

“Flammarion engraving.” Artist unknown. Published in *L’atmosphère: Météorologie Populaire* (Paris, 1888).



## PS 1581: CAPSTONE SEMINAR IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (W) PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE & GLOBAL POLITICS

Fall 2022

- Faculty: Dr. Horia M. Dijmarescu (HOR-yah DIJ-muh-reh-skoo) (pronouns: he/him/his)  
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- Class time: [Redacted]
- Classroom: [Redacted]. To protect each other, I strongly recommend continuing to wear masks that cover the nose and mouth during in-person classes.
- Student hours: [Redacted], **in person or via Zoom**. Student hours are times I have blocked off in my schedule to meet with you to discuss any concerns you might have, including, but not limited to questions about course materials / concepts / deadlines, accessibility / life events / anything that affects your safety or wellbeing, stress related to current events, your career plans, etc. Please sign up here: [Redacted]. Meetings are in 20-minute

increments. If you'd like more than 20 minutes or these times don't work for you, we can schedule alternatives via email. I ask that you please wear a mask for in-person student hours (and I will too!).

### **Course Description**

In the social sciences, the quest to design sound research has, at times, led to attempts to mimic the natural sciences, often elevating large-n quantitative and positivist qualitative research above interpretive and reflexive research. Some scholars, on the other hand, claim that sound research projects can be based on different ontological and epistemological assumptions than those of quantitative research, and thereby standing on their own merits. In this course, we will explore, evaluate, and apply the philosophical grounding of various epistemological and methodological debates. Throughout the term, students will gain hands-on experience by working on their own research projects. Though the course puts methodological and philosophical debates in conversation with substantive questions arising from international relations and global studies, the skills students will learn are applicable to the study of American politics, comparative politics, history, anthropology, sociology, economics, and other social science disciplines.

### **Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

This course will improve understanding of the philosophical justifications for various social scientific research approaches, explore similarities, differences, and tradeoffs among social scientific research approaches, encourage reflective and systematic scholarship, and provide opportunities to apply various methodological approaches to personal research interests. Since the course is taught through a global politics lens, students will appraise how methodological choices shape what scholars notice about social, cultural, economic, political, and historical processes across time and space. Upon completing this course, students will be able to assess sophisticated research designs motivated by a variety ontological and epistemological assumptions. Students will review each other's works with an eye for how philosophy of science debates impact the parameters of research on global political phenomena. By the end of the semester, students will have completed a substantial portion of the work required for developing a philosophically grounded, well-researched, theoretically interesting, and coherently argued undergraduate thesis paper on a specific global political phenomenon of their choosing.

### **Inclusive Learning, Sensitive Materials, and Resources**

This course serves all students, whatever their backgrounds, experiences, and ways of identifying. The class is a safe space in which to respectfully exchange ideas about the substantive and methodological merits of the arguments presented in the course materials. Our personal lived experiences undoubtedly inform how we analytically assess the world. Scholars' perspectives are also informed by their own backgrounds, experiences, and ways of identifying. With respect to the works we read, we should try to situate them in their historical and biographical contexts, though we may vehemently disagree with their arguments. Some readings may be emotionally difficult on account having descriptions of violence and other experiences that evoke suffering. I do not assign readings with the intent of upsetting you, nor do I like to gratuitously play "devil's advocate." If something from the readings bothers you, please let me know how you're feeling. Often, when something from the reading bothers you, I find myself feeling similarly, so please know you're not alone. Often, too, I find that talking it out together can help.



I encourage and appreciate suggestions for how to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for others. As part of an effort to protect and cultivate the diversity students bring to the classroom and given the sensitive nature of some of the topics we cover, I propose we work towards an atmosphere of trust and safety in the classroom. As I've said, some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions. Please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let me know if something said or done in or beyond the classroom, either by me or other students, makes you uncomfortable. With respect to one another, I ask you to be generous and kind in framing critiques, especially when we strongly disagree with one another's points of view.

The classroom is a space in which to be respectful of differences of gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, race, culture, nationality, linguistic background, and immigration status. I therefore ask you to please watch your language; please avoid insensitive comments. I also want to note that class rosters are usually provided to instructors with your legal name. As a class, we will address you by the name(s) and pronoun(s) with which you are comfortable, so please let me know if the roster information doesn't correctly reflect you.

