

**MGIMO University**  
**School of Government and International Affairs**

*Syllabus approved*  
Dean, The MGIMO School of Government and International Affairs  
Mikhail Troitskiy  
« » 2018

**Contemporary Global Issues**  
Undergraduate Course Syllabus

Instructor  
Dr. Aaron G. Sander

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This syllabus is designed in accordance with the MGIMO Educational Standard for the Bachelor Program in International Affairs.

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Director MGIMO Library \_\_\_\_\_ M.V. Reshetnikova

**PART 1:  
INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION, COURSE DESCRIPTION  
AND TEACHING METHODS**

**1.1 General information**

*Template*

- Full course title: Contemporary Global Issues
- Type of course: Mandatory
- Level of course B.A.
- Year of study: 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Number of ECTS credits allocated: 4
- Name of lecturer(s) and contact details:  
    Dr. Aaron Sander, PhD  
    E-mail: [asand018@odu.edu](mailto:asand018@odu.edu)

**1.2 Course aims and learning outcomes**

**Aims**

This course provides students with an introduction to what is known as the Contemporary Global Issues Discourse. It is designed to be of value to students who wish to immerse themselves in the basic problems in the field and who intend to take subsequent classes in the field especially at the masters level, and who wish to establish a strong foundation for that additional class work.

**Outcomes**

- To provide students with concepts and ideas needed to address the core question of the field of IR: what are the causes of international war and the conditions for world peace?
- To provide a basic understanding of international political-economic affairs;
- To attain a firm grasp of important new international policy problems.
- To build oral presentation skills through participating in seminar discussions.
- To sharpen concise writing skills, via briefing and research papers.
- To improve research and analysis skills, by designing an interesting research question, researching it, and composing an essay with a coherent and compelling perspective.

**1.3 Course requirements and grading plan**

**Course requirements**

*Attendance and Participation:* Attendance and participation are graded. Anyone with less than 70% attendance will automatically fail the course.

*Reading:* Conscientious reading of the assigned materials is compulsory; as well as coming prepared for discussion. Student participation in class discussions will have a major impact on your overall performance. In addition to the readings listed, students are expected to have a basic knowledge of current events for classroom discussions.

*Fair Warnings on assignments:* If you miss an assignment deadline, without a well-certified and verifiable excuse, it will count as a zero. In this case, there will be no chance for make-up. A written, verifiable, and valid excuse is required in order to request make up work. If you have a conflicting work schedule, adjust it ahead of time. Any assignment submitted late will be penalized one letter grade (from an A to a B, for example) after the deadline, then every subsequent day there after. Problems with technology are not an acceptable reason for late work.

*Note:* All readings should be available online via my Dropbox link. You do not need to physically enter a library to obtain these readings.

*\*It is therefore your positive responsibility to ensure you can access readings in time to complete them before class. \* Do let me know if you encounter any difficulties within the first week.*

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/17j72w140orvzxa/AAA528ASTfqT-UcG0s4SoHK8a?dl=0>

## **Grading plan**

*Note:* There are NO extra credit opportunities in this class. To maintain fairness, all students will have to go through the same set of assignments. No one will be awarded an extra assignment in order to boost the final grade. *However, if a student is failing, on a case-by-case basis, an additional assignment may be allowed.* Therefore, students should make sure they are fulfilling the grading requirements in order to obtain a desired final grade. Below is the detailed explanation of grading components:

*Attendance and Participation (10%):* Everyone who comes to class, pays attention, and participates reasonably well receives 100% for that day's attendance and participation. Deductions are made due to lack of attention and/or lack of contribution to the class.

*Seminar Weekly quizzes (10%)*

*Seminar Mid-term Exam (15%)*

*Seminar Essays and/or Presentations (10%)*

*Final Examination (30%):* This will be a comprehensive examination, covering all the main themes through the semester – likely in short essay format.

*Research Paper (25%):* By the end of Week 14, all students must submit to my email's inbox their research paper on a topic of his/her choice. NOTE: no two papers may be the same. I will have a sign-in sheet available online on which you can select/reserve your paper's topic and scope. Intended for an academic audience, this is an expanded essay presenting your evaluation and interpretation of arguments within the readings as well as your own independent research. References are required, but there should be few if any quotations. You should analyze a perspective and argue a point; and do so with no less than 4000 words, no more than 5000.

