

**INRL 300**  
**International Relations in Disciplinary Perspective**  
**The College of William & Mary**

Fall 2020

Instructors: Prof. Amy Quark and Prof. Maurits van der Veen

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Office hours:

Quark: Wednesdays 10:30am to noon (Zoom link on BB), or by appointment

van der Veen: by appointment (Zoom) or, weather permitting, Wednesdays 2-4pm outside Tyler Hall.

*Course Description:* Students enrolled in this course have taken classes in history, economics, sociology, and political science that introduce the basic theories, methods, and epistemologies of these disciplines. These introductory courses rarely explore the relevance of disciplinary perspectives to important questions in international relations. This course, therefore, has three main goals. It seeks to give students: (1) a better understanding of the similarities and differences in how historians, economists, sociologists, and political scientists approach the study of international relations; (2) an appreciation for the analytical benefits and limitations of integrating the four perspectives; and (3) the tools to decide how they want to focus their coursework and research going forward.

How does the course accomplish these goals? We do so in two ways. First, students will spend the first half of the semester discussing four big questions about scholarship across these disciplines. These questions are: Is theory useful for explaining event? What counts as knowledge in the respective disciplines? How do scholars determine causation? And should scholarly research be policy relevant and for whom? The class will then examine the obstacles and benefits to disciplinary synthesis in international relations analysis. Finally, we will spend the bulk of the second half of the semester instilling an appreciation for multidisciplinary analysis and gaining greater knowledge in history and the social sciences through hands-on analysis. Students will write one case memo. The memo will use the perspectives of economics, history, sociology, and political science to explain one of the cases assigned.

*Required Reading:* All readings on the syllabus and all course documents are available on Blackboard (<http://blackboard.wm.edu>). You are expected to read a major newspaper on a daily basis. You are also encouraged to read other relevant periodicals, such as the *Economist*, *National Interest*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *New Republic*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *Survival*, *Orbis*, etc.

*Delivery Mode:* This course will be delivered through both asynchronous and synchronous modes of instruction. Synchronous classes will be recorded for the use of students in different time zones, particularly those in the St. Andrews program. Students are highly encouraged to join synchronously whenever possible. The mode of delivery for each class is stated in the course schedule below.

*Class Recordings:* Some meetings of this course will be recorded. Recordings will be available only to students registered for this class. This is intended to supplement the classroom experience. Students are expected to follow appropriate university policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Recordings may not be reproduced, shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments; violations may be subject to disciplinary action. If the instructor or a William & Mary office plan any other uses for the recordings, beyond this class, students identifiable in the recordings will be notified to request consent prior to such use.

*Course Requirements:* You are expected to attend class, complete the readings before the class for which they were assigned, and participate actively in class discussions (especially the discussion sections). Graded assignments include two exams and a four-page final policy memo. Each exam will comprise of a take-home essay. It will test your ability to think creatively and critically about course material. The essay must be turned in on BB by the start of the class on the day it is due.

**No student can pass the course without completing *all* assignments.**

*Grading:* Your participation in class discussions and performance on the exams and policy memo will determine your final grade. They are weighted as follows:

Participation: 15%  
Midterm: 25%  
Final exam: 25%  
Final policy memo: 35%

*Participation:*

In addition to participating in class meetings, students are required to submit two questions on BB before each panel of guest speakers. These questions must be submitted by 11:59pm the day before the panel. The due dates for these questions are indicated on the course schedule below.

Students will also have the opportunity to earn **participation extra credit** by attending outside speaker events related to international relations. You can earn this extra credit by attending four speaker events during the fall semester. If you attend four speaker events, we will raise your class participation score by one letter grade.

Before attending event, check with us to make sure that the event is sufficiently related to international relations. You will then write a half page summary of the event to deposit on the course Blackboard site. The summary must include the event title, date, time, location, and an honor pledge that you attended at least 70% of the event.

*Late Assignments:* Rescheduling an exam or receiving a paper extension because of an absence requires advance notice. Take-home essays will be penalized one letter grade for each day they are late. Final policy memos will be penalized one-third of a letter grade for each day they are late (i.e., the grade for a memo that is one day late will be lowered, for example, from an A- to a B+).

*Academic Honesty:* You are expected to adhere to the tenets of the Honor Code when completing course assignments; they will be strictly enforced. If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism (e.g., the rules for properly attributing cited material or how to paraphrase), please ask for clarification from me before handing in your work.

**\* COURSE SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE  
AT THE DISCRETION OF THE INSTRUCTORS\***

**Part I: Points of Divergence**

**WEEK 1**

**August 20: Introduction**

**August 21: No discussion section**

**WEEK 2**

**August 25: Is theory useful?**

\*Asynchronous lectures on BB

- Readings:
- \* Jack Levy, “Too Important to Leave to the Other: History and Political Science in the Study of International Relations,” *International Security* (1997): pp. 22-33.
  - \* Paul Krugman, “Two Cheers for Formalism,” *Economic Journal* (1998): pp. 1829-1836.
  - \* Sankaran Krishna, “Race, Amnesia, and the Education of International Relations,” *Alternatives* 26:401-424.

