

## ***PLSC 486 C – International Relations through Film***

Summer 2008

MTWRF 12 PM – 1:40 PM, EBN 22

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***Course description:*** Films are an integral part of our daily lives. Often times, we tend to merely take them on their entertainment face value. In this class, we will use the medium of films to understand key theoretical concepts and issues within International Relations. The goal of this course is to get a deeper and a better understanding of state behavior and how different actors can affect how states interact and behave within the international system. Emphasis will be placed on the various domestic actors that have a role in shaping state behavior. The films that we watch are not necessarily about International Politics, but have sub-contexts that can be easily used to understand state behavior. Please keep in mind that this is a class about International Politics and not about films. Please refrain from talking about the film – either in your discussions or your papers – in any other context but the topic at hand.

***Disclaimer:*** Several films that we will watch over the course of the semester are **R** rated and may include extreme violence, crude language, and nudity. If any of these offend you, or if you are uncomfortable watching such films in a public or in a classroom setting, it would be prudent for you to withdraw from the class at the earliest.

***Class format:*** We will alternate between watching films/ documentaries/ television series and having discussion in class. On the days we do not watch a film, the class will start off with the discussion of the day's news by each area expert group.

***Readings:*** This is a reading and writing intensive class. Students are expected to come to class prepared, participate in discussions and to exhibit advanced college-level writing capabilities. Not being prepared for class is bound to reflect in your participation and therefore in your final grade. This is a small class and there will be very few opportunities to free ride.

The following books are required for this class. These are available for purchase in the bookstore or online.

- American Political Science Association. 2001. *Style Manual for Political Science*. Washington, DC: American Political Science Association.
- Roselle, Laura and Sharon Spray. 2008. *Research and Writing in International Relations*. New York: Pearson.
- Waltz, Kenneth N. 1954. *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press

- Waltz, Kenneth N. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Williams, Phil, Donald M Goldstein and Jay M Shafritz. *Classic Readings and Contemporary Debates in International Relations*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

In addition to the required books, several journal and book articles will be assigned. The journal articles can be accessed through the MetaLINK application on the library website. Articles and book chapters that are not readily available online will be posted on BB under the course documents section.

**Note about the syllabus:** This is a live syllabus and is bound to change. You will be informed about any changes in the syllabus, assignments, grading requirements and readings via your Binghamton email. Any information about changes to the syllabus will also be posted on BlackBoard (BB). It is your responsibility to ensure that a) your Binghamton email is live and b) you check BB constantly for any updates.

**Grading:** You must complete all requirements for the class in order to get a passing grade. No extra credit assignments, extensions for deadlines or incompletes will be given unless supporting documents for a sudden personal emergency are provided. If you wish to contest a grade, please do so in writing and not before 72 hours of receiving the grade. In order to contest the grade, you will be required to write a paragraph justifying why you think the grade you received was not reflective of the quality of work that you submitted. This paragraph has to be typed and turned in as a hard copy to the instructor along with the original graded assignment. The breakdown of the final grade along with the deadlines for all assignments are as follows:

Area news presentation and compilation	10%	List to be posted on BB no later than 7pm Saturday
Participation	20%	Participation in every seminar
Leading discussion and discussion questions	15%	Questions to be posted on BB no later than 5pm the day before discussion
Short reaction papers (3)	30%	Posted on BB no later than 5pm the day before reading is due in seminar. At least one paper should be turned in before the mid term i.e. Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> July. All students are required to read the posted reaction papers in addition to the readings for the day and incorporate the papers in their discussion in class.
Mid term	10%	Posted no later than 5pm on Friday, 18 <sup>th</sup> July.
Final take home exam	15%	Due Wednesday August 6 <sup>th</sup> at 5 pm. Exam will be posted on BB on Saturday July 26 <sup>th</sup> .
Attendance		Mandatory

**Area Expert Groups:** Groups will be randomly assigned to a specific region on the second day of classes. Each Group will present foreign policy related news (restrict yourself to no more than 3 to 4 headlines per region) of the past few days to the class at the beginning of non-film viewing days. At the end of the week, each group will compile a list of headlines and post it on the discussion board with appropriate citations. The purpose of this exercise is to not only familiarize yourself with a specific region and the overarching foreign policy and international politics related problems and concerns that the region faces, but also to familiarize yourself with the major news sources for different regions. You will also learn how to cite various forms of news sources using the appropriate APSA form citation. **A single grade will be assigned to the entire group.**

**Participation:** Participation is mandatory. This is a seminar and merely attending class will not count as participation. Participation will be graded along the following rubric:

**F:** Did not participate at all or made comments, questions that were irrelevant to the topic/ readings or were not insightful. Neither did the student make an effort to meet the instructor during office hours in order to discuss participation problems.

**D-C:** Participated in less than 5 classes or made comments, questions on irrelevant topics or merely summarized the readings. Made some effort to meet the instructor and discuss problems with participation.