I encourage you to proactively protect your health. If you feel unsafe or unwell, please dial **9-1-1** for emergencies. If you have non-emergency physical or mental health concerns, please consider getting in touch with the folks at the **Student Health Center** (<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/shs/about-us/contact/>) and/or the **Counseling Center** (<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cc/>). Please also take a moment to review the **University's COVID-19 guidelines**: <https://www.coronavirus.pitt.edu/>. During the entirety of all in-person classes, you (and I) recommend wearing a mask (bandanas are not masks) that covers your nose and mouth, regardless of vaccination status. If this is not feasible for you, please contact **Disability Resources and Services** (*link below*) as soon as possible so that I can work to accommodate you and the safety of the class. If you do not properly wear a mask in class (and do not have a pre-approved medical exception), I will kindly ask you to leave. If you are feeling unwell—and especially if you have a fever, respiratory symptoms, loss of taste or smell, or other symptoms associated with COVID-19—**do not come to class!** Instead, please contact your primary care physician for medical guidance about testing and quarantining. Any absences on account of illness will be excused.

Please also let me know if you have concerns about accessibility. If you require any accommodations, please register with **Disability Resources and Services** (<https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/disability-access/disability-resources-and-services>) as early as possible and also tell me that you have done so. Additionally, if any class meetings conflict with religious events, illness, medical appointments, family obligations, etc., please let me know and we'll work together to ensure you're on track in the course.

If you'd like to report sexual harassment, violence, or misconduct of any kind, please reach out to the **Office of Sexual Harassment and Assault Response and Education (SHARE)** (<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/share/>). Please also familiarize yourself with **Pitt and Community Assistance Resources** (<https://pitt.libguides.com/assistanceresources>).

If you have technological trouble or need to gain access to electronic resources, please reach out to **Information Technology** (<https://www.technology.pitt.edu/>) and let me know as well.

### **Determination of Grades**

Grades in this course follow Dietrich guidelines, with the corresponding percentages:

A+	4.00	(97% - 100%)
A	4.00	(94% - 96.9%)

A-	3.75	(90% - 93.9%)
B+	3.25	(87% - 89.9%)
B	3.00	(84% - 86.9%)
B-	2.77	(80% - 83.9%)
C+	2.25	(77% - 79.9%)
C	2.00	(74% - 76.9%)
C-	1.75	(70% - 73.9%)
D+	1.25	(67% - 69.9%)
D	1.00	(64% - 66.9%)
D-	0.75	(60% - 63.9%)
F	0.00	(<59.9%)

An A+ signifies superlative work, an A is for outstanding work, and an A- stands for excellent work. Grades in the B range signify work that is very good (B+), good (B) or more than adequate (B-). Grades in the C range signify work that is acceptable in varying degrees. **Unexcused late assignments** may be penalized by 1/3 of a full letter grade for each day they are late (1 day late would bring an otherwise A- paper into the B+ range, and so on) so please submit assignments on time and talk with me in the event of unforeseen circumstances that prevent you from doing so.

While I will always try my best to get assignments back to you in a timely manner, because of the volume of materials I must review, please be patient in receiving grades. My goal is to be as fair in assessing the quality of your work while also recognizing the effort you put into it. Out of respect for the work you put into the course, I tend to give back extensive written feedback on assignments that you turn in before the end of the semester. **If I mark up your work more than you expect, please don't get discouraged.** We can work together to ensure that you improve over the course of the semester, and I take substantial improvement into account in determining final grades. Pitt students are outstanding, and evaluations are by necessity somewhat comparative. If you are concerned about your understanding of course materials and concepts, be proactive and reach out to me as early as possible. If you would like to improve your writing skills, there are resources for that too. Pitt also provides writing support via **The Writing Center**: <https://www.writingcenter.pitt.edu/>.

If you are unhappy with your grade on a specific assignment, you may write a 1-page memo in which you state why you think the substance of your work merited a higher grade. The memo is required because I will use it as a guide for re-examining your work. I will grade your assignment from scratch (which means your grade may go *up* or *down*). That said, my goal is never to penalize just for the heck of it. **If you are concerned about your understanding of course materials, it is best to be proactive. Please talk with me *before* an assignment is due. I am here to help.**

### Academic Integrity

In this class and beyond, you are expected to adhere to all policies and requirements of the University of Pittsburgh and to abide by all applicable laws and regulations. This includes but is not limited to the following duties: (1) not to seek an unfair advantage over other students, by giving or receiving unauthorized assistance during completion of academic requirements; (2) to truthfully represent fact and self at all times; (3) to respect the personal rights and personhood of all members of the Pitt community; and (4) to avoid plagiarism (please note that CANVAS has tools that allows instructors to see whether parts of papers are improperly lifted from other sources). To learn more about plagiarism, please check out this resource: <https://www.plagiarism.org/article/what-is-plagiarism>. If you have questions about whether something qualifies as plagiarism, please talk with me before you turn in your assignment. If any student cheats, plagiarizes, or in any manner violates Pitt rules regarding appropriate academic conduct,

the incident will be reported, and the relevant information will be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies for appropriate action. If a violation of Pitt's rules of academic conduct is deemed to have taken place, the student may receive a **F for the class**. For Dietrich academic integrity resources please visit this link: <https://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policies-and-procedures/academic-integrity-code>.

