POLI 815
SEMINAR IN ADVANCED INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY
Crossing Boundaries: The Internal-External Nexus in IR

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INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

The purpose of POLI 815 is to provide a research seminar experience to advanced graduate students. In distinction from literature review and survey courses, this seminar will afford students a semester-long opportunity to pursue individual research projects. Thus, the aim of the seminar, in terms of a final product for each student, will be a research paper of publishable quality.

In order to foster a common set of themes, concepts, and concerns, the course will be organized around the internal-external nexus as it affects international relations, broadly defined: that is, agent-structure relationships (which include decision making and choice within various domestic and international contexts), two-level models, and theoretical frameworks which consciously link the domestic and the international (such as the democratic peace or political survival). This seminar is an advanced graduate-level research seminar. The course is designed to prepare students to carry out analytically and methodologically sound research at the cutting edge of the discipline. Although we will discuss and critically analyze several readings each week, the main thrust of the course and each class period will be on students’ research projects. The main purpose of the readings is to focus our discussion of conducting research on internal-external relationships in IR. In this context, most classes will involve both student led discussions of the readings and of ongoing student research. Any research topics involving internal-external interactions or effects are generally acceptable. However, the instructor must be consulted both in the choice of paper topics and the design and conduct of research.

THE READING

Three books have been assigned (all are paperback):

– Mancur Olson, Power and Prosperity (2000)

Most of the course readings will be available on Blackboard (as indicated by [BB] on the syllabus). The rest of the course readings are in books on reserve at Thomas Cooper Library, as listed at the end of the syllabus. Only three items on reserve need to be highlighted: Friedman & Starr; Geva & Mintz; Russett & Oneal. The syllabus also indicates several recommended items (almost all are available through Thomas Cooper’s E-Journals link.

I want to acknowledge and thank Professor Roger Coate, as I have borrowed extensively from his Spring 2006 POLI 817 syllabus in the development of the present syllabus.
NOTE: Two items posted on Blackboard are my most recent syllabi for POLI 715 (Fall 2010) and POLI 725 (Spring 2009). Students should use the relevant sections of these syllabi for review, to aid in class discussion of the assigned reading, for research paper bibliographic assistance, etc.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Participation
Seminar participation. Because this is a graduate seminar, the instructor will not run class meetings as a lecture; all students are expected to come to each class meeting prepared to discuss the readings and their research. This will involve spending the time to read each assignment on the reading list, and thinking about what each reading contributes to the weekly topic. Class discussion of the readings will focus on such issues as the theoretical arguments being made (explicitly or implicitly), the empirical evidence that is marshalled to test these arguments, and potential directions for future research. Each participant is expected to participate actively to each class discussion.

Each seminar participant will be asked to organize and lead at least one seminar session. All participants are asked to cooperate fully each week with the participant playing the lead role. Each seminar participant must prepare 3-5 questions for class discussion over the assigned readings for each day. These questions are to be produced in triplicate: one for you, one for the instructor and one for the individual participant who will be leading the seminar that day. Copies should be turned in to the instructor and lead participant by 12:00 noon on the day of class.

In-class presentations. Beyond regular class attendance and active participation in class discussion, each student is expected to make 2 brief (10 minutes maximum) presentations to the rest of the class on the weekly topics. Please volunteer freely and pace the presentations throughout the semester. The presentations should involve identifying one or more important questions related to the week's topic that have been left unanswered or answered incompletely by the readings (and offering tentative suggestions on how such gaps might be filled in future research), and/or proposing some extension of the week's readings to a new question or area. These presentations are meant to help focus the class discussion on new directions from the week's readings, and to help identify interesting directions for future research (perhaps even for this course's research paper). They should be written from a research-oriented, academic perspective, rather than a literature review or normative (“I liked/hated this article”) perspective, and should be constructive; criticisms of assigned readings should be accompanied by one or more suggestions about how to overcome the problems, with appropriate discussion of the implications of these suggestions for the body of research. Each presentation should be summarized in a roughly 1-2 page paper to be handed in for evaluation.

