International Relations After the Cold War: Theory and Prospect

Syllabus

Course description: If politics is the study of “who gets what?”, then international politics studies how states divide resources through conflict and cooperation. This course examines this question since the end of the Cold War. The focus of this course will be on examining how the world we live in today is explained (or not) by the available theoretical perspectives. Two important cases, the September 11th terrorist attacks and the US-led war and occupation of Iraq, provide a basis for examining the importance of changes in the international distribution of power, globalization, the proliferation of “weapons of mass destruction,” and terrorism.

Requirements: The requirements for this course consist of a mid-term (2/1) and a final exam (3/20). Both exams will include take-home and in-class (blue-book) components.

Readings: A reader will be available from AS Soft Reserves with most of the readings. The following books should be available for purchase at the Price Center bookstore:

- Hersh, Seymour M. 2004. Chain of Command: The Road From 9/11 to Abu Graib

As you read the assigned materials for each session, please think about the following questions:

- What is the author’s main argument? What are the competing arguments?
- What evidence does the author present to support this argument?
- Do you agree or disagree with the argument?
- What other evidence support to the argument? Or support competing arguments?
- What are the policy prescriptions that follow? Do these make sense?

Lectures. Class attendance will be important for your performance on the exams. Much of the material covered in lectures may either not be in the readings or not be in easily digestible form. Taking notes will aid comprehension of the substance of the course. Lecture outlines will also be posted on-line at: “http://www.polisci.ucsd.edu/ps145c/”.

Academic Dishonesty. You are expected to do your own work. Students caught cheating on an exam or plagiarizing their essays will receive a failing grade for that exam and will be referred to the university administration for sanction.

Grade Appeals. You can expect to be graded on your academic performance. This includes clarity of thought, knowledge of the material, and ability to communicate (composition, spelling, and grammar). Students who believe they have received an incorrect grade or a grade based on non-academic criteria should submit a single typed page that identifies the problem and presents a reasoned argument that fits the criteria listed above.
Course outline and readings:

Week 1: The Cold War: History and IR Theory
Tues, 1/9: History of the Cold War
• Winston Churchill, “Iron Curtain speech”, March 5, 1946
• Mr. X (George Keenan), “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” Foreign Affairs, July, 1947.
Thurs, 1/11: Rise of Realism, Fall of Idealism, Rise of Neo-Realism
• Art & Jervis, pp.29-60

Week 2: Understanding the Cold War
Tues, 1/16: Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence
Thurs, 1/18: The irrelevance of neo-realism? Rise of Institutionalism?
• Distribute Mid-Term Prompt

Week 3: The New World Order and IR theory
Tues, 1/23: Life after the Cold War, 1991-2001
Thurs, 1/15: Revisiting IR Theory?
• Art & Jervis, pp. 61-95, 114-126

Week 4: Strategic Interactions and Domestic Politics
Tues, 1/30: Do “unit characteristics” matter?
Thurs, 2/1: Midterm Exam

Week 5: 9/11: Midterm & Globalization
Tues, 2/6: Strategic interaction and games
• Schelling, Strategy of Conflict Chapter 1 (pp.3-20)
• Lake & Powell, Chapter 1
Thurs, 2/8: The international economy
• Art & Jervis, pp.309-324, 283-308

Week 6: Iraq, 1980-2001
Tues, 2/20: The Proliferation Threat
• Art & Jervis, pp. 239-249
• Hersh, pp. 203-247, 287-311
Thurs, 2/22: The Disarmament Problem
• Zunes, Stephen. 2005. Undermining the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: it didn’t start with the Bush administration. *Foreign Policy in Focus* (8 June 2005).

Week 7: Terrorism
Tues, 2/13: The Rise of New International Terrorism
• Art & Jervis, pp. 391-406
Thurs, 2/15: Revising “Terrorism”
• Art & Jervis, pp. 221-238
• Hersh, pp.73-162

Week 8: Iraq, 2002-2003: The Reasons for War
Tues, 2/27: US Grand Strategy & The Case for War
• Art & Jervis, pp. 417-431
• Hersh, 163-202
Thurs, 3/1: But why war?
• Art & Jervis, pp. 205-220

Week 9: Iraq, 2004-2007: Fixing what is broken
Tues, 3/6: Coping with civil war
• Distribute Final Exam Prompt
• Hersh, pp. 249-286
• Art & Jervis, pp. 459-480
Thurs, 3/8: Building & Rebuilding States
• Art & Jervis, pp. 451-458

Week 10: The Bush Administration’s Choices
Tues, 3/13: Human Security & The Environment
• Art & Jervis, pp.495-508
Thurs, 3/15: China, Russia & Iran
• Art & Jervis, pp. 517-525
• Hersh, pp. 342-350

Final Exam: Tuesday, March 20, 8am-11am (Location TBD)