I. Course Description

This course aims to provide students with a conceptual and analytical tools to help them acquire a deeper and more nuanced understanding of western political thought as an intellectual trajectory with spatio-temporal implications. It seeks to do this through a survey of the various thinkers and schools of thought in international political theory. The course aims to:

1. Give an account of the supposed ‘evolution’ and development of thought in what is known as the disciplines of Political Science and International Relations.
2. Addressing the idea that disciplines are categorizations of ‘truths’ and ‘knowledge’ and must always be contextualized;
3. Analyze both classical and modern texts in their historical context;
4. Highlight the continuities and discontinuities between classical and contemporary ways of understanding and explaining ‘political phenomena’.

The course seeks to promote critical thought in relation to a wide and intellectually demanding range of ideas and theories, and the ability to articulate this thought clearly and concisely in both the written and spoken word. By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Critically assess competing interpretations of classical and contemporary texts, thinkers and theories; and
2. Develop independent arguments about the strengths and weaknesses of different interpretations and theories in relation to ‘real world’ issues and problems.

II. Teaching Methods

**Lecture/Seminar:** The course is composed of 29 sessions. You are expected to read the required texts assigned for each one of them and actively participate in the discussions.

**Private Study:** The most important part of the course. Students are expected to engage in careful and detailed independent study, employing the reading list (below) as a guide.

This is a writing-intensive course; writing is, therefore, taken very seriously. The process of writing can be as difficult and as rewarding as life itself; it can be seen to address, simulate, and work out life’s central concerns. Like life, writing requires nothing less than the risk of submitting our unique vision of the world publicly, while presenting that vision so that others will understand and appreciate its value. In turn, this requires understanding and appreciating the value of others’ perspectives, their criticisms and contributions to our own work. Writing asks us not only to see the world but also to envision how the world sees us; to be both subject and object to ourselves.

III. Course Structure

The course has two parts. The first part deals with ‘classical’ thinkers up to the mid-twentieth century. The second part (from
session 12 onwards) takes the inter-war period as its starting point and follows through the development of modern political theory, from interwar internationalism through to some of the main currents of contemporary political thought.

Each session has required and recommended readings. Students are expected to read the required texts for each session. They are encouraged to choose 3-5 texts from the recommended readings to write their essays.

**Important Note on Lectures and Reading for Seminars**

The scope of the course is considerable; the approach taken in the seminars will be to contextualize key ideas in the intellectual and historical circumstances in which they were produced and explore the ways in which particular thinkers formulated and articulated their concepts and theories. The variety of topics and readings is very wide; however, students should bear in mind that the course has been designed to not only give an overview of the history of political thought but also to provide you with the opportunity to focus on your academic interests. Students will be given the chance to concentrate on four or five topics which most interest them, while viewing these topics as a part of a wider whole.

**Textbooks**


**II. Evaluation and Requirements**

Your grade in this course will be based on class participation, four short papers and a final project. The breakdown is as follows:

- Attendance and Participation _____ 20%
- 4 Papers _____________________ 60%
- Final project __________________ 20%

At the end of the semester, your grade will be assigned according to the following scale: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D (60-69), and F (below 59).

- **Attendance**

  This course relies for its success upon your faithful attendance and your regular contribution to our discussion. Extended absences for reasons of illness or family emergency will be arranged on a case-by-case basis. Should there be any circumstance that makes it difficult for you to participate in class discussions, please feel always feel free to approach me about it. We will work together to find a solution.

- **Papers**

  Students are required to write four 1000-word papers, due at the end of the second, third, fourth and fifth week of class (we will talk about precise dates and details on what is expected from your writing in the first day of class). Essay questions can be chosen from the “discussion” sections below and should engage with the required and recommended readings. Papers must take the form of an answer to a particular question. General reflections on a broad theme are not admissible. Marks and feedback will be provided within 3 days of promptly submitted papers. All papers must be: double spaced, spell-checked, proof-read, edited for punctuation, grammar and coherence and turned in by the deadline; late papers will be assessed a grade cut. We will hold a mini-writing workshop in session 5.

