

Syllabus

PSCI 150-920: Introduction to International Relations

Summer Session II (July 6 - August 7, 2020)

Instructor: Nicky Bell (he/him/his)
belln@sas.upenn.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays 5:00-7:00pm (Eastern) and by appointment (both on Zoom)
I'm happy to schedule appointments if office hours don't work for you; just ask!

"Synchronous"
Meeting Time: Wednesdays 1:15-3:05pm (Eastern)

Grader: Santiago Cunial
scunial@sas.upenn.edu

Communication Preferences: I prefer to meet during office hours or by appointment. However, I am available by email, and I try 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 post your questions on the Piazza page ([described below](#)) and you will likely receive a quick response from your colleagues.

Course Description

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

1. You will be familiar with the major Western IR theories.
2. You will be able to apply these theories to contemporary international issues, especially in the areas of security and political economy.
3. 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 resume and apply for jobs.

How the Course Will Work

We will use a version of the “flipped” classroom model, which means that you will gain your first exposure to the course material on your own, and then we will meet as a group once a week for exercises, discussion, and collaborative work.

Each Thursday,¹ I will post pre-recorded video lectures for that week’s topics on Canvas. I will also post my lecture slides. Please note that the video lectures will only be available until the start of our synchronous class meeting on Wednesday, though the lecture slides will remain available throughout the course. This ensures that we all move through the material together. You should expect to spend about 2-3 hours per week on the video lectures.

I am also assigning readings for each week’s topics, which will be posted on Canvas. I strongly encourage you to watch the video lectures before completing the readings. 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. The amount of time that you will spend on the readings depends on your own reading habits, but I have tried to aid you by identifying texts that you should “read closely” and those which you can “skim.”

We will meet online as a class using Zoom each Wednesday from 1:15-3:05pm (Eastern) to discuss that week’s topics. It is absolutely essential that you watch the video lectures and read the assigned texts before our class meetings. We will use this time to discuss the case studies in small groups, complete exercises and simulations a class, and engage in other active learning techniques. If you do not watch the lectures and read the assigned texts before our meetings, it will be very difficult for you to gain anything from these sessions.

Because the assessments in this course are designed to evaluate your ability to think like an international relations scholar rather than how well you retain information, it is not necessary to take extensive notes on lectures or readings.

¹Except for the first week, when the lectures will be posted on Monday, July 6.

Case Studies

Each week, you will be assigned a case study related to that week's topics from either *Cases in International Relations: Pathways to Conflict and Cooperation* by Glenn Hastedt, Donna L. Lybecker, and Vaughn P. Shannon (CQ Press, 2015) or the Institute for Study of Diplomacy (ISD) at Georgetown University. I will provide PDF copies of the cases from Hastedt, Lybecker, and Shannon on Canvas, since their book is available through Penn Libraries. You will need to purchase the ISD cases through the [ISD website](#) at a cost of \$3.50 per case (a total of \$10.50 for the course). **If you are unable to afford the cost of these texts for any reason, please email me and I will provide you with free copies, no questions asked.**

At the start of the course, you will be randomly assigned to a group of 4-5 students. This will be your group for the entire term. Each week during our synchronous meetings, we will break out into groups so that you can answer questions about the case with your group. It is absolutely essential that you read the case before our class meetings so that you can contribute to these discussions.

Each week (starting with week 2), one person from the group should designate themselves as the "recorder." This person is responsible for taking notes on the group's discussion about the case. The recorder will use their notes to draft a one-page memo addressed to a policymaker of your choice that summarizes the problems and questions raised by the case, possible policy solutions to the case, your group's analysis of those policy options, and a final policy recommendation (as well as any dissenting views from members of the group). **The recorder should submit their memo on Canvas that evening (Wednesday) by 11:59pm (Eastern).** Each member of the group will serve as the recorder once during the term.

More information on how to read and evaluate a case study, the requirements for the memo, and the grading rubric for the memo will be provided to you on the first week of class.

Podcast Assignment

The main assessment in this course is a 4-6 minute podcast episode on an international issue of your choosing that you will produce. 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?), 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. You will also be evaluated on the overall quality of your audio production, such as using proper recording techniques and employing background music.

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

I have created a series of intermediate deadlines to help you with the process of producing a podcast and to help us recognize any potential problems early on. **Please note that these deadlines do not necessarily align with our class meetings.** I will provide you with written feedback on submissions within two days. All times Eastern.

