Political Science 441: International Political Economy

Northwestern University
Fall 2019
Fridays 1-3:50pm
Scott Hall 201 (Ripton Room)

Prof. Stephen Nelson
Office: Scott Hall 238
Office hours: Wednesdays 2-4pm
Email: stephen-nelson@northwestern.edu
Phone: 847-491-2589 (office)
Course website: accessed via canvas.northwestern.edu

Course Overview
Political Science 441 surveys some of the major issue areas and debates in the fields of International and Comparative Political Economy. It is targeted to Ph.D. students in political science, though graduate students from other fields and ambitious and well-prepared undergraduates are welcome to join. Forewarned is forearmed: the reading load is heavy, and I expect that each member of the course will be prepared to discuss each of the readings.

Broadly, the subfields of International and Comparative Political Economy involve the study of how politics, emphasizing power, material interests, institutions, and non-material factors (like ideas, norms, and social conventions), shape and are shaped by market forces (transactions involving goods and services, money and financial assets, firms and factories, and workers). Because I do not regard the disciplinary distinction between IPE and CPE as particularly important, the course includes topics and readings from both subfields.

If there are readings/topics that you would like to cover that are not on this version of the syllabus, please bring them to my attention. I also reserve the right to make changes (with the caveat that you will have plenty of warning if I choose to shuffle readings around). The syllabus is an outline, not a contract, and it is subject to change.

Course Requirements and Grading
Active and thoughtful engagement with the material is essential to success in this course. There are four ways in which I try to measure your engagement with and mastery of the course material:

(1) Participation in the course discussion will account for 25% of your final grade. The reading load is substantial and the course will be driven by discussions rather than lectures. For these reasons I strongly urge that you attend all meetings, arrive on time, and show up well prepared – you must keep up with the readings and be ready to contribute to the conversation to succeed in this seminar.
All students are required to serve as the author’s defendant in one course meeting. During the week in which you have been assigned the role of author’s defendant, you will be stepping into the shoes of an author of one of the readings assigned for the seminar; you will be responsible for presenting the main arguments and evidence in the reading and will be expected to be prepared to respond to tough questions about the reading that are raised by me and the other members of the group. Your performance as author’s defendant will account for 5% of your grade.

There are two short writing assignments that you’ll complete for the seminar. Each student will write one critical memo that outlines the main argument(s) in one or several of that week’s readings and provides an incisive critique of the material. The critical memo should be submitted via email to me no later than 8 PM the evening before the meeting in which the reading(s) appear. The memo should be in the range of 3-5 pages (though you may go longer if need be). You can write your memo on the same reading(s) for which you are serving as author’s defendant. (Efficiency logic suggests that this is in fact the best strategy.) The other short writing assignment is a referee report that you will produce for one article from the list of assigned readings that you’ve chosen to review. For the referee report you should approach the article as if it’s been submitted for publication at one of the top journals in the field. Your report should inform the journal’s editorial team about the key strengths and weaknesses of the piece and provide constructive feedback for the author(s). (I understand that reviewing already-published work that appears on a graduate seminar syllabus is a hard task, given that everything on this syllabus has already made it through the publication gauntlet, but nothing is flawless, some well-cited publications are riddled with holes, and all work can be improved through constructive critique.) You’ll pick an article from the reading list to review by the second meeting; the referee report can be submitted by 9AM on the day that we’ll be discussing the article you’ve chosen to review. I’ll say more about each of these brief writing assignments in our first meeting of the quarter. The critical memo and referee report together account for 30% of the final course grade.

For the remaining 40% of your course grade you have two options: (a) you may choose to submit a research proposal (likely in the 20-25 page range) that outlines a research puzzle that falls within the purview of I/CPE, situates the puzzle in the relevant literatures, develops a preliminary theoretical argument and observable implications, and sketches how you plan to conduct the research necessary to shed light on the puzzle (what kind of research design will allow you to answer the motivating question?); (b) alternatively, you may write essays based on two field exam-style questions. Like the qualifying field exam, you will get the questions and have a short time period in which to compose your responses. (We will work out a start day and time during finals week and you’ll submit your answers in the 36-hour period after you begin the exam.) Unlike the field exam you will have access to your readings and notes and will not be expected to go much beyond the assigned course readings in constructing your answers to the questions.
The due date for the final paper is **Wednesday, December 11**. I should have the paper in my hand by **7:00 PM** on that day. Papers that are submitted after the deadline will be penalized by a half grade (from a B+ to a B, for example) for each 12-hour period that passes after the announced deadline. Barring unusual and challenging personal circumstances, I expect that all students in the course will complete the requirements on time.

**Recommended Readings**

There is a lengthy list of additional, recommended readings following the assigned readings for each topic. The purpose of the recommendations is to help you (assuming that you are a PhD student in political science) assemble a reading list as you prepare for the qualifying exams in the comparative and IR subfields. You can, of course, dip into the recommended reading list for the seminar meeting but going beyond the assigned reading is not expected.
Course Schedule and Reading List

Week 1 (September 27): rationalism and its alternatives in the study of IPE


Additional, recommended reading related to this topic


Week 2 (October 4): origins and durability of int’l economic orders

Additional, recommended reading on this topic
Beth Simmons, Who Adjusts? Domestic Sources of Foreign Economic Policy During the Interwar Years (Princeton University Press, 1994).
Harold James, International Monetary Cooperation since Bretton Woods (International Monetary Fund, 1996).
Week 3 (October 11): the distributional politics of international trade

Additional, recommended reading on this topic
Adam Dean, *From Conflict to Coalition* (Cambridge University Press, 2016).
Week 4 (October 18): power, law, and the “neoliberal” turn in the postwar international trade and monetary orders


Additional, recommended reading on this topic


Week 5 (October 25): governing globalized finance


*Additional, recommended reading on this topic*


Week 6 (November 1): sovereign borrowing and creditworthiness


*Additional, recommended reading on this topic*


Week 7 (November 8): varieties of capitalism


*Additional, recommended reading on this topic*


Week 8 (November 15): old and new perspectives on economic development


**Additional, recommended reading on this topic**


Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations* (Yale University Press, 1982).


Week 9 (Nov. 22): international economic relations and political conflict

Additional, recommended reading on this topic