**B:** Participated in most classes, but did not make/ ask insightful comments/ questions all the time.

**A:** Participated in all classes and made meaningful comments and asked insightful questions that encouraged discussion and increased the student's own understanding of the reading material and the topic at hand as well as the understanding of the class.

**Leading Discussion:** Each of the Area Expert Groups will also act as discussion leaders at least twice this semester. Each group will have to prepare a set of questions, enough to run discussion for an hour and half, and post them on BB no later than 5 pm the previous day. In class, you and your group members will present an overview of the readings for the day and how the films and the readings fit into the topic at hand. You and your group partner(s) will also conduct the discussion for the day. **A single grade will be assigned to the entire group.** You will be able to sign up for your preferred days to lead on the second day of classes. Keep in mind that this is separate from the participation component for the class.

**Short papers:** You will be required to write three short response papers (2-3 pages) throughout the semester. You can choose any day you like to write your response paper as long as you turn in at least one before the mid term. Do not summarize the readings and please refer to the Roselle and Spray text in order to get an idea of how to write a response paper.

**Mid term:** The mid term exam will be in the form of an essay where you will have to choose one week's readings and write a short (maximum 5 pages) response paper on that week's readings.

**Final Take home exam:** There will be a final take home exam. The exam will be in the form of an essay.

**Attendance:** There is no part of the grade assigned to attendance. Attendance is mandatory and you are expected to attend class regularly. You must be present in class when a film is being viewed, even if you have previously seen it. Any unexplained absence for more than two classes will make you loose two grade points.

**Turnitin:** All papers, including short papers, the mid term and final exam need to be posted on turnitin. You will find the turnitin link on BB. Deadlines for turnitin will be the same as the deadlines for the hard copies. It is therefore, advisable that you post the turnitin copy before you turn in the hard copy of the assignment. Papers will not be graded until they have been posted on turnitin and turned in as hard copies.

**Academic Integrity and Citations:** Your work must be your own. If you quote, use or build your arguments upon the ideas or work of others (whether written or oral), you are expected to quote them and/ or give them explicit credit. In case of failure to do so, the penalties will be severe, ranging from a failure in the course to suspension. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a failing grade for the class, however insignificant the problem might be. Remember, such an academic misconduct is

also recorded in your transcripts. If you are not sure how to cite sources or what constitutes plagiarism, please come and talk to me – it is not worth the risk!

For the purpose of this class, you will be required to use the American Political Science Association form citations. The APSA citation manual is a required text and it is advisable that you use it extensively.

**Deadlines:** I enforce strict deadlines both for hard copies and for turnitin uploads on BB. Any delay after the stipulated deadline will be penalized as follows:

A minute to an hour after the deadline:	Half a grade point penalty
An hour to 5 hours after the deadline:	One grade point penalty
5 hours to 24 hours after the deadline:	Two grade point penalty
Beyond 24 hours:	A failing grade unless documentation for a personal emergency, including illness is submitted.

<b>Reading schedule</b>	
Monday, July 7	Introduction to the class Careful reading of the syllabus
Tuesday, July 8	Studying International Relations
Reading	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Rosenau, James and Mary Durfee. 2000. <i>Thinking Theory Thoroughly: Coherent Approaches to an Incoherent World</i>. NY: Westview Press. pp. 2-11 and 224-238.</li> <li>•Gaddis, John Lewis. 1992-1993. "International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War." <i>International Security</i>. 17 (3): 5-58.</li> <li>•Snyder. One World, Rival Theories. Williams et al.</li> <li>•Walt, Stephen M. 1998. "International Relations: One World, Many Theories." <i>Foreign Policy</i>. 110: 29-46.</li> <li>•Waltz. Theory of International Politics. Chapter 1.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kahler, Miles. 1997. "Inventing International Relations: International Relations Theory After 1945," in Michael Doyle and G. John Ikenberry, eds., <i>New Thinking in International Relations Theory</i>. Boulder: Westview. pp. 20-53.</li> </ul>
Wednesday July 9	The State •The state as a protection racket.
Film	<b><i>Criminal minds – Honor among Thieves.</i></b>
Readings	<p><b>•Required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds. <i>Bringing the State Back In</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Available on BB)</li> <li>•Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development." <i>American Political Science Review</i>. 87:3: 567-57.</li> <li>•Benson, Bruce L. 1999. "An Economic Theory of the Evolution of Governance and the Emergence of the State." <i>The Review of Austrian Economics</i>. 12(2): 131-160.</li> </ul>
Thursday , July 10	The State – Evolution and Sovereignty

