

PSC 346: Individuals and World Politics

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Description: This course surveys and evaluates the field of international politics from the vantage point of individual decision-makers. Theories and models of international behavior that examine international politics from this perspective are grouped into three categories: decision-making, micro-level, and rational choice approaches.

One purpose of the course is to evaluate the “great man” theory of world history, that is, the claim that individuals *qua* individuals largely shape the world we live in. An equally important purpose is to establish criteria by which this and similar assertions about causality are evaluated.

Required Texts:

- Cashman, Greg. *What Causes War?* New York: Lexington Books, 1993.
- Schelling, Thomas. *Arms and Influence*. Yale, 2008.

Requirements:

Students are expected to attend class and keep up with the reading assignments. You may be called on to comment on the readings.

There will be two in-class examinations, each of which will count for 40 – 45% of the final grade. The dates of each examination will be announced during the semester. It is the student’s responsibility to take note of these dates. Make-up examinations will *not* be given. Classroom participation, including attendance, will count for 10 – 20% of the final grade.

From time to time, additional assignments will be posted on the class web page that can be reached at: <http://pluto.fss.buffalo.edu/classes/psc/fczagare/default.htm>.

You will be notified of these assignments by e-mail. Please make sure that you are receiving messages from the PSC 346 Listserv.

Students are strongly encouraged to read the *New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, *Newsweek*, or another news source during the course of the semester. Students are assumed to have a basic understanding of world affairs and current events.

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The following is a chronological list of topics and suggested readings covered in this course.

I. Approaches To The Study Of International Politics

1. Idealism v. Realism

- Paul R. Viotti and Mark V. Kauppi (1999). *International Relations Theory*. 3rd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 55 – 93.*
- John A. Vasquez (1997). “The Realist Paradigm and Degenerative versus Progressive Research Programs: An Appraisal of Neotraditional Research on Waltz’s Balancing Proposition.” *American Political Science Review*, 91: 899 – 912.#

2. Behavioralism v. Traditionalism

- Cashman, Chapter 1

II. Richard Snyder’s Decision-Making Approach (The Original Formulation)

- Richard Snyder, H.W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin, “The Decision-Making Approach to International Politics,” in James Rosenau, ed., (1969) *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, rev. ed. New York: Free Press, pp. 199 – 206.*
- Glenn D. Paige, “The Korean Decision,” in James Rosenau, ed., (1969). *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, rev. ed. New York: Free Press, pp. 461 – 472.*
- James E. Campbell (2000). “The Referendum that Didn’t Happen: The Forecasts of the 2000 Presidential Election.” *PS*, 35: 33 – 38.*
- Bueno de Mesquita, pp. 11 – 18.

III. Other Decision-Making Approaches

1. *The Synoptic Ideal v. Disjointed Incrementalism*
 - Herbert Simon (1987). “A Life Spent on One Problem,” *New York Times*, (Nov. 26).*
 - David Braybrooke and Charles E. Lindbloom, “Types of Decision-Making” in James Rosenau, ed., (1969). *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, rev. ed. New York: Free Press, pp. 207 – 216.*
 - Sidney Verba, “Assumptions of Rationality and Non-Rationality in Models of the International System,” in James Rosenau, ed., (1969). *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, rev. ed. New York: Free Press, pp. 217 – 231.*
2. *Do Different Models Make A Difference?*
 - Graham T. Allison (1969). “Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis.” *American Political Science Review*, 63: 689 – 718.#
 - Cashman, Chapter 4

IV. Micro-Level Approaches

1. *Instinct Theories*
 - Cashman, Chapter 2
2. *Personality Studies*
 - Alexander and Juliette George, *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House: A Personality Study*, in Nelson W. Polsby, Robert A. Dentler and Paul Smith (1963). *Politics and Social Life*, pp. 192 – 208.*
 - Joseph de Rivera, “Interpersonal Relations: Commands and Communication,” in William Vocke, (1976). *American Foreign Policy*, New York: Free Press, pp. 3863.*
 - Walt Anderson (1976). “Looking for Mr. Active-Positive,” *Human Behavior* (October).*
 - “Carter and Reagan: Clues to Their Character,” *US News & World Report*, (October 27, 1980).*
 - Charles F. Hermann and Margaret G. Hermann (1967). “An Attempt to Simulate the Outbreak of World War I,” *American Political Science Review*, 61: 400 – 16.#
 - Cashman, pp. 36 – 49.
 - [Janice Gross Stein](#), “Psychological Explanations of International Conflict” in Walter Carlsaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons, eds., *Handbook of International Relations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002, pp. 292 – 308.

3. *Images and Perceptions*

- Cashman, pp. 49 – 76, Chapter 6.
- David M. Lampton (1973). “The U.S. Image of Peking in Three International Crises.” *The Western Political Quarterly*, 26: 28 – 49.#
- Urie Bronfenbrenner (1986). “The Mirror Image in Soviet-American Relations.” *Journal of Social Issues*, 16: 45 – 56. Excerpt from Ralph K. White, *Psychology and the Prevention of Nuclear War*. New York, NYU Press, 1986, pp. 71 – 81.*.
- Ole R. Holsti (1962). “The Belief System and National Images: A Case Study.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 6: 244 – 52.#
- Ole R. Holsti, Richard A. Brody, and Robert C. North (1964). “Measuring Affect and Action in International Relations Models: Empirical Materials from the 1962 Cuban Crisis.” *Journal of Peace Research*, 1: 170 – 89.#

V. Rational Choice Approaches

1. *Expected Utility Models (Decision Theory)*
 - Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, entire book.
 - Bueno de Mesquita, “The Contributions of Expected-Utility Theory to the Study of International Conflict.” In Manus Midlarski, ed., *Handbook of War Studies*. Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989.*
 - Zagare and Kilgour, pp. 16 – 24
2. *Game Theory*
 - Frank C. Zagare (2008). “Game Theory.” In Paul D. Williams, ed., *Security Studies*. New York: Routledge, pp. 44 – 58.*
3. *Deterrence*
 - Frank C. Zagare (2004). “Reconciling Rationality with Deterrence.” *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 16: 107 – 141.*
 - Cashman, Chapter 7 – 9; Chapter 10, highly recommended.

= available at <http://www.jstor.org/>

* = available from instructor