*Conversion to letter grade:* Points accumulated across various assignments will be converted to a letter grade in accordance with the following scale: 90% and above – A range; 82-89% – B range; 75-81 % – C range; 67-74% – D range; 60-66% – E range; 59% and below – F

## **Academic Honor Code**

*Plagiarism and academic integrity:* As a student, you are committed to honesty and integrity.

Academic dishonesty of any kind is cheating: misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them, and the fabrication of information. All work you submit for this course must be your own. Suspected cases will be referred to the university authorities. If you have questions about what constitutes proper use of published or unpublished sources, please ask.

**PART 2:  
WEEKLY SCHEDULE & READINGS**

**2.1 Types of work**

Types of work	Academic hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>
<b><i>Total for lectures, seminars and written exam</i></b>	<b><i>64</i></b>
Lectures	32
Seminars	32
<b><i>Homework</i></b>	<b><i>44</i></b>
Oral Presentations and Essays	10
Preparation for lectures, and seminars	10
Quizzes	10
Research Paper	14
<b><i>Exam (preparation for and passing)</i></b>	<b><i>36</i></b>
<b>Course Assessment</b>	Quizzes/Exams, Essays & Presentations, Research paper

**2.2. Course content and readings by topic**

## **Part I: General Concepts, and Foundation**

### **Week 1. Introduction to Global Issues; Elements, Connections & Perspectives**

#### Aims and Content

To become acquainted with course expectations; and an understanding of the Issues being connected, as well as coming from different perspectives. *To answer: How are these Issues a part of everyday life?*

- International Relations as a part of everyday life
- Building blocks for the study of international relations
- Enduring Questions of international relations
- Viewing the world from differing perspectives
- Making connections in International Relations

#### **ESSENTIAL READINGS**

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. “Preface,” and “Understanding IR.” in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Preface and Ch. 1. xxv-xxxiii, 2-29.

### **Week 2. Historical Perspective, I**

#### Aims and Content

To see the development of our current political world, from its fragmented beginnings centuries ago; to the emergence into a global system of states of today. *To answer: How did a fragmented world become a global, integrated system of states for which order is an ongoing problem?*

- The international system in 1500
- The rise of the state system, and the pursuit of empire
- The path to world wars, and their aftermaths

#### **ESSENTIAL READINGS**

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. “The Emergence of a Global System of States, 1500-Today.” in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 2. 32-51.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS**

- Osiander, A. “Sovereignty, international relations and the Westphalian myth.” *International Organization* 55(2) 2001: 251–87.
- Sofka, J.R. “The 18th century international system: parity or primacy?” *Review of International Studies* 27(5) 2001: 147–63.
- Schroeder, P.W. “The 19th century international system: changes in the structure.” *World Politics* 39(1) 1986: 1–26.

## Week 3. Historical Perspective, II

### Aims and Content

To see the development of our current political world, from its fragmented beginnings centuries ago; to the emergence into a global system of states of today. *To answer: How did a fragmented world become a global, integrated system of states for which order is an ongoing problem?*

- The path to world wars, and their aftermaths
- The Cold War, and its ripple effect
- The end of the Cold War, and the contemporary world order

### ESSENTIAL READINGS

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. "The Emergence of a Global System of States, 1500-Today." in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 2. 51-69.

### SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

- Oslander, A. "Sovereignty, international relations and the Westphalian myth." *International Organization* 55(2) 2001: 251-87.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. "The [20th] Century: A Bird's Eye View." in *The Age of Extremes: 1914-1991*. Introduction. 1-17.
- Cox, Michael. "From the End of the Cold War to a New Global Era?" in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*. Ch.4. 65-79.

## Week 4. Theoretical Traditions in the Study of IR

### Aims and Content

To remind us of how and when theories converge and diverge, so that they can be applied to research. *To answer: How do theoretical traditions in international relations differ on how to understand actors and their behavior on the global stage?*

- Realist assumptions, and propositions
- Liberal assumptions, and propositions
- Marxist assumptions, and propositions
- Constructivist assumptions, and propositions
- Feminist assumptions, and propositions

### ESSENTIAL READINGS

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. "Theories of International Relations." in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 3. 70-103.

### SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

- Waltz, Kenneth. "The Anarchic Structure of World Politics." in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.2, 48-69.
- Doyle, Michael. "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs." in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.4, 139-152.
- Wendt, Alexander. "Anarchy is what States Make of It." in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.2, 78-86.
- Hudson, Valerie et. al.. "The Heart of the Matter: The Security of Women and the Security of States." *International Security* 33 (Winter 2009), 7-26.

## Week 5. The Analysis of Foreign Policy within IR

### Aims and Content

To find the tools necessary to analyze and interpret the domestic dynamics of states' foreign policies; and to understand the interplay between the internal and external realms. *To answer: Which factors most influence the foreign policies of states?*

- Foreign Policy Analysis: interests and strategies
- Policy, and reasons for change, at the individual level of analysis
- Policy, and reasons for change, at the state level of analysis
- Policy, and reasons for change, at the domestic level of analysis
- Policy, and reasons for change, at the international level of analysis

### ESSENTIAL READINGS

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. "The Analysis of Foreign Policy." in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 4. 104-136.

### SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

- Breuning, Marijke. "Why Study Foreign Policy Comparatively?" in *Foreign Policy Analysis: A Comparative Introduction*. Ch. 1, 1-26.
- Henrikson, Alan K. "Distance and Foreign Policy: A Political Geography Approach." *International Political Science Review* 23, 4 (2002): 437-466.
- Saunders, Elizabeth. "Transformative Choices: Leaders and the Origins of Intervention Strategy." *International Security* 34 (Fall 2009), 119-161.
- Downes, Alexander. "How Smart and Tough Are Democracies? Reassessing Theories of Democratic Victory in War." *International Security*, 33 (Spring 2009), 9-15, 31-51.

## Part II:

## The Problem of International War, and Security from It

## Week 6. War and Its Causes

### Aims and Content

To question, even amidst relative peace amongst the great powers, why does war and conflict persist in our midst. After all, war has existed since time immemorial. Considering its costs, it's necessary to investigate its causes. *To answer: Why is war a persistent feature of international relations?*

- Wars, and their underlying causes at the individual level of analysis
- Wars, and their underlying causes at the state level of analysis
- Wars, and their underlying causes at the international level of analysis
- Internal wars, and their causes at multiple levels of analysis

### ESSENTIAL READINGS

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. "War and Its Causes." in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 5. 138-173.

### SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

- Fearon, James. "Rationalist Explanations for War." in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.3, 95-103.
- Jervis, Robert. "Theories of War in an Era of Leading Power Peace." *American Political Science Review* 96,1 (March 2002), 1-14.



- Holsti, K.J. “War, Peace, and the State of the State.” *International Political Science Review* 16,4 (October 1995): 319-339.
- Art, Robert J. “The Political Uses of Force: The Four Functions of Force.” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.5, 195-203.

## Week 7. Conditions for International Peace

### Aims and Content

To have suffered over time uncountable wars must also mean that peace has prevailed at times; and yet with different causes of war also comes a need to understand the differing views of peace. *To answer: What factors make it more likely that states will resolve their differences and live in peace?*

- The international distribution of power as a condition for peace
- State strategies for achieving interstate peace
- International law and institutions as mechanisms for peace
- Economic interdependence
- A possible international community of democratic nations

### ESSENTIAL READINGS

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. “Pathways to Interstate Peace.” in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 6. 174-205.

### SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

- Kang, David C. “Hierarchy and Hegemony in International Politics.” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.4, 161-165.
- Morgenthau, Hans. “The Future of Diplomacy.” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.4, 165-175.
- Hoffmann, Stanley. “The Uses and Limits of International Law.” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.4, 176-181.
- Keohane, Robert. “International Institutions: Can Interdependence Work?” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.4, 181-188.

