

# PO8054 Great Power Politics

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Office Hours: Monday 10-12

**Course Description:** Great powers are the central actors for understanding how this plays out in international politics. Great powers shape the institutions that govern the system, help determine when cooperation is more or less feasible, and their conflicts remake global orders. As China rises and the US declines in a relative sense, the issues related to great power politics have taken on a new urgency and this capstone will provide students an opportunity to improve their understanding of a key question related to these problems. The module will examine how great powers establish international order and provide structure and governance in international relations; how great powers manage their rise and decline; conflict among great powers; and how great powers influence the domestic politics of other states.

## Assessment

### Participation 15%

Student participation and discussion is a central aspect of the seminar. This means that it is necessary to do the readings. Students should come prepared with topics of discussion and questions. The assessment of participation will be based on the quality of input into class discussions. To prepare for discussion you should: identify the theory or argument of the readings; identify the method used by the authors in the readings to test their arguments, and evaluate the strength of these method for testing the authors' argument; and you should think of possible extensions or alternatives to the arguments put forward in the readings.

### Response Papers (800 words each) 20%

Students are required to submit two 800-word response papers each worth 10% of the student's total mark. Students must submit one paper during the first 3 weeks and one from the remaining two weeks. These response papers should critically evaluate the readings. This means identifying a weakness or limitation in the articles and offering suggestions on how to improve the research. The critical evaluation may focus on the empirical or theoretical aspects of the readings or both.

### Presentation 15%

Each student will be required to provide a 5 minute presentation on one of the readings. These presentations are intended to stimulate discussion. To this end, the presentation should provide a brief over view of the reading, highlighting the main points. Students should emphasise potential questions for discussion and, critically, why these questions are of interest. There should be no or minimal summary of the readings. Grading will be based on the quality of content and presentation of the argument. A sign up list for the presentations will be distributed in the first week of term.

## **Research Design Paper (2500 words) 50%, Due March 11 2020**

The research design paper focuses on a potential research project related to the military and politics. Based on the course materials or other knowledge related to the topic, students should identify a question of interest or puzzle that they do not feel is adequately answered in the literature. Students should define their research question, outlining the variation they hope to explain, develop a preliminary theory to explain the variation, then detail the methods they would use to test the theory. When outlining the methods students should pay close attention to issues such as how they conceptualise their key variables (both independent and dependent variables) and the data they would use to measure them and how the methods they propose can be used to falsify their theory.

## **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism is a serious matter and must be avoided. Students should be familiar with what constitutes plagiarism. Please see <http://www.tcd.ie/undergraduate-studies/general-regulations/plagiarism.php> for further information regarding plagiarism and the university's policy regarding it.

## Course Outline

The weekly coverage might change as it depends on the progress of the class.

### Week 1: Power Politics and International Order

#### Required Reading:

- Goddard, S. E. and Nexon, D. H. (2015). The dynamics of global power politics: A framework for analysis. *Journal of Global Security Studies*, 1(1):4–18
- Barnett, M. and Duvall, R. (2005). Power in international politics. *International organization*, 59(1):39–75
- Lake, D. A. (2011). *Hierarchy in international relations*. Cornell University Press, pp 1-93

#### Recommended Reading:

- McConaughy, M., Musgrave, P., and Nexon, D. H. (2018). Beyond anarchy: Logics of political organization, hierarchy, and international structure. *International Theory*, 10(2):181–218
- Katzenstein, P. J. and Seybert, L. A. (2018). Protean power and uncertainty: Exploring the unexpected in world politics. *International Studies Quarterly*, 62(1):80–93
- Goddard, S. E., MacDonald, P. K., and Nexon, D. H. (2019). Repertoires of statecraft: instruments and logics of power politics. *International Relations*, 33(2):304–321
- Bull, H. (2012). *The anarchical society: a study of order in world politics*. Macmillan International Higher Education

### Week 2: Rise, Decline, and Revisionism

#### Required Reading:

- Shiffrinson, J. R. I. (2018). *Rising Titans, Falling Giants: How Great Powers Exploit Power Shifts*. Cornell University Press, pp1-41, 119-159
- Goddard, S. E. (2018). Embedded revisionism: Networks, institutions, and challenges to world order. *International Organization*, 72(4):763–797
- MacDonald, P. K. and Parent, J. M. (2011). Graceful decline? the surprising success of great power retrenchment. *International Security*, 35(4):7–44

#### Recommended Reading:

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### **Week 3: Conflict and War**

#### **Required Reading:**

- Braumoeller, B. F. (2008). Systemic politics and the origins of great power conflict. *American Political Science Review*, 102(1):77–93
- Lemke, D. and Reed, W. (2001). War and rivalry among great powers. *American Journal of Political Science*, pages 457–469
- Carson, A. (2016). Facing off and saving face: covert intervention and escalation management in the Korean war. *International Organization*, 70(1):103–131

#### **Recommended Reading:**

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### **Week 4: Status**

#### **Required Reading:**

- Ward, S. M. (2017). Lost in translation: Social identity theory and the study of status in world politics. *International studies quarterly*, 61(4):821–834
- Larson, D. W. and Shevchenko, A. (2010). Status seekers: Chinese and Russian responses to US primacy. *International Security*, 34(4):63–95
- Duque, M. G. (2018). Recognizing international status: A relational approach. *International Studies Quarterly*, 62(3):577–592

#### **Recommended Reading:**

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## Week 5: Great Powers and Domestic Order

### Required Reading:

- McDonald, P. J. (2015). Great powers, hierarchy, and endogenous regimes: Rethinking the domestic causes of peace. *International Organization*, 69(3):557–588
- Boix, C. (2011). Democracy, development, and the international system. *American Political Science Review*, 105(4):809–828
- Gunitsky, S. (2017). *Aftershocks: Great Powers and Domestic Reforms in the Twentieth Century*, volume 154. Princeton University Press, Chap 1-2

### Recommended Reading:

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