**August 27: Is theory useful? (Marcus Holmes and Laurie Koloski)**

\*Synchronous panel and Q&A (also recorded)

**August 28: Discussion section**

\*Synchronous discussion (also recorded)

- Question:
- \* Historian John Lewis Gaddis argues, “When theories are right, they generally confirm the obvious. When they move beyond the obvious, they’re usually wrong.” To what extent is theory building a useful exercise in the study of international relations? Why do you think historians and social scientists disagree on the utility—even feasibility—of generalization?

**WEEK 3**

**September 1: What questions do we ask?**

\*Asynchronous lectures on BB

- Readings:
- \* Barry Buzan and Richard Little, “Why International Relations has Failed as an Intellectual Project and What to do About It?” *Millennium* (2001): pp. 19-39.
  - \* Yale Ferguson, “Diversity in IR Theory: Pluralism as an Opportunity for Understanding Global Politics,” *International Studies Perspectives* (2015): pp. 3-12.
  - \* Quito J. Swan, “Review of Vitalis, Robert, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations*. (2016), August, H-Diplo, H-Net Reviews. <https://networks.h-net.org/node/28443/reviews/139065/swan-vitalis-white-world-order-black-power-politics-birth-american>
  - \* Zvobgo, Kelebogile and Meredith Loken, “Why Race Matters in International

Relations,” *Foreign Policy* (2020), June 19.  
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/06/19/why-race-matters-international-relations-ir/>

**September 3: What questions do we ask? (John Lopresti, Hiroshi Kitamura)**

\*Synchronous panel and Q&A (also recorded)

**September 4: Discussion section**

\*Synchronous discussion (also recorded)

Questions: \* What are the major contributions to the study of IR made by economists, political scientists, sociologists, and historians? What kinds of questions is each best at addressing?

**WEEK 4**

**September 8: What counts as knowledge?**

\*Asynchronous lectures on BB

- Readings:
- \* Richard Ned Lebow, “Social Science and History: Ranchers Versus Farmers?” in Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, ed., *Bridges and Boundaries: Historian, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations* (MIT Press, 2001), READ ONLY pp. 133-135.
  - \* John Lewis Gaddis, “In Defense of Particular Generalization: Rewriting Cold War History, Rethinking International Relations Theory,” in Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, ed., *Bridges and Boundaries: Historian, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations* (MIT Press, 2001), READ ONLY pp. 307-311.
  - \* Paul Schroeder, “History and International Relations Theory: Not Use or Abuse, but Fit or Misfit,” *International Security* (1997): pp. 64-74.
  - \* Milja Kurki, “Critical Realism and Causal Analysis in International Relations,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* (2007):361-378. READ pp. 361-369.

**September 10: What counts as knowledge? (S. Harish and Paul Mapp)**

\*Synchronous panel and Q&A (also recorded)

**September 11: Discussion section**

\*Synchronous discussion (also recorded)

Questions: \* To what extent do historians and different social scientists differ regarding how they make knowledge claims? Do these differences prevent scholars from producing interdisciplinary research? Can these obstacles be overcome? Do they need to be?

**WEEK 5**

**September 15: How is evidence collected and analyzed?**

\*Asynchronous lectures on BB

- Readings:
- \* Andrew Bennett and Alexander L. George, “Case Studies and Process Tracing in History and Political Science: Similar Strokes for Different Foci,” in Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, ed., *Bridges and Boundaries: Historian, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations* (MIT Press, 2001), READ ONLY pp. 137-160.

- \* Gary Goertz. *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), pgs. 41-48 & 220-226. (A research Methods discussion of the differences between quantitative and qualitative analysis)
- \* Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," *Archival Science* (2002):1-19.

**September 17: How is evidence collected and analyzed? (Caroline Hanley; Nathaniel Throckmorton)**

\*Synchronous panel and Q&A (also recorded)

**September 18: Discussion section**

\*Synchronous discussion (also recorded)

Questions: \* What can historians and different social scientists learn from each other when collecting and analyzing evidence? Is one approach superior (or not) to another?

**WEEK 6**

**September 22: Should research be policy relevant? For whom?**

\*Asynchronous lectures on BB

- Readings:
- \* Michael Burawoy, "Sociology - Going Public, Going Global," Introduction to *Public Sociology against Market Fundamentalism and Global Inequality*: Beltz Juventa published in German, (2015). Pp. 1-8.
  - \* Bruce Jentleson and Ely Ratner, "Bridging the Beltway-Ivory Tower Gap," *International Studies Review* (2011): pp. 6-11.
  - \* Alexander George, "Knowledge for Statecraft: The Challenge for Political Science and History," *International Security* (1997): pp. 44-52.

