DESCRIPTION

This course meets the university’s writing flag requirement. It examines the international political causes and consequences of key economic crises in the twentieth century--the Great Depression and the Great Recession that began in 2008. We will explore the following questions: what are the political mechanisms by which a crisis in one country spreads to another? What impedes or facilitates international cooperative efforts to stem economic crises? How do crises transform domestic political coalitions and/or institutions? Under what conditions can an economic crisis generate international political change and war? The discussion and the requirements of the course will push students to think abstractly, to utilize theoretical concepts to interpret key historical events over the past century, and to improve their writing skills.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There will be four sets of requirements for this course. First, you will be expected to attend class, keep up with the assigned readings, participate in our discussions, and complete short in-class writing assignments and/or quizzes. Second, you will complete a series of short writing assignments that will generally ask you to summarize and comment on a reading. Third, you will turn in a midterm essay on Friday, March 7. Fourth, you will complete a final paper. This last paper will be completed in two parts—a first draft due on April 26 and a final draft that will be due on Thursday, May 3. These requirements will provide the following components of your final grade:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance, participation, and quizzes</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shorting writing assignments</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>First draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final draft</td>
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READING MATERIALS

The reading material for this course will be made available through two primary formats. First, our course blackboard site will contain electronic copies of our assigned article readings. Second, the following required texts are available at the University Co-op bookstore.


COURSE GOALS

I want to use the subject material of our course to get you thinking (i.e. criticizing, applying, extending) about explanatory “models” of international politics that generate intellectual leverage, or quite simply can explain broad patterns of social behavior with just a few variables or concepts. This might be new for many of you. This is not going to be a class designed to get you to memorize a bunch of facts about international relations so that you can succeed on a multiple choice exam. It is not about giving you the answers. I instead I will raise challenging questions that have been debated (sometimes quite ineffectively) for centuries and then teach one style by which you can generate your own answers. You will be asked to evaluate arguments, draw implications from them, and write effective statements of your ideas. You will be graded on the effectiveness of your original, written arguments—not on whether you can regurgitate what you have read or what I have said.

Build on this broad teaching approach, here is a set of more specific goals for our semester.

1. Enhance your understanding of the big questions in the study of international politics. How does economic crisis stress domestic and international political orders? What contributed to the collapse of international cooperation in the interwar period? What caused the Great Depression? What caused World War II? How is the crisis of 2008 different from the Great Depression? Is the long term project of European integration sustainable?

2. Enhance your ability to think in the abstract i.e. theoretically. All of our discussions and your written assignments will be oriented around this.

3. Sharpen your reading skills. The goal of your reading should not be to finish the article or the chapter. Instead it should be to prepare yourself to think critically and originally about the questions, theoretical claims, evidence, and implications of the material you have read. To this end, you will complete a series of short writing assignments designed to get you ready to participate actively in class discussions on our readings.

4. Practice generating implications (theoretical, empirical, policy) from theoretical priors/concepts.
5. Develop your writing skills. Our assignments will be designed to foster your ability to organize an essay around a few central ideas, critique alternative arguments, economize your sentence structure, and increase the use of active tense in your writing.

COURSE POLICIES

Our class format necessarily creates mutual obligations among students to come prepared to discuss both the readings and the lecture materials. If only a few people in a group or the class are regularly doing the reading, our discussions will stumble as the bulk of students rely on a minority to carry them. Such a situation penalizes those students doing the readings as they then are pushed to shoulder more responsibility in class. To avoid this situation while fostering a stimulating and productive intellectual environment in class, I have established the following rules to ensure that all students meet these obligations to each other.

Classroom civility…As the instructor of record for this course, it is my responsibility to enforce this. Quite simply, I take this to mean that you will respect the right of your colleagues to ask questions and discuss their opinions about the subject matter of our course in class and that you will respect their right to listen undisturbed to the discussion in class. In short, if you are bothering others in the classroom by doing such things as watching videos on your computer or talking to the person sitting next to you outside of our discussion groups, expect to be asked to leave the classroom.

Attendance and participation…will be tracked daily throughout the semester with multiple mechanisms—attendance checks, random quizzes, classroom participation, group work that will include discussing assigned readings and offering comments on your colleagues’ writing assignments.

Short writing assignments…will be distributed throughout the semester. Sometimes they will entail a summary and/or comment on an assigned reading. Sometimes they will entail writing a comment on another student’s paper. These summaries should be typed and ready to be turned in when they are due. Late assignments will not be accepted.

You will be expected to participate in class discussions and demonstrate that you have done the readings by performing such tasks as summarizing the main arguments, critiquing an author’s claims, drawing out policy implications, suggesting how an author’s argument may apply to another issue area, or highlighting similarities and differences with other readings. Note: one way you can boost this participation component of your grade is by bringing questions about our readings to class. We will be working through some relatively complex readings. Consequently, I will devote the opening portion of each class to addressing these questions.

