

# GVPT200: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL RELATIONS

Kee Hyun Park

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OFFICE HOURS: Thursdays 3–5pm,

schedule at [calendly.com/keehyun/gvpt200](https://calendly.com/keehyun/gvpt200)

or by e-mail

CLASS: Weekdays 10–11:30am (July 8–26)

LOCATION: Zoom ([Link to Classroom](#))

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## Course Description

This course aims to introduce students to the central theories and themes in the academic study of International Relations. We begin with a survey of the core theoretical approaches in the discipline. We then explore the key topics and debates in contemporary international relations, covering issues related to international peace and security, international political economy, and international organizations. We conclude by discussing other important issues in world politics, including environmental politics, and international development.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon a successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of key concepts in the field of International Relations, including *sovereignty, power, peace, war, etc.*
- Analyze and evaluate theoretical assumptions and arguments of realist, liberalist, constructivist, and domestic oriented approaches to international relations
- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing on major topics in international relations
- Develop a theoretical argument backed up by evidence on contemporary political events

## Instructional Tools

- **Course website** (<https://umd.instructure.com/courses/1366110>): This website will provide all course materials as well as important announcements and the course syllabus.
  - **Video lectures.** You should watch video lectures (up to 60 minutes each) available at the course website before each class session begins.
  - **Readings.** You will not be required to purchase textbooks or other reading materials for this course. All course readings will be available online in PDF. Please note that these PDFs are distributed for educational purposes, may be protected by copyright, and should not be reproduced or distributed further.
  - **Lecture slides.** The lecture slides will be posted online, by noon the day before each session. The slides are posted to help you prepare for discussions, to ease the note-taking burden during lecture, and to facilitate greater student engagement during lecture.

## Course Requirements and Evaluation

Grades are not given, but earned. Your grade is determined by your performance on the learning assessments in the course and is assigned individually. Grades will not be curved. All assessment scores will be posted on the course website. If you would like to review any of your grades or have questions about how something was scored, please come to my virtual office hours or e-mail me to schedule a virtual meeting. Grades will be assigned based on the following:

- **Class participation.** Participation in class sessions will be an important factor in the final assessment. You will be given a grade for class participation that reflects the quantity and quality of your in-class comments, as well as your general attitude and effort toward the course.
- **Online Short quizzes.** You will take three online quizzes based on class readings (each taking 4% of the final grade), each due July 10 (Wednesday), 12 (Friday), and 19 (Friday) at 11:59pm.
- **Short paper.** You will write one short paper (approximately 5-7 pages in length & taking 15% of the final grade) which is due July 21 (Sunday) at 11:59pm. A handout describing the paper assignment is posted on our course website. For help with your ideas and the general direction of your paper, please set up a virtual meeting with me.
- **Exams.** You will take two exams (each taking 25% of the final grade), each of which will address material from Sessions 1 through 7, and Sessions 9 through 14. Exams are not cumulative. Additional details regarding exam content and format will be provided in lecture 2 days before each exam.

Assessment	Due Date & Time	% of Final Grade
Class participation	Ongoing	23%
Online short quizzes	July 10, 12, 19 at 11:59pm	4% × 3
Short paper	July 21 at 11:59pm	15%
Exams	July 17, 26	25% × 2

### Grade Breakdown.

The percentage to letter grade conversion chart that I will use is the following:

A+: 97 – 100	A: 93 – 96.9	A-: 90 – 92.9
B+: 87 – 89.9	B: 83 – 86.9	B-: 80 – 82.9
C+: 77 – 79.9	C: 73 – 76.9	C-: 70 – 72.9
D+: 67 – 69.9	D: 63 – 66.9	D-: 60 – 62.9
F: below 60		

