Course Description
How can we explain the patterns of international politics? Why do wars happen? How do culture and religion affect international politics, and how is the present shaped by history? Has the internet empowered individuals, social movements, and businesses so much that states have become irrelevant? How are countries affected by the global economy, with its ever-increasing levels of international trade and investment, and in turn how does the political economy of individual countries shape international relations? How do alliances between countries function, and what impact do they have on foreign policy? What causes terrorism? Is the proliferation of nuclear weapons a threat to peace, and if so, how should the world respond? Does the United Nations matter?

In this course we will begin to grapple with these issues, using theories developed by current political scientists and by philosophers throughout history, to try to explain and predict the patterns of international politics. We will analyze which theoretical perspectives actually lie behind common historical and current interpretations of international relations, and students will be encouraged to choose or develop their own theories to explain events.

Learning Objectives
Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

- Demonstrate broad factual and causal knowledge of important current and historical issues in international relations
- Apply contending theories from the political science literature and the policy world to analyze, compare, and evaluate events and trends in international relations
- Assess the value of competing theories in explaining events
- Synthesize facts and arguments across cases in order to reason critically and argue creatively, through both oral discussions in section and written essay exams

Course Requirements and Procedures

Participation in weekly discussion sections is required. Small-group discussion forms an important part of the course experience, and students should come to discussion section prepared to discuss the assigned readings. A passing grade of C- or better must be achieved in section for the student to receive a passing grade in the course.

There are three do-at-home essay exams for this course—two midterms and a final. All exams are equally weighted, but improvement will be rewarded when Prof. Marten is determining each student’s final course grade. Each exam will be turned in electronically at the specified date and time; late turn-ins will be significantly penalized, with 1/3 grade taken off for each day late (e.g., an A- exam turned in after the due date and hour will earn a B+ if it is received within 24 hours of the due time; it will receive a B if its turned in 24-48 hours after the due time; etc.).

Each exam will require students to answer two essay questions, with a total word count for each completed exam of approximately 1,000 words per essay (or 2,000 words total). Essays must rely on currently assigned course readings alone for analysis; these are not research papers. The major purpose of
the exams is to monitor whether students are doing the assigned readings, and whether they are analytically engaged with the assigned course material. **Honor code:** Students may consult with whomever they like as they are considering the assigned essay questions. (Please note that the TAs will *not* read essay drafts or discuss the essays with individual students; all consultation with TAs must happen in section and in public only, so that all students in the section have an equal advantage.) However, once a student begins outlining and writing the essay, no further consultation is allowed. **In other words, the structure and content of all essays must be the student’s alone.** Prof. Marten has served on the Barnard College Honor Board, and takes the issue of academic integrity very seriously. For each exam, all students (whether or not they are Barnard College students) must submit a Barnard College Honor Code pledge, affirming that the structure and content of the written work is completely their own. *Any student found to have violated the Honor Code on any assignment will receive a failing grade in the course,* and will face the disciplinary rules of his or her home college.

Questions will be emailed to students via Courseworks, and exams will turned in as Word or PDF documents only, on the 1601 (i.e., lecture, not section) Courseworks “assignments” page for this class, which will include an honor code statement. Early turn-ins are welcomed and encouraged.

--Midterm 1 questions: emailed by the evening of Sept. 28; will cover material through Oct. 7; due **Friday, Oct. 16 at 5pm.**
--Midterm 2 questions: emailed by the evening of Oct. 28; will cover material through Nov. 9; due **Friday, Nov. 20 at 5pm.**
--Final exam questions: emailed by the evening of Dec. 2; will cover course material from Nov. 11 through the end of the course (the exam is NOT comprehensive); due **Wednesday, Dec. 23 at 4pm** (please note that this is the date and time that an in-class exam would have been officially scheduled; Barnard rules require that the take-home final be due at this time.)