## Week 8. WMD

### Aims and Content

To attempt to understand why anyone would develop, then use, such weapons; and now that we have, how to mitigate proliferation. *To answer: How have nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction changed the practice of international relations?*

- Nuclear weapons, and its revolution
- The nuclear revolution: deterrence and statecraft
- Nuclear Proliferation and Efforts to Halt It
- Other Means of Mass Destruction, and their comparisons

### ESSENTIAL READINGS

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. “Weapons of Mass Destruction.” in

*Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 7. 206-222, 223-244.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS**

- Sokolski, Henry. “Our Not So Peaceful Nuclear Future.” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.7, 264-269.
- Waltz, Kenneth. “**Nuclear Myths and Political Realities.**” *American Political Science Review* 84,3 (September 1990): 731-745.

#### **SEMINAR MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

### **Part III**

## **States, Markets, and the International Political Economy**

### **Week 9. IPE’s Basic Concepts**

#### Aims and Content

To understand the basic concepts of trade theory, and how trade provides both opportunities and risks; as well as other factors at both the domestic and international levels. *To answer: How is the world economy influenced by international politics?*

- Basic elements of international trade
- Basic elements of international money
- Multinational enterprises and the world economy
- The institutions of the world economy

#### **ESSENTIAL READINGS**

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. “International Economics: Basic Theory and Core Institutions.” in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 8. 246-285.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS**

- Gilpin, Robert. “Perspectives on Political Economy” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.8, 282-299.
- Copeland, Dale C.. “Economic Interdependence and War” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.8, 299-307.
- Rodrik, Dani. “Why Doesn’t Everyone Get the Case for Free Trade?” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.8, 307-313.

### **Week 10. States and the World Economy**

#### Aims and Content

To ascertain the capabilities and limits of states’ actions in the world economy, one characterized by globalization. *To answer: How do governments use international economic relations to further national political objectives?*

- States and markets: three great traditions of thought
- Managing domestic economy in a world of anarchy
- State building, war, and markets
- Great power and the world economy

- Globalization and its challenges

### **ESSENTIAL READINGS**

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. “Power, Politics, and the World Economy.” in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 9. 286-317.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS**

- Jeffrey Frankel. “Globalization of the Economy.” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.9, 314-330.
- Naim, Moises. “What Globalization Is and Is Not” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.9, 330-335.
- Brynjolfsson, Erik, et al. “Labor, Capital, and Ideas in the Power Law Economy” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.9, 335-342.
- Rodrik, Dani. “A Sane Globalization.” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.10, 358-368.

## **Week 11. The Politico-Economics of Development**

### Aims and Content

To consider the challenges faced by developing countries, and how globalization effects their outcome. *To answer: How does participation in the world economy help or hinder the economic development of poorer countries?*

- Developing countries and their challenges
- Is international trade a path to development?
- Is international finance a path to development?
- Development strategies and emerging great powers

### **ESSENTIAL READINGS**

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. “Dilemmas of Development.” in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 10. 318-354.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS**

- Cohn, Theodore H. “International Development.” in *Global Political Economy: Theory and Practice*. Ch. 11, 337-381.
- Rodrik, Dani. “Trading in Illusions.” in *Foreign Policy* 123 (March-April, 2001): 54-62.
- Organski, A. F. K. “The Power Transition.” in *World Politics*. Ch. 14. 338-376.
- Robert Art, “The United States and the Rise of China,” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.11, 393-401.

## **Part IV**

### **Selected Policy Issues in International Relations**

## **Week 12. The Challenge of Non-state Actors**

### Aims and Content

To realize that what we understand to be the nation-state system is being, and has always been, challenged by non-state actors; and to consider where the projection might bring us in the future. *To answer: Is the state a political actor in decline?*

- States, sovereignty, and the Westphalian System

- Challenges of pirates, weak states and warlords
- Challenges of terrorists, technology, and the privatization of war
- International responses to challenges
- Wither the state?