Overall Course Participation will comprise 40% of the course grade. This includes: participation in weekly discussions; performance as seminar leader; the in-class presentations; performance as “panel discussants” in the simulated panels that will be held on April 11 and April 18.

Research Paper
The most important component of student requirements is the production of an original research paper of publishable quality. This paper may be quantitative or qualitative in its methodology, depending on the nature of the question and the student's methodological training, but in any case it must be analytical and theoretical in nature rather than descriptive. The final paper must be 25-30 pages in length (excluding references), and should be comparable to an academic journal article.

Please note: These are simply 3-5 questions only. In distinction from my practice in 715 or 725 participants do not need to provide extensive discussion of where the question came from, why it is important, etc.
in style. For this assignment I will insist that the paper conform exactly to the current style for notes, in-text citations, and references used in either the current American Political Science Review or the current International Studies Quarterly. You will be required to note which style is being used on your title page.

Please note that this should be an original paper for this course, (although it may be based on a previously written paper). It may be a chapter from your thesis or dissertation which is linked to other chapters or represents the progression of your research program. If there is any question as to the appropriateness of the topic/paper, please talk to me about it and bring me a copy of the other paper. Each participant will present the research paper in class in the format of simulated conference panel presentations.

Unless accompanied by a legitimate, documented excuse, any late papers will receive a grade of zero. All non-medical excuses, such as participation in professional conferences, must be approved by the instructor in advance. My policy is not to give incompletes without such legitimate, documented justifications.

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Schedule of Research Paper Requirements

1. January 17: Descriptive list of five potential topics due. These should be drawn from a systematic review either of the relevant literature (as done in a previous course) and/or conference programs for the ISA conferences for 2008, 2009 and 2010 available on line at: http://www.isanet.org/neworleans2010/ http://www.isanet.org/newyork2009/ http://www.isanet.org/sanfran2008/

Note: No class on January 17: the list of topics should be brought to my office, the department office, or e-mailed to me.

2. January 24: Narrow down your research topics to 1 or 2 and present a detailed discussion of these topics in class; (also bring your initial list of five potential topics).


4. February 7: annotated bibliography or brief literature review outline due (five pages maximum).

5. February 14: Draft of research paper prospectus due. This is to have a maximum length of five pages [double-spaced, normal margins, normal fonts]. Using course materials, and other materials generated in consultation with the instructor, students will present a brief statement of a research interest, how it emerges from, or relates to, concerns in the IR/Comparative literatures, and broad research design issues; (in essence, a mini-research design). Group discussions of issues/concerns/problems.


7. March 28: Critiques of 2 other participants’ paper prospectuses due with oral reports.

8. April 25: FINAL DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE

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COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Course Introduction/Organization (Jan. 10)

1. General Theoretical Overviews of International Relations (Jan. 24)
   Required Reading
   Russett, Starr and Kinsella, chapters 1-6 [review the rest of the book during the semester for material bearing on your research interests/topics]

2. Crossing Boundaries: Agent-Structure and Opportunity and Willingness (Jan. 31)
   Required Reading
   Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr, Inquiry Logic and International Politics, chap. 2 [BB] [Reserve Book]
   Gil Friedman and Harvey Starr, Agency, Structure, and International Politics, chaps. 1, 2 (chap. 4 is recommended) [Reserve Book]

3. Studying Decision Making and Choice (Feb. 7)
   Required Reading
   Russett, Starr and Kinsella, chap. 7
   Friedman and Starr, chap. 5 [Reserve Book]
   Nehemia Geva and Alex Mintz, eds., Decision-making on War and Peace [Reserve Book]
   – ch. 1 by Mintz
   – ch. 2 by Morrow
   – ch. 3 by Levy
   – ch. 4 by Stein and Welch
   [Recommended: Zeev Maoz, National Choices and International Processes, chaps. 2, 3, 5; Reserve Book]

4. Crossing Boundaries: Overview of Internal-External Relationships (Feb. 14)
   Required Reading
   George Tsebelis, Nested Games, chs. 1, 2 [BB] (chs. 3 and 4 recommended) [Reserve Book]
Russett, Starr and Kinsella, chap.13 [chap.16 recommended]
J. David Singer, "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations" in J.N. Rosenau, International Politics and Foreign Policy (Revised edition) [BB]

[Recommended: 2-3 pieces from the special issue of International Studies Review 5,4, December 2003, “Dissolving Boundaries.” The articles by Bruce Russett, David Lake, Cliff Morgan and Navin Bapat are especially recommended. All are [BB]. Note that this issue is available in hard copy and electronically at E-Journals through Thomas Cooper.]

