

International Relations

(BP-PPo-1601, BM-WPo-1601, P4-4)

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1 Course Description and Goals

The course will introduce participants to the theoretical and empirical study of international politics. Topics covered will include interstate and civil wars, intervention and peacekeeping, international institutions, international trade, human rights, and the global environment. The course will introduce participants to analyzing actors, interactions, and institutions. Students will acquire knowledge of basic game theoretic applications to international politics, the empirical approaches to study interactions among states and between states and non-state actors, and the dilemmas policy-makers face in interacting with domestic and international audiences.

I am happy to adjust the topics of the final weeks to discuss questions you might be interested in such as European integration, environmental politics, or terrorism. We will discuss your wishes as the semester progresses.

2 Expectations & Course Organization

This is an undergraduate/bachelor-level lecture. Students will be expected to read one book chapter or scientific paper per week in addition to news or magazine articles of current events. In-class participation is encouraged and will likely improve the final grade. To pass this course, you will have to take the final examination.

All lectures are pre-recorded and posted on Moodle. The videos will introduce key concepts and theories of International Relations and serve as the basis for student-led class discussions. Typically, each seminar sessions will have three parts.

1. Questions about the readings/video lectures to deepen our understanding of the week's topic.
2. A practical task that applies theory to evidence and practical political decision-making.
3. Normative discussions about the theoretical implications.

Seminar sessions will take place on Mondays from 12:15 until 13:45.

My office hours are on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 13:00 to 13:45. Please register for an appointment at <https://calendly.com/ncbormann/office-hours>.

3 Evaluation and Assessment Criteria

In order to obtain the credits for this course you need to pass the final exam. The exam is closed-book and will contain ten short-answer questions and three short essay questions (if the Corona situation permits).

4 Missing and Late Work

University rules apply.

5 Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1: How to Study International Politics

April 20th, 2026 2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

Jeffrey A Frieden, David A Lake, and Kenneth A Schultz. *World Politics – Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, 2010 Ch.2.

Week 2: The Origin of States

April 27th, 2026 2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona N. Golder. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. CQ Press, Washington, DC, 2nd edition, 2012 Ch.4.

Week 3: History of International Politics

May 4th, 2026 2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

Jeffrey A Frieden, David A Lake, and Kenneth A Schultz. *World Politics – Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, 2010 Ch.1.

Week 4: Why Are There Wars?

May 11th, 2026 2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

Jeffrey A Frieden, David A Lake, and Kenneth A Schultz. *World Politics – Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, 2010 Ch.3

Optional: Allan Dafoe and Devin Caughey. Honor and war: Southern us presidents and the effects of concern for reputation. *World Politics*, 68(2):341–381, 2016.

Week 5: The Liberal Peace

May 18th, 2026 2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

Michael W. Doyle. Liberalism and world politics. *American Political Science Review*, 80(4):1151–1169, 1986.

Optional: Sebastian Rosato. The flawed logic of democratic peace theory. *American Political Science Review*, 97(4):585–602, 2003.

Week 6: Public Holiday

May 25th, 2026

No Seminar Session

Week 7: International Institutions and War

June 1st, 2026

2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

Jeffrey A Frieden, David A Lake, and Kenneth A Schultz. *World Politics – Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, 2010 Ch.5

Optional: Brett Ashley Leeds. Do alliances deter aggression? the influence of military alliances on the initiation of militarized interstate disputes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(3):427–439, 2003.

Week 8: The Causes of Civil Wars

June 8th, 2026

2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

Lars-Erik Cederman, Kristian S. Gleditsch, and Halvard Buhaug. *Inequality, Grievances, and Civil War*. Cambridge University Press, New York, 2013 Ch.3

Week 9: Genocide & Mass Killings

June 15th, 2026

2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

Scott Straus. Retreating from the brink: Theorizing mass violence and the dynamics of restraint. *Perspectives on Politics*, 10(02):343–362, 2012

Week 10: Reading Week

June 22nd, 2026

No Seminar Session

Revision and catch-up

Week 11: International Intervention

June 29th, 2026

2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

Virginia Page Fortna. Inside and out: Peacekeeping and the duration of peace after civil and interstate wars. *International Studies Review*, 5(4):97–114, 2003.

Optional: Séverine Autesserre. The crisis of peacekeeping – why the un can't end wars. *Foreign Affairs*, 98(1), 2019.

Optional: Alan J Kuperman. A model humanitarian intervention? reassessing nato's libya campaign. *International Security*, 38(1):105–136, 2013.

Week 12: International Trade & Inequality

July 6th, 2026

2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

Jeffrey A Frieden, David A Lake, and Kenneth A Schultz. *World Politics – Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, 2010. Ch.7.

Optional: Branko Milanovic. *Global Inequality – A New Approach for the Age of Globalization*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2016. Ch.1.

Week 13: Human Rights

July 13th, 2026

2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

Jeffrey A Frieden, David A Lake, and Kenneth A Schultz. *World Politics – Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, 2010. Ch.12

Optional: Emilie M. Hafner-Burton and Kiyoteru Tsutsui. Human rights in a globalizing world: The paradox of empty promises. *American Journal of Sociology*, 110(5):1373–1411, 2005.

Week 14: Review

July 20th, 2026

2.288 - Kursraum-Medizin (CA-D022.288)

No readings