Political Science 341: International Political Economy

Northwestern University
Winter 2018
Tuesday & Thursday 12:30-1:50 PM
Harris Hall 107

Prof. Stephen Nelson
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Course website: accessed via canvas.northwestern.edu

Teaching Assistants
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Course Overview
This course focuses on the forces shaping countries’ foreign economic policies. Why do governments choose to protect some industries behind high tariff walls while leaving others exposed to the vagaries of international competition? Why do most countries rely on the U.S. dollar for their primary reserve currency – and will the dollar continue to serve that function? Why have many countries removed barriers to cross-border financial flows – and what are the social and political consequences of financial market openness? Does international trade and investment make military conflict less or more likely? Do economic sanctions even work? Have the series of economic crises over the past half-decade – the 2008 financial market meltdown in the U.S., the global credit crunch the followed, and the ongoing sovereign debt crises (in the Eurozone countries and elsewhere) – shifted the distribution of global economic and political power?

In this course we will develop an analytical toolkit to provide some insight into these and other questions, paying particular attention to evaluating the theoretical arguments with two types of evidence: qualitative and historical and quantitative and cross-national.

The course is organized thematically. We start with an introduction to the study of International Political Economy (IPE) and explore why it is distinct from international economics; following the introduction to the course we will discuss the problem of international cooperation when national economic policies have spillover effects. The next three topics (weeks 2-6) are devoted to three of the main issue areas that concern IPE specialists: the politics of the international trade, monetary, and financial systems. We then turn our attention to economic development strategies pursued by low- and middle-income countries and the role of foreign development aid in promoting growth. The last two weeks of the course are devoted to the relationship between transnational economic linkages and conflict and to the rise of new economic powerhouses (namely, China) and the possible consequences of this shift for American influence in global economic affairs.
Prerequisites
It is suggested – but not strictly required – that students in this course have Political Science 240 (Introduction to International Relations) under their belts.

Introductory courses in macroeconomics and international economics are helpful but not required. If you find the economic terminology and concepts confusing, any of the three introductory texts listed below are likely to prove useful. These texts may be of use to you, but are not required readings for the course.


Course Requirements and Grading
Course requirements include two exams, active participation in lecture activities and (especially) instructor-led discussion sections, and two short response papers.

The weighting of the course requirements is as follows:
- Course participation: 10%
- Response papers (2): 20%
- Midterm exam: 30%
- Final Exam: 40%
- Research pool participation [mandatory]

Course participation accounts for a significant proportion of the final grade. Securing a good participation grade means regular attendance in both lectures and sections, keeping up with the readings, and actively contributing to the conversation.

The final exam day and time is non-negotiable. If you know in advance that you will not be able to take the final exam from 3-5PM on MONDAY, MARCH 19, DO NOT TAKE THIS COURSE! Weinberg College rules forbid faculty members from giving final exams in advance of the registrar-assigned day and time – unless, of course, the course votes unanimously to reschedule the exam (and achieving unanimity in a course of this size is unlikely). Only if you have sufficient reason (i.e., a documented emergency which prevents you from being able to make it to the room for the exam) will I contemplate approving an incomplete or rescheduling the exam for you. You can verify the WCAS policy on final exams here:

http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/courses-registration-grades/final-exams.html

The response papers involve briefly summarizing and critically evaluating the main argument for several of the week’s assigned readings. A sign-up sheet will be circulated
during the first meeting of your discussion section to divvy up the readings. Response papers must be submitted to your TA the evening before your section meets. Your TA will set a more precise deadline for submitting the response papers.

Befitting a 300-level political science course, the reading load in this class is substantial (averaging 67 pages per week over the 10-week quarter). Lectures and readings are complements, not substitutes – some lectures draw closely on that week’s readings, but most do not. To perform well in this course, you will need to regularly attend lectures in addition to closely reading all of the assigned material and participating in section discussions.

Note on required participation in the Political Science Research Pool: students enrolled in this course are required to complete a research assignment that can include up to 4 hours of research study participation. These studies require that students set up an appointment to complete participation at a laboratory on campus (or via an on-line survey). Students will learn how studies are conducted and will receive a synopsis at the conclusion of the quarter describing the study’s goal, result, and relevance to the class. Students who prefer not to participate in the research may opt for an alternative that entails reading any one chapter about political science research and writing a five-page reaction paper. The typical chapter is about 20 pages and thus reading it and writing a five-page paper should take approximately four hours.

