MSFS 510 International Relations Theory and Practice
Georgetown University, Fall 2011

Profs. Victor Cha, Charles Kupchan, Kathleen R. McNamara, Daniel Nexon, Erik Voeten

Joint Lectures: Tuesday, 2:00 - 3:15 Reiss 112
Discussion Sections: Tuesday, 3:30-4:45
Section 1: McNamara, Intercultural Center 212
Section 2: Kupchan, Intercultural Center 210A
Section 3: Nexon, Walsh 398
Section 4: Cha, Car Barn 315
Section 5: Voeten, St. Marys 111

Learning Goals
This course is a graduate-level class on contemporary theories and issues in international relations. Students who complete this course will (a) gain deep knowledge of the dominant English-language theories of international relations; (b) be able to confidently assess the explanatory power of these theories in the study and practice of international politics; (c) engage in a sophisticated and effective way with the most pressing contemporary policy debates in international politics, and (d) develop the critical analysis, persuasion, and communication skills needed for professional success.

Learning Assessments
To ensure that these learning goals are achieved, you will be assessed in three ways. First, the course will demand your active and informed participation, and you will be evaluated on the quality of that participation (20% of total grade). Second, you will complete a mid-term exam (35%). You will write two essays, from a choice of questions, demonstrating your mastery of the foundational theories of international relations. This exam will be in the format of a take home exam that you will have two days to complete (October 19-21). Third, you will write a final paper. In this assignment, you will chose an outcome in international relations and contrast the power of several theories' explanations for the outcome observed. You will be assessed on your ability to create a systematic and rigorous written analysis. Further details about these assignments will be given in class. To summarize, you will be responsible for:

1. Mid-Term Take Home Essay Exam, due by October 21 (35%)
2. Final Paper, due by December 19 (45%)
3. Discussion Section Participation (20%)

Please note that the main Blackboard website for the class is MSFS-510-C1.Fall2011: Intl Relatns Theory & Practice.Fall2011. You will also be enrolled in a BB website for your particular section, which will be “MSFS-510-01” through “-05.” Please check these frequently for updates as readings may change, materials may be added, or special discussion section tasks may arise.
Class Schedule and Readings

Analytic Frameworks

9/6 – Introduction

Jack Snyder, “One World, Rival Theories” Foreign Policy, (November 1, 2004).


9/13 – Anarchy & Realism (Cha)


John J. Mearsheimer, “Anarchy and the Struggle for Power.”


Kenneth N. Waltz, “The Anarchic Structure of World Politics.”

All four essays above are from International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues, 9th Edition (Ed. Art and Jervis)

9/20 – Liberalism & Cooperation (Kupchan)

Michael W. Doyle, “Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs”

Stanley Hoffman, “The Uses and Limits of International Law”


All three essays above are from International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues, 6th Edition (Ed. Art and Jervis)


9/27 – The Social Construction of World Politics (McNamara/Nexon)


*The Principles in Action*

10/4 – Democratic Peace & US Foreign Policy (Kupchan)


10/11 – International Institutions & Organizations (Voeten)


10/18 – International Law (Tony Arend, guest lecture)


**MID-TERM TAKE HOME EXAM AVAILABLE 10/19 AND DUE 10/21**
10/25 – Sovereignty and Human Rights (Voeten)


11/1 – Deterrence Strategy & the 21st Century (Nexon)


Bruce Blair, Matt Brown, and Richard Burt; Josef Joffe and James W. Davis "Can Disarmament Work? Debating the Benefits of Nuclear Weapons" Foreign Affairs (July/August 2011).


11/8 – Markets, Power and the Historical Foundations of the Global Political Economy (McNamara)

Friedrich Hayek, The Road to Serfdom, (1944), chs 1-4, 15. SKIM


Dani Rodrik, “Feasible Globalizations” (July 2002).


**11/15 – Crisis, Change & the Globalization of Finance (McNamara)**


**11/22 – American Primacy and World Order/Power Transition (Nexon)**

Douglas Lemke, *Regions of War and Peace*, Chapter 2 ("Theoretical Origins")


John G. Ikenberry, "Liberal Internationalism 3.0" *Perspectives on Politics* 7,1 (March 2009:71-87)


**11/29 – Great Power Politics & The Rise of China (Cha)**

Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, "China I: The Coming Conflict with America," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1997), pp.18-32


12/6 – US Grand Strategy Revisited (Cha/Kupchan/McNamara/Nexon/Voeten/)

Special roundtable session. Readings TBA