

**POLI 150H**  
**International Relations and World Politics**

Prof. Layna Mosley  
Department of Political Science  
UNC Chapel Hill  
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**Course Information:**  
<http://blackboard.unc.edu>

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**Office Hours**

Mondays, 10-11:30am  
Tuesdays, 1-2:30pm

**I. Course Overview**

Course Objectives. This course is designed to fulfill two objectives: first, to provide an analytical perspective with which to understand why political actors in global politics make the decisions they do; and, second, to offer an understanding of key historical and contemporary events in world politics, including issues relating to security and interstate conflict; global trade and finance; and international institutions and law.

Our approach to learning will be an active one, using a textbook that encourages students to develop the tools necessary for understanding and evaluating events in world politics. While we will spend some time discussing how various scholars have thought about world politics (“grand theories” in international relations), we will spend more time focusing on how theories of world politics can be applied. Our starting point for this application will be Bueno de Mesquita’s (BDM) “strategic perspective” on world politics. His text, and the accompanying workbook, is designed to introduce you to a variety of tools and to suggest ways that those tools could be applied to various phenomena in world politics. To supplement the BDM text, we also will consult a series of other readings, all available on electronic reserve.

Course Requirements. Final course grades will be based on two essay assignments (20% each, 40% total); various forms of class participation (20% total); in-class presentations regarding current issues in international politics (10%) and an in-class final examination (30%).

Participation. As a small, honors class, the course will be organized largely as a seminar. I often will introduce the topics for the day, either to provide background on substance (e.g. how does the World Trade Organization work?) or to situate analytical concepts in the broader study of international relations. In general, however, students are expected to be active participants during class sessions. Some of the material introduced in the text may be challenging to grasp; we will work together to understand the concepts and their application. I usually will ask questions and expect students to provide answers, rather than giving a lecture. Attendance at all class sessions is, of course, a prerequisite for participation. I will take attendance regularly; students with absences will receive a lower participation grade than those who attend consistently. In extreme cases (e.g. missing more than four class sessions), repeated absences may be grounds for a failing course grade.

Participation requires preparation. **You are expected to read the assigned material prior to coming to class;** to keep up with current events in world politics by regularly reading a print or on-line news source (e.g. *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the BBC, the *Economist*); to ask any

questions they have on the assigned readings (or on previous days' material); and to contribute regularly to class discussion. We also will have ample time for debate, both about the utility of various analytical tools, as well as about current events in world politics.

Students are expected to show respect for the professor and for other students in the class. This means arriving a few minutes prior to the start of class, so that class sessions can begin on time and without disruption; refraining from distracting behaviors during class (using email, IMing, text messaging, etc); and generally paying attention to what's being said in class.

There are two other ways in which participation will be assessed. First, as you read the assigned materials from the BDM text, you are expected to complete the accompanying exercises in the Powner and Bennett workbook. These exercises are designed to help you grasp the material presented in the text, which will better prepare you for in-class discussions, essays and the exam. You may work individually or as a group on these exercises, but each student should complete and keep a copy of the workbook exercises. I will periodically ask to take a look at your workbook exercises, not to grade the answers, but to check that you are keeping up. These checks will contribute to your participation grade.

Second, there are several discussion forums in the "Discussion Board" area of Blackboard. These will allow us to continue some conversations outside the classroom context, as you think about material that we've discussed (or haven't had a chance to discuss) in class. They also will provide an alternative forum in which you may ask questions (of the instructor or your classmates) regarding class material. Depending on the topics at hand and the interests of class members, various discussion boards will be created. I expect that all students will regularly (once or twice per week) check the discussion boards and read through the various postings; I also expect that each student will regularly post to the discussion boards, either asking questions about materials, suggesting how current events relate to class materials, or expanding on in-class discussions. Participation in this fashion also will enhance your final participation grade.

Mid-semester participation grades will be given, in order to provide a sense of how you are performing in this aspect of the class.