### **Required Materials**

1. Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2016).
2. Sandra Harding, *Is Science Multicultural? Postcolonialisms, Feminisms, and Epistemologies* (Indianapolis: Univ. of Indiana Press, 1998).

*Any additional readings will be available online.*

### **Assignments**

#### *Participation and One-on-One Meetings (5%):*

**This is a discussion-based seminar. Regular attendance and active class participation are required. You should come to each meeting prepared to discuss that week's topics in detail.** Active participation entails demonstrating critical thinking by connecting concepts across various themes of the course, engaging with me and fellow classmates, being an attentive listener to others, and creatively applying theoretical concepts to worldly situations.

**You may have one no-questions-asked unexcused absence during the term. Please discuss any absences beyond that with me.** I usually air on the side of lenient in excusing absences. I also want to ensure you're on track, so please communicate with me about how you're doing. If you're feeling unwell, test positive for COVID-19, or face extenuating life circumstances, your absence(s) will, of course, be excused.

Here are some questions you might think about as you prepare for class:

- How would you concisely summarize the week's main argument? (*Also, see next assignment*)
- What future possibilities are the week's main arguments calling us to?
- How would you defend each authors' arguments (even if you disagree)?
- How would you critique each authors' arguments (even if you agree)?
- What are the stakes in the reading(s), and for whom?
- What unspoken assumptions appear in the readings?
- What other questions should we ask about the material(s)?

In addition to participating in class discussion, I ask that each student **schedule three one-on-one meetings with me during my student hours, during weeks 2, 9 and 13**. The purpose of the first meeting is to discuss your research topic and goals for the course. The second meeting will focus on the work you've done exploring the literature about your topic as you put together your Research Design Project (*see below*). And during the third meeting we'll talk about how your Presentation (*see below*) preparations and research papers are coming along before the end of the semester is upon us. While these meetings will be informal in tone, they are intended to help you identify and resolve challenges at critical points in the semester so please come prepared to have

substantive discussions about your work. Of course, I encourage you to come to student hours beyond these three required meetings as well.

### Research Design Project (45%)

**Each student will produce on a three-part research design.** The three components are equally weighed (15% each). Please proofread your work before turning it in to avoid stylistic and substantive errors.

**Component I:** For this component, you'll come up with and write down various kinds of research questions. You've already identified topics about which you want to learn more so the goal here is to reflect on different ways of asking questions about your chosen topic. You'll get a chance to broaden, then you'll have to narrow in a bit. First, enumerate questions that come to mind from the nearly infinite interesting questions you can ask about your topic. This first set of questions are **exploratory questions**. They can span any number of topics that interest you. Don't limit yourself. Think big. Be creative. Ask tough questions that have **theoretical significance** and to which you may not find an easy answer. Avoid research questions that can be answered with yes, no, or maybe – you want to pose an *analytical* question that steers you towards explanation. Also avoid normative (i.e., “what should...?”) questions. Be precise with your wording/framing.

Document these exploratory questions and turn in these exploratory questions in component I. Here are some exploratory questions that came to my mind about human rights politics (I use this example from my Spring 2022 Politics of Human Rights course):

- (a) *What determines the political power of human rights groups?*
- (b) *Under what conditions to states comply with human rights treaty obligations?*
- (c) *How do international human rights norms shape public policy given the pervasiveness of human rights abuses?*
- (d) *What forms of political institutions are in/effective protectors of human rights?*
- (e) *How does civic education affect individual commitment to human rights norms?*
- (f) *Why do people disagree on whether healthcare/clean air/assisted suicide/etc. are rights?*
- (g) *What affects people's likelihood of empathizing with survivors of human rights abuses?*

From among your enumerated exploratory questions, decide—in direct (student hours) consultation with me—what you would like your **main research question** to be (it may be a synthesis from among the ideas in your exploratory questions). In addition to clearly labeling your main research question, you should draft a concise paragraph that explains why chose that research question. What about it motivates you?

