

School of International Studies

Seminar course

Great Power Transition and Asian International Relations

Instructor: Prof. Rajesh Rajagopalan (rajesh.sis.jnu@gmail.com)
Meeting Venue:
Meeting hours: Mondays & Thursdays, 2.00 to 4.00 pm.
Office hours: Mondays, 12 to 1 pm and by appointment in Room 218, SIS-1

Course Description

This optional seminar course assumes that you have already completed the basic 'Theory of International Relations' (first semester) course, and preferably also the 'Problems of International Relations' (second semester). In this course, we will build on that base, and address theoretical debates around power transitions in the context of the current changes taking place in global and more specifically, Asian international politics. First, we will discuss the issue of power transitions from a number of Realist and Liberal theoretical approaches. Subsequently, we will consider readings on the nature of the current global changes, the relative decline of the US and with it, unipolarity, China's rise and the challenge this poses in terms of global and regional stability. Finally, we will examine how Indian analysts have grappled with these issues.

Course Requirements

This is a discussion course. There will be no lectures. All students are required to actively participate in class. Your participation will partly determine your grade. Class discussions will be led by one student, and all students will be required to lead at least two such class discussions during the semester. 'Leading the discussion' means the assigned student will present the assigned reading for that class, outlining the key points made in the readings and key issues/problems/weaknesses in the reading for that class. Each point raised by the presenter will be discussed by the rest of the class. Therefore, all students are required to take part in the discussions. You are expected to read one book/four journal articles per week.

The two class presentations will each account for 15% of your grade (15x2=30% total). Class participation will constitute another 10% of your grade.

You are required to write a term paper and present it in class in the last two weeks of the course. The presentation will constitute 10% of your grade. After the presentation, you are required to incorporate the suggestions and comments in your term paper before submitting it during the final exam week. The remaining 50% of your grade will be for the final term paper itself.

Reading Schedule

Theorizing Power Transitions

1. Charles Kindleberger, *The World in Depression, 1929-39* (University of California Press, 1973)
2. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1981)
3. Paul Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (Unwin-Hyman, 1988)
4. John Ikenberry, *After Victory* (Princeton University Press, 2001)
5. Dale Copeland, *The Origins of Major Wars* (Cornell University Press, 2000)
6. David M. Edelstein, *Over the Horizon: Time, Uncertainty and the Rise of Great Powers* (Cornell University Press, 2017)
7. Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shiffrin, *Rising Titans, Falling Giants: How Great Powers Exploit Power Shifts* (Cornell University Press, 2018) [In a summary form, Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shiffrin,

“Partnership or Predation? How Rising States Contend with Declining Great Powers”, *International Security* 2020; 45 (1): 90–126.
doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00384]

8. Stacie Goddard, *When Right Makes Might: Rising Powers and World Order* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018)

Theorizing Polarity

1. Kenneth Waltz, “The Stability of A Bipolar World,” *Daedalus* 93, no. 3 (1964): 881–909.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20026863>
2. Edward D. Mansfield, “Concentration, Polarity and the Distribution of Power,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Volume 37, Issue 1, March 1993, Pages 105–128, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2600833>
3. R. Harrison Wagner, “What Was Bipolarity” *International Organization*, 47(1), 77-106.
doi:10.1017/S0020818300004719
4. William C. Wohlforth, “The Stability of a Unipolar World.” *International Security*, vol. 24, no. 1, The MIT Press, 1999, pp. 5–41, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539346>.

Theorizing International Hegemony

As an introduction, read Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, *Causes of War*, pp. 43-50.

1. G. John Ikenberry & Daniel H. Nexon, “Hegemony Studies 3.0: The Dynamics of Hegemonic Orders,” *Security Studies*, 28:3, 395-421, DOI:10.1080/09636412.2019.1604981
2. Carla Norrlof & William C. Wohlforth, “Raisondel’Hégémonie (The Hegemon’s Interest): Theory of the Costs and Benefits of Hegemony,” *Security Studies*, 28:3, 422-450, DOI: 10.1080/09636412.2019.1604982
3. Daniel W. Drezner, “Counter-Hegemonic Strategies in the Global Economy,” *Security Studies*, 28:3, 505-531, DOI: 10.1080/09636412.2019.1604985

America’s Rise, Decline & Grand Strategy

1. Hal Brands, *American Grand Strategy in the Age of Trump* (Brookings Institution Press, 2018)
2. Adam Tooze, *Crashed: How A Decade of Financial Crises Changed the World* (Penguin, 2018)
3. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton University Press, 2012)
4. Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States* (New York: Farrar, Strous and Giroux, 2019)
5. Stephen Wertheim, *Tomorrow, the World: The Birth of U.S. Global Supremacy* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020)

China’s Rise and the International Order

1. Avery Goldstein, “China's Grand Strategy under Xi Jinping: Reassurance, Reform, and Resistance,” *International Security* 2020; 45 (1): 164–201.
doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00383
2. Wu Riqiang, “Living with Uncertainty: Modeling China's Nuclear Survivability,” *International Security* 2020; 44 (4): 84–118. doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00376
3. Andrew Chubb, “PRC Assertiveness in the South China Sea: Measuring Continuity and Change, 1970–2015,” *International Security* 2021; 45 (3): 79–121.
doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00400

Additional Recommended Readings:

1. Evan Osnos, *The Age of Ambition* (Vintage, 2015)
2. Peter Martin, *China’s Civilian Army* (Oxford University Press, 2021)

3. M. Taylor Fravel, *Active Defense: China's Military Strategy since 1949* (Princeton University Press, 2019)

Transitioning from Unipolarity

1. Astrid H. M. Nordin and Mikael Weissmann, "Will Trump Make China Great Again? The Belt and Road Initiative and International Order," *International Affairs* 94, no. 2 (1 March 2018): 231–49.
2. Roy Allison, "Russia and the Post-2014 International Legal Order: Revisionism and Realpolitik," *International Affairs* 93, no. 3 (1 May 2017): 519–43.
3. Patrick Porter, *The False Promise of Liberal Order*

A Contested Asia?

1. Rush Doshi, *The Long Game: China's Grand Strategy to Displace American Order*
2. Michael J. Green, *By More than Providence: Grand Strategy and American Power in the Asia Pacific since 1783*

Additional Recommended Readings:

1. Aaron Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (W.W.Norton, 2011)

Related Theoretical Issues (if time permits)

1. Mariya Grinberg, "Wartime Commercial Policy and Trade between Enemies," *International Security* 2021; 46 (1): 9–52. doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00412
2. Mark L. Haas, "When Do Ideological Enemies Ally?" *International Security* 2021; 46 (1): 104–146. doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00413
3. Melinda Haas, Keren Yarhi-Milo, "To Disclose or Deceive? Sharing Secret Information between Aligned States," *International Security* 2021; 45 (3): 122–161. doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00402
4. Arman Grigoryan, "Selective Wilsonianism: Material Interests and the West's Support for Democracy," *International Security* 2020; 44 (4): 158–200. doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00378
5. Iain D. Henry, "What Allies Want: Reconsidering Loyalty, Reliability, and Alliance Interdependence," *International Security* 2020; 44 (4): 45–83. doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00375