- **Final Project**

  For the final project you will be able to choose from one of the following options:
  a) A 1500-word paper addressing any of the themes discussed, provided you formulate the essay question;
  b) A 1500-word biographical paper on a thinker/scholar/writer of your choice (I will give more details in class);
c) An engagement with a topic/thinker of your choice in a creative format other than writing, e.g. video, photography, drawing, oral presentation, etc.

- Late Policy
All assignments are due in hard copy at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be penalized.

- Academic Integrity
Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Serious sanctions may result from academic dishonesty of any sort. Should you have any questions or concerns about plagiarism, please consult the UHM Student Conduct Code: http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/policies/conduct_code. When you quote from a text, you must indicate that you have done so (failure to do so constitutes plagiarism), either in the body of the text or in footnotes. Please be consistent with your chosen to cite your sources. For more examples and information on how to cite different kinds of sources, consult the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers or the Chicago Manual of Style.

- Disability Access
If you have any difficulties in getting to class or taking the course, please talk with me about how I can make it more accessible to you. I will be happy to make any appropriate accommodations. You may also wish to contact the KOKUA Program Office at 956-7511 or to visit the office website online at http://www.hawaii.edu/kokua

III. Schedule

Part One
1. International Political Theory: approaches and themes
2 and 3. ‘Ancient Thinking’: Plato and Aristotle
4. Sovereignty, Property and the Laws of War: Grotius
5. Mini Writing Workshop
6. The State and the State of Nature: Hobbes
7. Perpetual Peace: Kant
8. Revolution and Reaction: Paine and Burke
9. Liberalism, National Self-Determination and Civilization: Mill
10. Revolution and World History: Marx and Engels
11. Imperialism: Hobson and Lenin

Part Two
12. Inter-War Liberal Internationalism
13. ‘Classical’ Realism: Carr/Morgenthau
14. The Behavioral Revolution: from Classical to Scientific political theory
15. Neo-Realism: Structures and Science
16 and 17. Neo-Liberalism: Institutions and Hegemony
18 and 19. Post-Marxism: Class, Social Forces and Emancipation
20 and 21. Gender studies and Feminism
22. Constructivism: the social construction of interests
22 and 23. Postcolonialism
Readings

1. International Political Theory: approaches and themes

Essential reading:


Recommended reading:

Discussion
1. On what grounds can international politics be theorized separately from domestic politics?
2. Do IR traditions evolve or are they invented?
3. Why did Wight think there was no such thing as international theory?

2 and 3. ‘Ancient thinking’: Plato and Aristotle

Required readings:
Aristotle, The Politics. Ellis, trans. (Prometheus)

* Recommended = required readings for this session.

Discussion:
1. Is it possible to speak of the ‘administration of justice’?
2. Based on Aristotle’s work, what is the relationship between power and stability?
3. Is democracy essentially a good thing?

4. According to Plato, what would a ‘good’ politician be like?

4. Sovereignty, Property and the Laws of War: Grotius

Essential reading:
Grotius, H., The Free Sea (Mare Liberum, 1609), David Armitage (ed), Online Library of Liberty (http://oll.libertyfund.org/index)
Grotius, H., On the Law of War and Peace (De Jure Belli ac Pacis, 1625), Book 1, Chapter 2 & 3; Book 3. Constitution Society 1814 Translation (http://www.constitution.org/gro/djbp.htm)

Recommended reading:
Holk, L. van, and Roelofsen, C.G. (eds.), Grotius Reader (1983)
Jeffery, R., Hugo Grotius in International Thought (New York: Palgrave, 2006)
Keene, E., Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics (Cambridge: CUP, 2002).