Prof. Marten supervises all grading, sets grading guidelines, and reviews section leader performance. Any student who wishes to challenge the grade given by a TA must discuss the situation with the TA who graded the exam first. If the student remains unsatisfied after this, Prof. Marten will review the work in question; but students should realize that a change in grade is unlikely, and that Prof. Marten reserves the right to lower a grade as well as raise it. Exams must be turned in when scheduled. Exceptions will be granted only in cases of medical or family emergency, will be granted only by Prof. Marten, not by the TAs, and in most cases will require a supporting email from the student’s advising dean. **If you have an extracurricular event that will interfere with the midterm schedule, you should not take this course.**

**Electronic devices and laptops:** Any student who wishes to use a laptop in lecture MUST sit either in the back half of the classroom or on the sides. The center-front of the auditorium is reserved for students who (wisely) choose to avoid the temptations of electronics during lecture, to pay attention to the material distraction-free, and to thereby get some value for their tuition dollar.

The use of all other electronic devices (including phones, tablets, watches, glasses, and anything else they think up next) is strictly prohibited once the lecture begins. Please note that attendance at lecture is not required, so if you’d rather use your electronics, feel free to do so elsewhere.

**Grading:**
**First midterm:** 30%
**Second midterm:** 30%
**Final exam:** 30%
**Section participation:** 10%. Students are expected to attend all section meetings. If you must miss a section because of a religious holiday or an illness or family emergency, please notify your section leader
(not Prof. Marten). The section leader will provide a one-page make-up essay assignment to substitute for class participation that day.

**Required Reading List**

Please do the readings in the order they are listed on the syllabus; they are listed in the order that will make comprehension easiest. It may be helpful to do the readings after the lecture for which they are assigned; the lectures will help students understand what it is about each reading that is important. (Please make an exception for the longer readings from the case-study books: Dobbs and Marten. It will be good to start those readings early, so as not to fall too far behind.) **A good skill to learn is “strategic skimming”:** learn to extract the important arguments from each piece—how arguments are built and supported, what their strengths and weaknesses are—rather than reading each piece word-for-word. It may be useful to have a dictionary at hand while reading; some readings include difficult vocabulary. All readings are assigned because they are important elements in ongoing debates—not because they present the “truth.” In other words, read each piece critically and with a grain of salt. In discussion section and in your essays, you will be expected to analyze and critique the readings, not merely summarize them.

The books are available at Book Culture (536 West 112th St., between Broadway and Amsterdam), and are also on reserve at Butler library. You should feel free to buy copies used or on the web at discount rates, or to share purchases with a friend in class. **The assigned articles and web readings are every bit as important as the books, and should not be considered optional.** Many of these must be accessed through Columbia University’s eLibrary (library.columbia.edu) in order to avoid a fee. To access CU eLibrary sources, simply enter the electronic journal title on the Columbia library web “quick search e-resources” page, and then find the correct issue number or article title when the corresponding database opens. (There will be an in-class demonstration of how to do this on the first two days of class.)


Course Schedule and Assignments

Sept. 9. Introduction: thinking about international politics.
  
  **Nye and Welch:** “What Is International Politics?” pp. 1-16. Also note the study tool on p. 63, “Table 2.1. Key Features of Paradigms.”
  
  **Columbia eLibrary:**
  

**Part I: The “Isms”: Realism and Its Critics**

  
  **Note: Rosh Hashanah. Prof. Marten will ask Barnard IT to web-record the class.**
  
  
  **Open web:**
  
  
  [http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Thuc.+5.84&fromdoc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0200](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Thuc.+5.84&fromdoc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0200)
  

Sept. 16. Realist views on security and the causes of war
  
  **Columbia eLibrary:**
  
  
  
  **Open web:**
  

  
  **Nye and Welch:** “Liberalism,” pp. 64-69; “Managing Conflict” (pp. 193-200).
  
  **Open web:**
  
  
  Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch,” 1795, available at: [https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/kant/kant1.htm](https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/kant/kant1.htm)
  

Sept. 23: Liberalism, realism, and international institutions: the example of NATO and Russia.