**September 24: Should research be policy relevant? For whom? (Amy Oakes and Jennifer Bickham-Mendez)**

\*Synchronous panel and Q&A (also recorded)

**September 25: Discussion section**

\*Synchronous discussion (also recorded)

Questions: \* Political scientist Steven Krasner observes, "Almost none of the research we do in political science has much of an effect on policy makers. They don't have time to read the stuff we write and they would ignore most of it if they did have the time. It does happen occasionally, but it is just very rare." Is it the responsibility of IR scholars to do policy relevant work? Who should be the target of advice to influence policy? Why is the research of some disciplines valued more by policymakers than others? How can IR scholars—across disciplines—make their work more useful to decision-makers? What are the power relations through which policy advice is distilled?

**Part II: Approaches to Synthesis**

**WEEK 7**

**September 29: How is disciplinary and theoretical synthesis encouraged?**

\*Asynchronous lectures on BB

Readings: \* Daniel Nielson, Michael J. Tierney, and Catherine Weaver, "Bridging the Rationalist–Constructivist Divide: Re-engineering the Culture of the World Bank," *Journal of International Relations and Development* (2006): pp. 107-139.  
\* Michael J. Tierney and Catherine Weaver, "Principles and Principals? The Possibilities for Theoretical Synthesis and Scientific Progress in the Study of International Organizations," unpublished ms, READ especially pp. 14-24.

**October 1: Bridging political science and sociology (Mike Tierney)**

Readings: \*TBA

**October 2: No discussion section, Take-home essay #1 due**

**WEEK 8**

**October 6: Bridging Political Science and Sociology (Paula Pickering; prerecorded)**

\*Asynchronous lectures on BB

Readings: \* Danović and Pickering, "Public Scepticism of internationally supported civil society organizations"

**October 8: Latin American and Globalization (Fabricio Prado; prerecorded)**

\*Asynchronous lectures on BB

Readings:

**October 9: Discussion section – QUARK DISCUSSION SECTION CANCELLED (I will be at a virtual conference)**

Questions: \* How do the guest speakers bridge disciplinary divides (or not)? What are the strengths and weaknesses of their approaches?

**WEEK 9**

**October 13: Bridging economics and history in practice (John Parman, prerecorded)**

\*Asynchronous lectures on BB

Readings: \* John Parman, "Childhood Health And Sibling Outcomes: Nurture Reinforcing Nature During the 1918 Influenza Pandemic," *Explorations in Economic History* (2015): pp. 22–43.

**October 15: Bridging ? (Maurits van der Veen)**

\*Synchronous lecture (also recorded)

**October 16: Discussion section**

\*Synchronous discussion (also recorded)

Questions: \* How do the guest speakers bridge disciplinary divides (or not)? What are the strengths and weaknesses of their approaches?

## WEEK 10

### October 20: Bridging political science, sociology and history (Amy Quark)

\*Synchronous lecture (also recorded)

Readings: \* Amy Quark, "Ratcheting up protective regulations in the shadow of the WTO: NGO strategy and food safety standard-setting in India. *Review of International Political Economy* 23(5):872-898.

## Part III: Practicing Synthesis and Policymaking

### October 22: Writing a policy memo decision-makers will *actually* read

\*Asynchronous lectures on BB

Readings: \* Tyler Bembenek and Caper Gooden, *Irregular Migration in the Mediterranean: Recommendations for U.S. Action*, Project on International Peace and Security (PIPS), College of William & Mary, January 2015.  
\* Alanna Whytock, *Japan's Aging Population and the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance*, Project on International Peace and Security (PIPS), College of William & Mary, April 2009.  
\* For additional PIPS policy briefs, see: [www.wm.edu/pips](http://www.wm.edu/pips).  
\* IFPRI, The Global Food Problem Isn't What You Think.  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/01/02/global-food-problem-isnt-what-you-think/?utm\\_term=.b8e0d4d87259](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/01/02/global-food-problem-isnt-what-you-think/?utm_term=.b8e0d4d87259)

### October 23: Discussion Section

\*Synchronous discussion (also recorded)

Questions: \* What are the hallmarks of a useful policy memo? What are the main temptations that we must avoid when trying to craft an effective policy memo? Research from which discipline do you think will be most easily integrated into policy analysis? Why?

## WEEK 11

### October 27: Case Study: COVID-19

\*Delivery mode TBA

### October 29: Case Study: COVID-19

\*Delivery mode TBA

### October 30: Discussion Section

\*Synchronous discussion (also recorded)

## WEEK 12

**November 3: Case Study: COVID-19**

\*Delivery mode TBA

**ADDITIONAL COURSE HOURS:**

**November 5: Case Study: Reparations for Colonialism**

\*Delivery mode TBA

**November 6: Discussion section**

\*Synchronous discussion (also recorded)

**ADDITIONAL COURSE HOURS:**

**WEEK 13**

**November 10: Case Study: Reparations for Colonialism**

\*Delivery mode TBA

**November 12: Case Study: Reparations for Colonialism**

\*Delivery mode TBA

**November 13: Discussion section; Take-home Essay #2 due, 5pm**

\*Synchronous discussion (also recorded)

**November 18: Final policy memo due at 5pm (final exam period as scheduled by the Registrar)**

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