World Politics

Seminar Instructor: Pauline Brücker
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Academic Year: 2016/2017
Spring Semester

Seminar description

This seminar accompanies Dr. Hélène Thiollet’s core lecture on World Politics. The goal of the seminar is to enhance students’ understanding of central concepts and issues in world politics by facilitating discussion focused on the readings assigned in this course. Seminar sessions will emphasize class discussion and the development of students’ analytical skills by means of oral presentations and debate.

The seminar accounts for 2/3 of the final grade for the class, with specific assignments discussed below. The remaining 1/3 of overall grade is the final exam administered in conjunction with the lecture course. Please see the assignment sheet provided by Dr. Thiollet.

By the end of the semester, students will have an enhanced grasp of the key themes and debates in world politics and improved presentation and research skills.

Organization

This seminar is complementary to the weekly lecture, and provides students an opportunity to discuss and debate the readings and key themes in world politics. Active participation is required and students may be called upon at any time to provide their views on or interpretation of a text.

The class will be divided between (i) a first hour (hour and half depending on the session), devoted to the readings and class debate on the texts; (ii) a second hour devoted to the oral presentation followed by a class discussion.
For any matter concerning the class, please send an email to the above-mentioned email address.

**Assessments for the seminar and evaluation**

**Class Participation (10%)** You should be ready to be called on in class and are expected to volunteer to take part in collective class discussions, whether in relation to assigned readings or in response to oral presentations.

**Readings (30%):** All students should read the compulsory articles assigned for each seminar and be ready to engage in the class debate. Each session, students will present their review of one of the text in front of the class (5-10 min. each).

The presentation should include:
- background information on the author including his/her theoretical orientation;
- the main question and hypothesis of the article;
- the arguments and evidence used to support this hypothesis;
- the student’s critical opinion of the article.

Each presenter is expected to comment on the other presenters’ review of his assigned text. A synthesis note on the text is to be sent to the class before the next session, building upon the comments made of the presentation in class.

Comments on the presentation will be made by students and should focus on:
- The blind spots of your classmate presentation
- Critical remarks on the text and the presentation

**Oral Presentations (30%):** Students, working by groups of two, will be assigned to prepare and give an approx. 15-20 minutes presentation on the topic of that session.

Presentations will include
- An introduction presenting the challenges of the issue and the problematique to which the presentation will respond.
- It should be based on literature review, empirical examples, and should present arguments and counter arguments.
- Each presentation should end up with a debate question to be asked to the class.
- A summary of the presentation along with a bibliography should be distributed to the class 24 hours maximum before the session.

**Mid term written Exam (30% of the overall grade):** The mid-term exam is two-hours long and takes place under invigilated conditions. It consists in:
Syllabus of the seminar

- One essay-type question (closely connected to the lectures material) out of a choice of 2 essay questions
- Two reading related questions on weekly compulsory assignments

Seminar sessions: weekly readings & oral presentations

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<th>World Politics as a Historical Process</th>
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**Session 1 (25/01): Introduction**

**Required Reading:**

**Session 2 (01/02): Old and new empires**

**Required Readings:**

ROSENAU, James, “Illusions of Power and Empire”, History and Theory, vol. 44, no. 4, Theme Issue: Theorizing Empire, December 2005, pp. 73-87.

**Oral presentation:** The United States in the Middle East: the decline of an empire?

(No session on 08/02)

**Session 3 (22/02): Globalization**

**Required Readings:**


**Additional readings:**
Oral presentation: Globalization and migration: a threat to Nation-state sovereignty? (choose a case study)

The International System and its actors

Session 4 (!!23/02!!): State sovereignty in question

Required Readings:

JASON Ralph and Adrian GALLAGHER, Legitimacy faultlines in international society: The responsibility to protect and prosecute after Libya, *Review of International Studies* (2015), 41, 553–573

Additional reading:
PUTNAM, Robert, Diplomacy and Domestic Politics *International Organization*, 42,3; 1988

Oral presentation: The effectiveness of non-state based regulation in question: the case of the anti-sweatshop movement.

Session 5 (01/03): The rise of transnational networks and NGOs

Required Readings:


Additional reading:

Oral presentation: NGOs as a counterpower? The case of the “French Doctors” (Doctors without Borders) as a humanitarian advocate (choose a case study)

Session 6 (05/03): International Organizations in the world system

Required Readings:


Additional reading:


Oral presentation: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): an international advocate for asylum seekers or a tool for states? (choose a case study)

TRANSNATIONAL DYNAMICS:
1. International Security and War and Peace

Session 7 (15/03) War (1) – Civil wars

Required Readings:


KALYVAS Stathis N. The Ontology of "Political Violence": Action and Identity in Civil Wars, Perspectives on Politics, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Sep., 2003), pp. 475-494
Additional readings:

Oral presentation: Are “new wars” really new? Critical analysis of the Kaldor’s concept through the example of the wars in Sudan and South Sudan

Session 8 (22/03): War (2) – Terrorism and the war on terror

Required Readings:


Additional reading:

Oral presentation: The war on terror as a justification for exceptions? The case of Guantanamo.

Session 9 (29/03): Peace-making and its ambiguities

Required Readings:


Oral presentation: International jurisdictions as a mean of peace-building? The controversial case of the ICC
2. Economic dynamics of World Politics

Session 10 (05/04): International Political Economy

Required Readings:


Additional readings:
BUZAN Barry, and George LAWSON, Capitalism and the emergent world order, International Affairs, 90: 1 (2014) 71–91

Oral presentation: Free trade in question. Discuss with references to trade agreements currently under debate (CETA, TTIP, TPP, etc).

Session 11 (12/04): International development

Required Readings:


Oral presentation: Migration and development: what comes first? (choose a case study)

Session 12 (19/04): Revolutions

Required Readings:


**Additional reading:**


**Oral presentation:** The 2011 Egyptian revolution: from the Arab Spring to the Arab Winter?