

International Politics

POLS 240 Section 4

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Review Syllabus

- <http://www.unm.edu/~ckbutler/POLS240/>
- **Readings**
- **Responsibilities**
- **Policies**
- **Coursework and Grading**

Core Concepts

- **Interests**
- **Interactions**
- **Institutions**

Core Concepts

- **Interests**

- **Who are the relevant actors and what are their interests?**

Core Concepts

- **Interactions**

- **What is the nature of their interactions? What strategies can they be expected to pursue? When are their choices likely to bring about cooperation or conflict?**

Core Concepts

- **Institutions**

- **How do institutions constrain and affect interactions? How might they impede or facilitate cooperation? When and how do institutions favor different actors and their interactions?**

Eleven Puzzles

- **Why do countries sometimes wage war rather than resolving their disputes through negotiations?**
- **Do countries fight wars to satisfy influential domestic interests?**
- **Why do trade policies vary so widely?**
- **Why is international finance so controversial?**
- **Why do countries pursue different currency policies?**

Eleven Puzzles

- **Why are some countries rich and some countries poor?**
- **How could relatively small transnational groups bring about policy change within and among countries?**
- **Why is it so hard to cooperate internationally to protect the environment?**
- **Why do countries sometimes try to protect the human rights of people outside their borders?**

Eleven Puzzles

- **Why are some periods marked by extensive global conflict while others experience robust efforts at cooperation?**

Theories

- **“We do not build theories because we believe the world is simple or mechanical. Rather, we build them because we know the world is extraordinarily complex, and the only way to understand important phenomena is to cut away some of the complexity and identify the most important factors.”**
 - **FLS, introduction**

Theories

- “Theory is the poetry of science. It is simplification, the essential abstraction, the exaggeration of truth. Through simplification theory creates a caricature of reality. Through deduction the premises of the caricature are translated into empirical--and therefore refutable—generalizations. The caricature itself is not the real world—it mocks it. Yet mind true things by their mockeries! The caricature mocks reality; the deductions from the caricature illuminate it.”

– Robert A. Mundell 1964

This is the World We Live In

- **Anarchy**

- **There is no central authority (i.e., no world government) in international politics.**

- **Hierarchy**

- **Some actors and formal institutions constrain the behavior of other actors more than others.**