**Note: Yom Kippur. Prof. Marten will ask Barnard IT to web-record the class.**

**Columbia eLibrary:**
  
  
  
Sept. 28. Constructivism: ideas, culture and power in the international system, for good and bad.


**Columbia eLibrary:**


Sept. 30. Levels of analysis: bureaucratic, organizational, and individual actors.

**Available on Courseworks:**

**Columbia eLibrary:**

**Part II: The 20th Century and Why It Matters**

Oct. 5. Europe: the Origins of World War I.

**Nye and Welch:** chapter 3, “From Westphalia to World War I,” pp. 78-110.

**Open web:**

**Columbia eLibrary:**

Oct. 7. Sovereignty, imperialism, and decolonization

**Courseworks:**


**Open web:**

Oct. 12. The Origins of World War II


**Columbia eLibrary:**

Oct. 14. No lecture or assigned readings; use this time to complete midterm 1, due by Friday, Oct. 16 at 5pm on Courseworks.


**Columbia eLibrary:**


**Nye and Welch:** “Containment in Action” and “The Rest of the Cold War,” pp. 159-67.

**Open web:**

**Columbia eLibrary:**

Oct. 26. The Cold War, part 3: The nuclear arms race, détente, and arms control

**Nye and Welch:** “The Role of Nuclear Weapons,” pp. 172-79.

**Columbia eLibrary:**

**Courseworks:**

**Open Web:**

Oct. 28: The Cold War, part 4: Putting it all together: the Cuban Missile Crisis

**Nye and Welch:** “The Cuban Missile Crisis,” pp. 179-82.

**Dobbs:** entire.

Nov. 2. Election Day Holiday, no class meeting.

Nov 4. The End of the (first?) Cold War: Realism, Liberalism and Ideas.

**Nye and Welch:** “The End of the Cold War,” pp. 167-72.

**Columbia eLibrary:**

Nov. 9. The UN Security Council, peacekeeping, and R2P: the legacy of the 1990s

**Nye and Welch:** “The United Nations” and “Intrastate Conflict” (pp. 200-218).
Available on Courseworks:
Joshua Goldstein, *Winning the War on War*, chapters 4 and 5, pp. 73-135.

Columbia eLibrary:

Open Web (recommended, not required if you are already familiar with this material):

Columbia eLibrary:

Open Web:

Nov. 16. The European Union: a slow death, or the success of “governance”?
Columbia eLibrary:

Open Web:

Courseworks:

Open Web:

Nov. 18. No lecture or assigned readings; use the time to complete midterm 2, due by Friday Nov. 20 at 5pm on Courseworks.

Part IV. International Security in a New Era

Nov. 23. The rise of China

Columbia eLibrary:

Open Web:

Columbia eLibrary:
Nov. 25. Wednesday before Thanksgiving; no class meeting.

Nov. 30. The causes of terrorism.

**Columbia eLibrary:**


**Nye and Welch:** “Conflict in the Persian Gulf,” pp. 230-34.

**Columbia eLibrary:**


Dec. 7. State Failure and Warlordism: The Examples of Chechnya and Iraq

**Marten:** chapters 1, 2, 5, 6, and conclusion (pp. 1-30, 102-200).

Dec. 9. The Bid for Palestinian Statehood and the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict.

**Nye and Welch:** “Arab-Israeli Conflict,” pp. 222-230.

**Columbia eLibrary:**


**Open web:**

**Columbia eLibrary:**
Kimberly Marten, “Reformed or Deformed? Patronage Politics, International Influence, and the Palestinian Authority Security Forces,” *International Peacekeeping* 21, no. 2 (June 2014): 181-97. **Note:** this is a very dense article, and you are not responsible for all of the factual details; skim through it to get the essence of the argument about how patronage politics interact with security questions.


**Nye and Welch:** “A Nuclear Iran?” pp. 237-40.

**Columbia eLibrary:**


**Open Web (please note: Prof. Marten might change these readings based on current events):**