Syllabus for Govt. 391: International Conflict and Cooperation

College of William and Mary
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For the past 15 years theorists of international relations have attempted to develop sound explanations for patterns of conflict and cooperation observed in the international arena. However, just when a consensus seemed to be emerging on which theories best explained the real world…that world underwent a series of sudden and dramatic changes. These changes in the real world (the end of the Cold War, the spread of democratic polities, the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union and the enlargement of existing international organizations) caused scholars to re-asses their explanations of international conflict and cooperation. As a result, we have seen an explosion of interest in the subject of international cooperation. Today, students of international relations have a large number of theories to choose from, but little consensus on which theories are most helpful at explaining or predicting conflict and cooperation in the real world.

This course provides students of international politics with an opportunity to test these competing theories in a number of interesting ways. After a review of the theoretical literature students will apply these theories to a range of historical and contemporary case studies. Cases are drawn from a range of different policy areas including economic, security and environmental issues. In addition to the case studies, students will have the opportunity to apply the insights of these theories in a series of computer simulations conducted over the internet. These simulations allow students to assume the role of state leaders, advisors or diplomats and interact with other students at universities in North America, Europe, the Former Soviet Union and Asia. Through the use of the case study method and the simulations, students will draw conclusions about which theories help us to understand patterns of international conflict and cooperation.

I. Outline of the Course:

I. What Do We Mean by “Cooperation” and “Conflict?”
II. The Realist Canon.
III. The Liberal Response.
IV. Does Cooperation Vary by Issue Area?
V. Does Domestic Politics Influence International Cooperation?
VI. Applying Theories to Cases

A. NATO Expansion – Collective Good or Domestic Politics?
B. The Uneven Enlargement of International Organizations
C. Arms Control in Europe Before and After the Cold War
D. Economic and Political Integration in Europe and Beyond
E. Trans-border Environmental Problems
F. Marshall Plan II or Containment Redux?

VII. Atlantic Council Simulation: Security Crisis in Europe
II. **Reading Assignments:** The vast majority of the required reading for this course is contained in a Course Reader. The reader is a compilation of book chapters, speeches, conference papers and journal articles. A copy of the reader can be purchased at Staples Office Supply store on Richmond Road and another copy is in the Government Department Office (Morton 10). You should photocopy the entire Reader as soon as possible. Additional reading will be assigned for the simulation and by your class-mates as a supplement to the group projects. All this material will either be distributed in class or through the course web page at [http://courseinfo.wm.edu/courses/GOVT391-01-S00/](http://courseinfo.wm.edu/courses/GOVT391-01-S00/).

III. **Grades:** Your course grade will be the weighted average of class discussions, group projects, simulation performance, and the final paper. These 4 elements will be weighted as follows:

- Class Discussion  20%
- Group Project  20%
- Simulations  20%
- Final Paper  40%  (Due on May 8, 1999)

IV. **Schedule of Lectures, Group Projects, and Readings:**

I. **What Do We Mean by “Cooperation” and “Conflict?” How Are These Related to Negotiation and Bargaining?**


Robert Keohane, “The Concept of Cooperation,” Chapter 4 from *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy.*

Starkey and Boyer, Chapter 1 and 5.  (Optional cases in chapters 2-4 may make it easier to follow points in chapter 5).

II. **The Realist Canon (and the new pretenders)**


Starkey and Boyer, Chapter 2.

### III. The Liberal Response.


### IV. Does Cooperation Vary by Issue Area?


Starkey and Boyer, Chapter 4.

### V. Does Domestic Politics Influence International Cooperation?


Starkey and Boyer, Chapter 3.

**VI. Applying Theories to Cases: High-Tech Group Presentations**

A. **NATO Expansion**


B. **The Uneven Enlargement of International Organizations**


C. **Crisis Management in Europe After the Cold War**

Reading to be announced.

D. **Economic and Political Integration in Europe**


E. **Trans-border Environmental Problems**

Reading to be announced.
F. Marshall Plan II or Containment Redux? Western Economic Assistance

Reading to be announced.

VII. Atlantic Council Simulation: Crisis Management


Starkey and Boyer, Chpt. 6 and 7.

The simulation will use the software from the ICONS web site at the University of Maryland. Feel free to check it out.

[http://www.icons.umd.edu](http://www.icons.umd.edu)

The simulation is run by the Atlantic Council. Check out the description and the rules at their web site, or peruse the results of last year’s simulation at

[http://www.acus.org/Education/](http://www.acus.org/Education/)