

Instructor: Dr. Amentahru Wahrab
Meeting Time and Place: Tuesday 6-8:45pm/Zoom
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POLS 5341.001: Seminar in International Relations

Fall 2020

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The April 2014 publication of Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* triggered an unprecedented global debate on capitalism and inequality. Hailed and condemned by commentators on the political Left and Right as the "21st Century Marx," Piketty argues that the tendency of returns on capital to exceed the rate of economic growth has been causing a widening of inequality that threatens to undermine (liberal) democracy. Introducing graduate students to related literature on the evolution of capitalism in the age of globalization, this course provides the necessary theoretical tools and philosophical frameworks to engage in such sophisticated critiques of capitalism and equality in the global age. There are no prerequisites for this seminar. Graduate students who have not previously taken any courses in international relations, political theory, or international/political economy are welcome to enroll in this class.

While discussing economic concepts and categories linked to the critical analysis of global capitalism, this seminar focuses on questions that explore the ideational and ethical dimensions of the contemporary framework of capitalism. These questions are intended to reveal the normative foundations of our economic system. Moreover, students are encouraged to relate their own research interests to the themes and issues raised in this seminar. The organization of this course rests on the following eight main questions:

1. Why do nation-states go to war?
2. Can international institutions promote peace?
3. How do people organize across borders to address injustice?
4. Why is the world unequal?
5. Is a better world possible?

II. Student Learning Objectives

The five principle learning objectives of this course are:

1. To understand the basic elements and functions of the international system;
2. To gain a clear understanding of the key theoretical orientations with the field of International Relations;
3. To acquire the knowledge and skill to analyze contemporary global politics;
4. To appreciate the role of ideas and ideologies in contributing to the constitution and reproduction of inequality, conflict, peace, war, and change in our globalizing world;

5. To produce and deepen critical forms of knowledge and understanding that contribute to emancipatory strategies of social and political transformation.

III. COURSE READINGS (REQUIRED)

1. Baylis, John, Steve Smith, and Patricia Owens. *The Globalization of World Politics : An Introduction to International Relations*. 8th ed. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. ISBN: 0198825544 9780198825548
2. Kamola, Isaac A. *Making the World Global : U.S. Universities and the Production of the Global Imaginary*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2019: ISBN: 9781478004738

Please note: Each student is required to immerse themselves in 5-10 additional readings (books, academic journal articles, or review essays) pertaining to his or her research topic/theme. Please see the instructor for specific literature recommendations that relate to the themes and issues raised in this seminar to your own areas of interest.

Additional Course Readings (highly recommended)

- 1) Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *The Making of Global International Relations: Origins and Evolution of IR at Its Centenary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019)
- 2) Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, 2nd Beacon Paperback ed. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001).
- 3) Barry Buzan and George Lawson, *The Global Transformation: History, Modernity and the Making of International Relations* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015)
- 4) Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations*, *The United States in the World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).
- 5) Yaqing Qin, *A Relational Theory of World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
- 6) Robbie Shilliam, *The Black Pacific: Anti-Colonial Struggles and Oceanic Connections* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015).
- 7) Quynh N. Pham and Robbie Shilliam, *Meanings of Bandung: Postcolonial Orders and Decolonial Visions* (London and New York: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2016).
- 8) Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal, *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, *Oxford Handbooks of Political Science* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

IV. COURSE STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS

Let me encourage you to maintain an exploratory mind and create your own active learning environment—not solely interacting with me, but with each other as well. I expect regular student attendance and participation. Students must be willing to engage in class discussions. I will facilitate student discussions by creating a safe context that allows you to speak up freely. But, I do not accept the equation of subjective experience or unreflective “common sense” with “truth.” Be prepared to engage with the questions raised in this seminar, regardless of students’ own preferences. Most of all, I am interested in preparing students for independent research which requires a tolerant, reflective mind, best summarized by Immanuel Kant’s dictum: “Have the courage to use your own understanding!” “Mama said so” will not suffice.

