

# Introduction to International Relations

L32 548

Michael M. Bechtel  
Office: Seigle Hall, room 233  
Phone: +1 (314) 935-5812  
Email: mbechtel@wustl.edu  
Office hours: By appointment  
Webpage: www.mbechtel.com

## 1. Description

Why do countries fight wars? When do states decide to trade? How can countries address global challenges such as climate change? This course introduces students to the tools needed to answer those and other questions related to the interaction between states. First, we cover the theoretical and empirical basics required to analyze international politics in major policy areas such as conflict, trade, development, and the environment. Second, we explore the role of international organizations and how international interactions are connected to domestic politics.

## 2. Prerequisites

None.

## 3. Requirements

Readings: The value of this course crucially depends on students' preparation and participation. Therefore, all students have to come to class prepared, i.e., having done all mandatory readings and having answered the reading questions. Students should be prepared to answer questions on the mandatory readings and defend or criticize arguments on which the readings elaborate.

Exams: There will be five 60-minutes in-class, closed-book exams. The exam covers the mandatory readings and the material discussed in class. In order to receive a passing grade in this course, students must also complete the Political Science Department's Assessment of Undergraduate Knowledge.

Final grade: The final grade is computed as the weighted average of the four best exam grades. The pass mark is a C-.

Department Assessment: In order to receive a passing grade in this course, you must complete the Political Science Department's Assessment of Undergraduate Knowledge. You will receive a link to the assessment by email by February 15 and will have until March 1 to complete it. Your performance on this online assessment will not affect your course grade and will not be shared with Professor Bechtel. The only information that will be conveyed to Professor Bechtel is whether you've completed the survey. This assessment is part of a Washington University's accreditation efforts.

## 4. Time and Room

10.00-11.30am  
Louderman 485

## 5. Contact Information

Instructor: Michael Bechtel (mbechtel@wustl.edu)

### Teaching assistants:

Dino Hadzic (dino.hadzic@wustl.edu)

Taishi Muraoka (tmuraoka@wustl.edu)

Jeffrey Ziegler (jeffreyziegler@wustl.edu)

\* Please contact Jeffrey if you have questions throughout the semester.

## **6. Aims of the Course**

The specific aims of this course are as follows:

- to introduce students to theories and evidence in international relations
- to provide students with knowledge about international institutions and how they operate
- to provide an intellectual basis for studying phenomena from different viewpoints
- to improve students' research skills

## **7. Key Skills**

The course seeks to develop or enhance the following key skills:

- Improving learning and performance: Discriminating reading, exam preparation, accepting and responding to criticism, developing own opinions
- Problem solving: Conceptualization of issues, identification and evaluation of arguments, assessing research designs, analysis and synthesis of evidence and argumentation, evaluation of the credibility of evidence, assessing the validity of conclusions

## **8. Required Textbook**

Kinsella, David/Russett, Bruce/Starr, Harvey. 2012. *World Politics: The Menu for Choice*. 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. Wadsworth: Boston.

### **Recommended Textbooks (not required)**

Hinich, Melvin J./Munger, Michael C. 1997. *Analytical Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Morton, Rebecca B. 1999. *Methods and Models: A Guide to the Empirical Analysis of Formal Models in Political Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shepsle, Kenneth/Boncheck, Mark S. 1997. *Analyzing Politics. Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Sobel, Andrew. 2005. *Political Economy and Global Affairs*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

## **9. iClickers**

In this course, we will be using iClicker technology during every class. Each student must check out an iClicker from Olin Library in order to participate and to have your participation recorded. Therefore, before the second meeting of the semester (January 23), please go to the Olin Library Help desk to check out an iClicker. All iClicker devices are available for checkout only for students registered in specific courses, so please be prepared to tell the circulation staff that you are registered for this course.

Students will need to register their iClicker on the course Blackboard site under "iClicker student registration".

The deadline to return your iClicker to Olin Library is the last day of regular classes for the semester (April 28). Students who do not return their iClickers at the conclusion of the semester will be charged for replacement of the device.

