any doubt about how to cite material that you wish to use, please consult your TA. Your enrollment in this course signifies that you have granted your permission to submit your written work to services that check the authenticity and originality of your work. You should also be aware of the fact that you may not turn in the same piece of work (or part thereof) for credit in multiple classes, either in the same semester or while at Cornell in general.

I respect and uphold Cornell University policies and regulations pertaining to: the observation of religious holidays; assistance available to the physically handicapped, visually and or/hearing impaired student; sexual harassment; and racial or ethnic discrimination.

Students with Disabilities: In compliance with the Cornell University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities. Students are encouraged to register with Student Disability Services to verify their eligibility for appropriate

accommodations. Students seeking accommodations should submit to the Head TA and me an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services within the first two weeks of the semester.

Religious Observances: Students may ask for reasonable and timely accommodations for sincerely held religious beliefs. Please review the syllabus closely to determine if your religion will present any scheduling conflicts with any of the assignments. You must inform the Head TA of any conflicts within the first two weeks of the semester.

Classroom Behavior: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students will treat one another with respect and courtesy. As a teacher I regard the classroom as a sacred place. I will close the door to the lecture hall myself, at the beginning of each class. This is a symbolic act to which I attach great importance. We are a community of learners and as such we deal with each other with utmost respect, especially when we discuss fraught issues inviting different political views. The first session offers you two different readings (by Shields and Belkin) on this absolutely central aspect of this course.

Copyright Material: Whether it is especially marked as copyright material or not, the instructor expressly prohibits students to sell any of the course material to any entity or person inside or outside of Cornell. Such behavior constitutes a very serious form of academic misconduct. Neither the instructor nor Cornell will tolerate such conduct and reserve the right to seek legal redress.

After all of these unavoidable preliminaries, let me end how I started, on a positive note. ***I hope you will enjoy learning how to think critically.*** If you do, you will have gotten to the heart of your liberal arts education at Cornell.

## LIST OF READINGS AVAILABLE ON CANVAS

1. I was Wrong to Oppose Safe Spaces (Shields)
2. Alumni Yank Funds over Speech Issue (Belkin)
  
3. Why We Fight Over Foreign Policy (Nau)
  
4. Reductionist and Systemic Theories (K. Waltz)
5. Great Power Politics (J. Mearsheimer)
6. Tragedy of Offensive Realism (J. Kirshner)

*LAB-R1: "We Are the Most Rejected Generation" (Brooks)*

7. How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace (Owen) [NOT subsections: pp. 90-93 and 105-108]
8. International Liberalism Reconsidered (Keohane)
9. Trading State (Rosecrance)
  
10. The Marxist Perspective (Gilpin)
11. Social Forces, States and World Orders (Cox)
12. The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System (Wallerstein) [NOT pp. 392 middle-397 middle]
  
13. Race and IR (Ba)
14. The Du Bois Doctrine (Mampilly)
15. Racism and Antiracism (Búzás)
16. Sex and Death (Cohn)
17. Women and Children First (Carpenter)
18. Women and the Evolution of World Politics (Fukuyama)

*LAB-R2: "How Should We Talk to Students about Our Perilous Times?" (Schanzer)*

19. Constructing International Politics (Wendt)
20. Clash of Civilizations? (Huntington)
21. Civilizations in World Politics: China and Sinicization in Comparative Perspective (Katzenstein)
22. Good Muslim, Bad Muslim (Mamdani)
  
23. The Jacksonian Tradition (Mead)
24. Same War—Different Views (Katzenstein)
  
25. A Conflict that Shaped the Modern World (Erlanger)  
[Optional: "Unsung History: 75 Years after World War II," *The New York Times*,  
A Special Section, September 8, 2022]
26. World War I (Yoder)
27. Civil-Military Relations and the Cult of the Offensive (Snyder)
28. Commercial Liberalism under Fire (Ripsman and Blanchard)
  
