

Syllabus

PSCI 150-920: Introduction to International Relations

Instructor: Nicky Bell (he/him/his)
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00-3:00pm and by appointment **on Skype (@njbell89)**
(I'm happy to schedule appointments if office hours don't work for you; just ask!)
Course Dates: July 9 - August 8, 2019
Course Times: Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:15-5:05pm
Room: PCPSE 202 (133 S. 36th St.)

Communication Preferences: I prefer to meet during office hours or by appointment, including if you feel that you are struggling in the course and would like additional support. However, I am available by email, and I strive to respond to emails by the end of the next business day (M-F). If you have a question about the course content, you should send your questions to the Google Group (described below) and you will likely receive a quick response from your colleagues.

Course Description

Welcome to Introduction to International Relations! The discipline of international relations focuses on the actors (e.g. people, states), structures (e.g. international organizations), and forces (e.g. power, norms) that shape interactions between states. The goal of studying international relations is to build theories of these interactions that can explain events across time and space. For example, can the same factors explain the destructiveness of World War I and the relative peace of the Cold War? Why does the United States view countries half a world away (China, Russia) with suspicion, but fosters good relations with Canada, with whom it shares thousands of miles of border? IR scholars use the tools of scientific inquiry to answer these questions. This course is an introduction to both the theories that international relations scholars developed to explain world politics and some of the methods that they use to build, test, and revise these theories.

In this course, you will also produce a 4-6 minute podcast episode offering a policy recommendation on an international issue of your choosing. You will receive instruction in the use of Audacity audio editing software (free download).

Learning Objectives

There are four major learning objectives in this course, and the activities and assignments have been designed to help you achieve these objectives.

1. You will become familiar with the major IR theories and challenges to those theories from critical and non-Western perspectives.
2. You will be able to apply IR theories to contemporary international issues, especially in the areas of security and political economy.
3. You will be able to analyze the methods of scientific inquiry used by scholars of international relations. This is not a course in statistics or research methods, but the scientific method requires researchers to make assumptions that may or may not be realistic. You will learn to evaluate these assumptions and challenge them when appropriate.
4. You will be able to create audio podcasts using Audacity audio editing software. Many companies and non-profits now produce their own podcasts, and I hope this exercise will be helpful as you build your CV and apply for jobs.

Class Structure

Each 3 hour and 50 minute class will be divided into four parts, with 10 minute breaks between each section. A typical class will be structured as follows:

1:15-2:05pm	Discussion of previous day's topics and readings
2:15-3:05pm	Lecture on Topic 1
3:15-4:05pm	Lecture on Topic 2
4:15-5:05pm	Class activity or optional in-class work time for podcast

Discussing the previous day's material at the start of the next class is a pedagogical technique known as "spaced practice," which can improve the strength of information storage in the brain.¹ In order to facilitate spaced practice, you are expected to do the readings listed next to each day's class after that class and before the next class. For example, on July 25, we will have lectures on international trade and immigration. The readings listed in the syllabus on July 25 should thus be completed by the next class, July 30.

Lectures will provide you with a foundation of knowledge before you read. Hopefully, you will find that you understand the readings better than you would have if you read them before lecture. Although the primary purpose of lectures is to give you important information about the topics, I design my lectures to be interactive. I will expect you to be an active learner during lecture by asking questions, answering questions, working to solve problems in groups, doing group exercises, etc.

The final hour of class will be for class activities such as simulations, film screenings, and guest speakers. If there is no activity scheduled, you may use the time to work on your podcast assignment. I will be available to help with any questions or

1. Yana Weinstein, Christopher R. Madan, and Megan A. Sumeracki, "Teaching the Science of Learning," Cognitive Research: Principles and Implications 3, no. 2 (2018): online.

issues you have.

I kindly request that you do not pack up your computers, notebooks, etc. until class has ended. The noise from packing up early is distracting to your classmates and the instructor.