The course readings and assignments have been carefully selected to generate broad in-class discussions and insightful oral presentations. Each class meeting will follow the same basic structure:

- 1) A student engages as “discussant” of the assigned readings by raising questions for discussion and leading class discussion (40 minutes)
- 2) Instructors response to discussant and class discussion (10 minutes)
- 3) Short break (10 minutes)
- 4) Instructors lecture on assigned readings of the week plus class discussion (90 minutes)

Students are required to select a topic of their choice (in consultation with me) for a **25-page research paper that relates the materials of this seminar to a topic of the student’s interest. An abstract/outline of the paper (1 page) plus a research bibliography (10-15 entries), will be due by Week 10 (but preferably earlier). The final exam period at the end of the semester is reserved for a conference style presentation of your research paper in class in front of peers.**

In your term paper, you should engage in your texts and topics with as much sophistication as possible. You should indicate how your textual analysis reveals something of political significance about the larger theme/context from which it is taken. Thus you should engage in a careful textual analysis of your themes and texts and cite appropriate, short textual passages (full footnotes). No book reports or summaries please! You are expected to incorporate in your papers external research (books, journal articles, and reviews). I am happy to give you recommendations for additional secondary sources. If you wish such advice, please talk to me about it **BEFORE** you get to work on your paper. Your papers represent an exercise in political interpretation. **An electronic copy of the research paper is due December 8 via Canvas-Turnitin.**

Finally, each student will be responsible for serving as a discussant of our weekly reading assignments (possibly with another student). You will be required to raise questions for class discussion that relate to self-selected textual passages of the assigned readings. You will lead these discussions and involve the entire class. You will be asked to sign up for specific weeks by the end of the third week of class. Assignments on particular topics/weeks will be made on first-come, first serve basis. In addition to the assigned readings, your presentation may include additional supportive (brief) materials (for example, handouts, charts, and/or visual materials like Power Points, video clips, or other web-based materials).

Regular class attendance is required. Please inform the instructor *in advance* if you have to miss class for really, really important reasons!

V. A NOTE ON GRADING:

You must complete all assigned written and oral work in order to pass the seminar. Any student found guilty of plagiarism will fail the seminar (see academic dishonesty section below). Your in-class presentation and participation will count for 25% and your term paper for 75%. Thus, your seminar grade will reflect your presentation, participation, and the overall quality of your written work. Students who participate regularly during our class discussions will receive *extra credit* – meaning that if you find yourself between two grades at the end of the semester, you will receive the *higher grade*.

Please be advised that *overparticipation* and the monopolization of class discussion at the expense of your peers may hurt the quality of the course, especially if such actions tend to derail the thematic agenda. I reserve the right to cut off discussion at any point in order to keep us on track and help *all* students to engage with the relevant materials. A significant element in academic study is the ability to learn to listen to other voices. For the purposes of this course, you should interpret the grades you receive in the following terms:

1) *Discussant Presentations:*

An “A” will only be given to presentations that are clearly superior in form as well as content. Typically, such presentations of self-selected textual passages are coherent, well organized, and adhere to the given time frame. “A” students show their critical and careful reading of the texts and generate genuine interest and excitement for their topic. They lead discussions effortlessly, distribute speaking time fairly, and stay focused on their theme.

2) *Term Papers:*

Much of the above pertains to term papers as well. In addition to treating the subject in a sophisticated and creative manner, “A” papers exhibit elegant and clear prose. Such papers draw connections between non-obvious points; they are well organized and furnish adequate citations of primary and secondary sources without losing their own unique and distinct voice. An “A” paper in a graduate seminar should add a new wrinkle to the existing body of texts/literature. If this grade is to mean something, just doing a “good job” will result in a “B.” To get an “A,” you must demonstrate your ability to go *beyond* the expected.

VI. COURSE AND CLASSROOM PROTOCOLS:

Our goal is learning, through the sharing of ideas about a complex and rich subject of great intellectual and aesthetic value. The classroom is for comments, questions, and clarifications about the assigned reading. To help achieve that goal:

- Reading assignments are to be completed in advance of the class meeting when they are scheduled to be discussed; you are expected to bring a hard copy of the assigned readings, your insights, and any puzzlements to share with the rest of the class;
- Be on time; do not go out and come back during class (except for real emergencies); do not leave early;
- Turn off and put away your cell phones;
- No private conversations;
- Laptops are permitted for occasional note taking use only; you may not withdraw from the group into your laptop;
- Participation in class discussions is a required component of the grade for classwork;
- To sum up: we want to keep the heat in the system for 150 minutes and maximize our learning experience.

OFFICE HOURS:

Friday 1-3pm and by appointment outside of scheduled office hours.

Students are required to meet with me at least once during the semester to discuss potential research topics. Students are also encouraged to see me during office hours on a regular basis. Please clarify any difficult readings and/or other problems as soon as they arise. Don't wait until the last few weeks of the semester.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

The UT Tyler community regards cheating as an extremely serious matter and deals severely with those who violate the standards of academic integrity.