Once you've chosen your main research question (and have written up your justification paragraph), it'll be time to work together to pick it apart. The research needed to find answers to a theoretically significant question can be overwhelming because it's not always clear where to start. Examine your main research question and ask yourselves what **subsidiary questions** logically follow from it and write them down. Then, do the same for the first round of subsidiary questions you wrote down. As an example, I'll use as my main research question: *how do international human rights norms shape state policy given the pervasiveness of human rights abuses?* Here are some example subsidiary questions that come to mind:

- 1. *To which international human rights norms are we referring?*
  - a. *By what criteria should we determine which human rights norms to use to clarify the scope of the question?*
    - i. *What constitutes a “human rights norm”?*

- ii. *What/who determines whether something is a “norm”?*
  - iii. *What/who determines whether something is an “international norm”?*
- 2. *By what processes, if any, do norms (regardless of content) shape public policy?*
- 3. *At what level of analysis are we defining “public policy”?*
  - a. *Are there ways to define public policy without conflating it with state-level policy?*
- 4. *Are certain norms likely to systematically shape public policy in particular ways?*
- 5. *Do norms “shape”? That is, do norms act? Or do norms require actors to “do” them?*
  - a. *What sort of actors “do” (“enact”? “practice”? what’s the right word here?) norms?*
  - b. *How does the identity of those who “do” a norm influence how others see the norm?*
- 6. *How pervasive are human rights abuses in practice?*
  - a. *What kinds of human rights abuses are we talking about here?*
    - i. *Depending on which human rights abuses: who’s doing the violating?*
    - ii. *By what criteria should we determine which “human rights abuses” to use to clarify the scope of the question?*
- 7. *Are there conceptual differences that make relating “human rights norms” to “human rights abuses” alike to discussing apples to oranges?*

This is a non-exhaustive list. There are many, many other subsidiary questions one can ask. Each of the subsidiary questions could itself be a research project. The subsidiary questions you ask depend very much on your main research question, so you have some discretion regarding how many to include (that said, I’d consider my example list on the short side). Writing out subsidiary questions together will also require you to be creative and think big. Dig deep for questions and maintain the precision of your wording/framing. How we answer the subsidiary questions determines the scope and generalizability of the main research question. The goal of writing out subsidiary questions is to visualize the component parts that you need to research to arrive at a satisfactory answer.

**On Friday, September 16 at 5pm** each student will submit (on CANVAS) a document (12pt Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, single-spaced) that contains: (1) a list of your **exploratory questions**, (2) a clearly identified **main research question** chosen from among your exploratory questions with a paragraph justification, and (3) a list of **subsidiary questions** that logically flow from your main research question.<sup>1</sup> **You’ll be using your main research questions and list of secondary questions in component II.**

**Component II:** You’ll start the process of exploring how other scholars answer the main research question and subsidiary questions you articulated in component I. To answer each question, you should find multiple peer-reviewed sources (that is, articles that come from academic journals or books from academic publishers) that make arguments and/or present data that help you answer. As you research, consider and document any additional questions that might become relevant. If a peer-reviewed source can answer a substantial number of your subsidiary questions, that signifies that a decent amount of research on that subject has been done, so consider digging deeper by expanding your questions. **On Friday Oct. 7 at 5pm**, each student should submit (on CANVAS) an **annotated bibliography** (12pt Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, single-spaced) that contains (1) a properly formatted APA or Chicago Style citation for each peer reviewed source that helps you answer an element of one of your questions; (2) a paragraph describing the main argument(s) of the piece; and (3) a paragraph describing how the piece helps you with a particular question. If there are multiple viewpoints on a particular issue, you should include those divergent

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<sup>1</sup> I am mindful that if you’re working on your B.Phil., you may have already settled on a research question. I will nevertheless ask that you complete this portion of the assignment because it will give an opportunity to formally reflect on how the data you’ve collected over the summer affects the research question you are asking.

voices in your annotated bibliography (the paragraph where you describe how you intend to use the piece is a good place to reflect on how you might weigh competing claims). There is not specific length requirement for your annotated bibliography because each person's submission will be project specific. You should be as exhaustive as possible about the major debates in the field you're researching (and, in the spirit of the subject of the capstone, keep your eye out for authors' methodological choices).

**Component III: On Friday, Oct. 28 at 5pm**, each student should submit (on CANVAS) a 4-page (12pt Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, single-spaced) **literature review**, in which you articulate, in narrative form, the major debates you've found in the academic literature as you were putting together component II. When you reference ideas written by others in your lit review, you should include parenthetical citations that include the author's last name, the publication year, and page numbers (if you're quoting directly). I generally discourage relying on quotes, unless you are making a point about the specific words being used in the quoted section. Though you'll be referencing a lot of other works, your voices must come through. Your lit review should be a concise and logically coherent discussion of how the various texts/ideas you reference fit together to get you closer to answering *your* main research question. What are the major debates that scholars are having that influence how you approach your main research question? It might serve as a helpful guide to pay close attention to how authors whose works we read write their own literature reviews.

#### *Methodology & Argument Memo (15%)*

**On Friday, Nov. 11 at 5pm**, each student should submit (on CANVAS) a 4-page (12pt Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, single-spaced) **methodology and argument memo**. The first three pages of your memo should **directly engage with each of Jackson's four idea-types** to reflect on the analytical tradeoffs of approaching your main research question with various philosophical ontological assumptions in mind. How might scholars with each of Jackson's four ontological orientations see your topic and the major debates that scholars are having about it? What sorts of questions would they raise? What sort of research would they argue is possible? I encourage you to try to put yourself in the shoes of folks who might see the world differently than you here so that you can explore the value added that each ontological orientation might add to your research, as well as the limitations that each might impose on your work.