Presentations. Each student will be responsible, along with a partner, for making one in-class presentation on an important current issue in world politics. The team's presentation grade will account for 10% of each team member's final course grade. Presentations should last approximately ten minutes; there also will be time for presenters to answer questions from the rest of the class. Your choice of topic is open. It may be a global issue such as the proliferation of biological weapons, debt relief, or environmental threats to national security; a regional/national issue such as democratization in the Middle East, the crisis in Darfur, or China's role in multinational production and the global economy. This exercise will allow each team of students to develop expertise on a particular issue, while also exposing the entire class to important topics. Teams are encouraged to think carefully about their presentations, and to use the classroom's technology (e.g. use powerpoint, but not just to display text; maps, figures, tables or video could be useful). Teams also should strongly consider providing short (no more than 10-15 pages total) background materials (articles, links to websites) on their topic, which I will post on Blackboard. If you would like to do this, please email the materials to me no later than 48 hours prior to your presentation.

I will divide the class into presentation teams, and I will announce these no later than August 30. I will also provide the schedule – drawn at random – of dates on which each team will present. If you have questions about your topic or presentation, please feel free to email or drop by office hours. The first

presentation will take place on September 6.

Essays. You will be assigned to write two five to seven page essays (more specific guidelines will be included in the assignments); the first is due at the beginning of class on October 18; the second is due at the beginning of class on November 20. Each essay will count for 20% of your final grade. These essays are given in lieu of in-class exams during the semester; you will be given a question that draws on material we have covered in the readings and in class. The essay question will not require you to do additional research (although you certainly may if you choose); but you will be expect to refer to specific arguments, ideas and facts that have been covered in the class. In completing each essay, you are expected to adhere to the same conditions you would for an in-class exam. This means no consulting about your essay with other students in the course, with students in other courses, with your parents, and so on. UNC's Honor Code prohibits discussing the essay questions and/or your essay answer with any others; the essay you turn in is assumed to be your, and only your, work.

Final Exam. The final exam for this course is scheduled for Friday, December 8, at 4pm. This will be an in-class examination with short-answer and essay components, again based on material from both assigned readings and class discussions; and it will account for 30 percent of your final grade. As the University's policy states, all students must take the exam at the scheduled time, unless they receive authorization from the Dean's Office to do otherwise.

Grading Scale: The following ten-point grading scale is used for this course. All graded work will use number, rather than letter, grades, so that you'll know exactly where you stand.

94 and above: A	91-93: A-	88-90: B+
84-87: B	81-83: B-	78-80: C+
74-77: C	71-73: C-	68-70: D+
64-67: D	61-63: D-	
60 and below: F		

## II. Course Readings and Schedule

The following books are available for purchase at the UNC Bookstore, and are required for the course:

Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, 2006. *Principles of International Politics: People's Power, Preferences and Perceptions*. CQ Press, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. ISBN 1-933116-11-0. [Referred to as "BDM" on course schedule]

Leanne C. Powner and D. Scott Bennett, 2006. *Applying the Strategic Perspective: Problems and Models*. CQ Press, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. ISBN 1-933116-92-7.

There should be a discount (offered via the publisher) if you purchase both books at the UNC bookstore. If you purchase books elsewhere, please be sure you have the correct edition.

While the BDM textbook will serve as our main reading, I sometimes will provide some material on certain substantive topics. In some cases, this background material will be in the form of slides (including maps, figures, tables and text); in other cases, it will take the form of an article or book chapter. All of these items will be made available prior to class meetings, on Blackboard (<http://blackboard.unc.edu>), under "Course Documents," and organized by date. These materials are considered part of the assigned materials, so please be sure to read them.

The New York Times – or some other news source with solid international coverage -- also is strongly recommended for this course.