Near the start of the quarter, students will receive an e-mail asking them whether they prefer study participation or the alternative assignment. The e-mail will also include details on how to complete either requirement. Failure to complete the requirement during the quarter will result in an incomplete. Failure to complete the requirement during the following quarter will result in a failing grade for the class. Note that if you are enrolled in multiple classes that require participation, you only need to satisfy the requirement one time. Also, if you already completed the requirement in another course in a previous quarter, you are excused from the requirement.

Required Book
There is one required textbook for this course, available for purchase or rental in the Norris bookstore:


Frieden’s book is far from obscure; in other words, there are many copies of *Global Capitalism* available for purchase via online book vendors. In addition, I will try to put a copy of the book on closed reserve in the main university library.

Electronic Reserves
Aside from the books, all of the required course readings will be accessible electronically. Links – either directly to a PDF of the scanned article/chapter or to the e-journal that contains the reading – will appear on the course canvas page.
**Ground Rules for Discussion Sections**
Every participant in this course brings a different perspective to the classroom. Part of the instructor’s job is to make sure that one viewpoint is not privileged over others. Dialogue in my courses is expected to always be respectful. We all reserve the right to respectfully disagree with one another; we do not have the right to intimidate anyone, and in fact we have an obligation to treat other members of the Northwestern community with decency and respect. Your instructors observe and will enforce all university policies concerning racial, ethnic, gender identity, sexual preference, or religious discrimination and harassment.

**Academic Integrity**
Plagiarism is a serious offense at Northwestern. If we suspect that you have knowingly misrepresented someone else’s work as your own, we will report the violation of academic integrity; if the evidence indicates that the student committed an act that violated standards of academic integrity, this constitutes grounds for suspension or even dismissal from the university.

Northwestern’s official policy regarding academic integrity is found at: http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/students/integrity/

**AccessibleNU**
Students that require any reasonable academic accommodations must provide information prepared and approved by the staff of AccessibleNU detailing the arrangements to me no later than the end of the second week of classes. Please contact AccessibleNU (http://www.northwestern.edu/accessiblenu) or visit the office at 2122 Sheridan Road (Suite 135) for more information about services offered by Northwestern.

**Policy on Posting Class Material (Lecture Slides, Notes, Readings)**
The material from this course is only for students enrolled in this course. Please do not post any material from this course (including your own notes) on any online platforms (e.g., StudyBlue).
Course Schedule

Topic 1: Introduction; what is International Political Economy (and why does it matter)? (January 9)

Readings

Total pages of required reading topic 1: 28

Topic 2: Obstacles to cooperation in international economic relations (January 11)

Readings

Total pages of required reading topic 2: 30

Topic 3: International trade (January 16-18)

Readings
- Jeffry Frieden, *Global Capitalism*, pp. 28-79; 105-16; 220-28; 278-290.

Total pages of required reading for topic 3: 188
Topic 4: International monetary and financial systems (January 23-Feb. 8)

Part I: Explaining choices about money

Readings
- Jeffry Frieden, Global Capitalism, pp. 111-21; 173-92; 253-60; 290-300; 339-60.

Part II: Financial flows and financial market crises

Readings
- Jeffry Frieden, Global Capitalism, pp. 383-412.

Total pages of required reading for topic 4: 201

***MIDTERM EXAM SCHEDULED FOR TUES., FEBRUARY 13***

***[NOTE: DROP DEADLINE IS FRI., FEBRUARY 16]***

Topic 5: Economic development and foreign economic aid (February 20-22)

Readings
- Jeffry Frieden, Global Capitalism, pp. 80-104; 435-56.

Total pages of required reading for topic 5: 91
**Topic 6: Economic statecraft; the link between international commerce and interstate conflict** (February 27-March 1)

**Readings**

Total pages of required reading for topic 6: 35

**Topic 7: China’s economic rise and the eclipse of American power?** (March 6-8)

**Readings**

Total pages of required reading for topic 7: 121

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**WCAS Reading Week starts on TUESDAY, MARCH 13**
**WCAS Final Exams start on MONDAY, MARCH 19**
**Our Final Exam: 3-5PM on MONDAY, MARCH 19**