Discussion

1. What are Grotius’s main claims in The Free Sea?
2. Is Keene right to see Grotius as justifying two forms of international order: a society of states in Europe and a colonial order beyond?
3. What are the key similarities and differences between Grotius’s view of justice in war and contemporary just war arguments?

5. Mini-writing Workshop

Bring a pencil/pen and 2 blank sheets of paper!

6. The State and the State of Nature: Hobbes

Essential reading:

Recommended reading:
Malvis, R. The Hobbesian Theory of International Conflict (Oslo: 1993)
Vincent, R.J., ‘The Hobbesian Tradition in Twentieth Century Thought’, Millennium
10, 2 (1981)


Discussion
1. Is Hobbes’s ‘state of nature’ a model of international politics in an inter-state system?
2. How different is Hobbes’s account of natural law from that of Grotius?

7. Perpetual Peace: Kant

Essential reading:
Hurrell, A., ‘Kant and the Kantian Paradigm in International Relations’, Review of International Studies 16, 3 (July 1990)
Recommended reading:
Brown, Garrett Wallace, Grounding Cosmopolitanism: from Kant to the idea of a cosmopolitan constitution, (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2009)
Gallie, W.B., Philosophers of Peace and War, ch. on Kant.
Lynch, C., ‘Kant, the Republican Peace, and Moral Guidance in International Law’, Ethics and International Affairs, 8 (1994)

Discussion
1. How does Kant’s theory differ from the earlier ideas about the law of nations of the ‘sorry comforters’, including Grotius?
2. What role does nature play in Kant’s account?
3. What role is played by philosophical history in Kant’s argument about perpetual peace?

8. Revolution and Reaction: Paine and Burke

Essential reading:
Recommended reading:
Discussion

1. Can revolution ever contribute to international order?

2. Examine Burke’s case for intervention against revolutionary France.

3. ‘A reactionary with a cause’. Examine this assessment of Burke’s international political theory

9. Liberalism, National Self-Determination and Civilization: Mill

Essential reading:


Recommended reading:

Bell, D. ‘John Stuart Mill on Colonies’, Political Theory 38 (1) 2010: 34-64.


Discussion

1. What is the relationship between ‘civilization’ and ‘self-determination’ in Mill’s thought?

2. Is Mill’s thought euro-centric rather than racist or imperialist?

3. Can you see a relationship between Mill’s liberalism and contemporary liberal arguments in international politics?

10. Revolution and World History: Marx and Engels

Essential reading:


Recommended reading:


Linklater, A., Beyond Realism and Marxism, Chapter 2 (London: Macmillan, 1990)


**Discussion**

1. What are the key features of Marx’s and Engels’s account of the relations between economy and politics?
2. Examine similarities and differences between Mill’s account of human development and that of Marx and Engels.
3. In what ways do Marx and Engels share the views and prejudices of their contemporaries about the non-European world?

**11. Imperialism: Hobson and Lenin**

**Essential reading:**


**Recommended reading:**


Linklater, A. Ch 4 in Beyond realism and Marxism: critical theory and international relations (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1990).


**Discussion**

1. Is imperialism a progressive or a reactionary doctrine?
2. What is the connection between imperialism and war?
3. Is imperialism a thing of the past?

**Part 2**

**12. Inter-war Liberal Internationalism**

**Essential reading:**


Recommended reading:

Angell, N., ‘Who are the Utopians? And who the Realists?’ Headway, Jan 1940.


Discussion

1. On what grounds did inter-war liberals believe that international anarchy could be tamed?

2. Whose illusion was the 'great illusion'?

3. ‘The ideas of inter-war liberal international theory are merely of archaeological interest’. Do you agree?

13. ‘Classical’ Realism: Carr and Morgenthau

Carr, E. H., The Twenty Years’ Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations (London: Macmillan, 1939)


Recommended reading:


Discussion

1. To what extent was Carr’s vision of a new international order rooted in reality?

2. ‘Carr used Realism, but at heart he was a Revolutionist’. Do you agree?
3. Evaluate the scientific basis of Morgenthau’s theory of international politics.
4. ‘Classical realism uses history but in a peculiarly ahistoric way’. Is this true?
5. In what ways, if any, did Morgenthau seek to go beyond realism?