29. History and September 11 (Fukuyama)

30. Keeping Saddam in the Box (Mearsheimer and Walt)

*LAB-R3: "I'm Watching the Sacrifice of College's Soul (Bruni)*

31. Many Theories (Walt)

32. Sources of Soviet Conduct (X)

33. The Failure of Success (Kennan)

34. Communist Bloc Expansion (Macdonald)

35. Cuban Missile Crisis (Allison)

36. Cuban Missile Crisis at 50 (Allison)

37. Diplomacy, Not Derring-Do (Nathan)

38. How JFK's Secrets Fed Conspiracy Culture (Naftali)

39. Constructing National Interests (Weldes)

*LAB-R4: Trump's Revolution (Dans)*

40. The Long Peace (Gaddis)

41. Theories of War in an Era of Leading-Power Peace (Jervis)

42. Understanding Change (Koslowski and Kratochwil)

43. Spread of Nuclear Weapons (Waltz)

44. More Will be Worse (Sagan)

45. Nuclear Weapons Don't Matter (Muller)

46. The Vanishing Nuclear Taboo (Tannenwald)

47. Midnight and Counting (*The Economist*)

48. Intervention in Vietnam and Central America (Chomsky)

49. Norms of Humanitarian Intervention (Finnemore)

*LAB-R5: "No One Has Ever Defeated Autocracy from the Sidelines" (Levitsky, Way and Ziblatt)*

50. Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault (J. Mearsheimer)

51. Ukraine Holds the Future (Snyder)

52. How Much of a State is the Islamic State? (Mecham)

53. Why the Islamic State Won't Become a Normal State (Rubin)

54. The Jihadi Threat to International Order (Mendelsohn)

55. Politics of Transnational Economic Relations (Gilpin)

56. The MNC and the Law of Uneven Development (Hymer)

57. Foreign Expansion (Moran)

58. American Power after the Financial Crisis (Kirshner)

59. The Quiet Coup (Johnson)

60. The Emperor Has No Clothes (Colgan)

- 61. Climate Policy Is Working (Gallagher)
- 62. Let Them Drown (Klein)

*LAB-R6: The Professor Who Quantified Democracy (Gibson)*

- 63. World of Regions (Katzenstein)
- 64. Jihad vs. McWorld (Barber)
- 65. Trade in Human Body Parts (Harrison)
- 66. Beyond Paradigms (Sil and Katzenstein)

- 67. Eight Tips to Improve Your Relationship, Courtesy of International Relations (Jones-Rooy)

*LAB-R7: ALL YOU LATE-COMERS CREATING AN OVERFLOW CROWD AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER: BRING YOUR OWN QUESTIONS 😊*

#### SOURCES OF READINGS

- 1: I Was Wrong to Oppose Safe Spaces / Jon A. Shields / *The New York Times* (Sunday April 10, 2022).
- 2: Alumni Yank Funds over Speech Issue / Douglas Belkin / *The Wall Street Journal* (December 3, 2021).
- 3: Why We Fight Over Foreign Policy / Henry R. Nau / *Policy Review* 142: 25-42.
- 4: Reductionist and Systemic Theories / Kenneth Waltz / *Theory of International Politics*, Addison-Wesley, pp.60-78.
- 5: Introduction / John J. Mearsheimer / *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Norton, pp.1-28.
- 6: Tragedy of Offensive Realism / Jonathan Kirshner / *European Journal of International Relations* 18, 1: 53-75.
- LAB-R1: David Brooks, "We Are the Most Rejected Generation", The New York Times, May 18: 9.*  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/15/opinion/rejection-college-youth.html>
- 7: How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace / Jon M. Owen / *International Security* 19, 2: 87-125 [NOT subsections: pp. 90-93 and 105-108].
- 8: Selections from pp.22-43 / *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World* / Richard Rosecrance / Basic Books, 1986, pp.22-43 [noted selections].
- 9: International Liberalism Reconsidered / Robert O. Keohane / in John Dunn, ed., *The Economic Limits to Modern Politics* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 165-94.
- 10. Selections from *The Political Economy of International Relations* / Robert Gilpin / Princeton U Press, 1987, pp. 34-41, 50-54.
- 11. Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory / *Millennium* 10,2: 126-54.
- 12: The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis / Immanuel Wallerstein / *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16, 4 (1974): 387-415.
- 13: Race and IR / Oumar Ba / Cameron G. Thies, ed., *Handbook of International Relations*, pp. 22-36. Northampton MA: Elgar.
- 14. The Du Bois Doctrine: Race and the American Century / Zachariah Mampilly / *Foreign Affairs* (September - October 2022): 156-67.
- 15: Racism and Antiracism in the Liberal International Order / Zoltán I. Búzás / *International Organization* 75, Special Issue 2: 440-63.
- 16: Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals/ Carol Cohn / *Signs*, 12,4: pp. 687-718.
- 17: 'Women and Children First': Gender, Norms, and Humanitarian Evacuation in the Balkans 1991-95 / Charli Carpenter / *International Organization* 57, 3: 661-94; do not read 678-88.

