

Seung-Whan Choi, Ph.D.  
1136 BSB  
Phone: 312-413-3280

**Email:** whancoi@uic.edu  
**Web:** <http://www.uic.edu/~whancoi/>  
**Office Hours:** T and R, 08:30 am – 09:30 am or by appointment

PolS 384 International Relations Theory  
Fall 2014  
Room 1115, BSB  
T and R, 09:30 am - 10:45 am

## COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to offer a broad overview of International Relations theory. We will take great care to examine different IR theories in detail. Each will express fairly simple ideas but the mechanics of each theory can, at times, be analytically complex. To build a critical understanding of these works, you will find it best to read through the material *slowly and carefully*. It will often be necessary to re-read portions of the most essential material. While each of the readings we examine helped to initiate an energetic research tradition in IR, we will still discover weaknesses in each of these undertakings. To appreciate these weaknesses (and, of course, the strengths), you must be prepared to invest a great deal of intellectual energy. To help you better understand IR theories, this course will also use the medium of film. Film provides a window to the world and this course will explore how various aspects of international affairs and IR theories have been covered and dramatized by movies.

## COURSE MATERIALS

There are no required textbooks for this course. All your course readings along with the syllabus are already sent to your UIC email account.

## GRADING POLICY

*Class Attendance (20 points):* Regular attendance is required of all students. Attendance is one of the most important measures of your interest and desire to do well academically. Your attendance helps me facilitate better discussions, and your fellow students benefit from your ideas and experiences. **Without appropriate documentation, each absence will cost you two points. If you fail to attend more than seven times, your course grade will be lowered by one letter grade. If you fail to attend more than ELEVEN times, your course grade will be an F. There will be no exceptions. If you come late twice (i.e., after I check the class attendance), it will be counted as one absence.**

*Class Participation (10 points):* You are expected to actively participate in class discussion. Participation includes thoughtful comments, sophisticated questions about readings, clear evidence of active listening of your fellow students, and other valuable contributions to classroom discussion.

*Two Movie Reviews (3 points each):* Their purpose is to get you to critically think about three movies. If you do not attend the movie sessions, your reviews will not be accepted. Each movie review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

*Eight Critical Reviews (3 points each):* Their purpose is to get you to critically evaluate IR theories. Each critical review must discuss important aspects of both readings and movie. If you do not attend the movie sessions, your reviews will not be accepted. Each critical review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

*Two Take-Home Exams (20 points each):* Their purpose is to get you to critically analyze and theorize the root causes of America's homegrown jihadists.

The grading scale is as follows: **A** (>= 90 points); **B** (80-89); **C** (70-79); **D** (60-69); **F** (< 60)

## **OTHER COURSE POLICIES**

**Late work:** I am willing to help solve almost any special problem or concern you might have with this course. However, this is only possible if you talk with me about it *in advance* of assignment due dates. Extensions for assigned work will be granted only for documented medical or family emergencies. In sum, if you anticipate difficulty submitting assigned work by the specified due date because of an illness or other emergency, extensions are possible only when you:

- contact me in advance **by email only**
- provide me with appropriate documentation **within one week after the due date**

**Extremely important:** For the record, you must keep our email exchanges for extensions granted *in your email account* (i.e., both your request email to me and my grant email to you). If you fail to present both emails, your claim will not be supported. This means that for your own protection, you can delete our email exchanges from your email account 60 days after you are officially able to check your final course grade on line.

**Computer-related problems:** Ultimately, you are responsible for backing up your own work and caring properly for your own computing equipment. I may grant extensions for assignments due to computer-related problems, but only in the rarest of circumstances. First, I will not entertain any requests for extensions due to computer-related problems made to me within 12 hours of the paper's due date. If you expect computer difficulties that make it impossible for you to submit a paper by the due date (and that due date is not within 12 hours) contact me and we will discuss alternative arrangements for you.

**Accommodations for disabilities:** Students with disabilities must inform me of the need for accommodations. Those who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Disability Resource Center. Please contact ODS at 312-413-2183 (voice) or 312-413-0123 (TTY).

**Academic dishonesty:** The University expects students to fulfill their academic obligations through honest and independent effort. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious offense subject to strong disciplinary actions, including but not limited to being dropped from the course with a grade of "F."

**Classroom etiquette:** You are expected to observe all rules of proper classroom conduct. In order to insure an appropriate environment conducive to learning by all: (1) please refrain from talking, eating or other disruptive activity during class- even one or two conversations quickly create distractions for other students; (2) no cell phone calls, incoming or outgoing, are allowed in this class- please turn off your cell phone or set to vibrate; and (3) please do not come to class late. Also, please do not leave class early. If you must do so, tell me beforehand so I can arrange for you to sit near the door so your exit will be less disruptive.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

**August 26: What Are We Going To Learn?**

**August 28 and September 2: How to build a Theory: A Beautiful Mind**

**September 4:** The first movie review, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

**September 4 and 9: Quantitative vs Qualitative Approaches: Moneyball**

**September 11:** The second movie review, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

**September 11 and 16: Realism and Liberalism**

- Reading: Choi, Seung-Whan. 2013. "What determines U.S. Humanitarian Intervention?" *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 30 (2): 121-140.  
Morgenthau, Hans J. 1967. "To Intervene or Not to Intervene." *Foreign Affairs* 45 (3): 425-436.
- Movie: Black Hawk Down

**September 16:** The first critical review, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

**September 18 and 23:** Assessing and Addressing the Threat: Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noDGBGxAaeM>)

**September 25 and 30:** Research Break

**October 2:** The first take-home exam, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

Answer the following question:

What are the root causes of America's homegrown terrorism? Include **one** of homegrown terrorist plots/incidents such as the Boston Marathon bombings in April 2013 and Moner Mohammad Abusalha's suicide bombing in Syria in May 2014.