The iClicker comes with two AAA batteries. If the batteries need to be replaced, the student who has checked out the iClicker is responsible for replacing them.

iClickers with additional functionality, such as vibration and additional lighting, are available for check out at The Teaching Center (Eads 105) for visually impaired students.

If you own an older model iClicker, you are encouraged to check out an iClicker from the library. If you prefer to use your older model, you should contact me to set up a time to test your iClicker at the beginning of the semester to ensure it will work properly.

Conduct that violates the University's academic-integrity policy includes, but is not limited to, asking another student to submit answers for you using an iClicker when you are not in class and submitting answers on another student's iClicker.

## **10. Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism and cheating constitute breaches of academic integrity and are subject to sanctions. The following webpage provides detailed information about our policy: <https://wustl.edu/about/compliance-policies/academic-policies/undergraduate-student-academic-integrity-policy/>

## **11. Additional Information**

Bias Reporting: The University has a process through which students, faculty, staff and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of bias, prejudice or discrimination against a student can report their experiences to the University's Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) team. See: [diversityinclusion.wustl.edu/brss/](http://diversityinclusion.wustl.edu/brss/)

Accommodations based upon sexual assault: The University is committed to offering reasonable academic accommodations to students who are victims of sexual assault. Depending on the specific nature of the allegation, such measures may include but are not limited to: implementation of a no-contact order, course/classroom assignment changes, and other academic support services and accommodations. If you need to request such accommodations, please direct your request to Kim Webb ([kim\\_webb@wustl.edu](mailto:kim_webb@wustl.edu)), Director of the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center. Ms. Webb is a confidential resource; however, requests for accommodations will be shared with the appropriate University administration and faculty. The University will maintain as confidential any accommodations or protective measures provided to an individual student so long as it does not impair the ability to provide such measures.

Mental Health: Mental Health Services' professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. See: [shs.wustl.edu/MentalHealth](http://shs.wustl.edu/MentalHealth)

## 12. Reading Schedule

Date	Topic	Assigned readings from 9 <sup>th</sup> edition (corresponding chapter in 10 <sup>th</sup> edition)
18 Jan. (W)	Introduction	Russett et al. 1 (1)
23 Jan. (M)	Theory I	Russett et al. 2 (2)
25 Jan. (W)	Theory II	Russett et al. 13 (11)
30 Jan. (M)	The International System	Russett et al. 13 (11)
1 Feb. (W)	<b>EXAM 1</b>	
6 Feb. (M)	Bargaining I	Russett et al. 5 (4)
8 Feb. (W)	Bargaining II	Russett et al. 5 (4)
13 Feb. (M)	Trade I	Russett et al. 14 (12)
15 Feb. (W)	Trade II	Russett et al. 14 (12)
20 Feb. (M)	Conflict	Russett et al. 9 (8) and 11 (NA)
22 Feb. (W)	<b>EXAM 2</b>	
27 Feb. (M)	Development	Russett et al. 15 (13)
1 Mar. (W)	Environment I	Russett et al. 16 (14)
6 Mar. (M)	Environment II	Russett et al. 16 (14)
8 Mar. (W)	<b>EXAM 3</b>	
20 Mar. (M)	Immigration	Russett et al. 6 (5);
22 Mar. (W)	Terrorism and Human Rights	Russett et al. 8 (7)
27 Mar. (M)	International Organizations I	Russett et al. 10 (9)
29 Mar. (W)	International Organizations II	Russett et al. 10 (9)
3 Apr. (M)	United Nations	Russett et al. 10 (9)
5 Apr. (W)	<b>EXAM 4</b>	
10 Apr. (M)	European Union I	Russett et al. 14 (12)
12 Apr. (W)	European Union II	Russett et al. 14 (12)
17 Apr. (M)	IR and Domestic Politics I	Russett et al. 6 (5)
19 Apr. (W)	<b>EXAM 5</b>	
24 Apr. (M)	IR and Domestic Politics I	Russett et al. 7 (6)
26 Apr. (W)	Summary	