

PLSC 380H - Winter 2011
Power: Strength and Weakness in International Relations

Instructor: Michael Allen	Class: MTWThF Online
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General Note: The syllabus is a living document that can and will be altered throughout the duration of the course based both on need and design. Generally, this may mean readings will be removed or added as needed. All changes will be listed on Blackboard, so make sure to check announcements for any such change.

Course Description

For many of the great theories of International Relations, power is the driving force of relationships between actors. However, the common rules we expect between major powers appear to change when the great powers deal with weak states and non-state actors. In this course, we examine the role power plays in relationships between actors of extreme power differences. Given situations of asymmetric power, the rules (and lack of them) enable the powerful as well as bind them in areas such as alliances, conflict, terrorism, trade, and international governance. Students will be evaluated based on participation, paper assignments, and midterm and final exams.

Course Format

This is a distance learning course that will be administered entirely online primarily through the Blackboard Learning System. Consequently, to participate, you will need to not only have access to the internet throughout the entire term, but you will also have to have updated software to access course files. A steady connection to the internet may also be required for larger files and for online tests (the midterm and final), making sure that you have access to this is important, though the speed is not as important as the consistency.

Technology wise, it is of utmost importance that you have the latest versions of these tools or the ability to read documents that are generated in them: Adobe Acrobat Reader and Word 2007. You do not need to purchase the latest version of the products; you do need to make sure you have the latest updates for your versions such that you can read files generated in later iterations of the program. Specifically, Microsoft has switched to open .xml files and new word documents (As well as others) are generated as .docx which is different than the traditional .doc file. Make sure you are updated. Most items that I post in Adobe Acrobat format, however, some student documents and uploads will not be.

The class will meet five days a week. For each day, you are expected to have done the reading that was assigned for that day and willing to participate in class discussion. This course carries the full weight of a normal course and you should expect to participate in it with as much time as a normal summer or winter course (3 hours) every day. The daily routine of the class will involve two components. The first is a lecture-based component that is available from 12:01 AM until 11:59 PM the day of the lecture not all days will have a lecture, but most will. The lecture will be available as an online video and require that you have audio to both read and listen - right now I have not finalized if the video will be mainly accessible through youtube, itunes, or another such format, but that will be known before the first video is available. After the lecture, each student will be expected to contribute to the discussion in the **Discussion Board** section of class. Details about discussion requirements will be noted below.

Course Requirements

1. Participation (Discussion): 25%

For a 300 level course, this is a high percentage of the grade devoted to course participation. As such, I expect students to treat it as an important part of their learning process in this course. Discussion will occur every day and will normally be prompted by questions I post for the day, or I ask in lecture. Each student is expected to do the following:

- (a) Start a new thread¹ within the appropriately labeled forum for that day's discussion. In that post, write a response that answers a question raised in lecture, expands upon the important themes, critique the material that was due, or engages the material in a unique way. You have 24 hours to post your initial thread for the day. That is, for a given day, you have until midnight.
- (b) Comment, at length, on at least two other student's posts. This can be a new response in the thread, or you can interject yourself into an ongoing conversation. Your comment should be substantial and around a paragraph in response. You have 48 hours to do this from the start day for the conversation.
- (c) Attempt to respond to any comments or questions raised by your own post. Not all comments require a response, but if people spent time on your post, you should also be able to reciprocate the effort. You have up to 72 hours from when the lecture is posted to complete the final requirement.

For each lecture day that occurs, the threads will be opened immediately that day. Each forum will be open for 72 hours to allow students to both post and respond to other posts. If you wait until the last moment to post and comment on other posts, other individuals will not have an opportunity to respond. Consequently, your grade not only depends on you fulfilling the requirements, but also your willingness to facilitate discussion on each topic. Creating your first post 71 hours after it becomes available does not facilitate discussion.

Grading Discussions: Each discussion is worth up to 20 points. This amount is doubled on book discussion days (there are three of them). Up to 5 points are awarded for your initial post, up to 10 points for your responses to other individuals, and up to 5 points for responding to responses and your facilitation of discussion. **Make sure to treat the forum discussion as academic work. Each post should be thoughtful, proofread, spellchecked, and coherent before posting. Even though the discussion is online, do not treat it like a chat room, casual conversation in a video game, or a text to your friends.** That being said, you will be marked down for improper grammar and spelling. One suggestion is to write the post in a word processing program (like Word) first. This prevents from you from accidentally deleting the post and also allows you to easily spell and grammar check the submission.

As a general rule, I will not be participating in the discussion and will grade each forum when the time expires. Late "discussion" will not be accepted as there are no opportunities for other students to respond.

2. Reaction papers (2): 30%

You will write two short papers in this class. Each paper will be 3-5 pages in length, double spaced, and Times New Roman font (size 12). The short paper should discuss one reading from the day at length. Ideally, the paper will identify the weaknesses and strengths of the articles/readings contribution to our themes, topics, other readings, or the discipline as a whole. A strong paper should be able to isolate a point and expand upon it in useful ways. For example, critiquing an article and suggesting a remedy would be valid. Alternatively, you could expand the theory and apply it to new situations that are not covered within the article itself.

