IR 444: Issues and Theories in Global Society

Spring 2010
VKC 210
School of International Relations
University of Southern California
Tuesday and Thursday, 5:00-6:20PM

Instructor:  Dr. Eric Blanchard  SOS 268
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Office Hours:  Tuesday 2-3PM, Thursday 11:15AM-12, and by appointment

I. Course Description, Objectives and Requirements:

“Issues and Theories in Global Society” is a course designed to help the advanced student of International Relations (IR) conceive of the world as a single society and understand the key forces that have constituted and transformed this society. After a careful consideration of the roles the state plays in theories of IR, we will debate the relative merits of seeing world politics in terms of states, networks, or some form of transcendent political community. While the course is designed to help students become familiar with the consequences that flow from the way the world is organized into sovereign nation-states, we will also consider at length the challenges posed to nation-states and global communities in the 21st century by globalization, democratization, revolution, technology, and new forms of cultural identity. Considering the existence of “global society,” and the possibilities of “global restructuring,” do we need new theories to help us grasp change, now and in the future? In other words, we will be asking whether our theories are up to the task of future challenges.

The main purpose of IR 444 is to present students with the intellectual tools to think through these big issues, helping them develop the ability to apply advanced IR theory to the study of world politics. To this end, students are expected to come to all class sessions ready to discuss the week’s readings, and raise thoughtful questions about these readings, prior readings, or lecture points. Attendance is a prerequisite, but engaged, meaningful class participation and the focused application of critical thinking skills are the keys to success in this class. To satisfy the research component of all 400 level courses, students will produce (with the advisement of the instructor) an analytic research paper tailored to their individual interests. This paper will draw upon the IR 444 course materials in a focused but creative direction.
Grading:

Attendance and participation, classroom exercises 15%
Discussion leadership 10%
Midterm I (2/18) 15%
Midterm II (4/6) 15%
Research paper (15-20 pages, 3750-5000 words) on topic approved by instructor 25%
Final Exam (5/6) 20%

Readings (texts on order at the USC Bookstore):


All other readings are available on USC’s Blackboard system (https://blackboard.usc.edu/).

Classroom policies:

In the classroom:
Please be sure to help the instructor maintain a collegial atmosphere necessary for learning by keeping comments civil and respectful. This is a discussion seminar that will demand the full use of your undivided cognitive abilities; therefore, the use of laptops is discouraged and even frowned upon. Before you enter the seminar, please discontinue the use of and stow all portable electronic communication devices and be sure your device is in an off-position or silent (not vibrating) mode. Messaging, tweeting, texting, chatting, stock trading, social networking, teleconferencing, blogging or using electronic devices in any manner that distracts your fellow classmates from classroom activities will not be tolerated, and WILL result in a lowered participation grade for each occurrence (specifically, students will not receive credit for any class in which they choose to disrupt the class in this manner). Audio or video recording of class sessions is not allowed without explicit permission from the instructor. I will only consider excusing absences upon the presentation of appropriate medical or other documentation.

Notes on written work:
*All written work should be neat, free of spelling and grammatical errors, double-spaced, page numbered, and utilize appropriate citation practices.
*It is strongly suggested that assignments accord with the citation practices and reference standardization found at www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html, or a similar style guide. Author-date style is preferred. Students are advised to consult a helpful guide to research papers, such as The Craft of Research by Wayne C. Booth, et al. (University Of

*Work must be submitted by the relevant deadline, both as a hard copy to my box in VKC 330, and as a clearly labeled (your name, name of assignment) electronic attachment to uscIR444@gmail.com. Late work will be penalized one half grade for each day late (A to A-, etc.), yes, including weekends.*

**Statement for Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. **Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible.** DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. [http://www.usc.edu/disability](http://www.usc.edu/disability)

**Statement on Academic Integrity**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: [http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/](http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/). Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: [http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/](http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/).

**II. Schedule**

**WEEK 1: Introduction, What’s a Theory? Why States?**

Jan 12

Course introduction (No readings assigned)

Jan 14

Sterling-Folker, Ch 1 “Making Sense of International Relations Theory,” pp.1-12.

Sterling-Folker, “Appendix: A Brief Overview of Kosovo,” pp.333-342

Samantha Power, “Kosovo: A Dog and a Fight,” in “A Problem from Hell”: *America and the Age of Genocide,* pp.443-473.
WEEK 2: Elements of Global Society?