Podcast Assignment

The main assignment in this course is that you will produce a 4-6 minute podcast episode on an international issue of your choosing. Each episode should contain background information on the policy issue (Why is this an issue that policymakers must address? Who are the key actors involved in this issue? What attempts have already been made to resolve this issue?), audio from an original interview with an academic or policymaker with knowledge of the policy issue, and a proposed policy solution. Your description of the policy issue and proposed policy solution should explicitly draw on the IR theories learned in class, and you should consider alternative views and/or potential concerns with your policy solution. Each episode must also contain an intro and outro and at least two pieces of background music.

You will work with a partner on this assignment. You may choose your own partner, or I will assign you to a partner based on shared interests in potential episode topics. You will be instructed in the use of Audacity audio editing software, which is available for free download for Windows and Mac at audacityteam.org.

There will be a series of intermediate assignments to help you with the process of producing a podcast and to help us recognize any potential problems early on.

- By the start of class on July 11, you should email me with the name of your partner (if applicable) and three international issues you would be interested in working on. I will let you know the name of your partner and your topic by 5:00pm on July 12.
- On July 11, we will meet with Penn Library staff, who will introduce you to the audio recording resources available at Penn, and you will receive instruction in Audacity audio editing software.
- By the start of class on July 18, you and your partner should email me a “story map,” which is a way of outlining your episode that we will discuss in class.
- By the start of class on July 23, you and your partner should email me an interview guide for your interview with an expert academic or policymaker. We will discuss how to create an interview guide in class. You must have your interview scheduled before submitting an interview guide. If you have difficulties scheduling an interview, let me know as soon as possible.
- By the start of class on July 25, you and your partner should email me with a nearly complete script for your podcast that includes all narration (when you

are talking), answers you expect to include from your interview (it is okay if you are just guessing at this point), and where you will include background music or sound effects. We will discuss the specifics of script-writing in class.

- On August 1, we will meet in the WIC Seminar Room (Van Pelt Room 124) to work on our podcast episodes. I will meet with each group for 15 minutes to listen to a draft of your episode and provide feedback. You should have at least a partial draft of your podcast mixed in Audacity by this point.
- On August 8, we will listen to the podcast episodes as a class. You should also submit all Audacity files and your podcast episode exported as a .mp3 file with metadata to me via Penn Box **by 12:00pm (noon)**. Your metadata should include a 100-word episode description, attribution for music or sound effects as required by the relevant licenses, and a list of sources that you referenced while making your episode in Chicago Author-Date style (does not count towards 100-word limit). Detailed information about Chicago citations are available from the [Purdue University Online Writing Lab](#).

Grading

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

Podcast Episode (see rubric)	70%
On-time submission of assignments	10%
Engagement	20%

Most courses include a “participation” grade because, I believe, it is a measurable way of assessing your engagement during class. However, it is a noisy measure. Many people are fully engaged in class – and by engagement, I mean being attentive to the instructor and your colleagues and focused only on class material during class time – but choose not to participate in traditional ways for various reasons. Moreover, participation is not the only way to measure engagement. Ways that you can show me that you are engaged in class include:

- Making eye contact with whoever is talking (the instructor or one of your colleagues).
- Nodding when you understand something.
- Taking active notes, as described in the technology policy (writing down everything the instructor says is not active note-taking).
- Not using phones or computers to engage in activities that are not related to the class. Briefly looking up information online, however, is acceptable.
- Actively contributing to group work.

You must attend class to be engaged. The constraints of the shortened term and long class periods mean you may be at a substantial disadvantage if you miss a class. If you are absent for a medical issue, family emergency, or other excused absence, please notify me by email at your earliest opportunity.

Likewise, because of the shortened timeframe of this course, late assignments put you and the instructor at a disadvantage. For that reason, I will deduct two percentage points from your course grade every 12 hours after the deadline for late assignments.

