OBJECTIVES: This core seminar provides a graduate-level introductory overview of the field of International Politics. Students will explore and be able to demonstrate a working understanding of: substantive issues in the field; major theoretical questions, perspectives and debates; and issues of methodology and interpretation of empirical findings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: The workload for this course is extensive. Regular attendance and participation are essential. Students will complete the assigned readings before class and come prepared to discuss the readings. Preparation includes not only being able to identify and explain the main points of a given article but to have thought about the author’s arguments, the relationships between the week’s readings, and the relationships with earlier readings in the course.

The course grade is based on a combination of critical reviews (30 percent), mid semester and final papers (50 percent), and class participation (20 percent).

Critical reviews: Students will prepare four critical review papers during the semester. Each paper will focus on a specific week’s required readings. The class will be divided into two groups the first day of class with each group writing review papers on alternating weeks.

Review papers will be six to seven double-spaced pages in length and will focus on any five authors of the week’s assigned readings. Papers must be submitted to the instructor by noon the day of class. Papers can be submitted by email as an attached file in Word or by hard copy placed in the instructor’s mailbox in the POSC department office. No late papers will be accepted.

Reviews must be written in paragraph form and for each selected author briefly discuss: 1) the reading’s puzzle/paradox and main argument; and 2) what you see as the reading’s major strength and major weakness. Examples of possible strengths and weaknesses can include: the nature and importance of the puzzle/paradox and argument; the logical consistency of assumptions, hypotheses, and argument; the appropriateness of illustration/test of argument; the author’s interpretations of findings and the broader ramifications of the article for the field. Do not simply list the strength or weakness but justify your selection.

Mid and Final Papers: Each student will write two 10-12 page papers, one due at mid-semester and one at the end of the semester. Topics will be handed out two weeks in advance. The papers will require no outside research and will require students to draw linkages across different weeks of the course. Papers must be submitted in hard copy by 5:00 pm on the due date. No late papers will be accepted.

Class Participation: Class participation will be based on contributions to class discussion. In addition to general participation, each week that the group is not writing a critical review its members will be responsible for presenting the basic issues and arguments in the readings to the class to start the day’s discussion. All students will be expected to contribute to class discussion.
**READINGS:** There are no books required for purchase for the course. The required readings consist of journal articles and book chapters, many are classic works in the field while others are examples of more recent scholarship. All journal articles are available electronically through the MU Raynor Library website. Search for the journal title and then the volume and issue number to find and download the file. All books will be placed hard copy on library reserve (Ares password 6601S14). Where the book or journal article is not available through the MU library, the materials will be available on the D2L course website. If there are any problems with access to materials please notify the instructor.

Those students without any undergraduate background in the substantive issues and theories of international relations (IR) are strongly encouraged to purchase an undergraduate IR text (such as that used for POSC 2601) and read this prior to the course.

The readings noted on the syllabus are only a sample of the extensive literature available on the themes explored in the course. Students interested in pursuing further graduate work in IR are encouraged to explore works noted in the citations in the assigned readings, look at recent issues of the journals in this syllabus, as well as consult with the instructor and other IR faculty in the department.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS:**

**Week 1: January 15: Introduction**
Course basics. This session will not go the full period

**Week 2: January 22: Field Overview**
[No Review; this will be a working session so come prepared to discuss the readings]


Quincy Wright, *The Study of International Relations* (New York: Appleton –Century-Crofts, 1955), Chapters 1-5 (pp. 3-43).


**PART I: INTERNATIONAL SECURITY:**

**Week 3: January 29: Realism, the Interstate System, (Im)balance and (Cold) War**
[No Review; come prepared to discuss readings]


Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), Chapters 5-6. (pp. 79-128)


**Week 4: February 5: Security Dilemmas, Deterrence and Rationality**  
*[Group 1 review; Group 2 present]*


**Week 5: February 12: (Neo)Realism after the Cold War: Interstate Conflict**  
*[Group 2 review; Group 1 present]*


**Week 6: February 19: Conflict after the Cold War: Ethnic Civil Wars and Terrorism**  
*[Group 1 review; Group 2 present]*


**Week 7: February 26: Liberalism and the Democratic Peace [Group 2 review; Group 1 present]**


**Week 8: March 5: Rethinking Anarchy and the Dynamics of International Society [No Review; come prepared to discuss readings]**


**March 7 (Friday): Midterm paper due by 5:00 p.m.**
Week 9: March 12: Spring Break—No class

PART II: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

Week 10: March 19: (In)stability in International Trade and Financial Systems
[No Review; come prepared to discuss readings]


Week 11: March 26: Friman at Conference—No class

Week 12: April 2: Domestic Sources of Foreign Economic Policies
[Group 1 review; Group 2 present]


**Week 13: April 9: Development**  
*[Group 2 review; Group 1 present]*


**Week 14: April 16: Explaining Globalization**  
*[Group 1 review; Group 2 present]*


**Week 15: April 23: Globalization Impacts**  
*[Group 2 review; Group 1 present]*


Susan Strange, *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*  
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Chapters 4-5 (pp. 44-87).


**Week 16: April 30: Exploring Things Illicit**

[No Review; come prepared to discuss readings]


**May 5 (Monday): Final Paper due by 5:00 p.m.**