5. Crossing Boundaries: Substitutability and Applications (Feb.21)

Required Reading
Most and Starr, chap.5 [BB] [Reserve Book]
Review article by Cioffi-Revilla and Starr

Applications:
Marc V. Simon and Harvey Starr, “A Two-Level Analysis of War and Revolution: A Dynamic Simulation of Response to Threat,” in Geva and Mintz, eds. [BB] [Reserve Book]
Journal of Conflict Resolution Special Issue on “Substitutability in Foreign Policy” 44,1, February 2000. Read 2-3 articles. The articles by Morgan and Palmer, McGinnis, and Moore are especially recommended These three articles are [BB]. This issue is available in hard copy and at E-Journals through Thomas Cooper.

[Recommended: Articles by David Lake; Douglas Lemke, in the special issue of ISR noted in last week’s reading; Harvey Starr, "Revolution and War: Rethinking the Linkage Between Internal and External Conflict," Political Research Quarterly, vol.47, 1994.] all these are [BB]

6. Pulling It All Together: Models of Governments, Elites, Selectorates, Peace and Development (Feb. 28)

Required Reading
Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, et al., The Logic of Political Survival, chaps. 1, 2, 3
Mancur Olson, Power and Prosperity, chaps. 1, 2, 3, 4

Applications:
NOTE: Since there will be no class on March 7 due to Spring Break, and the instructor will be at the ISA annual meeting on March 14, there will be NO CLASS MEETINGS until March 21. Students should be working on their research papers. They should try to use the week of February 28, in particular, to consult with the instructor on the papers.

7. Pulling It All Together: Development, Growth and Prosperity (March 21)

    Required Reading
    Bueno de Mesquita et al., chaps. 4, 5 [chap. 7 recommended]
    Olson, chaps. 5, 6 [chaps. 7, 8 recommended]
    Russett, Starr and Kinsella, chaps. 12, 15; review chap. 13 [chap.14 recommended]

    Application: One area for which these ideas are particularly relevant is that of “failed states.” Some of the best work in the area can be found in the Special Issue on “Failed States,” Conflict Management and Peace Science, vol.25, 2008.

8. Pulling It All Together: Democracy and the Democratic Peace (March 28)

    Required Reading
    Bueno de Mesquita et al., chaps.6, 9, 10
    Olson, chaps. 9, 10
    Russett, Starr and Kinsella, chap. 11 [chap.8 recommended]

    [Recommended:
    – Bruce Russett and John Oneal, Triangulating Peace, chaps. 1, 2, 8, and 3. Reserve Book

● April 4: Group Discussion of Research Papers
● April 11: Simulated Panel Presentations of Research Papers (with discussants)
● April 18: Simulated Panel Presentations of Research Papers (with discussants)

★ April 25: Final Papers Due and Concluding Seminar Discussion and Critique ★
BOOKS ON RESERVE AT THOMAS COOPER LIBRARY

JX1395/.F758/1997 Friedman, Gil and Harvey Starr, AGENCY, STRUCTURE, AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS (Routledge, 1997)

JX1395/D42/1997 Geva, Nehemia and Alex Mintz, DECISIONMAKING ON WAR AND PEACE (Lynne Rienner, 1997)


JZ1320 .R87 2001 Russett, Bruce and John Oneal, TRIANGULATING PEACE (Norton, 2001)

JF51/.T74/1990 Tsebelis, George, NESTED GAMES (University of California Press, 1990)