- 18: Women and the Evolution of World Politics / Francis Fukuyama / *Foreign Affairs* 77, 5: 24-40.  
 LAB-R2: David Schanzer, "How Should We Talk to Students about Our Perilous Times?" <https://perilous.substack.com/p/how-should-we-talk-to-students-about>
- 19: Constructing International Politics / Alexander Wendt / *International Security* 20, 1: 71-81.
- 20: The Clash of Civilizations? / Samuel P Huntington. / *Foreign Affairs* 72: 3: 22-49.
- 21: Civilizations in World Politics: China and Sinicization in Comparative Perspective / Peter J. Katzenstein / Honorary Degree Lecture / Beijing March 28, 2011.
- 22: Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism /Mahmood Mamdani / *Critical Views of September 11*, New Press, 2002, pp.44-60.
- 23: The Jacksonian Tradition and American Foreign Policy / Walter Russell Mead / *The National Interest* 51: 1-25.
- 24: Same War, Different Views: Germany, Japan, and the War on Terrorism / Peter J. Katzenstein / *Current History* 101, 659: 427-435.
- 25: World War I / Amos Yoder / *World Politics and the Causes of War since 1914*, University Press of America, pp.27-54.
- 26: A Conflict that Shaped the Modern World / Steven Erlanger / *The New York Times* (June 28, 2014).  
 [Optional] *Unsung History: 75 Years after World War II* / *The New York Times* (September 8, 2022) [Special Section].
- 27: Civil-Military Relations and the Cult of the Offensive, 1914 and the Cult of the Offensive / Jack Snyder / *International Security*, 9, 1: 108-46.
- 28: Commercial Liberalism under Fire: Evidence from 1914 and 1936/ Norrin M. Ripsman and Jean-Marc F. Blanchard/ *Security Studies* 6, 2: 4-24, 39-41.
- 29: History and September 11 / Francis Fukuyama / from *Worlds in Collision*, Palgrave, pp.27-36.
- 30: Keeping Saddam Hussein in the Box / J. Mearsheimer and S. Walt/ *The New York Times* (February 2, 2003).  
 LAB-R3: Frank Bruni, "I'm Watching the Sacrifice of College's Soul," <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/14/opinion/college-soul-ai-education.html>
- 31: International Relations: One World, Many Theories / Stephen M. Walt / *Foreign Policy* 110: pp. 29-44.
- 32: The Sources of Soviet Conduct / X / *Foreign Affairs* 25:4: 566-582.
- 33: The Failure in Our Success / George F. Kennan / *The New York Times* (March 14, 1994).
- 34: Communist Bloc Expansion in the Early Cold War: Challenging Realism, Refuting Revisionism / Douglas J MacDonald / *International Security*, 20, 3: 152-88.
- 35: Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis / Graham T. Allison / *American Political Science Review* 63, 3: 689-718.
- 36: The Cuban Missile Crisis at 50 / Graham Allison / *Foreign Affairs* 91, 4: 11-16.
- 37: Diplomacy, Not Derring-Do / James A. Nathan / *Foreign Affairs* 91, 6: 163-65.
- 38: How JFK's Secrets Fed Conspiracy Culture/ *Wall Street Journal* November 18, 2023.  
<https://www.wsj.com/politics/how-jfks-secrets-fed-conspiracy-culture-36987cec>.
- 39: Constructing National Interests / Jutta Weldes / *European Journal of International Relations*, 2, 3: 275-318.  
 LAB-R4: Paul Dans, "Trump's revolution is the only way to save America, says the architect of Project 2025," *The Economist* (April 29, 2025). <https://www.economist.com/by-invitation/2025/04/29/trumps-revolution-is-the-only-way-to-save-america-says-the-architect-of-project-2025>.
- 40: The Long Peace: Elements of Stability in the Postwar International System / John Lewis Gaddis / *International Security*, 10, 4: 99-142.
- 41: Theories of War in an Era of Leading-Power Peace / Robert Jervis/ *American Political Science Review* 96, 1: 1-14.
- 42: Understanding Change in International Politics / Rey Koslowski and Friedrich V. Kratochwil / *International Organization*, 48, 2: 215-247.