### **ESSENTIAL READINGS**

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. “Non-state Actors and Challenges to Sovereignty.” in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 11. 356-387.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS**

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. “Update on Rise of ISIS.” in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*.
- Cronin, Audrey Kurth. “Ending Terrorism.” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.11, 401-407.
- Keck, Margaret and Kathryn Sikkink. “Transnational Activist Networks.” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.13, 454-460.
- Schurman, Rachel. “Fighting ‘Frankenfoods’: Industry Opportunity Structures and the Efficacy of the Anti-Biotech Movement in Western Europe.” *Social Problems* 51 (May 2004), 243–268.

## **Week 13. The World’s resources and the Environment**

### Aims and Content

To question how our climate and environment can affect state policy; not to forget the depletion of the planet’s resources. *To answer: How does the natural environment influence international relations?*

- The global environment and its natural resources
- The tragedy of the commons
- Problems with the environment
- Damage to the world’s resources
- Managing the challenges

### **ESSENTIAL READINGS**

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. “Then Environment and International Relations.” in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 12. 388-415.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS**

- Hardin, Garrett. “The Tragedy of the Commons.” in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.14, 480-486.
- Busby, Joshua. “Warming World: Why Climate Change Matters More Than Anything Else.” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2018): 49-55.

## Week 14. Humanitarian Intervention

### Aims and Content

To differentiate the sovereignty of the state from that of the individual; the latter being accompanied with increasing international calls for states to influence, if not intervene in, another state's affairs. *To answer: how has intervention based on humanitarianism changing the international order?*

### ESSENTIAL READINGS

- Donnelly, Jack. "Human Rights." in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, edited by John Baylis, Steve Smith, and Patricia Owens. Ch.30, 463-478.

### SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

- Annan, Kofi. "Reflections on Intervention." in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.12, 408-414.
- Howard, Rhoda E., and Jack Donnelly. "Human Rights in World Politics." in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.12, 414-427.
- Western, Jon, and Joshua S. Godstein. "Humanitarian Intervention Comes of Age." in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.12, 414-434.
- Downes, Alexander. "To the Shores of Tripoli? Regime Change and Its Consequences." in *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, edited by Robert Art and Robert Jervis. in Ch.12, 434-441.

### TERM PAPER DUE

## Week 15. The Future International Order

### Aims and Content

To see how far our conception of the nation-state has changed; and to muse in which direction world order will take. *To answer: Will the international system undergo fundamental change in the future?*

- A world of geo-economic competition
- A return to a multipolar balance of power system
- A new bipolarity
- A democratic peace
- A clash of civilizations
- A global fracture with different zones

### ESSENTIAL READINGS

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. "Facing the Future: Six Visions of an Emerging International Order." in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 13. 416-453.

### SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

- Grieco, Joseph, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno. "Update on South China Sea," and "Update on Ukraine." in *Introduction to International Relations: Enduring Questions and Contemporary Perspectives*. Ch. 13. 416-453.
- Mead, Walter Russell. "The Return of Geopolitics: The Revenge of the Revisionist Powers." *Foreign Affairs* 93 (May-June 2014). 69-79.
- Ikenberry, G. John. "The Illusion of Geopolitics The Enduring Power of the Liberal Order," *Foreign Affairs* 93 (May-June 2014). 80-90.

- Haass, Richard. “How a World Order Ends: And What Comes in Its Wake.” *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2019).

## **Week 16.**

### Aims and Content

To bring the themes of the course together in summary, and some detail. *To answer: What questions might you have left before the final exam?*

### **READINGS**

- Applicable contemporary newspaper and magazine articles.

## **Final Exam Date TBD**

**Disclaimer:** Instructor could modify schedule of the classes as necessary.

## **PART 3: APPENDICES**

### **Appendix: Tips for Success**

Remember that there is no shortcut to success and no easy fixes. To be successful, first of all you have to ask yourselves what is it that you want to obtain from the course. If you simply want to be over the course, for it to be calculated towards your degree requirements, no tips would help you to be successful. Only your genuine desire to learn and contribute would guide you in your journey towards successful outcome. That is the starting point.

On a more technical note, preparing for your classes and reading the assigned material should not be a source of stress for you. Again, treat them as a source of something new and insightful to help you learn and develop. Our classes will be based upon the discussions of the main arguments and points in the readings. However, you are welcome to contribute with your own critical opinion about the readings. It just will demonstrate that you have mastered them well enough.

