IR 382: Order and Disorder in Global Affairs

Spring 2011
SOS B44
School of International Relations
University of Southern California
Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30-1:50pm

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 11AM-12, 5PM-6, Thursday, 2PM-3 and by appointment

I. Course Description, Objectives and Requirements:

“Order and Disorder in Global Affairs” is a course designed to help students make sense of one of the fundamental questions we can ask about international relations and politics in general: how is world order established, maintained, or destroyed? In an important sense, order is what the “study of politics seeks to discern and the practice of politics seeks to achieve” (Zartman 2009: 3). Are we seeing the modern era of world politics ending and a new, postmodern era beginning? What do these changes mean for the current period of American international political dominance?

In this class we will seek to understand the past in order to better understand the future of world order. We will consider the appropriate terrain—civilizational, historical, philosophical—upon which to base our inquiries into world order. We will ponder the relationship between order and power, order and change, order and justice, and order and legitimacy, inquiring also into the current sources of disorder—such as terrorism, environmental degradation, inequality, intrastate violence—and how the international system can address them.

We will take a close look at the European “discovery” of the “New World” and the mid-17th century European creation of the now familiar patterns of modernity. After tracing the rise of the modern Westphalian world order, we will pose the question: to what extent was the 20th century world shaped by United States hegemony? We will examine the renewal of American hegemony after the events of September 11, 2001 and its consequences for global order. Finally, we will consider topics such as: what alternative world orders are possible (Confucian, Islamic, etc.), what the relevant actors in any world order transformation will be, what new patterns of order/disorder are likely, what such an order’s central political organizing principle would be (if not sovereignty), and what the role of the United States should be in the post-Cold War, post-9/11 international order.

The main purpose of IR 382 is to present students with the intellectual tools to think through these big issues. In pursuing this goal, we will gain familiarity with international history while developing our ability to apply (sometimes quite advanced) IR theory to the study of world
politics in the intellectual spirit of the late Professor Hayward Alker, who originally created and taught this class here at USC. To this end, students are expected to come to all class sessions ready to discuss the week’s readings, and raise thoughtful questions about these readings, prior readings, or lecture points. Attendance is of course a prerequisite, but engaged, prepared, active, meaningful class participation and the focused application of critical thinking skills are the keys to success in this class. In addition to providing a forum for discussion, IR 382 will give students the opportunity to hone their skills through a program of intensive directed reading, the completion of several critical reflection papers, and occasional, reading-based short answer assignments.

**Grading:**

Participation, classroom exercises 15%
Reflection papers 30% (three 1250 word essays, due February 3, March 24, April 21)
Midterm (February 22) 25%
Final Exam (Wednesday, May 11, 2-4 p.m.) 30%

**Readings** (texts on order at the USC Bookstore and reserve at Leavey library):


All other readings are available on USC’s Blackboard system (https://blackboard.usc.edu/).

**Classroom policies:**

**In the classroom:**
Please be sure to help the instructor maintain a collegial atmosphere necessary for learning by keeping comments civil and respectful and being attentive to the contributions of your instructor and your fellow students. The lectures and discussions in this class will demand the full use of your undivided cognitive abilities; therefore, the use of laptops is discouraged. Before we start class, please discontinue the use of and stow all portable electronic communication and entertainment devices and be sure your device is in an off-position or silent (*not vibrating*) mode. Messaging, tweeting, texting, chatting, hacking, multiplayer gaming, social networking, bargain shopping, portfolio managing or using electronic devices in *any manner* that distracts from classroom activities will not be tolerated, and WILL result in a lowered participation grade (for example, students texting in class will have their attendance grade lowered by 1% per occurrence and may be asked to leave if they are disruptive). Audio or video recording of class sessions is not allowed without explicit permission from the instructor.

**Outside the classroom:**
Check Blackboard for important messages, assignments, and updates. I recommend that students keep open communication lines with me particularly regarding factors that have an effect on
their performance as students; the best way to reach me is USC email, however I will not (necessarily) be responding immediately to messages sent after 9PM or on weekends/holidays. I will only excuse emergency medical absences upon the presentation of verifiable, appropriate medical or other documentation if such requests are presented to me in a timely manner. Please do not expect travel plans to be a legitimate excuse for missing class. With a proper request (i.e., early notification), I will consider giving 1% credit for successful participation in and completion of a service-learning program such as TIRP. I will consider writing letters of recommendation for students who have taken at least two courses with me with at least an A- average (hint: I don’t normally recommend distracted or disruptive students).

