“International Relations of a Post-Western World”
(Revised)

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PREQUISITES: 1601 or an equivalent introductory course in International Politics; an introductory course in Economics or international finance is recommended for background, but not required.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course explores the growing contestation of the Western-governed order, institutions and norms in contemporary international relations. Since World War II, the study and practice of International Relations has developed in tandem with the institutionalization of American power. US hegemony has been the foundation for the establishment of prominent international organizations, international law and new norms of international conduct. Though American military power remains unmatched, many commentators, academics and policymakers now openly refer to waning global American influence, the rise of China as an economic superpower and potential rival, and the establishment of a new “multipolar” order. This current transitional era can be termed the “post-Western world.”

In this course, we will theoretically and empirically investigate the various contours of this emerging era in international relations. We will use perspectives developed in North American political science and international relations theory, but also read recent work by non-Western scholars. The first half of the course will focus on how the post-Western world is engaging with international economic issues and consider possible new forms of emerging global economic governance. We will assess the political fallout of the recent global financial crisis and investigate the growing power of emerging markets and political groups like the BRICS. The second part of the course will deal with challenges to the authority of the US-led security system and the third will explore the global standing of the so-called Western values agenda of democracy promotion and human rights that is becoming an important arena of “multipolar” contestation. Throughout the course we will read about new political relationships and processes, but also critically interrogate claims that Western power has eroded. Much of the case material will draw from Eurasia, but we will also consider emerging political dynamics in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and South Asia.

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Classes will consist mostly of lectures. Students majoring in disciplines other than political science are free to take the course with the necessary prerequisites.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: The course will introduce students to the major debates on globalization within the international relations field. Students who complete the course will learn how to:

1. Identify the major international organizations, processes and norms established by the United States and its allies as the foundation of the international order.
2. Understand the various processes, actors and institutions that international relations theorists identify as driving forces to change the formal and informal rules of the international system.
3. Provide analytical context to new cases and news reports of emerging powers challenging US power and authority in various issue areas.
4. Understand areas of overlap and difference between Western approaches to the study international relations and their scholarly counterparts in emerging powers.
5. Evaluate the merits and shortcomings of these positions in writing.
6. Critically assess the quality of evidence and methodology employed by academic and popular authors in support of their theoretical and analytical claims.
7. Apply the concepts and analytical constructs learned in this course to related methodological and theoretical questions in the political science discipline and the social sciences, more broadly.

REQUIREMENTS: Given the course’s broad scope and heavy reading load, it is ESSENTIAL to keep up with the weekly reading assignments, as the readings are designed to be building blocks for understanding topics in subsequent weeks. Lectures will complement, not substitute for, the readings and regular class attendance is imperative. Students are encouraged to seek help from the instructor and teaching assistants during office hours or to make individual appointments. In addition, students are required to complete:

1. One Short Paper (5-6 pages) Assignment (due Monday February 23, 2015)
2. One 11-12 page Final Paper assignment (due April 9, 2015)
3. One Take-Home Final Exam (Distributed April 29, due May 6)

The short paper topic and guidelines will be distributed on Wednesday, February 4. Final paper topics and guidelines will be distributed in early March. All students, regardless of institutional affiliation, must adhere to the Barnard College Academic Honor Code.

GRADING: Grades will be calculated as follows:
Short paper (25%);
Final Paper/Project (40%);
Final Exam (35%).

I will grant Incompletes or extensions only in the case of a documented medical emergency. Otherwise, all late work will be downgraded.

READINGS: The following books are required and are available for purchase at the Columbia University bookstore:

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The rest of the readings are journal articles or short commentaries that are available through the E-Journals tab on Columbia University’s LibraryWeb. To find an article, simply type in the journal title and follow the appropriate link based on your citation information (volume, date). Readings should also be available through Courseworks. Students are encouraged to download and keep personal copies of these readings. If you still have problems obtaining the readings even after you’ve followed these procedures, please let one of us know ASAP.

The Columbia University Libraries and Harriman Institute will also be developing a dedicated course page that will include a set of resources (maps, data sets, reading lists) designed to accompany some of the course’s topics.

### I. Introduction: Overview, Definitions and Theoretical Approaches

#### Class 1-3 (Jan 21, 26, 28) Course Overview and Introduction

Richard Haas, "The Unraveling: How to respond to a Disordered World." *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 93, No. 6 (November-December 2014).


**Class 5** (Feb 4)  *Global Norms, Judgments and Governance*


Recommended:

**Class 6** (Feb 9)  *Case Study of Emerging Powers, Norms and Rule-Making: Rise of the BRICs*

Available at: http://www.content.gs.com/japan/ideas/brics/building-better-pdf.pdf


*Distribution of Short Paper Assignment: “The Rules are Changing!” due Monday, February 23*

**II. Challenges to Western-Led Bretton Woods Institutions**

**Class 7** (Feb 11)  *The Impact of the Great Financial Crisis, 2007-*


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Class 8 (Feb 16)  The Politics of Global Trade and Investment


Class 9 (Feb 18)  The Politics of the Dollar: Debating Western Monetary Power

-TBA Reading on Western sanctions towards Russia

Class 10 (Feb 23)  Debating Emerging Donor Aid and Influence: China and the Gulf States

Short papers due today!

Available at: http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/10/23/making-bank/

Class 11 (Feb 23)  The Politics of Off-Shore Money and Regional Tax Havens


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IV A Declining US Global Security System?

Class 12 and Class 13 (Mar 2 and 4) The Politics of US Power, Forward Basing and Global Influence


Class 14 (Mar 9) Regional Security Organizations and their Development


Class 15 (March 11)

Paper Writing Workshop: no Assigned Readings

Spring Break: March 16-20

Class 16 (Mar 23) The Rise of “Illiberal” Conflict Resolution and New Mediators


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**Class 17 (Mar 25)**  
*Politics of Global Energy Security*


**V Contesting Values in a Post-Western World: Activism, Human Rights, Democracy and the Backlash**

**Class 18 (Mar 30)**  
*Global Social Movements: Does the West Set the Advocacy Agenda?*


**Class 19 (Apr 1)**  
*Video Screening: Putin’s Kiss*

*Keep working on papers*

**Classes 20 (Apr 6)**  
*Regional Variation in Human Rights Theory and Practice*


Class 21 (Apr 8)  *The Changing International Media Landscape: Political Consequences?*

**Long Papers due today!**


Class 22 (Apr 13)  *Democratic Backlash: The Rise of Competing Monitors, Institutions and Counternorms*


Recommended:

Class 23 (Apr 15)  *The ICC and the Politics of Justice Regimes*


VI Case Studies of Post-Western Dynamics

Class 24 (Apr 20)  *Central Asia as a Post-Western Arena*

Class 25  (Apr 22)  *The Crisis in Ukraine*

Michael McFaul (rebuttal), Steven Sestanovich (rebuttal) and John Mearsheimer (surrebuttal), “‘Faulty Powers: Who Started the Ukraine Crisis?’” *Foreign Affairs* Vol.93, No. 6 (September-October 2014).

Class 26  (Apr 27)  *After Mubarak and the Struggle for Egypt*

Readings TBA

Classes 27 + 28  (April 29 + May 4)  *Course Conclusion and Exam*

Overview of Course and Concluding Discussion.

Distribution of Take-Home final exam on April 29th. Due Wednesday May 6 by Noon.