As to the fulfillment of your class assignments, always remember that keeping the work until the very last moment will not help. Always start as early as you could. It gives you more time, space and freedom to think, question, analyze and prepare a quality work. If this is a written assignment, try to have some extra time at your disposal after having finished the first draft of your work. Finish the first draft, leave it out of your sight for as much time as you could, and then take a second, fresher look at what you have written. Repeat this for as many times as time allows you, but do not overdo it. Anyway, in most cases usually a third look suffices to eliminate major shortcomings. This introspective and critical look at your own writing will substantially improve its overall quality.

## Appendix: Suggestions and Tips on Writing

(Adapted from material by Dr. Jo Spear & Dr. Austin M. Carson)

*Sources:* Preference should be given to academic journals and monographs, for your independent research. You should always approach sources as a critical reader. Make your own judgment about the credibility of what they say and critically evaluate the sources they use and whether the empirical evidence justifies the conclusions that they reach. Internet sources can be suspect (anyone can put materials up on the web) so please approach these cautiously. Use a standard citation format, like Chicago Style/Turabian, or MLA; and footnotes rather than endnotes. No bibliography.

*Focus Your Paper:* A common structural problem with student papers is that they lack sufficient focus. There are some easy ways to avoid this problem. The first and best is to give yourself a very specific question (this is surprisingly hard to do well) and then structure your paper to address it. The worst case is a paper where you do not have a question. Thus it may have a general title like “The Crimean Crisis” and it may contain a lot of facts. However, there will be no explanation of why the facts matter and no explanation for why events transpired as they did rather than some other way. In short, the paper will be an unstructured discursive wander around the issues. You may show some research skills in answering in this fashion, but you will not necessarily show any structuring or analytical skills; these are essential in both academic and policy writing.

*Better approach:* Where you have a question, but it allows you to just give a narrative answer. For example, “What role has Russia played in the Crimean crisis?” This at least suggests a structure for the paper and could be used to establish some categories (for example, political role, military role, peacemaking role, reconstruction role). In an answer to this you would certainly display some research skills, but not the analytical skills that bring you closer to a grade of ‘A’.

*Best approach:* The question is focused and forces you to make judgments about causality and event importance. For example, “Why has Russia become involved in the Crimean crisis?” The difficulty with this type of a question is that there are a number of contending answers, so you really have to think about what you include, how you approach it, what you argue and how persuasive that argument is. This type of question also encourages a more sophisticated structure than merely a narrative. Thus, in answering this, your paper could be structured to summarize the event, explain its significance, and make your own interpretation of what the key factors were that produced Russian, or European, or U.S. involvement in Ukraine. You would use course material, your own research, and your own judgment to justify your conclusions about what really mattered.

*Showcase Your Skills:* The best papers showcase skills like:

- Your understanding of the course materials (not just your original research)
- Your ability to conduct broad and deep original research
- Your ability to comprehend and use different kinds of documents (scholarly; policy-focused; primary government)
- Your ability to situate your knowledge in wider context (historical; academic discipline)
- Your ability to draw insights from interesting, creative places (from other disciplines or expertise areas; from other historical eras; from other domains in international security)
- Your ability to make judgments about what causes what
- Your ability to present work in a suitable academic format, for example, to write a paper with a strong introduction and conclusion, to effectively footnote to provide an accurate ‘paper trail’.
- Your ability to edit your work effectively

*Twenty Basic Rules:* These are derived from Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 123-128 and Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

*Selecting a Topic, Making an Argument and Organizing Your Work*

- Pick an important topic
- Pick a manageable topic
- Say something new and important
- Concentrate on making a single set of arguments
- Do not over-state or under-state your claims
- Acknowledge other viewpoints and treat them with respect
- Anticipate and preempt counterarguments
- Outline everything before writing anything
- Start with a proper introduction and end with a proper conclusion
- Use headings and sub-headings to provide structure and to convey your main points

*Writing*

- Identify – and write to – your audience
- Get to the point
- Stick to the point
- Stay out of the weeds
- Be precise
- Be concise
- Avoid jargon
- Always write second and third drafts
- Never plagiarize
- Proofread every single words