Political Science 310B: International Relations Theory  
Stanford University, Winter Quarter 2010  
Tuesdays 2:15–5:05pm, Encina West Room 400  
http://coursework.stanford.edu

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Office Hours (Encina West 411)  
Wednesdays 9am-12pm

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Office Hours (Encina West 310)  
Tuesdays 1:00–2:00 pm  
and by appointment

PS 310B is part of a three-quarter graduate-level sequence in international relations theory. The primary audience is political science graduate students intending to take the qualifying exam and/or write a field paper in IR. Graduate students from other departments and advanced undergraduates with adequate preparation may be admitted to the course with permission from the instructors.

The course sequence PS 310 A–C has three main objectives:

1. To give students a brief introduction to the large academic literature on international politics, with the goal of helping them to prepare for the synthesis and analysis they will be required to carry out on the IR field exam.

2. To introduce students to a variety of frontier research problems that animate current work in the field, so they can see and evaluate examples of how empirical research is actually conducted rather than just commenting on “the classics” or reading pure theory.

3. To initiate one or more of their own empirical research projects, to gain practical experience in elaborating a theoretical argument, drawing out testable implications, assembling and analyzing relevant evidence, and presenting the work in stages before colleagues. For some students this may entail producing a first draft of a field paper.

PS 310A (fall quarter) introduces IR theories and applies them mostly to topics in international security. 310B (winter quarter) expands on the main theoretical traditions in the field and applies them to issues in international political economy.
Course Requirements:

1. Regular attendance and participation in seminar discussion

2. Four short papers (maximum 4 pages) that critically examine the readings for a given week. You may choose the weeks for which you will write papers. Each week’s papers will be due at 5:00pm on the Monday before class meets. Please send your papers by email to plipscy@stanford.edu and tomz@stanford.edu. Use the following naming convention for attachments: LastName#.doc, where LastName is your surname and # is 1, 2, 3, or 4, depending on whether this is your first, second, third, or fourth short paper.

These short papers should address some aspect of the week’s readings. You may
- Critically examine a set of arguments,
- Appraise a controversy in the literature,
- Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the research designs employed, and/or
- Propose a new research project that builds on the literature.

3. A 10-page research proposal, due on Friday, March 19. The proposal should present a hypothesis related to the course and develop a strategy for testing it. Indicate how you would measure the key dependent and independent variables, obtain a sample of cases, and use data to assess the hypothesis.

Note: We will not allow incompletes in this class, so please plan accordingly.

Readings:

All readings are available through the coursework website. There is no course reader.
Schedule and Assignments

Week 1 (1/5): Introduction

Background reading:


Week 2 (1/12): Theoretical Approaches


Week 3 (1/19): Trade—Domestic Preferences


Week 4 (1/26): Trade—Domestic Institutions


**Week 5 (2/2): Trade—International Power and Institutions**


Week 6 (2/9): Finance 1 – Sovereign Debt and Financial Crises


Week 7 (2/16): Finance 2 – Foreign Direct Investment


**Week 8 (2/23): Sovereignty and Hierarchy**


Week 9 (3/2): Finance 3 – Money and Exchange Rates


Week 10 (3/9): Energy and the Environment


Bonus Week (TBA):

You get to choose the topic of discussion for this “bonus” session!