

# Politics II: Introductory International Relations

## (MP-CBa-1804; MP-CBa-2504; EO-C1)

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### **1 Course Description and Goals**

The course will introduce participants to the theoretical and empirical study of international politics. You will explore both broader schools and an analytical focus on international politics. 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. Specifically, we will focus on understanding the causes of interstate war, conflict resolution within states, and areas of international cooperation.

### **2 Expectations & Course Organization**

This is an M.A./graduate-level seminar. Students will be expected to read one scientific paper per week and are encouraged to engage with additional literature. In-class participation is mandatory and will likely improve the final grade.

All lectures take place in room U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002) (wooden building) on Mondays from 14:00 to 16:00. Our sessions will commonly start at 14:15.

### **3 Evaluation and Assessment Criteria**

In order to obtain the credits for this course you need to pass the final exam. The exam consists of four short essay questions. These questions will be randomly selected out of a longer set of twelve questions which will be made available to you during the semester.

To participate in the exam, you will need to submit five comments on at least eight readings via the online collaborative platform *Perusall* (<https://app.perusall.com>). To access the course material, register at perusall and enter the following code: BORMANN-HRMFT or directly navigate to the course website at <https://app.perusall.com/join/BORMANN-HRMFT>.

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>.

## 4 Missing and Late Work

University rules apply.

## 5 Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

### Week 1: Intro & How to Study International Politics

April 20th, 2026

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

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R. Harrison Wagner. *War and the State: The Theory of International Politics*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2007. Ch.1.

### Week 2: The State of Nature & States

April 27th, 2026

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

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R. Harrison Wagner. *War and the State: The Theory of International Politics*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2007. Ch.2.

### Week 3: Violence, Organization, and War

May 4th, 2026

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

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R. Harrison Wagner. *War and the State: The Theory of International Politics*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2007. Ch.3.

### Week 4: Bargaining and War

May 11th, 2026

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

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Dan Reiter. Exploring the bargaining model of war. *Perspectives on Politics*, 1(1):27–43, 2003.

Optional: James D. Fearon. Rationalist explanations for war. *International Organization*, 49(3):379–379, 1995.

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

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

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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**

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**Week 7: International Institutions & Interstate War**

June 1st, 2026

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

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Erik Voeten. Outside options and the logic of security council action. *American Political Science Review*, 95(4):845–858, 2001.

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.

Optional: Brett Ashley Leeds. Alliance reliability in times of war: Explaining state decisions to violate treaties. *International Organization*, 57(4):801–827, 2003.

**Week 8: The Causes of Civil Wars**

June 8th, 2026

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

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

Optional: Barbara F. Walter. Information, uncertainty, and the decision to secede. *International Organization*, 60(1):105–135, 2006.

**Week 9: One-Sided Violence & Genocide**

June 15th, 2026

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

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

Optional: Hanne Fjelde and Lisa Hultman. Weakening the enemy: A disaggregated study of violence against civilians in africa. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 58(7):1230–1257, 2014

**Week 10: Reading Week**

June 22nd, 2026

**No seminar session**

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Revision and catch-up

**Week 11: International Intervention**

June 29th, 2026

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

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

S  verine 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

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

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: International Law & Human Rights**

July 13th, 2026

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

Cosette D Creamer and Beth A Simmons. Do self-reporting regimes matter? evidence from the convention against torture. *International Studies Quarterly*, 63(4):1051–1064, 2019.

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

U.002 - Seminarraum (NB-DUGU.002)

No readings