International Politics
Political Science UN1601x
Fall 2019: M,W 2:40-3:55pm
Location: Altschul 202

Prof. Kimberly Marten
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Office Hours: By appointment via my Google calendar: https://tinyurl.com/y7gnllya
Please make sure you have your own Google calendar open and set to U.S. East Coast time.

If you need to cancel an appointment with me, please do so the night before; your sign-up is otherwise your commitment to attend.

Course Description
How can we explain the patterns and evolution of international politics? Why do wars happen? Do states still matter? How do alliances between countries function? How are countries affected by global trade and investment, and in turn how does the political economy of individual countries shape international conflict and cooperation? How do ideas and culture affect international politics? What causes terrorism? Is the proliferation of nuclear weapons a threat to peace, and if so, how should the world respond? Does the United Nations matter? Can there be a globally agreed response to climate change?

In this course we will begin to grapple with these questions. We will use theories developed by philosophers, political scientists and policy analysts, and we will examine the historical roots of today’s problems, in order to explain and predict the patterns of international politics and the possibilities for change. Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to choose and develop their own theories to explain events.

Learning Objectives
Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:
- Demonstrate broad factual and causal knowledge of important current and historical issues in international relations.
- Apply contending theories from the political science literature and the policy world to analyze, compare, and evaluate events and trends in international relations.
- Assess the value of competing theories in explaining events.
- Synthesize facts and arguments across cases in order to reason critically and argue creatively, through both oral discussions in section and written essay exams.

Course Requirements and Procedures

Participation in weekly discussion sections is required, through enrollment in the separate but linked UN1611 (non-credit) course. Small-group discussion forms an important part of the course experience, and students should come to discussion section prepared to discuss the assigned readings. A passing grade of C- or better must be achieved in section for the student to receive a passing grade in the course.

There are three take-at-home essay exams for this course—two midterms and a final. Each will require some combination of essays that total 2,000 words. All exams will be submitted via Courseworks (not in hard copy, and not by email). They must be turned in as Word or PDF documents on the 1601 (i.e., lecture, not section) Courseworks “assignments” page. Questions
will be emailed to students via Courseworks at least two weeks in advance of the due-date. Essays should rely on assigned course readings and lectures for analysis; these are not research papers. Each exam will be turned in via Courseworks at the specified date and time. Extensions will be granted only by Prof. Marten (not by the TAs), and only in the case of unforeseen emergency. It is your responsibility to manage your time well—and to take deadlines seriously. Please note that there cannot be any extensions on the final exam due to the grading turnaround time imposed on us by the university, so if you are unable to complete the final exam on time you will need to request an incomplete in the course.

There are two major purposes of the exams: (1) to monitor whether the student is doing the assigned readings and is analytically engaged with the material, and (2) to measure the student’s capacity (honored in discussion section, and with each passing exam) to independently synthesize concepts across sections of the syllabus and make a coherent, original argument. A separate document specifies grading criteria for both essays and section discussion participation. Prof. Marten supervises all grading, sets grading guidelines, and reviews section leader performance. Any student who wishes to challenge the grade given by a TA must discuss the situation with the TA who graded the exam first. If the student remains unsatisfied after this, Prof. Marten will review the work in question; but students should realize that a change in grade is unlikely, and that Prof. Marten reserves the right to lower a grade as well as raise it. Improvement across the semester will be rewarded when Prof. Marten is determining each student’s final course grade.

Grading:
First midterm (due Sunday Oct. 13 at 5pm): 20%
Second midterm (due Sunday Nov. 17 at 5pm): 30%
Final exam (due Wednesday Dec. 18 at 4pm): 30%
Section participation: 20%. Students are expected to attend all section meetings. If you must miss a section because of a religious holiday, illness, or family emergency, please notify your section leader (not Prof. Marten). The section leader will provide a one-page essay make-up assignment to substitute for class participation that day.

Honor Code and Plagiarism
All assignments in this class are to be completed in accordance with the Barnard Honor Code, whether or not the student is a Barnard student. Any student who violates the Honor Code on any assignment, including through plagiarism (defined below), will earn a zero on the assignment and face dean’s discipline at their home college. Students affirm that all work turned in is their own, and that they have fully and accurately cited every written source, including web-based sources and unpublished sources (such as prior student papers), used in their writing. Students are allowed to consult with anyone they like as they begin thinking about their exam essays, but no further collaboration is allowed once they begin outlining and writing those essays. In other words, both the argumentative structure and the wording of those essays must be completely the student’s own work.