Attendance and participation points cannot be made up under any circumstances, including excused absences. However, each student in the class will receive a bonus at the end of the semester of 150% of the average daily points for this component of your grade. For example, if there are 100 attendance and participation points for the semester and these points were checked on 20 class days, then the average daily point total is 5. All students would receive a bonus of 7.5 points to account for excused and unexcused absences. Note: your total attendance and participation score for the semester cannot exceed 100%.
Lateness…If you come late to class and miss an attendance check (e.g. sign-in sheet, quiz), you have missed the attendance check for that day. Please do not ask to have your assignment collected.

The determination of grades and grade appeals…This process must be initiated by your written explanation of why the decisions behind the assignment of your grade should be revisited. You will have one week after an assignment has been handed back to submit this written explanation. After that period, all grades will be considered final and any discussion that we might have will be restricted to how you can do better on the next assignment. Once you have submitted your written request, I will decide whether to regrade your entire assignment.

Please keep in mind that your past performance in other classes taken here at the University is not germane to any grading decisions made in my class. Consequently, if receiving a D in my class places you on academic probation, this does not constitute a viable justification for requesting the regrading of any assignment.

Grade appeals also cannot be made on the basis of being “close” to a letter grade. Cutoffs between letter grades will be strictly observed according to guidelines listed below. Note: these already include appropriate rounding:

92.5-100 A; 89.5-92.5 A-; 86.5-89.5 B+; 82.5-86.5 B; 79.5-82.5 B-; 76.5-79.5 C+; 72.5-76.5 C; 69.5-72.5 C-; 66.5-69.5 D+; 62.5-66.5 D; 59.5-62.5 D-; 0-59.5 F

“Scholastic dishonesty…includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without prior permission of the instructor, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act” (Section 11-802 (b), Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities).

If you have any questions about what constitutes scholastic dishonesty, you should consult with me or the website listed below. Any student that violates this policy will fail this course and have the details of the violation reported to Student Judicial Services. (http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/academicintegrity.html).

Disabilities: The University of Texas will make reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (Video Phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

Religious holidays: By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Emergency evacuation: In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services
office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as they way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Faculty members must then provide this information to the Fire Prevention Services office by fax (512-232-2759), with "Attn. Mr. Roosevelt Easley" written in the subject line.

Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at http://www.utexas.edu/emergency.

Changes to the syllabus…I may make minor changes to the syllabus. These will be announced at least a week in advance.

CLASS SCHEDULE

I. Introduction

Tuesday, January 15
Introduction

Thursday, January 17
Overview of the politics of economic crisis


Tuesday, January 22
Domestic political and economic fundamentals


Thursday, January 24
International economic fundamentals: Standard trade theory and exchange rates


II. The Interwar Collapse

Tuesday, January 29
Overview

Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters*, pp. 3-66.

Thursday, January 31
Economic and Political Legacy of World War I: trade, war debts, and reparations

Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters*, pp. 67-152

Tuesday, February 5
The Cooperative Interregnum

Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters*, pp. 153-221

Thursday, February 7
The Crises of 1929 and 1931

Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters*, pp. 222-286

Tuesday, February 12
Hegemonic stability theory and the collapse of international cooperation: American missteps

Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters*, pp. 317-347

Thursday, February 14
Reading break—no class

Tuesday, February 19
The Domestic Politics of International Cooperation


Thursday, February 21
The Domestic Politics of War


Tuesday, February 26
The Dysfunctional Weimar Republic and the Rise of Hitler


Thursday, February 28
Nazi rearmament, territorial acquisition, and the path to World War II


Note: Paper assignment distributed today

Tuesday, March 5
Writing break—no class

Thursday, March 7
Writing break—no class

**Papers due by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 8**

III. The Great Recession in the United States

Tuesday, March 19
Subprime origins


Thursday, March 21
The panic of 2008

Chinn and Frieden, *Lost Decades*, pp. 87-120


**Tuesday, March 26**

The politics of bailouts

Chinn and Frieden, *Lost Decades*, pp. 121-174

**Thursday, March 28**

Economic crisis and polarization in the United States


**Tuesday, April 2**

American global leadership in the aftermath of 2008


**IV. The Euro Crisis**

**Thursday, April 4**

The Euro and European Integration


**Tuesday, April 9**

From the US to Europe

Chinn and Frieden, *Lost Decades*, pp. 175-200

Lewis, *Boomerang*, pp. 1-82

**Thursday, April 11**

The intertwined banking and sovereign debt crises


**Tuesday, April 16**

Revisiting the German Problem

Lewis, *Boomerang*, pp. 133-170
V. Comparing the Crises

_Thursday, April 18_
Discussion: Comparing 1929/1931 with 2008


Assignment for paper #2 distributed

_Tuesday, April 23_
Writing break

_Thursday, April 25_
Writing break

**Note:** first drafts of your final paper are due by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 26. You must email them to me and your writing partners by then.

_Tuesday, April 30_
Workshop papers in class

Bring at least one page of type written comments on the papers of your writing partners.

_Thursday, May 2_
Writing break

**Note:** Final drafts of your second paper are due by 5 p.m. on Friday, May 3.