¹A thread is a post within the forum with its own title. Each student should begin participation by posting a new thread

The day you write your reaction paper, you must post it on the proper forum for discussion. This replaces your initial contribution for the day and other people should comment on it. You must still fulfill the other two parts of the discussion. The paper is due on the day we read the assignment (so read in advance), and it must be submitted to both dropbox as well as posted in the discussion section.

3. **Midterm: 20%**

You will have 3 hours to complete the exam online. The exam is open book. It will be primarily concerned with definitions, applications, and argumentative responses. This will occur near the middle of the semester (see the schedule at the end of this).

4. **Final 25 %**

The final will be like the midterm and will occur on the final day of the class.

Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism

All written work is subject to being run through turnitin via blackboard. Any cases of plagiarism will receive an automatic failure on the assignment, possible failure in the course, and will be pursued further through the university for additional punishment.

The Binghamton University Student handbook says the following about plagiarism (2009:105) under the "Rules Governing Academic Life" section:

Presenting the work of another person as one's own work (including papers, words, ideas, information, computer code, data, evidence-organizing principles, or style of presentation of someone else taken from the Internet, books, periodicals or other sources). Plagiarism includes:

- quoting, paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgement, even a few phrases;
- failing to acknowledge the source of either a major idea or ordering principle central to one's own paper;
- relying on another person's data, evidence or critical method without credit or permission;
- submitting another person's work as one's own;
- using unacknowledged research sources gathered by someone else.

Additionally, cheating on any exam will result in failure for the exam and further action taken as per the guidelines stipulated in the student handbook (for reference, see 108-9).

Required Text

The three (3) books required for this course are the following:

1. Vinci, Anthony. 2010. *Armed Groups and the Balance of Power*. Routledge:New York.
2. Paul, T.V. *Asymmetric Conflicts: War Initiation by Weaker Powers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3. Kagan, Robert. *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*. New York: Vintage Books.

Recommended Texts

Two (2) recommended texts are entirely optional. I will accept reaction papers based on these books:

1. Arreguin-Toft, Ivan. 2005. *How the Weak Win Wars: A theory of Asymmetric Conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Thorton, Rod. 2007. *Asymmetric Warfare*. Polity:London.

We will be reading one book per week, starting with Kagan's book. While the book is not assigned to be finished until the Friday of each week, you should be reading it much earlier - If you wait until Thursday night or Friday morning, you will not be able to finish it on time.

Contacting the Instructor

The best way to get in touch with me is either through email or blackboard. I tend to be a person extremely connected to the internet and will often be able to reply promptly if it is a question with a simple answer - more complicated answers take more time. Additionally, I expect to be in my office (LNG 279) daily and am available on campus outside of my stated office hours. If you want to catch me, email me first and there is a high likelihood that I will be able to meet with you.

Final Grades

A: 93+
A-: 90-93
B+: 88-90
B: 83-88
B-:80-83
C+: 78-80
C: 70-78
D: 60-70
F: 0-60

Key Functions in *Blackboard*

- Announcements: Announcements regarding the course will be posted here. Changes to the syllabus or anything outside the normal routine of the course will be posted in this area when you log in.
- Lectures: This area will contain the daily lectures. A new lecture will become available under this section at 12:01 Am of the day it is assigned. The lecture will expire daily at 11:50 PM and will no longer be available.
- Course Documents: This section will contain any documents related to the course and not available elsewhere (some articles, this syllabus, etc.).
- Discussion Board: The discussion board is a primary component of the course and will have a few different sections that one should check daily:
 - Daily discussion: There will be multiple fora labeled this and listed for each day. The first post will usually be mine with some discussion questions or prompts listed. Participation in each daily discussion is mandatory and essential to your grade.
 - Course Questions: This is a space where students may ask me questions directly about either material or course structure that are not directly related to the daily happenings. You should check all new posts here before making a new post. Duplicate questions will be ignored if they are already answered in this section.
 - Communication: This section contains various ways to communicate with the instructor or other students. Two important functions are Send E-Mail and Collaboration:

- * Send E-mail: Allows users to send E-mails to other participants in the class. This should be used very rarely when the discussion board is not accessible.
- * Collaboration: Virtual office hours will be conducted under this section in real-time, java chat window. I will also be in my office at BU during this time.

Tentative Course Schedule

This is the reading you are expected to have done by the day it is assigned. As mentioned earlier, the books are going to be the longest part and you should start reading them well in advance of the due date for discussion. Initially, this will be a skeleton of what we are going to be doing and will be filled in as time goes on or class interest suggest a change in a topic or two. Suggestions for readings will also be welcomed if they are offered early enough.

