

Politics 15a

Introduction to International Relations
Summer 2024 | Session O | Online course
Monday, June 3 – Sunday, August 11

Instructor: Prof. Kerry A. Chase

Email: chase@brandeis.edu

Course description

This course introduces the study of International Relations. Topics include the nature of the state system, the sources of international conflict and cooperation, the outbreak and settlement of wars and militarized disputes, and the origins and effects of international institutions and international agreements. The course is organized in three parts: 1) Conceptual and Historical Foundations; 2) Theoretical Perspectives; 3) Problems in International Security.

Prerequisites and enrollment

Prior coursework in Politics or International Relations is not required.

Mode of instruction

Instruction for the course will be in remote asynchronous format. There are no class meetings. You will organize and pace your work each week, with assignments due at the end of the week.

Course structure

This is a 10-week course. Week 10 is ‘finals week,’ when you will write a take-home final exam. In Weeks 1-9, your assignments are to:

- Review course readings and two recorded lectures.
- Complete one class exercise; post and reply in a class forum; and take a weekly quiz.

Latte course website

All course content, with the exception of two required texts, can be accessed in Latte. Login using your UNET ID and Password at <https://moodle2.brandeis.edu>.

Asking questions and requesting help

Please ask questions about assignments and course content using the “Ask a question” forum in Latte. Email me about personal or individual matters related to your course work. I will answer questions in Latte and emails within 24 hours.

Learning outcomes

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- 1) Identify and interpret major patterns and decisive events in international relations.
- 2) Critically evaluate contending perspectives on and varying explanations of general trends and important developments in the international system.
- 3) Apply concepts and analytical frameworks to interpret primary-source information such as government documents and news media articles.
- 4) Advance to higher-level study in more specialized courses in international relations.

Technology requirements

For this asynchronous course, you will need an Internet-connected device; a PDF reader; word processing software; and Google apps accessible via your UNET account. To obtain software, visit the [Information Technology Services](#) website. If you are having difficulty paying for technology, contact [Student Financial Services](#).

Note regarding credit hours

This is a four credit-hour course which runs for a ten-week term. Plan to spend 12-15 hours per week minimum on course readings, recorded lectures, and assignments for the class.

Course texts

There are two course texts. Purchase or rent them from the [Brandeis Bookstore](#), or the vendor of your choice. Be sure to have access to the edition listed, not an earlier edition.

- 1) Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and David A. Welch, *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation: An Introduction to Theory and History*, 10th edition (Pearson, 2017). ISBN-13: 978-0-1355-7143-9 (print); 978-0-1374-7760-9 (eBook).
- 2) Robert J. Art, Timothy W. Crawford, and Robert Jervis, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 14th edition (Rowman & Littlefield, 2023). ISBN-13: 978-1-5381-6955-1 (print); 978-1-5381-7693-1 (eBook).

Financial barriers

If you are having difficulty paying for course texts, contact [Student Financial Services](#).

Electronic readings

Additional electronic readings—which are not in the two course texts—are posted to Latte in PDF.

Assignments

The required assignments and their weight in the final grade are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----|
| 1) Class exercises | 30% |
| 2) Discussion posts | 20% |
| 3) Latte quizzes | 30% |
| 4) Final assessment | 20% |

Class exercises

Each week, you will complete one class exercise from a choice of two topics for the week. Most class exercises will ask you to analyze and interpret a document or set of documents, or assemble and organize information from source materials on the Internet. Guidelines are posted in the Course Resources topic on Latte. The class exercise is due by 11:59pm EST on Mondays.

Discussion posts

Each week, you will submit one discussion post, and you will comment on a classmate's post. The discussion forums will ask you to analyze a news media article related to that week's topic. Guidelines are posted in the Course Resources topic on Latte. Discussion posts are due by 11:59pm EST on Saturdays, and comments are due by 11:59pm EST on Mondays.

Latte quizzes

Each week, you will take a quiz in Latte after completing course readings and reviewing the recorded lectures. Quizzes are 10 questions; they are open book, open note. There is a 4-hour limit to complete a quiz once you open it. You may take quizzes a second time, and the highest score will count. Additional details, including academic integrity for quizzes, are posted in the Course Resources topic on Latte. Quizzes are due by 11:59pm EST on Mondays.

Final assessment

The final assessment will be one or two short essays. This assignment is open book, open note. You will be asked to apply concepts and examples from the course to scenarios in international relations. Essay prompts will be posted during Week 9. Responses are due via Latte by 11:59pm EST on Sunday, August 11.

Grading

Assignments will be graded on a point basis. Final grades for the term will be computed using the weights for each assignment and this scale: A (93+); A- (90-92); B+ (87-89); B (83-86); B- (80-82); C+ (77-79); C (73-76); C- (70-72); D (65-69); F (<65).

Academic accommodations

If you are approved for accommodations documented in an accommodations letter, please email your accommodations letter to me. If you have extra time accommodations and wish to extend the 4-hour quiz limit, please email me. For questions about accommodations, contact Student Accessibility Support at (781) 736-3470 or access@brandeis.edu.

Illnesses and emergencies

If an illness or emergency prevents you from completing an assignment on time, be sure to notify me via email on or before the due date. Late work without a valid excuse may be deducted one-third of a letter-grade per 24 hours.

Community standards

Exemplary citizenship is expected of every class member in all social and online interactions, bar none. Respect the ideas, opinions, and backgrounds of your classmates; always be thoughtful and constructive online. Everybody is a valued contributor to our learning community.

Academic integrity

Honesty is expected in all of your academic work. Consult the Department of Student Rights and Community Standards' [Rights and Responsibilities](#) handbook and its [Academic Integrity](#) webpage for policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Also be sure to review academic integrity for quizzes on the page "Latte quizzes" in Course Resources. Suspected academic dishonesty will result in referral to the Student Conduct Process.

Course schedule

See Latte for the detailed schedule of course readings, lecture recordings, and assignments. Each week starts on Tuesday and ends on Monday. At the top of each week in Latte is an overview and a checklist of tasks. Weeks are organized into two topics. In each topic are learning objectives; important terms, concepts, people, and events; a list of course readings; and links to lecture recordings. At the bottom of the Latte page for the week is the discussion forum, a choice of two class exercises (for you to select one), and the Latte quiz.



Part 1: Conceptual and Historical Foundations

Week 1: June 4 – June 10

- 1.1: The State System
- 1.2: The ‘Long’ Nineteenth Century

Week 2: June 11 – June 17

- 2.1: World War I and After
- 2.2: The Interwar Crisis

Week 3: June 18 – June 24

- 3.1: World War II and After
- 3.2: The Cold War

Part 2: Theoretical Perspectives

Week 4: June 25 – July 1

- 4.1: IR Theory: Realism
- 4.2: IR Theory: Institutionalism

Week 5: July 2 – July 8

- 5.1: The State Level
- 5.2: Domestic and Transnational Politics

Part 3: Problems in International Security

Week 6: July 9 – July 15

- 6.1: Regional Conflicts
- 6.2: Yemen and Ukraine

Week 7: July 16 – July 22

- 7.1: Nuclear Weapons
- 7.2: Nuclear Proliferation



Week 8: July 23 – July 29

- 8.1: The United Nations
- 8.2: UN Peacekeeping

Week 9: July 30 – August 5

- 9.1: Regime Change
- 9.2: International Terrorism

Finals week: August 6 – August 11

- Final assessment is due by 11:59pm EST on Sunday, August 11