- 43: Selections from: *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May be Better* / Kenneth N Waltz. / *Adelphi Papers*, 171 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981).
- 44: Selections from: *More Will be Worse* / Scott D. Sagan / *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate* W.W. Norton, 1995, pp. 47-86.
- 45: Nuclear Weapons Don't Matter / John Muller / *Foreign Affairs* 97, 6: 10-15.
- 46: The Vanishing Nuclear Taboo? / Nina Tannenwald / *Foreign Affairs* 97, 6: 16-24.
- 47: Midnight and Counting / *The Economist* / September 30, 2017.
- 48: Intervention in Vietnam and Central America: Parallels and Differences / Noam Chomsky / *Monthly Review*, 37, 4: 1-34.
- 49: Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention / Martha Finnemore / in Peter J. Katzenstein, Ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, Columbia U Press, 1996, pp. 153-85.
- LAB-R5: Steven Levitsky, Lucan Way and Daniel Ziblatt, "No One Has Ever Defeated Autocracy from the Sidelines," *The New York Times* (May 8). <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/08/opinion/trump-authoritarianism-democracy.html>
- 50: Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault / John J. Mearsheimer / *Foreign Affairs* 93, 5: 77-89.
- 51: Ukraine Holds the Future / Timothy Snyder / *Foreign Affairs* 101, 5: 124-141.
- 52: How Much of a State is the Islamic State? / Quinn Meucham / *The Washington Post Monkey Cage* May 15, 2015 (6pp). [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/02/05/how-much-of-a-state-is-the-islamic-state/?utm\\_term=.2843f2ee407b](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/02/05/how-much-of-a-state-is-the-islamic-state/?utm_term=.2843f2ee407b).
- 53: Why the Islamic State won't Become a Normal State / Lawrence Rubin / *The Washington Post Monkey Cage* July 9, 2015 (4pp.). [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/07/09/why-the-islamic-state-wont-become-a-normal-state/?utm\\_term=.bf4b4904d6a0](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/07/09/why-the-islamic-state-wont-become-a-normal-state/?utm_term=.bf4b4904d6a0).
- 54: The Jihadi Threat to International Order / Barak Mendelsohn / *The Washington Post Monkey Cage* February 5, 2015 (6pp). [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/05/15/the-jihadi-threat-to-international-order/?utm\\_term=.6d3090895ff0](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/05/15/the-jihadi-threat-to-international-order/?utm_term=.6d3090895ff0).
- 55: The Politics of Transnational Economic Relations / Robert Gilpin / *International Organization*, 25, 3: 398-419.
- 56: The Multinational Corporation and the Law of Uneven Development / Stephen Hymer, *Economics and World Order: From the 1970s to the 1990s*, Macmillan, 1972.
- 57: Foreign Expansion as an Institutional Necessity for US Corporate Capitalism: The Search for a Radical Model / Theodore H Moran / *World Politics*, 25, 3: 369-86.
- 58: *American Power after the Financial Crisis* / Jonathan Kirshner / Cornell University Press, 2014, pp. 1-17.
- 59: The Quiet Coup / Simon Johnson / *The Atlantic* (May 2009), pp. 1-12.
- 60: The Emperor Has No Clothes: The Limits of OPEC in the Global Oil Market / Jeff Colgan / *International Organization* 68,3: 599-632. [Skip the sections with the statistical tests (page 616 bottom "To test the idea" ...to 619 bottom... "representatives withdrawn")]. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818313000489>
- 61: Climate Policy is Working: Double Down on What's Succeeding Instead of Despairing Over What's Not," / Kelly Sims Gallagher / *Foreign Affairs* 103, 3 (May/June 2024): 153-66.
- 62: Let Them Drown / Naomi Klein / *London Review of Books* 38, 11: 11-14.
- LAB-R6: *The Professor Who Quantified Democracy* / *Harvard Magazine* (July-August 2025): 32-35 / <https://www.harvardmagazine.com/2025/07/erica-chenoweth-democracy-data-harvard>
- 63: *A World of Regions* / Peter J. Katzenstein / Cornell University Press, chp. 7.
- 64: Selections from *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalization and Tribalism are Reshaping the World* / Benjamin R. Barber / Random House, 1995, pp. 3-20.
- 65: Globalization and the Trade in Human Body Parts / Trevor Harrison / *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 36, 1: 21-35.
- 66: *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics* / Rudra Sil and Peter J. Katzenstein /

Palgrave, pp. 24-43.

67: Eight Tips to Improve Your Relationship, Courtesy of International Relations / Andrea Jones-Rooy (filed under *Valentine's Day* 😊) (February 14, 2018). <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/8-tips-to-improve-your-relationship-courtesy-of-international-relations>.

*LAB-R7: ALL YOU LATE-COMERS ENJOYING THE EARLY MORNING HOUR ON FRIDAY, BRING YOUR QUESTIONS FOR OUR LAST DISCUSSION* 😊