Day	Date	Topic/Readings
Day 1	1/3/2011	Introduction Syllabus; Discussion Begins Today
Day 2	1/4/2011	Major States, Power Thucydides, The Melian Dialogue. Fearon, James D. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." <i>International Organization</i> . 49: 379-414. Lake, David A. 1996. "Anarchy, Hierarchy, and the Variety of International Relations." <i>International Organization</i> 50(1): 1-33.
Day 3	1/5/2011	Hegemonic Stability Theory/Trade Kindleberger, CP. 1986. <i>The World in Depression, 1929-1939</i> . Gallagher, John, and Ronald Robinson. 1953. "The Imperialism of Free Trade." <i>The Economic History of Review</i> VI(1):1-15. Krasner, Stephen D. 1976. "State Power and the Structure of International Trade." <i>World Politics</i> 28 (3):317-47. Gowa, Joanne. 1989. "Rational Hegemons, Excludable Goods, and Small Groups: An epitaph for Hegemonic Stability Theory?" <i>World Politics</i> 41(3):307-324. <i>Finish discussion from Day 1</i>
Day 4	1/6/2011	Alliances, the Weak and the Strong Olson, Mancur Jr and Richard Zeckhauser. 1967. "An Economic Theory of Alliances." <i>The Review of Economics and Statistics</i> . Keohane, Robert O. 1971. "The Big Influence of Small Allies." <i>Foreign Policy</i> 2:161-82. McKeown, Timothy J. "The Big Influence of Big Allies Transgovernmental Relations as a Tool of Statecraft" in Helen Milner and Andrew Moravcsik, eds., <i>Essays in Honor of Robert O. Keohane</i> . Princeton: Princeton University Press. Kimball, Anessa L. 2010. Political Survival, Policy Distribution and Alliance Formation. <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> . <i>Finish discussion from Day 2</i>
Day 5	1/7/2011	Finish Kagan No Lecture Today, Double Discussion Point Day <i>Finish discussion from Day 3</i>
Day 6	1/10/2011	Military Basing Abroad Johnson, Chalmers. 2004. "America's Empire of Basing." http://www.commondreams.org/views04/0115-08.htm . <i>Finish discussion from Day 4</i>

Day 7	1/11/2011	<p>Warfare between the Weak and the Strong</p> <p>Arregun-Toft, I. 2001. "How the Weak Win Wars." <i>International Security</i>. 26 (1):93-128.</p> <p>Sullivan, Patricia L. 2007. "War Aims and War Outcomes: Why Powerful States Lose Limited Wars." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 51(3): 496-524.</p> <p>Allen, Michael and Benjamin O. Fordham. 2011. "From Melos to Baghdad: Explaining Resistance to Militarized Challenges from More Powerful States." <i>International Studies Quarterly</i>.</p> <p><i>Finish discussion from Day 5</i></p>
Day 8	1/12/2011	<p>Midterm</p> <p>No Lecture Today; No <i>New</i> Discussion Today.</p> <p><i>Finish discussion from Day 6</i></p>
Day 9	1/13/2011	<p>International Organizations/The United Nations</p> <p>Abbott, Kenneth W. and Duncan Snidal. 1998. "Why States Act through Formal International Organizations." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i>. 42(1)3-32.</p> <p>Cortell, Andrew P., and James W. Davis Jr. 1996. "How do International Institutions Matter? The Domestic Impact of International Rules and Norms." <i>International Studies Quarterly</i> 40(4):451- 78.</p> <p>Keohane, Robert O, Peter M. Haas, and Marc A. Levy. 1993. "The Effectiveness of INternational Environmental Institutions." in <i>Institutions for the Earth: Sources of Effective International Environmental Protection</i>, 3-24.</p> <p><i>Finish discussion from Day 7</i></p>
Day 10	1/14/2011	<p>Finish Paul</p> <p>No Lecture Today, Double Discussion Point Day</p>
Day 11	1/17/2011	<p>Non-State Actors</p> <p>Lawrence, T.E. 1929. "The Science of Guerilla Warfare." <i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i>. http://www.britannica.com/bsp/additionalcontent/14/117884/guerrilla</p> <p>Mack, A. 1975. "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict." <i>World Politics</i>. 27 (2):175-200.</p> <p>Regan, Patrick M. and Michael Allen. Unpublished. "The Outcome of Asymmetric War."</p> <p><i>Finish discussion from Day 9</i></p>
Day 12	1/18/2011	<p>Terrorism</p> <p>Crenshaw, Martha. 1981. "The Causes of Terrorism." <i>Comparative Politics</i>. 13(4): 379-399.</p> <p>Gerecht, Reuel Marc. 2001. "A Cowering Superpower: It's time to fight back against terrorism." <i>The Weekly Standard</i>. http://www.newamericancentury.org/defense-20010730.pdf</p>

Schmitt, Gary. 2003. "Power and Duty: Us Action is Crucial to Maintaining World Order. <http://www.newamericancentury.org/global-032303.htm>
Finish discussion from Day 10

Day 13	1/19/2011	Finish Vinci. No Lecture Today, Double Discussion Point Day <i>This is the last day of Discussion Initiation</i> <i>Finish discussion from Day 11</i>
Day 14	1/20/2011	Final thoughts, catchup, and study day. <i>Finish discussion from Day 12</i>
Day 15	1/21/2011	FINAL <i>Finish discussion from Day 13</i>