- By July 10 at 5:00pm, please email me with an international issue that interests you. If you are working with a partner, please let me know their name.
- By July 15 at 1:15pm, please submit via Canvas:
 - A “story map,” which is a way of outlining your episode that we will discuss in class.
 - The names of three academics or policymakers who you would like to contact for an interview. **I strongly encourage you to reach out to your first choice for an interview as soon as possible.**
- By July 17 at 5:00pm, please an interview guide for your interview via Canvas. We will discuss how to create an interview guide in class.
- By July 24 at 5:00pm, please submit a nearly complete script for your podcast via Canvas. (If you email me your script sooner than July 24, I will provide you with feedback before the weekend.) We will discuss the specifics of script-writing in class.
- On August 4, I will meet with each group on Zoom for 20 minutes to provide feedback on a draft of your podcast. You should have most of your podcast mixed in Audacity by this point.
- You should submit your podcast episode exported as a .mp3 file to me via Canvas **by 5:00pm on August 7**. Please also submit a list of sources that you referenced while making your episode in [Chicago Style bibliographic citations](#).

Piazza

We will use Piazza (accessible through the course Canvas site) as a collaborative knowledge bank for questions about course content. To that end, I will not answer individual emails with questions about course content. Please post your questions to Piazza so that others with similar questions may also see the answer.

Active engagement on Piazza 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.

When you access Piazza, you will be offered an opportunity to create an account, but this is optional and only necessary if you plan on accessing Piazza from a mobile device. You do not need to create an account to access Piazza through the course Canvas site.

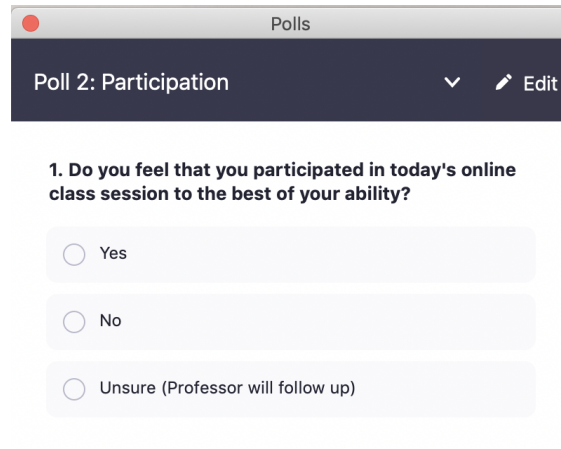
This is important: Penn has no contractual relationship with Piazza. Penn does not pay for Piazza and cannot control how they use information that you provide to them. In particular, when you sign up for Piazza, you may also sign up for a service called Piazza Network (or Piazza Careers). If you do so, significant information about you will be made available to Piazza's corporate customers. Please see [this helpful website](#) for information about how to access Piazza without providing unnecessary information to the company.

Grading

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

Case Study Memo	25%
Podcast Episode (see rubric)	45%
On-time submission of interim podcast assignments	10%
Participation	20%

Normally, I do not grade on "participation," because many students are actively engaged in class but feel uncomfortable speaking out loud. Unfortunately, the nature of remote instruction means that your learning, and the learning of your peers, depends in part on your willingness to share your thoughts and opinions out loud with other students. So, I am compelled to include participation as part of the course grade, but I hope that I have developed an assessment system that is as flexible and accommodating to your personal situation as possible. At the end of each online class session, you will be asked to respond to a Zoom poll:



The image shows a screenshot of a web application window titled "Polls". Inside the window, there is a section titled "Poll 2: Participation" with a dropdown arrow and an "Edit" button. Below the title, the poll question is: "1. Do you feel that you participated in today's online class session to the best of your ability?". There are three radio button options: "Yes", "No", and "Unsure (Professor will follow up)".

On some days, you may feel comfortable engaging out loud, while on other days, you may choose not to do so for perfectly valid reasons. So long as you feel like you participated to the best of your ability on this day, you will receive credit for the participation portion of the grade.

You must attend class to participate. The constraints of the shortened term mean you may be at a substantial disadvantage if you miss a class. If you will be 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 a full letter grade from your memo or podcast episode for every 12 hours after the deadline for late submissions (i.e. if the memo is an hour late, there will be a one letter grade deduction, if it is 12 hours late, there will be a two letter grade deduction, and so on). Late podcast assignments (the interim assignments throughout the term) will not be accepted. Please email in the case of extenuating circumstances, such as a medical issue or family emergency.

If your ability to complete any part of the course is affected by a medical issue, family emergency, or other reason, please notify me at the earliest opportunity. We will work together to devise whatever accommodations are necessary to ensure your well-being and success.

Regrade Policy: If the comments that you receive on your work are unclear or you are uncertain why you received the grade that you did, please reach out to Santiago Cunial (scunial@sas.upenn.edu), who is the grader for this course. If you are still unsatisfied with your grade after discussing it with Santiago, you may request a regrade from the instructor by email. Please keep in mind that your new grade will replace your previous grade, even if your new grade is lower than your original grade. A regrade request may not be submitted until 48 hours after you receive your original grade.