The last two pages of your memo should clearly identify the position you will take on your main research statement. This is the first time you will **directly articulate your argument** (that is, your answer to your main research question). It's possible that since you started thinking about your topic and as you put together your annotated bibliography and literature review that your main research question might change a little bit. *This is a natural part of the research process*. If that's the case, please describe the parameters of the change when you articulate your argument. You should also provide a preview of the *evidence* you will use to answer your questions and provide a descriptive, narrative outline of the *logic* of your research paper (*see below*).

#### *Peer Review of Lit Review and Methodology & Argument Memo (10%)*

By **Friday, Nov. 18 at 5pm**, each student will read and review several other students' literature reviews and methodology and argument memos. The number of works each student will review will be determined later, depending on course enrollment. Each student must turn in **hard copy** of each of the works they read, containing **margin comments** for the original author. Additionally,



for each review, each student should complete the **Peer Review Checklist** included in **Appendix I** of this syllabus (*see below*) and write up a 1–2-page (12pt Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, single-spaced) **narrative peer review** that analyzes substantive, methodological, and stylistic concerns that the original author should keep in mind for when they draft their research paper. Your review should be formal and professional (treat it like you would if you were on the editorial board of an academic journal). Submissions will be available to all students in the class.

### *Presentation (5%)*

During our last in-class session (**Wednesday, Dec. 7**), each student will have an opportunity to present the work they've been doing to the rest of the class. The amount of time allotted for each presentation will be determined later, depending on course enrollment (once decided, please keep to the allotted time by practicing your presentation ahead of time). The presentations take place before your research paper (*see below*) is due because having to present your ideas to others will be a good exercise for streamlining the logic of your argument as you develop it. Your presentation should formally, thoroughly, and clearly lay out your argument and the evidence you're using to sustain it. You should also situate your argument within broader literatures on your topic and directly engage with the most important counterarguments to your claims. All these elements will need to be present in your research paper as well. Beyond presenting, each student is expected to ask substantive questions and offer feedback to other presenters.

### *Research Paper (20%)*

By **Friday, Dec. 16 at 5pm** each student must submit a research paper (or thesis chapter). Because Global Studies B.Phil. students and Political Science majors have slightly different requirements for their respective degrees, what you'll have to turn in depends on which track you're pursuing.

#### *Global Studies B.Phil. students:*

Your paper should be approximately 15 pages (12pt Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, single-spaced) and should include a separate, properly formatted APA or Chicago Style works cited page. **Do not reproduce what you've already written** in your Methodology and Argument Memo or the Literature Review; **instead, your research paper should complement what you've written in your other assignments** (it may directly reference and build on ideas from those assignments). This paper is a *draft* and will require additions and revisions during the Spring semester. You should regularly consult with your B.Phil. committee during the Fall and Spring semesters. By completing all the course assignments on time, you will have a considerable amount of your thesis done.

#### *Political Science majors:*

Your paper should be approximately 10 pages (12pt Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, single-spaced) and should include a separate, properly formatted APA or Chicago Style works cited page. **You may reproduce parts of what you've already written** in your Methodology and Argument Memo or the Literature Review to frame the rest of your paper, but **this should not constitute more than one quarter of your paper** (this means you'll have to revise your earlier work for concision).

Regardless of your track, what you turn in should be complete, formal, tightly argued, well evidenced, coherently articulated, and theoretically impactful. Please note that I'll grade your research paper by reference to with the rubric provided in **Appendix II** (*see below*).

### Course Schedule

#### **Week 1: Introduction** (syllabus + 76 pages) August 31, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Please read this syllabus all the way through.**

**Chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-57):** Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

**Article (pp. 1-19):** Eve Darian-Smith and Philip McCarty, "Beyond Interdisciplinarity: Developing and Global Transdisciplinary Framework," *Transcience: A Journal of Global Studies* 7, no. 2 (2016).

Please come to class prepared to write (and turn in) a short essay on what you want to get out of the class and what you need to do to achieve your stated goals. In class, we will also make a writing and meeting calendar during which you'll map out when you'll complete certain course objectives, meet with me and/or your advisors (for B.Phil. students), etc.

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions:

- What are some of the substantive differences of focus between the fields of Global Studies and International Relations? How do these differences of focus relate to methodology?
- How might scholars distinguish *methodology* from *methods*?
- What is the difference between *philosophical* and *scientific* ontological assumptions and why should scholars reflect on the ontological assumptions that underly their research?
- Why does Jackson consider ontological commitments "wagers"? What are the practical analytical and political consequences of this framing?
- What is at stake, according to Jackson, in debates on philosophy of social science?