All students may use the Barnard and Columbia Writing Centers with no restrictions. If you know that you have problems with your writing—and especially if you get comments on an assignment indicating that there are problems with your writing—you are strongly encouraged to use the Writing Centers. Please note that appointments there fill up fast, so you need to be proactive in scheduling them [hint: you know the due-dates of assignments already…].

Courseworks will utilize Turnitin.com to check all essays for plagiarism. “Plagiarism” is the use of someone else’s words or ideas without full and proper attribution. It is, at its core, the act of falsely implying or claiming credit for intellectual work that someone else did. A paper is not “written” by cutting and pasting from the work of others. Even if a footnote is included to say where your cutting and pasting came from, that’s still plagiarism, unless the section has quotation marks around it. A paper is written by reading the work of others with an open and critical mind, taking notes in your own words on that writing, thinking about the issues independently and deeply, and then using your own words to analyze issues, while citing (not quoting) the contributions of others to your thinking. You should only be using quotations
quoting) the contributions of others to your thinking. You should only be using quotations from a published source when the exact words matter greatly. Such quotations should be brief, rare, and placed in quotation marks. All students receive in-depth briefings on plagiarism and proper citation techniques as part of their introductory days at Barnard and Columbia; any student who has any remaining questions about proper citation technique or about how to avoid plagiarism should discuss these questions and concerns with Prof. Marten before turning in the assignment in question.

Plagiarism is often committed as an act of desperation under pressure. If you ever feel so pressured on an assignment that you are tempted to plagiarize, please contact Prof. Marten instead. Together we can work out a fair extension.

**Academic Accommodations Statement**

If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations in this course, you must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance. Students requesting accommodations will need to first meet with an ODS staff member. Once registered, students are required to request accommodation letters each semester to notify faculty. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to contact ODS early each semester to access your accommodations. If you are registered with ODS, please schedule an appointment with Prof. Marten via her Google calendar, to bring your faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations for this course. Students are not eligible to use their accommodations in this course until they have met with me. Barnard ODS is located in Milbank Hall, Room 009/008. Please note that all written assignments in this class are take-at-home essays, and that time-and-a-half disability accommodations do not apply to take-at-home assignments. Please explicitly discuss with ODS the fact that this class has no in-class exams.

**Barnard Wellness Statement**

It is important for students to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors they may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We as a community urge you to make yourself—your own health, sanity, and wellness—your priority throughout this term and your career here. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these websites:

- [http://barnard.edu/primarycare](http://barnard.edu/primarycare)
- [http://barnard.edu/counseling](http://barnard.edu/counseling)
- [http://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about](http://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about)
- [Stressbusters Support Network](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/)

**Electronic devices and laptops:** Laptops and other electronic writing devices are not permitted in lecture, except in special circumstances with Prof. Marten’s written permission. You should expect to take notes by hand. You are welcome to audio record lectures if you wish, as long as it is for your private use only, and your recordings are neither distributed nor sold to others. If you require an exception to the laptop rule, please come and talk to Prof. Marten in office hours. In that case you will be expected to sit at either the far back or far sides of the classroom, so that your computer screen doesn’t bother other students.

Note: you will likely learn more and retain information better if you take notes by hand! See: [https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/)

**Required Readings (and Podcasts)**

All required readings (and podcasts) are web-based. As noted on the following reading list, some are available on the open web; some are accessible via the Courseworks “files” page for this course; and some you must find yourself on CLIO (Columbia’s online library), using your Columbia UNI and password. [Note that if you don’t go through CLIO on these sources, you will be asked to pay an exorbitant amount to get through the paywall.] If you ever find that an open web source has unexpectedly become paywalled, your first alternative should be to look for the
source on CLIO. At the first and second class meetings, we will briefly review how to find items on CLIO. Because you will be expected to provide exact page citations on essays whenever possible, please download the PDF version of articles when you have the option to do so, rather than relying on an unpaginated HTML version.

Please do the readings (and podcasts) in the order they are listed on the syllabus; they are listed in the order that will make comprehension easiest. It may be useful to have a dictionary at hand while reading; some readings include difficult vocabulary. All readings are assigned because they are important elements in ongoing debates—not because they necessarily present the “truth.” In other words, read each piece critically and with a grain of salt. In discussion section and in your essays, you will be expected to analyze and critique the readings, not merely summarize them.