Course grades will be converted into letter grades according to the following rubric:

98-100 = A+ (4.0 GPA points)
93-97 = A (4.0 GPA points)
90-92 = A- (3.7 GPA points)
87-89 = B+ (3.3 GPA points)
83-86 = B (3.0 GPA points)
80-82 = B- (2.7 GPA points)
77-79 = C+ (2.3 GPA points)
73-76 = C (2.0 GPA points)
70-72 = C- (1.7 GPA points)
67-69 = D+ (1.3 GPA points)
60-66 = D (1.0 GPA points)

Google Group

Prior to our third class, you will receive an email welcoming you to a Google Group for our class. The Google Group is intended to be a collaborative knowledge bank for questions about course content. To that end, I will not answer individual emails with questions about course content. Please send your questions to the Google Group so that others with similar questions may also see the answer.

Posts to the Google Group can be made by emailing:
intro-ir-penn-summer-ii@googlegroups.com from your Penn email address.

Active engagement in the Google Group is encouraged. You are welcome to respond to your colleagues' questions and also to distribute news articles, announcements, and opportunities relevant to the course. Answering your colleagues' questions is a good way to check your understanding of the material (I will monitor the group and clarify answers when necessary).

Technology Policy

I will post all lecture slides on Canvas before the start of class, and I encourage you to refer to them during lectures. During our discussion of the previous day's topics and during lectures, you may also take notes on a laptop or tablet if you would like, though even when taking notes electronically I encourage you to use "[active note-taking](#)" practices. The assessment in this class is designed to evaluate your ability to think like an international relations scholar, rather than how well you retain information. For that reason, it is not strictly necessary to take extensive notes during class.

Because group or class discussions are focused on learning together, I ask that you restrict your use of laptops or tablets during these times unless it is absolutely necessary. Please feel free to speak with me if you have questions about when it is appropriate to use electronic devices during group or class discussions.

Academic Integrity

When we enter the classroom, we accept a responsibility to our colleagues that we will conduct ourselves with honesty and integrity in the pursuit of knowledge. That includes, but is not limited to, abiding by Penn's [Code of Academic Integrity](#), which covers infractions such as cheating and plagiarism. Violations of the Code of Academic Integrity will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for further action.

I am available to answer any questions you may have about things like citing your sources. It is not assumed that you have this knowledge before entering class.

Accessibility Policy

In compliance with Penn policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require. Requests for academic accommodations need to be made during the first two weeks of the course, except under unusual circumstances, to arrange reasonable accommodations. Students must register with Student Disabilities Services (SDS) for accessibility verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

Course Outline and Readings

The course is divided into three parts. In the first part, we will discuss the four theories of IR that underpin the bulk of Western scholarship. The second and third sections address topics in international security and international political economy, respectively. These sections are not an exhaustive list of topics studied by scholars in these fields, but they will provide you with a foundation for PSCI 151: International Security, PSCI 152: International Political Economy, and PSCI 153: International Law

& Institutions.

Readings have been selected to represent both “canonical” texts which you will be expected to know as a student of IR, as well as texts which represent the diversity of scholars and viewpoints that are traditionally underrepresented in IR syllabi. Half of the authors assigned in this course are women, and I have tried to include critical (such as feminist or non-Western) scholarship where appropriate. All readings will be available on Canvas.

Readings that are preceded with **RC** (for “read closely”) review the key concepts and theories discussed in lecture. You should read these for understanding – you may wish to take notes on new information, but the readings should largely reflect the material in lecture.

Readings that are preceded with **S** (for “skim”) apply the ideas discussed in lecture to contemporary research questions in IR, or offer an alternative perspective to the dominant theories in IR. You may skim these readings. The goal is not to remember the details of these works, but to recognize how the author(s) apply or challenge the theories learned in lecture.

I have also assigned audio pieces for you to listen to that might spark ideas for your own podcast episode. These audio pieces are preceded with **L**. In addition to listening to the content, pay attention to how the piece is produced – how is the story structured? What kinds of questions did the interviewer ask? What elements of this story did you like or dislike? Is there anything from the production that you could incorporate into your own podcast episode?