#### **Week 2: Philosophy of Neopositivism** (37 pages) September 7, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Chapter 3 (pp. 58-82):** Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

**Chapter 1 (pp. 17-30):** Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, "The Bias of 'Science': On the Intellectual Appeal of Neopositivism," in Annette Freyberg-Inan, Ewan Harrison, and Patrick James (eds.), *Evaluating Progress in International Relations: How Do You Know?* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions:

- To what sorts of analytical problems is neopositivism responding?
- What is the logic of inquiry of neopositivism research designs?
- What are the analytical strengths of neopositivist research? What are its weaknesses?

- What additional problems or challenges arise from neopositivist ontological wagers?

Homework to complete before our next class:

- Look ahead to next week's discussion questions and prepare to write about them in class.

### **Week 3: Neopositivism in Practice** (44 pages)

September 14, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Article (pp. 371-386):** Barbara F. Walter, "Does Conflict Beget Conflict? Explaining Recurring Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004).

**Chapter 2 (pp. 24-51):** Martha Finnemore, "Sovereign Default and Military Intervention," in *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs about the Use of Force* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 2003).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions (I will ask you to write about this in class, so please do some research ahead of time on how you might answer them):

- What sort of neopositivist assumptions do you see among authors in your own area of study?
- What are the strengths and limitations of neopositivist research in your own area of study?

### **Component I of Research Design due Friday, Sept. 16 at 5pm**

### **Week 4: Philosophy of Critical Realism** (56 pages)

September 21, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Chapter 4 (pp. 83-122):** Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

**Article (pp. 361-378):** Milja Kurki, "Critical Realism and Causal Analysis in International Relations," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 35, no. 2 (2007).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions:

- To what sorts of analytical problems is critical realism responding?
- What is the logic of inquiry of critical realist research designs?
- What are the analytical strengths of critical realist research? What are its weaknesses?
- What additional problems or challenges arise from critical realist ontological wagers?

Homework to complete before our next class:

- Look ahead to next week's discussion questions and prepare to write about them in class.

### **Week 5: Critical Realism in Practice** (TBD pages)

September 28, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**TBD**

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions (I will ask you to write about this in class, so please do some research ahead of time on how you might answer them):

- What sort of critical realist assumptions do you see among authors in your own area of study?
- What are the strengths and limitations of critical realist research in your own area of study?

**Week 6: Philosophy of Analyticism** (47 pages)  
October 5, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Chapter 5 (pp. 123-170):** Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions:

- To what sorts of analytical problems is analyticism responding?
- What is the logic of inquiry of analyticist research designs?
- What are the analytical strengths of analyticist research? What are its weaknesses?
- What additional problems or challenges arise from analyticist ontological wagers?
- What sort of analyticist assumptions do you see among authors in your own area of study?

Homework to complete before our next class:

- Look ahead to next week's discussion questions and prepare to write about them in class.

**Component II of Research Design due Friday, Oct. 7 at 5pm**

**Week 7: Analyticism in Practice** (54 pages)  
October 12, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Article (pp. 93-116):** Jan Angstrom, "Towards a Typology of Internal Armed Conflict: Synthesizing a Decade of Conceptual Turmoil," *Civil Wars* 4, no. 3 (2001).

**Chapter 2 (pp. 67-98):** Daniel H. Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires, and International Change* (Princeton Univ. Press, 2009).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions (I will ask you to write about this in class, so please do some research ahead of time on how you might answer them):

- What sort of analyticist assumptions do you see among authors in your own area of study?
- What are the strengths and limitations of analyticist research in your own area of study?

**Week 8: Philosophy of Reflexivity** (36 pages)  
October 19, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Chapter 6 (pp. 171-207):** Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions:

- To what sorts of analytical problems is reflexivity responding?



- What is the logic of inquiry of reflexivist research designs?
- What are the analytical strengths of reflexivist research? What are its weaknesses?
- What additional problems or challenges arise from reflexivist ontological wagers?

Homework to complete before our next class:

- Look ahead to next week's discussion questions and prepare to write about them in class.

### **Week 9: Reflexivity in Practice (44 pages)**

October 26, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Article (pp. 693-707):** Brooke Ackerly and Jacqui True, "Reflexivity in Practice: Power and Ethics in Feminist Research on International Relations," *International Studies Review* 10, no. 4 (2008).

**Chapter 1 (pp. 1-30):** John M. Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760-2010* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2012).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions (I will ask you to write about this in class, so please do some research ahead of time on how you might answer them):

- What sort of reflexivist assumptions do you see among authors in your own area of study?
- What are the strengths and limitations of critical realist research in your own area of study?