Notes on written work:
*All written work should be neat—free of spelling and grammatical errors, double-spaced, page numbered, with a word count—and utilize appropriate citation practices.
*It is strongly suggested that assignments accord with the citation practices and reference standardization found at www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html, or a similar style guide. Author-date style is preferred. Students are also advised to consult a helpful guide to research papers, such as The Craft of Research by Wayne C. Booth, et al. (University Of Chicago Press), or Stephen Van Evera’s Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science (Ithaca. NY: Cornell University Press).
*Written work must be submitted by the relevant deadline, both as a hard copy to my box in VKC 330, and as an electronic attachment uploaded to the Blackboard system (turn-it-in). Late work will be penalized one half grade for each day late (A to A-, etc.). Yes, this includes weekends.

Statement for Students with Disabilities
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. http://www.usc.edu/disability

Statement on Academic Integrity
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://web-app.usc.edu/scampus/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. Information on the review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/ and http://web-app.usc.edu/scampus/1400-academic-integrity-review-process/. A primer on
plagiarism and how to avoid it is at: http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html. Contact the instructor with any questions.

II. Schedule

1) Order in IR: Contemporary Debates

January 11 (week 1): Introduction
No readings (please read the syllabus thoroughly)

January 13: Order and world politics

January 18 (week 2): Order and civilization
* Samuel P. Huntington “America in the World,” Hedgehog Review (Spring 2003), pp.7-18.

January 20: The contemporary situation

January 25 (week 3): Realist and Liberal orders

January 27: Liberal Order, American identity in historical perspective

Recommended:
February 1 (week 4): The Order/Justice debate

Optional:

February 3: Order, justice and legitimacy REFLECTION PAPER #1 DUE

Optional:
*Farhang Rajaee, ch. 8 in Zartman, pp.183-201.

February 8 (week 5): Critiquing order and international society

2) World Order in Historical Perspective

February 10: Historical perspectives on international society: human webs and humanity

Recommended:

February 15 (week 6): The Spanish encounter the new world
Tsvetan Todorov, The Conquest of America, pp.3-50.

February 17: The Spanish encounter the new world, continued
Todorov, pp. 53-97, (skim 98-123), 127-145.

February 22 (week 7):
**MIDTERM** Please bring a bluebook and a pen!
3) Transitioning to Modernity

**February 24: Modernity**  

**March 1** (week 8):  
Toulmin, pp.45-174.

**March 3:**  
Toulmin, pp.175-209.

**March 8** (week 9): *Historical world orders*  

**March 10:**  

Optional:  
Knutsen, pp.140-169.

**SPRING BREAK**

4) From Modernity to Postmodernity?

**March 22** (week 10): *Non-Western and alternative world orders (and justices)*  

Recommended:  
*Steve Chan,* “Chinese Perspectives on World Order,” ch. 10 in Hall and Paul, pp. 197-212.

**March 24**: *Challenging the secular order? REFLECTION PAPER #2 DUE*  

**March 29** (week 11): *Ecology, the environment and resource competition*  

**March 31: Regions and order**

**April 5 (week 12): Civilizations and civilizational dialogue reconsidered**

**April 7: Civilizations reconsidered**
* Mark B. Salter, “Not Waiting for the Barbarians,” in Hall and Jackson, pp. 81-93.

**April 12 (week 13): Liberalism and US primacy**

**April 14: A critique of American world ordering practices**
Christian Reus-Smit, American Power and World Order, pp.1-68.

**April 19 (week 14):**

**April 21: Polyarchy and primacy REFLECTION PAPER #3 DUE**
*Schroeder, “From Hegemony to Empire the Fatal Leap,” ch. 4 in Zartman, pp.61-87.
Optional:
*Gustav Schmidt, “Primacy and Other Ways of Shaping World Order,” ch. 7 in Zartman, pp.143-182.

**April 26 (week 15): Future prospects**

**April 28: Conclusions**

**Final Exam:**
Wednesday, May 11, 2-4 p.m.