**14. The Behavioral Revolution: From Classical to Scientific political theory**

**Essential reading:**

**Recommended reading:**
Kurki, M & Wight, C. ‘International Relations and Social Science’ in Dunne, Kurki & Smith (eds) International Relations Theories: discipline and diversity. JZ1305 I61,
Young, O. R., 'Professor Russett: Industrious Tailor to a Naked Emperor', World Politics, 21, 3 (1969)

**Discussion**
1. Is the scientific study of international relations an appropriate goal?
2. How revolutionary was the 'behavioral revolution'?
3. Does it matter if the science of IR cannot be value-free?

**15. Neo-Realism: Structures and Science**

**Essential reading:**
Waltz, K. N., Theory of International Politics (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), Chapter 1.

**Recommended reading:**

**Discussion**
1. What's new about neo-realism?
2. Is the weight given by realists to the concept of anarchy valid?
3. Can there be stability without hegemony?

16 and 17. Neo-Liberalism: Institutions and Hegemony

Essential reading:

Recommended reading:
Doyle, M., 'Liberalism in World Politics', American Political Science Review, 80, 4 (1986)

Discussion
1. Does interdependence refute realism?
2. What’s new about neo-liberalism?
3. Would the world be more or less peaceful without the multi-lateral institutions of the capitalist global economy?

18 and 19. Post-Marxism: Class, Social Forces and Emancipation

Essential reading:

Recommended reading:
Skocpol, T., 'Wallerstein's World Capitalist System: A Theoretical and Historical Critique', American Journal of Sociology, 82, 5 (1977)

Discussion

1. 'Capitalism not anarchy is the key fact of the international system'. Discuss.
2. Is the concept of imperialism applicable to contemporary international politics?
3. Is class still the most important cause of social exclusion in world politics?

20 and 21. Gender studies and Feminism

Essential reading:

Recommended reading:

Discussion

1. In what ways does feminism wish to change the discipline of international relations?
2. Is there a coherent feminist theory of international relations?
3. Is war a masculinist practice?

22. Constructivism: the Social Construction of Interests

Essential reading:

Recommended Reading
Reus-Smit, C., ‘Constructivism’ in Burchill et al Theories of International Relations 3rd edition.

Discussion

1. Are ideas as important as material factors in explaining international politics?
2. What kinds of identity matter in international relations?
3. How do constructivists understand power in international politics?

22 and 23. Post-colonialism

Essential Reading

Recommended Reading
Doty, R. Imperial Encounters (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996). CC X1395 D72
Edkins, J & Vaughan Williams, N. Critical Theorists and International Relations, Chapters 13, 28 and 30 (New York: Routledge, 2009). MC J21242 C93

Discussion

1. What are the implications of the critique of Eurocentrism for international political theory?
2. What does it mean to take a ‘subaltern’ point of view on international political theory?
3. Do ‘standards of civilization’ still operate in international society? If so, are they Eurocentric in character?

24 and 25. Poststructuralism and Postmodernism

Required:
Jameson, Fredric. Postmodernism or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism.
Foucault, Michel. Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972 (I encourage you to read the chapter entitled ‘Truth and Power’, p.109-133 but will also welcome your choice of another chapter that sparks your interests).

Discussion:
1. What is ‘post’ about postmodernism?
2. Is postmodernism true?
3. Nothing is fundamental. Discuss.

26 and 27. Media and political thought
Required:
Recommended:

Discussion:
1. Has the internet and other contemporary media technologies changed the way we think?
2. Media is not politics. Discuss.
3. “The world of art has been kept apart from the world of “vital” concerns’. Do you agree?

28 and 29. History(ies) of Political Thought
Review of course and preparation for final project.

30. Final Remarks and Feedback