

Syllabus  
POLS 615: Western Political Theory  
Ball State University  
Winter/Spring 2022: 1/10/22 – 5/7/22  
Dr. Josh Vandiver | jvandiver2@bsu.edu | Office hours: TR 445–615pm

***This is an online synchronous course that meets Thursday evenings from  
5:30-8:10 pm Central/ 6:30-9:10 pm Eastern***

Course Description

Selection of key theories and ideas in the Western political tradition, with emphasis on how political theory enables deeper thinking about contemporary security challenges, including international, national, human, environmental, energy, and cyber security.

Course Texts

*Required*

Brown, C., Nardin, T. and Rengger, N. (2002) *International Relations in Political Thought: Texts from the Ancient Greeks to the First World War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Hereafter *IRPT*]

Schmitt, C. (2008) *The Concept of the Political*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Williams, P., and McDonald, M. (2018) *Security Studies: An Introduction*. London: Routledge. [Hereafter *SS*]

Sword, H. (2012) *Stylish Academic Writing*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Course Schedule

Week 1 – Introducing Political Theory (and Security Studies)

- Heywood, *Political Theory: An Introduction*, Ch. 1: “Concepts and Theories in Politics” [Canvas]
- Brown et al., “Introduction,” in *IRPT* (pp. 1–15)
- Williams and McDonald, “An Introduction to Security Studies,” in *SS* (pp. 1–13)

## Week 2 – Realism: Overview

- Jensen and Elman, “Realisms,” in *SS* (pp. 17–32)
- Booth and Wheeler, “Uncertainty,” in *SS* (pp. 131–146)
- Sword, *Stylish Academic Writing*, Chs. 1, 6

## Week 3 – Realism: Concepts

- Williams, “War,” in *SS* (pp. 175–190)
- Buzan, “Polarity,” in *SS* (pp. 147–160)
- Freedman and Raghavan, “Coercion,” in *SS* (pp. 191–205)
- Sword, *Stylish Academic Writing*, Chs. 4, 9

## Week 4 – Realism: Theorists

- Bodin, excerpts from *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, in *IRPT* (pp. 270–5)
- Hobbes, excerpts from *Leviathan*, in *IRPT* (pp. 335–40)
- Schmitt, *Concept of the Political*, “Introduction” (pp. 3–16), and §1–7 (pp. 19–68)
- Sword, *Stylish Academic Writing*, Chs. 5, 7

## Week 5 – Realism: Contemporary Challenges

- Kaufman, “Ethnic Conflict,” in *SS* (pp. 380–394)
- Spear, “Counterinsurgency,” in *SS* (pp. 422–436)
- Aldrich, “Intelligence,” in *SS* (pp. 437–451)
- Sword, *Stylish Academic Writing*, Chs. 8, 11

## Week 6 – Realism: Institutions

- Duffield, “Alliances,” in *SS* (pp. 267–81)
- Fawcett, “Regional Organizations,” in *SS* (pp. 282–97)
- Fénelon, “On the Necessity of Forming Alliances,” in *IRPT* (pp. 301–6)
- Gentz, “The True Concept of a Balance of Power,” in *IRPT* (pp. 307–10)
- Hume, “Of the Balance of Power,” in *IRPT* (pp. 407–9)
- Sword, *Stylish Academic Writing*, Chs. 12–13

## Week 7 – Liberalism: Overview

- Navari, “Liberalisms,” in *SS* (pp. 33–47)
- Barnett, “Culture,” in *SS* (pp. 161–74)

## Week 8 – Liberalism: Concepts

- Dexter, “Peace and Violence,” in *SS* (pp. 206–20)
- Gjørsv, “Human Security,” in *SS* (pp. 221–34)
- Beswick, “Development,” in *SS* (pp. 250–64)

## Week 9 – Liberalism: Theorists

- Saint-Pierre, *A Project for Settling an Everlasting Peace in Europe*, in *IRPT* (pp. 394–8)
- Rousseau, *The State of War and An Abstract and Judgement of Saint-Pierre’s Project for Perpetual Peace*, in *IRPT* (pp. 416–7)
- Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, in *IRPT* (pp. 410–5, 532–4)
- Kant, *Essay on Theory and Practice, Perpetual Peace, and The Metaphysical Elements of Right*, in *IRPT* (pp. 428–55)

## Week 10 – Liberalism: Challenges

- Hartung, “International Arms Trade,” in *SS* (pp. 467–81)
- Klare, “Energy Security,” in *SS* (pp. 497–510)
- Dalby, “Environmental Change,” in *SS* (pp. 526–40)

## Week 10 – Liberalism: Institutions

- Weiss and Zach, “The United Nations,” in *SS* (pp. 298–316)
- Pugh, “Peace Operations,” in *SS* (pp. 317–33)
- Avant, “Private Security Companies,” in *SS* (pp. 350–62)

## Week 12 – Securitization: Overview and Challenges

- Nyman, “Securitization,” in *SS* (pp. 100–13)
- McInnes, “Health,” in *SS* (pp. 541–55)
- Mitchell, “Outer Space,” in *SS* (pp. 569–81)
- United States Space Force, “Spacepower: Doctrine for Space Forces,” Space Capstone Publication, June 2020 [[Link](#)]

## Week 13 – Poststructuralism: Overview and Challenges

- Åhäll, “Poststructuralism,” in *SS* (pp. 86–99)
- Rogers, “Terrorism,” in *SS* (pp. 385–407)
- Siers, “Cybersecurity,” in *SS* (pp. 556–68)

## Week 14 – Postcolonialism: Overview and Challenges

- Manchanda, “Postcolonialism,” in *SS* (pp. 114–28)
- Pillar, “Counterterrorism,” in *SS* (pp. 408–21)
- Williams, “Transnational Organized Crime, in *SS* (pp. 452–66)

## Week 15 – Feminism: Overview and Challenges

- Whitworth, “Feminisms,” in *SS* (pp. 74–85)
- Bali, “Migration and Refugees,” in *SS* (pp. 482–96)
- Swaine, “Women, Peace, and Security,” in *SS* (pp. 511–25)

## Evaluation of Student Performance

Seminar participation	10%
Seminar presentation	15%
Short op-eds (6)	25%
Responses to short op-eds (6)	25%
Long op-ed	20%
Response to a long op-ed	5%

## Course Format

### *Overview*

This course will operate as a discussion-based, student-centered, interactive seminar. It will focus upon the sources listed in the schedule above, sources we will “unpack” each week through a combination of short lectures and peer presentations, interactive seminar discussion, short op-ed essays and peer responses, and a long op-ed essay refined through peer critique.