Date	Topic	Readings
Theories of International Relations		
July 9	Thinking about IR: Anarchy and Levels of Analysis	<p>L. Planet Money (NPR): "Chasing the Dread Pirate Roberts" (https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2014/11/26/365510643/episode-585-chasing-the-dread-pirate-roberts)</p> <p>RC. Thucydides, Melian Dialogue</p> <p>RC. Excerpt of Waltz (1979), <u>Theory of International Politics</u></p> <p>S. Welch (2003), "Why International Relations Theorists Should Stop Reading Thucydides"</p> <p>S. Sjoberg (2012), "Gender, Structure, and War: What Waltz Couldn't See"</p>
July 11	Podcast Topics Due (by email) before start of class	
July 11	Realism and Institutionalism	<p>L. Radiolab (WNYC): "One Good Deed Deserves Another" (https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/104010-one-good-deed-deserves-another)</p> <p>RC. Excerpt of Mearsheimer (2001), <u>The Tragedy of Great Power Politics</u></p> <p>RC. Excerpt of Keohane (1984), <u>After Hegemony</u></p> <p>S. Excerpt of Kang (2010), <u>East Asia Before the West</u></p> <p>S. Allison (2018), "The Myth of the Liberal Order"</p> <p>S. Lissner and Rapp-Hooper (2018), "The Liberal Order Is More Than a Myth"</p>
July 12	Last day to add a course/drop a course with no financial obligation	

July 16	Liberalism and Constructivism	<p>L. Freakonomics (WNYC): "Riding the Herd Mentality" (first 17 min.) (http://freakonomics.com/podcast/riding-the-herd-mentality-a-new-freakonomics-radio-podcast/)</p> <p>RC. Putnam (1988), "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games"</p> <p>RC. Wendt (1992), "Anarchy Is What States Make of It"</p> <p>S. Weiss (2014), Excerpt of <u>Powerful Patriots</u></p> <p>S. Bush (2017), "The Politics of Rating Freedoms"</p>
International Security		
July 18	Story Map Due (by email) before start of class	
July 18	Causes of War and the Democratic Peace	<p>RC. Fearon (1995), "Rationalist Explanations for War"</p> <p>RC. Oneal and Russett (1999), "Kantian Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations"</p> <p>S. Excerpt of Oakes (2012), <u>Diversionsary War: Domestic Unrest and International Conflict</u></p> <p>S. Excerpt of Gowa (2000), <u>Ballots and Bullets: The Elusive Democratic Peace</u></p> <p>L. The Turnaround (Maximum Fun/Columbia Journalism Review): Ira Glass (first 28 min.) https://maximumfun.org/turnaround/ira-glass</p>
July 20	Last day to drop a course with 50% financial obligation Last day to change grade status	
July 23	Interview Guide Due (by email) before start of class	

July 23	Nuclear Weapons and Civil Wars	<p>L. BBC Radio 4: "The Human Button" (on Canvas)</p> <p>L. This American Life (WBEZ): "Good Morning, Kafranbel" (https://www.thisamericanlife.org/667/wartime-radio/act-two-5)</p> <p>RC. Excerpt of Schelling (1966), <u>Arms and Influence</u></p> <p>RC. Walter (2017), "The New New Civil Wars"</p> <p>S. Tannenwald (2018), "How Strong is the Nuclear Taboo Today?"</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Appeltshauser (2016), "African In/Security and Colonial Rule: Security Studies' Neglect of Complexity"</p>
International Political Economy		
July 25	Podcast Script Due (by email) before start of class	
July 25	International Trade and Immigration	<p>L. NPR: "The World in a T-Shirt" (three episodes) (https://www.npr.org/series/4622200/the-world-in-a-t-shirt)</p> <p>L. Trade Talks (Peterson Institute for International Economics): "The Migration Crisis Behind Trump's Mexico-Tariff Threat"</p> <p>S. Excerpt of Guisinger (2017), <u>American Opinion on Trade</u></p> <p>OR</p> <p>Mosley and Singer (2015), "Migration, Labor, and the International Political Economy"</p>

