

Political Strategy in International Relations

PS 1514

Cathedral of Learning 252, Tuesday-Thursday, 2:30-3:45

Prof. Stephen Chaudoin

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Email: chaudoin@pitt.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday 3:00-5:00 or by appointment

Office: 4612 Wesley W. Posvar Hall

Course Description

How does domestic politics affect foreign policy and vice versa? This course takes as a starting point the intuition developed by studies of “two level games,” where international relations is more than nation states interacting with one another. Rather international relations consists of politicians and policymakers- with varying constituencies and operating in different political and institutional structures- interact with one another. How does this conception of IR influence our analysis of diverse issues ranging from trade to war? This course will emphasize game theoretic analyses and will build substantially on mathematical and theoretical tools developed in previous PS courses. Previous completion of Research Methods (PS 0700) or similar course is strongly recommended.

Required Text: Spaniel, William. 2012. *Game Theory 101*. E-book.

- <http://gametheory101.com/Textbook.html>.

Required Text: Spaniel, William. 2012. *The Rationality of War*. E-book.

These are e-books that are available through Amazon. They are only \$3.99 and \$0.99 respectively. You first download a free Kindle PC e-Reader on your PC and then purchase the texts through Amazon. Instructions for this are on the website with the above URL. If you buy the book, and absolutely have to print out a hard copy, there are various apps that can help you print particular

pages, since you cannot print directly from the Kindle PC e-Reader. Google the terms “print from Kindle PC reader” and follow the discussions that are under that various hits.

Evaluation

Grades will be distributed in the following manner:

Assignments: 20%

Midterm Exam: 35%

Final Exam: 45%

Assignments

There will be a few (approximately 4-6) assignments throughout the semester. These will consist of problems or short response writing questions. On certain days, either marked on the syllabus or announced during the semester, we will complete in-class assignments which you can only get credit for if you are in attendance. Attendance at in-class activities falls into this grading category.

Mid-Term and Final Exams

The mid-term exam will cover material from the beginning of the semester until the point of the exam. The final exam will focus more heavily on material covered after the mid-term exam, but I will also ask you to address and incorporate material from the entire semester, so it is technically cumulative. All material presented in readings and class discussion is fair game for exams.

Course Policies

- Absence: I do not take attendance. You do not need to alert me to the fact that you will be absent or bring me any official excuse letter. However, missing class means missing information. Many of these readings are demanding and may need clarification in class. Additionally,

the lectures contain important supplemental information not found in the readings, and you are responsible for this information in exams and papers. If a medical or other emergency causes you to miss an in-class assignment, we will arrange for you to complete the assignment (or approximate equivalent) outside of class. To take advantage of this, you *must* email me to make appropriate arrangements within two days of missing the in-class assignment.

- Late Assignments: Assignments are due at the end of class on the days indicated on the assignment. I will *not* accept assignments that are more than two days late. Within the two day window, assignments are penalized a letter grade per day.
- Assignment Review: I am willing to review any graded assignment or exam. However, I will not hear any concerns until 48 hours after the assignment has been returned to you. You must express your concern with the grade in an email and support your argument as to why it should be changed. If you bring me an assignment to regrade, I will regrade the entire assignment, and I reserve the right to raise your grade or lower it on any part of the assignment. In other words, be careful in your use of review.
- Cell Phones, Laptops, Tablets: Laptops and tablets are allowed in class, provided they are used for class related purposes. Abuse of this privilege may cause us to re-evaluate this policy. Cell phones should be off.
- Academic Integrity: Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students suspected of violating the University of Pittsburgh Policy on Academic Integrity, noted below, will be required to participate in the outlined procedural process as initiated by the instructor. A minimum sanction of a zero score for the quiz, exam or paper will be imposed. For the full Academic Integrity Policy, go to <http://www.as.pitt.edu/fac/policies/academic-integrity>.
- Disability Services: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, (412)648-7890 or (412)383-7355 (FTY), as early as possible in the term. Disability Resources and Services will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

- Statement on Classroom Recording: To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.
- Email Communication Policy: Each student is issued a University email address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This email address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read email sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an email forwarding service that allows students to read their email via other service providers (e, g., Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their email from their pitt.edu address 'to another address do so at their own risk. If email is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University email address. To forward email sent to your University account, go to <http://accounts.pitt.edu>, log into your account, click on Edit Forwarding Addresses, and follow the instructions on the page. Be sure to log out of your account when you have finished. (For the full E-mail Communication Policy, go to www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policv109/09-i0-01.html.)
- Feedback: I am very interested in what you're getting from the course and how I can make the course better. Periodically, I'll solicit anonymous feedback in class about what you find most or least useful.
- Math: Many of the topics in this class will require you to use some basic mathematical tools. The course is designed to require no more than the following: basic algebra, familiarity with functions and some notation, and (very occasionally) a derivative. If you do not understand a particular tool we're using, contact me as soon as possible.