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)

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 issues regarding academic integrity. 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 two parts. In the first part, we will discuss the theoretical foundations of the Western study of international relations. The second part applies these theories to topics in security and political economy. These topics are not an exhaustive list of issues 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. Half of the authors assigned in this course are women.

Readings that are preceded with **RC** (for “read closely”) review the key concepts 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. Case studies are preceded with **C** (for “case”) and should also be read closely.

Readings that are preceded with **S** (for “skim”) are applications of the ideas discussed in lecture in recent academic research, 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 of Online Meeting	Topics	Readings
July 8	Thinking about IR: Anarchy and Levels of Analysis	L. Planet Money (NPR): “Chasing the Dread Pirate Roberts” RC. Thucydides, <u>Melian Dialogue</u> C. “Governing the Global Commons of the Arctic” (Hastedt, Lybecker, and Shannon) C. “Cybersecurity’s Uncertain Battleground” (Hastedt, Lybecker, and Shannon)
July 9	Last day to add a course/drop a course with no financial obligation	
July 10	Podcast Topics Due (by email) by 5:00pm Eastern	

July 15	Four Theories of International Relations	<p>C. Martin (2005), "Going to the United Nations: George W. Bush and Iraq" (ISD)</p> <p><u>Realism & Institutionalism</u></p> <p>L. Radiolab (WNYC): "Tit for Tat"</p> <p>S. Gewen (2020), "The Book that Shaped Foreign Policy for a Generation Has More to Say"</p> <p>RC. Excerpt of Mearsheimer (1994), "The False Promise of International Institutions"</p> <p>RC. Excerpt of Keohane and Martin (1995), "The Promise of Institutional Theory"</p> <p><u>Liberalism</u></p> <p>RC. Excerpt of Putnam (1988), "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games"</p> <p><u>Constructivism</u></p> <p>RC. Excerpt of Wendt (1992), "Anarchy Is What States Make of It"</p>
July 15	Story Map and Names of Experts Due (by email) by 11:59pm Eastern	
July 17	Interview Guide Due (by email) by 5:00pm Eastern	
	Last day to drop a course with 50% financial obligation	

July 22	Causes of War and Nuclear Weapons	<p>C. "Iran's Nuclear Ambitions" (Hastedt, Lybecker, and Shannon)</p> <p><u>Causes of War</u> RC. Fearon (1995), "Rationalist Explanations for War" RC. Walter (2017), "The New New Civil Wars" S. Excerpt of Oakes (2012), <u>Diversionsary War: Domestic Unrest and International Conflict</u></p> <p><u>Nuclear Weapons</u> L. BBC Radio 4: "The Human Button" (on Canvas) RC. Excerpt of Schelling (1966), <u>Arms and Influence</u> S. Tannenwald (2018), "How Strong Is the Nuclear Taboo Today?"</p>
July 24	Podcast Script Due (by email) by 5:00pm Eastern	
July 29	International Organizations and International Law	<p>C. Katz (2017), "Global Governance of Disease" (ISD)</p> <p><u>International Organizations</u> RC. Excerpt of Abbott and Snidal (1998), "Why States Act Through Formal International Organizations" S. Gray (2020), "Life, Death, Inertia, and Change: The Hidden Lives of International Organizations"</p> <p><u>International Law</u> RC. Excerpt of Simmons (2009), <u>Mobilizing for Human Rights</u> S. Finnemore (1999), "Rules of War and Wars of Rules: The International Red Cross and the Restraint of State Violence" S. Obama (2011), "Address to the Nation on Libya"</p>

August 5	International Trade and Labor Migration	<p>C. Lovely (1994), "Thinking Locally, Acting Globally: Congressman Jim Walsh and the NAFTA Vote" (ISD)</p> <p><u>Trade</u></p> <p>L. Marketplace (American Public Media): "We Make German Cars, In America"</p> <p>RC. Goldstein (1993), "Creating the GATT Rules: Ideas, Institutions and American Politics"</p> <p>S. Excerpt of Guisinger (2017), <u>American Opinion on Trade</u></p> <p><u>Labor Migration</u></p> <p>RC. Simmons (2019), "Border Rules"</p> <p>S. Excerpt of Peters (2017), <u>Trading Barriers: Immigration and the Remaking of Globalization</u></p> <p>S. Amnesty International (2019), "State of Migrant Workers' Rights With Four Years To Go Until the Qatar 2022 World Cup"</p>
August 5	Podcast Assignment Due (by Box) by 12:00pm Eastern	

Last updated: 5 July 2020. Subject to change.

Grading Rubric for Podcast Episode

Category	1 point	2 points	3 points	4 points	5 points
Research (5 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 (15 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 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: 45