If you need help locating a CLIO or Courseworks reading, please approach your classmates for help first, and your TA second, and only contact Prof. Marten if no one else can figure it out; it is most likely that the issue is with your search technique and not the source. But if all else fails—or if you ever find a broken link to an open web assigned reading—please let Prof. Marten know right away. When a link goes down, it is often possible to locate alternative addresses, and otherwise she will approach the Columbia librarians for help.

Course Schedule and Assignments

Sept. 4. Introduction: using theories to think about international politics.
   CLIO:

Part I: The Paradigms: Realism and Its Critics

Sept. 9. Realism: building blocks and evolution.
Sept. 11. Realism part 2: analyzing power politics and war.
Assignments for both lectures:
   CLIO:
   Open web:
   Steven E. Lobell, “Structural Realism/Offensive and Defensive Realism,” in The Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies, Mar. 2010,
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jp-j_m8aqE&feature=youtu.be
   http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Thuc.+5.84&fromdoc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0200
And for two recent examples of realist behavior by the US [not required reading]:


Sept. 16. Liberalism: building blocks and evolution.

Open web:


Sept. 18. Case study: Is NATO a realist alliance or a liberal institution?

Open web:


CLIO:


Sept. 23. Levels of analysis: domestic, bureaucratic, & organizational politics, and the psychology of decision-making.

Available on Courseworks:


Open Web:


CLIO:


Open Web:


CLIO:

And for interesting stories on the Belt and Road Initiative [not required], see:

Sept. 30. Constructivism: norms and ideas (neutral, good, and bad ones).  
[note: Rosh Hashanah. Prof. Marten will attempt to have lecture video-recorded.]

CLIO:
Sheri Berman, “Populism Is Not Fascism (But It Could Be a Harbinger),” Foreign Affairs 95, no. 6 (Nov./Dec. 2016): 39-44.

Open web:

Oct 7. Case study: Russia, NATO enlargement, and the seizure of Crimea
Courseworks files:

CLIO:

Part II: Selected Twentieth-Century History and Why It Matters Today

[note: Yom Kippur. Prof. Marten will attempt to have lecture video-recorded.]

Courseworks:

CLIO:
CLIO:


Oct. 14. The origins of World War II

Open web:

CLIO:


CLIO:

Open Web:

CLIO:

Open Web:

CLIO:

Oct. 21. The Cold War, part I: Origins, power, and ideology

CLIO:


CLIO:
Oct. 28. The Cold War, part III: The arms race and arms control.

Open Web:

CLIO:

Oct. 30. A cold war example: The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)

CLIO:

Open web:

And [not required], to show how the “definitive history” keeps on evolving:

Nov. 4. No class meeting, election day holiday.

Nov. 6. Gorbachev and the end of the Cold War: realism, ideas, and personalities.

CLIO:

Part III: Selected Issues: Recent History and Current Events

Nov. 11. The UN Security Council, the evolution of peace operations, and R2P.

Courseworks:
- Joshua Goldstein, Winning the War on War, chapters 4 and 5, pp. 73-135.

CLIO:
Nov. 13. International terrorism: the example of violent Islamists

CLIO:

Open web:

CLIO:


[Sunday Nov. 17, 5pm: Second midterm due (covers through Nov. 6).]

Nov. 18. International intervention: the example of the US invasion of Iraq, 2003

CLIO:


Nov. 20. Nuclear proliferation

Open web:

CLIO:


Nov. 25. No class meeting: Prof. Marten has been invited to speak at a conference at l’Institut français des relations internationals (IFRI) in Paris.

Nov. 27. No class meeting, Thanksgiving holiday.

Dec. 2. International sanctions

CLIO:


Note: If you are able to watch the Alex Gibney 2016 documentary film “Zero Days,” it is highly recommended (available on Amazon, Youtube, and other video subscription services). If not, Melman’s article (below) is an accurate summary of the story.

Open web:


CLIO:

Dec. 9. Climate change: state action and its alternatives.

Open web:

CLIO:

Courseworks:

Open web:

Wednesday, Dec. 18, 4pm (note time, set by the university): Final exam due (covers Part III of the syllabus).