## Course Policies

- **Attendance.** You are expected to come prepared for each session, having read *all required readings* watched the *recorded video lecture* listed under that date in the schedule below, and ready to engage in discussion. 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 slides, and you are responsible for this information in exams. If you cannot attend the lecture synchronously, I expect you to reach out to a fellow student to obtain lecture notes.
- **Extensions.** Extensions for any requirements will not be granted except in cases of documented emergencies or serious illnesses. If you have a medical excuse for missing a major grading event or deadline, you must provide me with detailed written documentation from the University Health Center (<https://health.umd.edu>) or another health care provider.
- **Late submission.** Any assignment turned in late will be docked ten percentage points of the assignment's grade for the first day it is late, as well an additional five percentage points for each additional day it is late. For example, if a short quiz (taking 4% of the final grade) is turned in three days later than its original due date, 0.8% (0.4% + 0.2% + 0.2%) of the final grade will be docked due to late submission.
- **Missed exams.** Missed exams in cases of illness or personal emergency can be accommodated only with proper documentation. Exams missed due to a university sponsored event or religious holiday may also be accommodated, provided that the student informs me of the conflict at least 3 days in advance. I reserve the right to accommodate a missed exam with a rebalancing of the remaining exams rather than a retake, should circumstances make this optimal.
- **Assignment review.** I am happy to review any graded assignment. However, I will not hear any concerns until 24 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, please be careful in your use of review.
- **Copyright.** Written or recorded lectures, lecture slides, handouts and tests, are copyright protected. This means that class lectures are copyrighted. You may not copy and distribute such materials except for personal use, and with my express permission. This means you may not audio-record or video-record class sessions without my permission, and you may not sell course materials or post them on a website. Be aware that copyright infringements may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.
- **Professionalism.** A large body of research demonstrates that students learn and retain more when they take handwritten notes and are free from distractions. I provide all lecture slides and videos online to help facilitate notetaking. I want you to be present and interactive with me in the virtual classroom. Please silence your cell phone, watch, etc. before class begins.
- **Academic integrity.** Cheating and plagiarism are absolutely unacceptable. I will employ various methods and techniques to detect cases of academic dishonesty. If you are unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me. When in doubt, always cite the source you have consulted. The university has a detailed code of academic integrity, which will apply to this course. You should familiarize yourself with this code, which is available at <https://policies.umd.edu/academic-affairs/university-of-maryland-code-of-academic-integrity>.

- **Accommodation of disabilities.** If you have any special condition that requires accommodation, please contact the Accessibility and Disability Services (ADS) office (<https://counseling.umd.edu/ads>) to obtain a letter of accommodation *in advance*. I will make every effort to work with you to meet any special needs, provided that you have given me the proper ADS documentation. Please try to provide documentation no later than July 11 (Tuesday).
- **Additional information.** Please visit <https://ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html> for the Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies and follow up with me if you have questions.

## Statement on Diversity and Inclusivity

The Government and Politics department deeply values the voices and perspectives of all people. We are committed to having a diverse department that recognizes and appreciates the differences in race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, abilities, class, nationality, and other factors. Our department prioritizes diversity and seeks to foster a diverse community reflected in its faculty, staff, and students.

In this class, students are invited to share their thoughts and a diversity of opinions is welcome. Respectful communication is expected, even when expressing differing perspectives. Supporting one's statement with research findings is encouraged. In accordance with free speech statutes, speech that contains threats of violence is prohibited.

## Reporting Racism and Other Forms of Hate and Bias

If you experience racism or other forms of bias in this class or any GVPT course, we encourage you to do at least one of the following:

- Report the experience to Kee Hyun Park, the instructor at [khpark@umd.edu](mailto:khpark@umd.edu).
- Report the experience to Professor Patrick C. Wohlfarth, the GVPT Director of Undergraduate Studies at [patrickw@umd.edu](mailto:patrickw@umd.edu).
- Report the experience to the GVPT Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee, led by Professor Antoine Banks at [abanks12@umd.edu](mailto:abanks12@umd.edu).
- Please also report all incidents of hate and bias to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at <https://diversity.umd.edu/bias/>.

## Course Schedule

### PART I: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

PLEASE DO WATCH THE FIRST VIDEO AND READ TWO READINGS BEFORE THE FIRST SESSION ↓

#### Session 1 (Monday, Jul 8) – Introduction and Realist Approaches to IR

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READINGS:
  - Jack Snyder, 2004, “One World, Rival Theories,” *Foreign Policy* 145(Nov/Dec): 52-62.
  - The New Yorker, “Why John Mearsheimer Blames the U.S. for the Crisis in Ukraine,” March 1, 2022.

#### Session 2 (Tuesday, Jul 9) – Liberalist and Constructivist Approaches to IR

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READINGS:
  - Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, 2018, “Liberal World: The Resilient Order,” *Foreign Affairs* 97(4): 16-24.
  - Alexander Wendt, 1995, “Constructing International Politics,” *International Security* 20(1): 71-81.