Examples of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to):

- Copying from another person's test paper
- During a test, possession of materials not authorized by the person administering the test
- Discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination or the divulging of examination contents to another when an instructor has allowed the exam to be kept by the student
- Working with others in taking tests or preparing academic assignments when not authorized by the course instructor
- Obtaining by any means another person's work and submitting that work as one's own. This included the downloading of academic papers or the purchase of papers written by others.

If a student is suspected of academic dishonesty, the classroom instructor may ask the student to meet with him or her to discuss the incident. A student may admit to allegations of academic dishonesty, waive the right to a hearing and accept penalties imposed by the instructor. The student may also deny all allegations and ask to see the Dean of Student Affairs. An accused student may accept the decision of the Dean of Student Affairs or ask for a hearing before an impartial hearing officer appointed by the university. Witnesses may be called and evidence presented. The hearing officer will consider all evidence and make a decision. The decision of the hearing officer may be appealed to the President by either the student or the Dean of Student Affairs. For a discussion of possible penalties, please see <http://www.uttyler.edu/mainsite/conduct.html>.

University Policies

Students Rights and Responsibilities

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: <http://www2.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade

replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract. The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability Services

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu

Student Absence due to Religious Observance

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement:

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have

an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation:

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services

Campus Carry:

We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>

UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University:

All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors.

Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products.

There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

Important Covid-19 Information for Classrooms and Laboratories

Students are required to wear face masks covering their nose and mouth, and follow social distancing guidelines, at all times in public settings (including classrooms and laboratories), as specified by [Procedures for Fall 2020 Return to Normal Operations](#). The UT Tyler community of Patriots views adoption of these practices consistent with its [Honor Code](#) and a sign of good citizenship and respectful care of fellow classmates, faculty, and staff.

Students who are feeling ill or experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, or a higher than normal temperature will be excused from class and should stay at home and may join the class remotely. Students who have difficulty adhering to the Covid-19 safety policies for health reasons are also encouraged to join the class remotely. Students needing additional accommodations may contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Resources at University Center 3150, or call (903) 566-7079 or email saroffice@uttyler.edu.

Recording of Class Sessions

Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in this course. Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in this course unless appropriate consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of students enrolled in the course and only for educational purposes. Course recordings should not be shared outside of the course in any form without express permission.

DATES

<https://www.uttyler.edu/schedule/files/academic-calendar-20-21.pdf>

SEMINAR SCHEDULE:

Key:

- = Assignment
- ! = Required Reading due before arriving to class

Class 1: August 25: Introduction to the Seminar

Watch:

- ! [*Changing the rules of international relations, with Paul Poast*](#)

Read:

- ! Introduction and Chapter 1 of Baylis, John, Steve Smith, and Patricia Owens. *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*. 8th ed. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- ! Preface and Introduction of Kamola, Isaac A. *Making the World Global: U.S. Universities and the Production of the Global Imaginary*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2019.

Write:

- ! Two paragraphs written after reading the assigned chapters noted above answering the question: what is international relations? According to the authors? According to your preconceived understanding? What differences do you notice? There are no right answers

so don't get overly distressed by this. The point is to make the attempt. Yoda doesn't know what he's talking about.

Class 2: September 1

Theme: The Historical Context

Read:

- ! *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*. 8th ed. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 2020: Chapters 2-5.

Write:

- ! Write one paragraph for each chapter. Each paragraph should summarize the heart of the chapter covered. Be sure to include one pithy quotation with page numbers (Author, date: page number). Consider this a skill building exercise. By the end of the semester you will have a notebook that you can refer to later and during any future research projects. You should get in the habit of doing this for all academic reading that you do. Post on Canvas before class starts.

Class 3: September 8:

! **Read:**

!

Class 4: September 15:

! **Read:**

Class 5: September 22:

- **Student Presentation (discussant)**

! **Read:**

Class 6: September 29:

- **Student Presentation (discussant)**

! **Read:**

Class 7: October 6

- **Student Presentation (discussant)**

! **Read:**

Class 8: October 13

- **Student Presentation (discussant)**

! **Read:**

Class 9: October 20

- Student Presentation (discussant)
- ! Read:

Class 10: October 27

- Student Presentation (discussant)
- 1-page abstract and bibliography for research paper due in class
- ! Read:

Class 11: November 3

- Student Presentation (discussant)
- ! Read:

Class 12: November 10:

- Student Presentation (discussant)
- ! Read:

Class 13: November 17:

- Student Presentation (discussant)
- ! Read:

Thanksgiving Holiday November 23-28

Class 14: December 1

- Student Presentation (discussant)
- ! Read:

Class 15: December 8 (exam week, research presentations)

- Academic Conference style presentation of research papers
-