Schedule

Note on Readings: Students are expected to complete the readings prior to the course meeting on the listed date... Again, students are expected to complete the readings *prior* to the course meeting on the listed date. All readings are available electronically or on the course website. The most up-to-date syllabus will always be found on the course website, since the schedule may change.

Note on Slides: Slides will generally be posted a day or so after the lecture. The slides are incomplete *by design*. The best way to approach the lecture slides is to revisit them after the lecture and fill them in from your own notes.

The Basics

Class 1: Syllabus and Rational Choice

- **Required:** The syllabus.
- **Required:** Moore, William. 2001. "Evaluating Theory in Political Science."
– <http://mailer.fsu.edu/~whmoore/garnet-whmoore//theoryeval.pdf>.
- **Required:** Dixit, Skeath, and Reiley. 2009. *Games of Strategy* Ch 1-2. (Courseweb)

Class 2: Normal Form Games

- **Required:** Spaniel, Lessons 1.1 - 1.4

Class 3: Extensive Form Games

- **Required:** Spaniel, Lessons 2.1-2.3

Class 4: Extensive Form Games, Cont.

- **Required:** Spaniel, Lessons 2.4-2.6

Class 5: Two Level Games

- **Required:** Putnam, Robert. 1988. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games." *International Organization*: 42(3): 427-460.

Class 6: Why Models?

- **Required:** Walt, Stephen. 1999. "Rigor or Rigor Mortis? Rational Choice and Security Studies." *International Security* 23(4): 5-48.
- **Required:** Powell, Robert. 1999. "The Modeling Enterprise and Security Studies." *International Security* 24(2): 97-106.

Theories and Conflict

Class 7: Causes of War

- **Required:** Fearon, James. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War" *International Organization* 49(3): 379-414.
- **Required:** Spaniel, War, Ch 1 and 2.

Class 8: Ends of War

- **Required:** Wittman, Donald. 1979. "How War Ends: A Rational Model Approach." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 23(4): 743-763.

Class 9: Absolute and Relative Gains

- **Required:** Powell, Robert. 1991. "Absolute and Relative Gains in International Relations Theory." *American Political Science Review* 85(4): 1303-1320.
- **Required:** Spaniel, War, Ch 3.

Feb 12: Private Information

- **Required:** Spaniel, War, Ch 4.

Feb 14: Bayes Rule and Mutual Optimism

- **Required:** Fey, Mark and Kris Ramsay. 2007. "Mutual Optimism and War." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(4): 738-754.

Feb 19: Tying Hands

- **Required:** Fearon, James. 1997. "Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands Versus Sunk Costs." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41(1): 68.

Feb 21: Sunk Costs

- **Required:** Fearon (above).

Feb 26: Midterm

Feb 28: Deterrence

- **Required:** Nalebuff, Barry. “Rational Deterrence in an Imperfect World.” *World Politics* 43(3): 313-335.

Theories and Cooperation

Mar 5: Coordination

- **Required:** Morrow, James. 1994. “Modeling the Forms of International Cooperation: Distribution Versus Information.” *International Organization* 48(3): 387-423.

Mar 7: Coordination II

- **Required:** None.

Mar 19: Iterated Prisoner’s Dilemma and Cooperation

- **Required:** Axelrod, Robert. 1984. *The Evolution of Cooperation*. Chapters 1-2, pp. 3-54. (Emphasis on Ch. 1, on Courseweb)

Mar 21: Iterated Prisoner’s Dilemma and Cooperation

- **Required:** Chaudoin, Stephen and Johannes Urpelainen. 2012. “When is the Good News About Pro-Cooperation Lobbies Good News About Cooperation?” (on Courseweb).

Mar 26: Cooperation Continued

- **Required:** TBD

Mar 28: Bargaining Models

- **Required:** Muthoo, Abinay. “A Non-Technical Introduction to Bargaining Models.” *World Economics* 1(2): 145-166.

Apr 2: Bargaining and Enforcement

- **Required:** Fearon, James. 1998. “Bargaining, Enforcement, and International Cooperation.” *International Organization* 52(2): 269-305.

Apr 4: Principal Agent Problems

- **Required:** Braun, Deitmar and David Guston. “Principal-agent Theory and Research Policy: An Introduction.” *Science and Public Policy* 30(5): 302-308.

Apr 9: PA Problems and International Institutions

- **Required:** Hawkins, Lake, Nielson, and Tierney. 2006. *Delegation and Agency in International Organizations*. Ch 1-2. (Courseweb)

Apr 11: NO CLASS

Apr 16: Review

Apr 18: In-Class Portion of Final Exam