International Politics
During Teaching Weeks at Trinity College (excluding Reading Week)
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The module introduces students to issues of contemporary relevance in international relations. The module focuses on recent research in the field in areas of substantive importance. The goal of the module is to make students aware of productive areas of research and methodological approaches.

Requirements and Grading

Reading

All course participants are expected to come to class each week having completed all the assigned readings, having thought about them carefully, ready to contribute to discussion.

Response papers/research extensions (30%)

Three short response papers (each equal value). These papers should outline an additional research question motivated by the readings and topic of that week. This can be as simple as an empirical extension of one of the papers. The papers should then provide a brief outline of how the question or hypothesis would be tested. Response papers should be at least one but no more than four double-spaced pages long.

Class Participation (20%)

Student participation in class discussion and debate on the readings is a central element of the seminar. Students are expected to have read all required readings and to have acquired detailed knowledge and developed informed critiques of the readings prior to the class meeting. The objective of class discussion will be to critically assess the readings and offer insights on what direction new research could and should proceed in the field. Students will be evaluated on the quality of their input in class discussion and debate. Those who are deemed to be falling behind in class participation may be asked to submit additional response papers.

Some questions to keep in mind while reading: What are the central theories discussed in the study? Are the assumptions of the theory consistent or do they contradict each other? If the study seeks to test a theory with evidence, what are the findings? How would you rate the quality of the test, e.g. do the data adequately measure the theoretical concepts; is the design strong enough to adequately test the theory? Are there cases that the author has overlooked? How would you go about re-designing the test to overcome any limitations? Can the study be extended to cover other issue areas; if so, which ones?

In general, students should keep in mind 3 questions: What is good about the work? What are the problems? And how could it be done better?

Presentation
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 overview 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 and the discussion questions. A sign up list for the presentations will be distributed in the first week of term.

Research Design

Students will be required to submit a long paper at the end of the term. The objective of the paper is to lay out a research design for a larger empirical project which seeks to explain variation in any outcome related to world politics. The paper must formulate a clear research question, connect a theory or theories covered in class to the outcome to be studied, derive a set of hypotheses which will be tested empirically, discuss how the test will be conducted (as well as how concepts will be measured and how the relevant data will be collected), and offer an informed discussion on the expected results of the test. The ultimate goal of the paper is to provide a solid foundation for the development of your dissertation.

Summary of Grading

20% Class Participation
30% Reaction Papers (three papers of equal value)
10% Presentation
40% Research Proposal

Week 1 Introduction: Order, Power, and Anarchy


Week 2 Hierarchy


Week 3 State-building and international relations


**Week 4 Diplomacy**


**Week 5 Technology**


**Week 6 Secrecy**


**Week 7 reading week.**

**Week 8 Borders and Walls**


**Week 9 Law and War**


**Week 10 Leaders**


**Week 11 Racism and ethnicity**


**Week 12 Partisanship**