### PART II: ACTORS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### Session 3 (Wednesday, Jul 10) – Leaders, Elites, Public Opinion, and the Media

- REQUIRED READINGS:
  - WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
  - Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith, “Ukraine Fighting Russian Goliath: Why Dictators Are So Bad at War,” *The Hill*, March 29, 2022.
  - Politico, “How Elites Misread Public Opinion,” June 17, 2022.
- **Short quiz 1 (on Sessions 1 & 2) due at 11:59pm**

#### Session 4 (Thursday, Jul 11) – Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs)

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READINGS:
  - WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
  - The New York Times, “What Is the United Nations? Its History, Its Goals and Its Relevance,” September 24, 2019.
  - Martin Feldstein, 1998, “Refocusing the IMF,” *Foreign Affairs*, 77(2): 20-33.
  - The New York Times, “What Is Brexit? And How Is It Going?,” November 8, 2021.

## PART III: WAR, PEACE, AND PROSPERITY

### Session 5 (Friday, Jul 12) – Is War Declining?

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READINGS:
  - James D. Fearon, 2014, “Rationalist Explanations for War,” In Robert Jervis and Robert J. Art, eds, *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, Pearson, pp. 95-103.
  - Joshua, Rovner, “Has the United States Abandoned Arms Control?,” *War on the Rocks*, June 2, 2020.
  - The Economist Special Report, “The Future of War,” January 25, 2018.
- **Short quiz 2 (on Sessions 3 & 4) due at 11:59pm**

### Session 6 (Monday, Jul 15) – Civil Wars and Terrorism

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READINGS:
  - Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, William Reed and Katherine Sawyer, “What Really Stands in the Way of A Negotiated End to Syria’s War?,” *The Washington Post*, February 4, 2016.
  - Matthew J. Morgan, 2004, “The Origins of the New Terrorism,” *Parameters* 34(1): 29-43.

### Session 7 (Tuesday, Jul 16) – International Law and Human Rights

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READINGS:
  - Eric Posner, “The case against human rights,” *The Guardian*, December 4, 2014.
  - Thierry Cruvellier, “The ICC, Out of Africa,” *The New York Times*, November 6, 2016.

### Session 8 (Wednesday, Jul 17) – Exam 1 and Short Paper Preparation

- **Exam 1**

### Session 9 (Thursday, Jul 18) – International Political Economy and Trade Politics

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READING:
  - Douglas A. Irwin, 2015, “The World Trading System: The WTO, Trade Disputes, and Regional Agreements,” In *Free Trade Under Fire*, Princeton University Press, pp. 239-94.

### Session 10 (Friday, Jul 19) – The Global Financial System

- NO VIDEO LECTURE. INSTEAD, WATCH “INSIDE JOB (2010)” ([LINK](#)) BEFORE CLASS
- **Short quiz 3 (on Sessions 6-7 & 9-10) due at 11:59pm**

## PART IV: CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

NOTE: YOUR SHORT PAPER IS DUE SUNDAY, JUL 21 AT 11:59PM

### Session 11 (Monday, Jul 22) – The Rise of Others and the Politics of Alliances

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READINGS:
  - Andrew J. Nathan and Andrew Scobell, 2012, “How China Sees America: The Sum of Beijing’s Fears,” *Foreign Affairs* 91: 32-47.
  - Jack S. Levy, 2008, “Power Transition Theory and the Rise of China,” In Robert Ross and Zhu Feng, eds, *China’s Ascent: Power, Security, and the Future of International Politics*, Cornell University Press, pp. 11-33.

### Session 12 (Tuesday, Jul 23) – Trade Wars

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READINGS:
  - The Washington Post, “Was Trump’s China trade war worth it?,” January 15, 2020.

### Session 13 (Wednesday, Jul 24) – Climate Change and Environmental Politics

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READING:
  - Thomas Bernauer, 2013, “Climate Change Politics,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 16: 421-48.

### Session 14 (Thursday, Jul 25) – Immigration and Development

- WATCH VIDEO LECTURE
- REQUIRED READINGS:
  - Margaret E. Peters, “Trump wants to restrict trade and immigration. Here’s why he can’t do both”, *The Washington Post*, September 11, 2017.
  - Sarah Bermeo, “Development, self-interest, and the countries left behind,” *Brookings Institute: The Future Development blog*, February 7, 2018.

### Session 15 (Friday, Jul 26) – Exam 2