**Course schedule.** As you read various sections of the BDM text, you also are expected to work through the assignments in the Powner and Bennett workbook. This will improve your understanding of the material presented, and it will help you formulate questions to ask in class. Assignments that are not in the BDM book will be posted on Blackboard.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
August 23 (F)	Course Introduction	<i>For background, you may find it helpful to begin reading BDM, Introduction (pp. 1-21).</i>
August 28 (M)	The Historical and Theoretical Foundations of International Politics	BDM, Introduction and Chapter 1 (pp. 1-52)
August 30 (W)	No class meeting (APSA meeting).	
September 4 (M)	No class meeting (Labor Day)	
September 6 (W)	Theories, Hypotheses, and the Scientific Method	BDM, Chapter 2 (pp. 53-83) <b>Presentation #1</b>
September 11 (M)	Theories of IR: the Structural Level	BDM, Chapter 4 (pp. 117-156)
September 13 (W)	Review the Structural Level Strategic Interaction in IR (I)	BDM, Chapter 3, parts (pp. 84-98) Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It"
September 18 (M)	Strategic Interaction in IR (II): Game Theory, Utility and Preferences	BDM, Chapter 3, parts (pp. 98-116) <b>Presentation #2</b>
September 20 (W)	The Problems of Cooperation and Distribution	BDM, Chapter 8 (pp. 263-301)
September 25 (M)	Concepts in IR: Power	BDM, Chapter 7 (pp. 232-262) <b>Presentation #3</b>
September 27 (W)	<i>No class today.</i>	Review BDM, Chapters 8 and 9
October 2 (M)	Concepts in IR: Preferences	BDM, Chapter 9 (pp. 302-342) Background slides: Foreign Aid <b>Presentation #4</b>
October 4 (W)	Concepts in IR: Perceptions	BDM, Chapter 10 (pp. 343-372) Daniel Drezner, "The Hidden Hand of Economic Coercion"
October 9 (M)	Theories of IR: Bureaucratic Politics, Constructivism	BDM, Chapter 5 (pp. 157-197)
October 11 (W)	Theories of IR: Taking Domestic Politics Seriously	BDM, Chapter 6, parts (pp. 198-219) Background Slides: The Cold War <b>Presentation #5</b> <b>Essay #1 topics distributed via email, Friday, October 13.</b>
October 16 (M)	Theories of IR: Domestic Politics (II)	BDM, Chapter 6, parts (pp. 219-232)
October 18 (W)	<i>Fall Break begins at 5pm. Optional class for those who want to review material thus far, or discuss particular issues in IR.</i>	<b>Essay #1 due: may be turned into Prof. Mosley's office (Hamilton 307) by 3:45pm, or at class meeting, 4:00pm.</b>
October 23 (M)	Reconsidering Domestic Politics: Autocracy, Democracy, and Coalitions	BDM, Chapter 12 (pp. 413-446)
October 25 (W)	International Institutions and Law	BDM, Chapter 14 (pp. 484-527)  <b>Presentation #6</b>
October 30 (M)	International Security: Alliances	BDM, Chapter 15 (pp. 528-558)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
November 1 (W)	International Security: War and Its Causes (I)	BDM, Chapter 16 (pp. 559-595) <b>Presentation #7</b>
November 6 (M)	International Security: War and Its Causes (II)	BDM, Chapter 17 (pp. 596-626)
November 8 (W)	International Security: Terrorism	BDM, Chapter 11 (pp. 373-412) Robert Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism" <b>Presentation #8</b>
November 13 (M)	Civil War and Its Causes	Paul Collier, "The Market for Civil War" Amitai Etzioni, "The Evils of Self-Determination"
November 15 (W)	International Intervention, Human Rights and the United Nations	Samantha Power, "Bystanders to Genocide" Background Slides on Intervention and the United Nations <b>Essay #2 topic distributed.</b> <b>Presentation #9</b>
November 20 (M)	The Global Economy: Trade (I)	BDM, Chapter 13, parts (pp. 447-469) <b>Essay #2 due at the start of class</b>
November 22 (W)	<i>Thanksgiving Recess. No class.</i>	
November 27 (M)	The Global Economy: Trade (II)	BDM, Chapter 13, parts (pp. 469-483) Background slides on the World Trade Organization and the GATT
November 29 (W)	The Global Economy: Finance	Goldstein and Pevehouse (pp. 202-227, 335-338). Background slides on the IMF and the World Bank. <b>Presentation #10</b>
December 4 (M)	The Global Economy: Development and Foreign Assistance	Global Issues, "Ending Poverty" Jeffrey Sachs, "The Development Challenge"
December 6 (W)	Last Day of Class: Evaluating the Strategic Perspective	