January 19


Recommended:

January 21


Doyle “The Range of Realism” pp.41-48


WEEK 3: The Realist approach and IR Theory

January 26


Recommended:

January 28


WEEK 4: Liberalism: Global Society, Institutions and Liberal Peace

February 2


February 4


Doyle, pp. 300-311.

Recommended:
Doyle, pp. 213-229; Sterling-Folker, pp.75-91.
**WEEK 5: International Society and the Pluralist-Solidarist debate**

February 9


February 11


**WEEK 6: Critical Approaches: Constructivism and Poststructuralism**

February 16
Sterling-Folker, ch. 5, pp.115-155.

Sterling-Folker, Ch.6 “Postmodern and Critical Theory Approaches,” pp.157-182.

Recommended:

February 18
**MIDTERM #1**
Bring Bluebook to class. Do not write name on book.

**WEEK 7: The Future of the State and World Society**
*STUDENTS SHOULD MEET WITH ME TO DISCUSS PAPER TOPICS STARTING THIS WEEK*

February 23

Recommended:
Sterling-Folker, ch. 9, “Biopolitical Approaches” pp.283-301.
February 25

Recommended:

**WEEK 8: Norms, transnationalism and global governance**

March 2


Recommended:

March 4


**WEEK 9: Human Rights and Democratization**

March 9


Recommended:
March 11

Recommended:

**SPRING BREAK**

**WEEK 10: Gender and the Environment in Global Society**

March 23
Sterling-Folker, ch.8, 243-281


Recommended:

March 25 **PAPER PROPOSALS DUE**


Recommended:

**WEEK 11: Revolutions and Transformation**

March 30

Recommended: (continued on next page)

April 1

Recommended:

*WEEK 12: Technologies and the Information Revolution*

April 6
**MIDTERM #2**

April 8


Recommended:
Christopher May “Unacceptable Costs: The Consequences of Making Knowledge Property in a Global Society,” *Global Society*, 16: 2, 123—144.

*WEEK 13: Technologies and the Information Revolution continued*

April 13

Recommended:

April 15

Recommended:

**WEEK 14: The State of the Future, Pt.1: Restructuring of World Politics or Human Extinction?**

April 20


Recommended:

April 22

Recommended:

**WEEK 15: The State of the Future, Pt. 2**

April 27

Recommended:
April 29


**FINAL PAPER**
Due APRIL 30 by 5PM, *both* hardcopy in my mailbox in VKC 330, and electronically to uscIR444@gmail.com.

**FINAL EXAM**
May 6, 4:30-6:30PM
III. IR 444: Paper Assignment Guidelines

The goal is to develop a topic and research question from the IR 444 course materials (i.e., theories, approaches, issue areas) with my supervision. To that end, it is important that you schedule a time to consult with me in my office hours. *Students are encouraged to schedule a meeting with me starting week 7 to discuss their papers.*

Notes on writing your IR 444 paper:
1) Pose a question, and answer it.
2) Develop your own analysis. Papers need to feature your ideas, in addition to any review of the relevant literature.
3) Back your argument with evidence/examples.
4) Use scholarly materials. I expect you to utilize books, book chapters, journals, government and international organization websites, etc. Use of internet materials must be judicious and take into account quality and source bias (be careful). Students are encouraged to make use of scholarly journals, recognized sources, and high quality periodicals, including, but not limited to:

5) Style and structure of essay must be legible. Proof-reading is a must. Poor spelling, grammar, or syntax detract from your work and make it difficult for me to award you a top grade. A clearly presented *introduction*, one that identifies the problem you are addressing, the research question you are answering (and foreshadows your answer), defines/discusses the concepts and terminology you are deploying, and previews the organization of the essay is key to helping the reader (me!) follow your argument. A *literature review* should synthesize and assess the scholarly treatment of a specific problem/question. The *main body* of the paper should develop your argument supporting your points with evidence. A *conclusion* should wrap up your argument and reflect upon the implications of your paper, for instance, stressing the importance/relevance of your question or pointing out avenues for future research. Proper (*not* sloppy) *citation* and referencing (footnotes/endnotes and a bibliography in standardized form) is mandatory. *Make yourself familiar with general (and USC) guidelines for citation and avoiding plagiarism.* See me with any questions.

Notes on Preliminary research proposal *(DUE March 25, 2010):*
This proposal (no more than 5 pages) consists of the following:
1) statement of research topic, its importance, and theoretical perspective
2) articulation of preliminary research question/ puzzle
3) preliminary literature review
4) preliminary bibliography of at least 10 sources, 5 of which must be scholarly (i.e., not newspaper reports)