### **Component III of Research Design due Friday, Oct. 28 at 5pm**

### **Week 10: Pluralism (53 pages)**

November 2, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Chapter 7 (pp. 208-235):** Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

**Chapter 1 (pp. 1-22):** Sandra Harding, *Is Science Multicultural? Postcolonialisms, Feminisms, and Epistemologies* (Indianapolis: Univ. of Indiana Press, 1998).

**Writing Guide (pp. 1-3):** Tomash Conrad Dabrowski, "Writing Essays – Best Practices" (2019).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions:

- Are the philosophical ontological wagers that Jackson describes akin to *ideologies*?
- By what criteria should scholars judge the validity of social scientific inquiry?
- What are the (positive or negative) worldly consequences of defining science narrowly?
- Jackson and Harding both critique dominant approaches to social science research; how does the main thrust of Harding's critique differ from Jackson's?
- How do Harding's insights apply to specific historical scientific discoveries?

### **Week 11: Postcolonial Philosophy of Science (65 pages)**

November 9, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Chapters 2-5 (pp. 23-88):** Sandra Harding, *Is Science Multicultural? Postcolonialisms, Feminisms, and Epistemologies* (Indianapolis: Univ. of Indiana Press, 1998).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions:

**TBD**

**Methodology and Argument Memo due Friday, Nov. 11 at 5pm**

**Week 12: Feminist Philosophy of Science** (78 pages)  
November 16, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Chapters 6-8 (pp. 89-146):** Sandra Harding, *Is Science Multicultural? Postcolonialisms, Feminisms, and Epistemologies* (Indianapolis: Univ. of Indiana Press, 1998).

**Article (pp. 611-632):** J. Ann Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements between Feminists and IR Theorists," *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (1997).

Optional reading:

**Article (pp. 245-253):** Robert O. Keohane, "International Relations Theory: Contributions of a Feminist Standpoint," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 18, no. 2 (1989).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions:

**TBD**

**Peer Review due Friday, Nov. 18 at 5pm**

**Week 13: Holiday Recess**  
November 23, 2022 (No class)

**Week 14: Universality, Objectivity, and Power** (75 pages)  
November 30, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Required readings:

**Chapters 9-11 (pp. 147-194):** Sandra Harding, *Is Science Multicultural? Postcolonialisms, Feminisms, and Epistemologies* (Indianapolis: Univ. of Indiana Press, 1998).

**Article (pp. 57-85):** Roland Bleiker, "Forget IR Theory," *Alternatives* 22, no. 1 (1997).

Please come to class prepared to discuss the following questions:

- Is it possible for theory or explanations to be value-neutral or objective?
- What is the relationship between knowledge production and power?
- How does epistemic gatekeeping manifest within and beyond academia?
- Do scholars have an ethical responsibility to avoid or correct systemic ignorance?

**Week 15: In-Class Presentations<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>2</sup> Because sharing your research with others is a critical assignment, you may not apply your no-questions-asked absence to this session.

December 7, 2022 (CLASSROOM)

Please come to class prepared to present your work and to ask questions when others present.

General questions with which to end the semester:

- What are some of the risks of not adequately questioning our assumptions?
- What are some strengths and limitations of various philosophies of social scientific inquiry?
- Is there any subject or set of questions you leave the course wanting to learn more about?
- Has anything you learned this semester surprised you? If so, why?
- What do you hope to do with the knowledge and tools you gained during this semester?

**Research Paper due Friday, Dec. 16 at 5pm**

**Appendix I: Peer Review Checklist<sup>3</sup>**

Author of reviewed work: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Literature Review**

The main research question and the various subparts are logically connected.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The author explores in detail how scholars answer key questions about the main topic.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

All referenced works are properly cited and formatted correctly.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The main topic is situated in the dominant literature of the primary field of study.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The main topic is situated in any relevant interdisciplinary literatures.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The author clearly distinguishes their own voice from referenced works.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The literature review is written in a proper academic tone and is free of stylistic errors.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The logic of the literature review is unified and coherent.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

Questions about the literature review to keep in mind as you prepare your narrative peer review:

- Does the literature review represent diverse perspectives?
- What elements would make the literature review more complete, thorough, and coherent?
- Are there crucial questions about the academic debate on the subject that are not sufficiently addressed in the literature review?
- Do you have any recommendations regarding works that the author should engage with / cite?
- Are there aspects of the academic debates outlined in the literature review that are unclear or that require additional elaboration?
- Does the literature review ground the debates it describes in the overall research agenda of the student who has written it?