July 30	International Organizations and International Law	<p>RC. Abbott and Snidal (1998), "Why States Act Through Formal International Organizations"</p> <p>RC. Simmons (2009), <u>Mobilizing for Human Rights</u></p> <p>S. Excerpt of Lightfoot (2016), <u>Global Indigenous Politics</u></p> <p>Because August 6 is our final teaching day, please also read in advance:</p> <p>RC. Excerpt of Sikkink (2011), <u>The Justice Cascade</u></p> <p>RC. Obama (2011), "Address to the Nation on Libya"</p> <p>S. Dimitrov (2016), "The Paris Agreement on Climate Change: Behind Closed Doors"</p>
Aug. 1	<p>Class will meet in WIC Seminar Room (Van Pelt Room 124)</p> <p>Each group will meet with the instructor for 15 minutes to review draft podcast episode.</p>	
Aug. 2	<p>Last day to withdraw from a course</p> <p>Full financial obligation will apply. Transcript will read "W".</p>	
Aug. 6	Human Rights and the Environment	<p>None</p> <p>Final teaching day</p>
Aug. 8	<p>Podcast Presentations</p> <p>Episode description and audio file due (via Box) by 12:00pm (noon)</p>	

Resources for Students

Introduction to International Relations can be a demanding course. There are many resources available at Penn to help you succeed in this and other classes.

- **Weingarten Learning Resources Center** (<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/index.php>)
Professional instruction in skills such as academic reading, test taking, and study strategies.
- **Tutoring Center** (<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/tutoring/index.php>)
A variety of subject-specific peer tutoring services to supplement support from faculty, TAs, and instructors.
- **Marks Family Writing Center** (<http://writing.upenn.edu/critical/wc/>)
Provides expert help in writing for undergraduate and graduate students.
- **Communication Within the Curriculum** (<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/cwic/>)
Helps students express themselves orally with clarity and confidence.

- **Penn Online Research Tutorials** (<https://guides.library.upenn.edu/hometabs/tutorials/>)
Step-by-step guides through the research process
- **Reference Services at Van Pelt Library**
Reference librarians are available to support students at any step of their research projects.

(Courtesy of the Center for Teaching and Learning)

Last updated: 23 July 2019. Subject to change.

Grading Rubric for Podcast Episode

Category	1 point	2 points	3 points	4 points	5 points
Research (10 points)	Shows little understanding of policy issue and/or sources are not cited	Shows some understanding of basic elements of policy issue and/or several major factual errors and/or sources are improperly cited	Shows in-depth understanding of at least one element of policy issue; 1-2 major factual errors; sources are properly cited	Shows in-depth understanding of one or more elements of policy issue; one major factual error or 2+ minor factual errors; sources are properly cited	Shows comprehensive understanding of policy issue; no more than one minor factual error; sources are properly cited
Application of IR Theory (20 points)	Does not attempt to apply IR theory to policy issue or policy recommendation	Makes reference to IR theory but application to policy issue or policy recommendation is unclear; or incorrectly applies IR theory to policy issue or policy recommendation	Applies basic elements of IR theory to either policy issue or policy recommendation	Applies basic elements of IR theory to both policy issue and policy recommendation	Applies IR theory to both policy issue and policy recommendation in a way that shows advanced understanding of theories

Policy Recommendation (10 points)	There is no policy recommendation	The policy recommendation is vague and/or unclear	The policy recommendation is clear but not sufficiently detailed to be actionable	The policy recommendation is clear and actionable	The policy recommendation is clear, actionable, and considers alternative views and/or potential issues
Audio Elements (15 points)	The podcast episode does not include any of the required elements	The podcast episode includes one of the required elements	The podcast episode includes two of the required elements	The podcast episode includes three of the required elements	The podcast episode includes all four required elements
Required elements are 1) an intro and outro, 2) at least two pieces of background music, 3) an original interview with an academic or policymaker, and 4) 4-6 minutes in length					
Audio Production (15 points)	The podcast episode shows little competence with production software	The podcast episode shows basic competence with production software, but with errors that frequently detract from the listener's understanding	The podcast episode shows basic competence with production software, but with errors that occasionally detract from the listener's understanding	The podcast episode shows basic competence with production software, and errors do not generally detract from the listener's understanding	The podcast episode shows competence with advanced features of production software and errors do not generally detract from the listener's understanding

Total Points Possible: 70