Friday, July 11	
Film	<i>A Man for all Seasons</i> Recommended: <i>Passport to Pimilco</i>
Reading	<p><b>Required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Osiander, Andreas. 2001. "Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Westphalian Myth." <i>International Organization</i>. 55(2): 251-287.</li> <li>• Philpott, Daniel. 1995. "Sovereignty: An Introduction and Brief History." <i>Journal of International Affairs</i>. 48(2): 353-369.</li> <li>• Spruyt, Hendrik. 1994. "Institutional Selection in International Relations: State Anarchy as Order." <i>International Organization</i>. 48(4): 527-57.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b> The text of the Peace of Westphalia. Available at the Avalon Project, Yale Law School. URL: <a href="http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/westphal.htm">http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/westphal.htm</a>.</p>
Monday, July 14	Levels of analysis
Readings	<p><b>Required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allison, Graham T. "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis." Williams et al.</li> <li>• Singer. The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations. Williams et al.</li> <li>• Waltz. <i>Man, the State and War</i>. Chapters 2,3,4,5,6, with special emphasis on chapters 2,4 and 6.</li> <li>• Williams et al. 128-133.</li> </ul>
Tuesday, July 15 Wednesday, July 16	Anarchy
Film	<i>Lord of the Flies</i>
Readings	<p><b>Required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milner, Helen. 1993. "The Assumption of Anarchy in IR: A Critique," in Baldwin, David A. ed. <i>Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate</i>. NY: Columbia University Press. pp. 143-169.</li> <li>• Powell, Robert. 1994. "Review: Anarchy in International Relations Theory: The Neorealist-Neoliberal Debate." <i>International Organization</i> 48 (2): 313-44.</li> <li>• Relations among Sovereigns by Thomas Hobbes. Williams et al.</li> <li>• Waltz. <i>Man, the State and War</i>. Chapters 6 and 7.</li> </ul>
Thursday, July 17 Friday, July 18	The International system
Film	<i>The Godfather</i>
	<p><b>Required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carr, E.H. "The Realist Critique and the Limitations of Realism." Williams, et. al</li> <li>• Kaplan. Rules for the Balance of Power System. Williams et al.</li> <li>• Thucydides. "The Peloponnesian War and the Melian Debate." Williams et al.</li> <li>• Waltz. The Stability of a Bipolar World. Williams et al.</li> <li>• Waltz. Theory of International Politics. Chapters 4, 5 and 6.</li> </ul>
Monday, July 21 Tuesday, July 22 Wednesday, July 23	Domestic politics and International Relations. Bureaucratic politics and the agent principal problem.
Film	<i>Thirteen days</i> <i>Yes, Prime Minister ("A Victory for Democracy")</i>

Readings	<p><b>Required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•George W. Downs; David M. Roocke. 1994. Conflict, Agency, and Gambling for Resurrection: The Principal-Agent Problem Goes to War. <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>, Vol. 38 (2): 362-380.</li> <li>•Fearon, James. 1994. "Domestic Political Audiences and the Escalation of International Disputes." <i>American Political Science Review</i>. 88: 577-592.</li> <li>• More readings to be added.</li> </ul>
Thursday, July 24 Friday, July 25	Domestic politics and International Relations. Diversionary theories of war
Film	<b><i>Wag the dog</i></b>
Readings	<p><b>Required:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Cramer, Jane Kellett, "Just Cause" or Just Politics? U.S. Panama Invasion and Standardizing Qualitative Tests for Diversionary War." <i>32 Armed Forces &amp; Society</i>, January 2006, pp. 178-201.</li> <li>•Levy, Jack S. 1989. The Diversionary Theory of War: A Critique. In <i>Handbook of War Studies</i>, ed. M. Midlarsky. Boston: Unwin. (BB)</li> <li>•Morgan, T. C., and K. Bickers. 1992. Domestic Discontent and the External Use of Force. <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i>. 36:25-32.</li> <li>•Miller, Ross. 1995. Domestic Structures and the Diversionary Use of Force. <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 39:760-785.</li> <li>•Richards, Diana, et al. 1993. "Good Times, Bad Times, and the Diversionary Use of Force." <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 37 (September): 504-35.</li> <li>•Smith, Alastair. 1998. "International Crises and Domestic Politics." <i>American Political Science Review</i>. 92(3): 623-639.</li> </ul>
Monday, July 28 Tuesday, July 29	Individual level
Film	<b><i>Elizabeth Duck Soup</i></b>
Readings	TBA
Wednesday, July 30 Thursday, July 31 Friday, August 1	Strategic interaction.
Film	<b><i>Dr. Strangelove. Excerpts from the Princess Bride.</i></b>
	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Fearon, James D. "Rationalist explanations of war." <i>International Organization</i>. 49(3): 379-414.</li> <li>•Lake, David and Robert Powell. 1999. <i>Strategic Choice and International Relations</i>. Princeton: Princeton University Press. pp. 3-20.</li> <li>•Miller, Ross. 1999. Regime Type, Strategic Interaction, and the Diversionary Use of Force. <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> 43:388-402.</li> <li>•Muthoo, Abhinay. 2000. "A Non-Technical Introduction to Bargaining Theory. <i>World Economics</i>. 1(2): 145-166.</li> </ul>
Monday, August 4 Tuesday, August 5 Wednesday, August 6	Non-state actors, threats to sovereignty, nationalism, political violence
Films	<b><i>Clear and Present Danger Michael Collins</i></b>

Readings	TBA
Thursday, August 7 Friday, August 8	Wrap up