The answer must include an introduction, body, and conclusion. It must be **five** pages long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

**October 2 and 7:** Diversionary War Theory

- Readings: James, Patrick and Jean Sebastien Rioux. 1998. "International Crises and Linkage Politics: The Experiences of the United States, 1953-1994." *Political Research Quarterly* 51 (3): 781-812.  
Meernik, James and Peter Waterman. 1996. "The Myth of the Diversionary Use of Force by American Presidents." *Political Research Quarterly* 49 (3): 573-590.
- Movie: Wag the Dog

**October 7:** The second critical review, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

**October 9 and 14:** Marxism

- Reading: Ollman, Bertell. 1973. "Marxism and Political Science: Prolegomenon to a Debate on Marx's Method." *Politics & Society* 3 (4): 491-510.
- Lecture by Richard D. Wolff, July 29, 2012, Crisis and Openings: An Intensive Introduction to Marxism (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T9Whccunka4>).

**October 14:** The third critical review, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

**October 16 and 21:** Deterrence Theory

- Readings: *The Economist*. June 16, 2011. "Nuclear Endgame: The Growing Appeal of Zero." Kristensen, Hans M., Robert S. Norris, and Ivan Oelrich. April 2009. "From Counterforce to Minimal Deterrence: A New Nuclear Policy on the Path Toward Eliminating Nuclear Weapons." *Federation of American Scientists & The Natural Resources Defense Council*. Occasional Paper No. 9 ([http://www.fas.org/pubs/\\_pages/occ\\_pap7.html](http://www.fas.org/pubs/_pages/occ_pap7.html)).
- Movie: The Mouse that Roared

**October 21:** The fourth critical review, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

**October 23 and 28: International Security Studies: What the Eggheads can teach the Generals**

- Lecture by Michael Desch, October 14, 2009, International Security Studies: What the Eggheads can teach the Generals (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5QJeV4SIYQ>).

**October 30 and November 4: Democratization Theory**

- Readings: Anderson, Lisa. May/June 2011. "Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the Differences between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya." *Foreign Affairs* 90 (3): 2-7.  
Lutterbeck, Derek. 2013. "Arab Uprisings, Armed Forces, and Civil–Military Relations." *Armed Forces & Society* 39 (1): 28-52.
- Movie: May 18

**November 4:** The fifth critical review, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

**November 6 and 11: Civil War Theory**

- Readings: Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97 (1): 75-90.  
Wimmer, Andreas, Lars-Erik Cederman, and Brian Min. 2009. "Ethnic Politics and Armed Conflict: A Configurational Analysis of a New Global Data Set." *American Sociological Review* 74 (2): 316-337.
- Movie: Hotel Rwanda

**November 11:** The sixth critical review, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

### November 13 and 18: Understanding Islam

- Documentary: Inside Islam (History Channel)

### November 20 and 25: Terrorism

- Readings: Azam, Jean-Paul and Véronique Thelen. 2010. "Foreign Aid versus Military Intervention in the War on Terror." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54 (2): 237-261.  
Eland, Ivan. 2007. "Excessive U.S. Military Action Overseas breeds Anti-U.S. Terrorism." Religion and Terrorism Conference Paper. Downloaded from [http://www.wcfia.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/615\\_\\_Eland.pdf](http://www.wcfia.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/615__Eland.pdf).
- Movie: The Battle of Algiers

**November 25:** The seventh critical review, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

### November 27: No Class: Thanksgiving

### December 2 and 4: Why Civil Resistance Works: Nonviolence in the Past and Future

- Reading: Blake, John. August 18, 2013. "Four Ways to beat 'the Man'." *CNN* ([http://www.cnn.com/2013/08/17/us/four-ways-to-beat-the-man/index.html?hpt=hp\\_t1](http://www.cnn.com/2013/08/17/us/four-ways-to-beat-the-man/index.html?hpt=hp_t1)).
- Lecture by Erica Chenoweth, February 3, 2012, Why Civil Resistance Works: Nonviolence in the Past and Future (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHkzgDOMtYs>).

**December 4:** The eighth critical review, due by 09:30 AM (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

### December 8: The Second Take-Home Exam, Due by 09:30 AM by Email only

Answer the following question:

What are the root causes of America's homegrown terrorism? Include **three** of homegrown terrorist plots/incidents such as the Boston Marathon bombings in April 2013 and Moner Mohammad Abusalha's suicide bombing in Syria in May 2014.

The answer must include an introduction, body, and conclusion. It must be **ten** pages long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the 12 point font size, with 1 inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

September 4, 2013

**SAMPLE FORMAT**

Your Name

The first movie/critical review

Introduction

Body

Conclusion