**Methodology & Argument Paper**

The author elaborates on the topic-specific tradeoffs of each of Jackson's ideal-types.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The paper cites works that exemplify various methodological approaches to the topic.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The thesis statement (argument) is clearly written and theoretically compelling.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

Key terms relevant to understanding the parameters of the argument are defined well.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The argument and methodological design are plausible and can be done.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The narrative outline of the research paper is coherent.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

The paper is written in a proper academic tone and is free of stylistic errors.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

Analytical choices are clearly justified.

☐ 1    ☐ 2    ☐ 3    ☐ 4    ☐ 5

Questions about the methodology and argument paper to keep in mind as you prepare your narrative peer review:

- What uninterrogated assumptions does the thesis statement (argument) contain? How should the author think about any assumptions you identify?
- Do the author's methodological choices align with the structure/substance of the thesis statement (argument)?
- How well does the thesis statement (argument) address a gap in the academic literature on the subject? (That is, reflect on the relationship between the methodology & argument paper and the literature review.)
- Does the preview of the outline of the research paper follow logically from the main research question and the articulated thesis statement (argument)?
- Is the answer thesis statement (argument) theoretically grounded, compelling, interesting, innovative, etc.?

<sup>3</sup> 1 = element is missing entirely and must be added

2 = element is poorly developed and must undergo a substantial overhaul

3 = element is reasonably developed and could use a lot of additional clarity, depth, or critical engagement

4 = element is skillfully developed and could use a little additional clarity, depth, or critical engagement

5 = element is impressively developed, exceeds expectations, and requires minimal additional work



**Appendix II: Research Paper Grading Rubric**

	<i>Unacceptable / Below Standards</i>	<i>Acceptable / Meets Standards</i>	<i>Good / Occasionally Exceeds Standards</i>	<i>Excellent / Exceeds Standards</i>	<i>Max. Score</i>
Introduction	Does not adequately convey topic. Does not describe subtopics to be reviewed. Lacks adequate thesis. No mention of analytical choices.	Conveys topic, but not key question(s) or terms. Describes subtopics to be reviewed. General thesis statement. Acknowledges analytical tradeoffs.	Conveys topic's key question(s) but does not answer them. Defines some terms. Clearly delineates subtopics to be reviewed. General thesis statement. Discusses analytical tradeoffs and provides vague justification for analytical choices.	Clearly articulate and answers topic's key question(s). Defines all relevant key terms. Clearly delineates subtopics to be reviewed. Specific thesis statement. Clarifies analytical tradeoffs and provides specific justification for analytical choices.	15 pts
Focus & Flow	Little evidence material is logically organized into topic, subtopic, or related topic. Many transitions are unclear or nonexistent.	Most material clearly related to subtopic and main topic. Material may not be organized within subtopic. Attempts to provide variety of transitions.	All material clearly related to subtopic, main topic, and logically organized within subtopics. Clear, varied transitions linking subtopics and main topic.	All material clearly related to subtopic and main topic. Strong organization and integration of material within subtopics. Strong transitions link main topic and subtopics.	20 pts
Evidence	Argument is not clearly situated in the relevant literature. Few credible sources supporting thesis. Substantial number of unsupported claims.	Argument is situated in some limited literature. Sources generally acceptable but lacking in peer-reviewed research.	Argument is well situated in literature within the primary field of inquiry. Sources well selected to support thesis. Evidence for subtopics adequate.	Argument is situated in field-specific and interdisciplinary literature and is persuasive. Broad and deep engagement with peer reviewed evidence related to thesis and subtopics.	20 pts
Discussion of Finding	Articulates a standard conclusion that summarizes and restates claims made in previous parts of the paper. No meaningful engagement with counterarguments.	Summarizes claims well. Discusses policy implications of research. Weak engagement with straw figure counterarguments.	Discusses policy implications of research and stakes of the argument and evidence presented. Engages with credible but peripheral counterarguments.	Discusses policy implications and stakes of research. Engages and effectively rebuts important credible counterarguments. Charts a path for future scholars.	15 pts
Grammar & Mechanics	Grammar and spelling errors substantially distract from the argument.	Few grammar and spelling errors.	Grammar and spelling errors are rare and do not detract from the argument.	Paper is free of grammar or spelling errors.	10 pts
Articulation	Word choice is consistently informal. Writing is choppy, with many awkward or unclear passages. Frequent use of platitudes or clichés.	Word choice is occasionally informal. Writing has a few awkward or unclear passages. Occasional use of platitudes or clichés.	Scholarly style. Writing has minimal awkward or unclear passages. Platitudes or clichés are exceptionally rare.	Scholarly style. Writing flows clearly and is easy to follow. No platitudes or clichés present.	10 pts
Citations & References	Reference and citation errors significantly distract from work.	Two references or citations are missing or incorrectly written.	One reference or citation is missing or incorrectly written.	All references and citations are present and are correctly written in APA or Chicago style.	10 pts