

Political Science 399
Oregon State University
Winter 2005
Tues. & Thursday, 1-2:50
108 Gilkey Hall

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Current Problems in Politics: Global Political Theory

This course focuses on normative issues in global politics. Traditionally, political theory has asked questions such as, "What is justice?" about arrangements within a society. In recent decades, however, with the growing globalization of our world, we have had to begin to ask whether there are normative standards that apply to relations between countries, and among people across national borders. In particular, do the norms of domestic society--justice, democracy, toleration, equality, the rule of law--apply globally, or should they?

In the immediate historical context, it is inevitable that our discussions will take place with two developments in the background: the terrorist attacks of 9/11/2001 and the war in Iraq. These events raise a number of questions, including: do the terrorist attacks require a revision of previous thinking on war and violence? Are (some) countries now justified in engaging in preemptive (or preventive) attacks, torture, detention without charge, etc.? Do these events and their aftermath demonstrate the need for international organizations and cooperation, or their inevitable weakness or even uselessness? The course requirements will ask you to make some connections between the readings and discussions in class and ongoing events. Additional readings on current developments may also be assigned.

The aims of the course are essentially two. First, the student should become familiar with the material covered in the course. S/He should be able to discuss the material, both verbally and in writing, in an informed way. Second, the course will also emphasize the development of skills in critical reading, thinking, and effective communication. These are skills that are essential to liberal arts education, and will be essential to the student's future success, whatever their chosen profession or field.

Requirements:

There will be a midterm and a final exam, two short papers, and about five in-class writing assignments. Each paper and exam is worth 20% of your final grade, and the in-class writing assignments are collectively worth the remaining 20%. The papers will require you to obtain a newspaper or magazine article and apply the ideas discussed in the course to it. Papers are due in the political science department office, 307 Gilkey Hall, by 4pm on the dates indicated on the schedule, below. More specific paper guidelines will be distributed at least a week before each paper is due. Late papers will not be accepted.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is an extremely serious matter. Students are expected to properly cite any sources used in writing their papers (including internet sources), and to work alone on the examinations. Violations of academic honesty will result in failing the course, and will be reported to the proper university authorities for further action. For a description of Oregon State's policies on academic honesty, see the website at:
<http://success.oregonstate.edu/study/honesty.cfm>.

Readings:

The following books are required for the course, and are available at the OSU bookstore:

Michael Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars, 3rd ed. Basic Books, 2000.

Charles Beitz, Political Theory and International Relations. Princeton, 1999.

Joel H. Rosenthal, ed., Ethics & International Affairs, 2nd ed. Georgetown, 1999.

Andrew Valls, ed., Ethics in International Affairs. Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.

Schedule:

This schedule is tentative, and subject to change. Changes will be announced in class, and it is the student's responsibility to keep abreast of any such changes.

1. Jan. 4: Course introduction.

I. The Challenge of Realism

2. Jan. 6: Confronting Realism. Read Walzer, chapter 1; and Hoffman in R.

3. Jan. 11: International Relations as a State of Nature. Read Beitz, Part I.

4. Jan. 13: Statecraft and the National Interest. Read Welch in V; and Coll in R.

II. Just War Theory

5. Jan. 18: Overview of Just War Theory. Read Fotion in V; and Coates in V.

6. Jan. 20: Justice of War. Read Walzer, chapters 4 & 5.
7. Jan. 25: Justice in War. Read Walzer, chapters 8 & 9.
8. Jan. 27: Justice in War. Read Walzer, chapters 10 & 11.

Jan 28: First paper due.

III. Terrorism

9. Feb. 1: The Problem of Terrorism. Read Walzer, chapter 12; and Norton in R.
10. Feb. 3: Moral Dilemmas of Terrorism. Read Valls in V; and Gordon & Lopez in V.
11. Feb. 8: The Response to Terrorism. Readings TBA.
12. Feb. 10: The Case of 9/11. Readings TBA.

13. Feb. 15: Midterm exam.

IV. Humanitarian Intervention

14. Feb. 17: State Sovereignty and its Limits. Read Beitz, Part II.
15. Feb. 22: Limits of Intervention. Read Walzer, chapter 6.
16. Feb. 24: The Critique of Walzer. Read Smith in R; and Caney in V.

Feb. 25: Second paper due.

17. March 1: The Case of Yugoslavia. Read Pasic and Weiss in R; and Nagengast in V.

V. Tolerance and Justice in Global Politics

18. March 3: The Problem of Relativism. Read Harbour in R; and Sen in R.
19. March 8: Global Distributive Justice. Read Beitz, Part III; and Jones in V.
20. March 10: The Responsibilities of Multinationals: Read Donaldson in R; and Elfstrom in V.

Final Exam: Monday, March 14, 2pm.