

Great Power Relations

Last Updated: Thu, 08/07/2025

Course prefix: INTA

Course number: 2100

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):
93691

Instructor First Name: Kuen-Da

Instructor Last Name: Lin

Semester: Fall

Academic year: 2025

Course description:

How could the international system led by the United States adjust to accommodate China's growing power? This question has become one of the defining issues of the time in world politics. The primary concern is whether China's rise could defy history and be peaceful. China's rise is only one recent episode of the long history of great power relations that has played a decisive role in shaping the international system the world has seen. This course's primary goal is to explain the linkage between great power competition and cooperation and the international order that results from the interaction. The course begins with an introduction to the primary schools of thought in international relations, which are the foundation for understanding the stability in great power relations discussed in the course's follow-on parts. The second part of the course introduces the concept of power transition among great powers, discusses power transition's linkages to great power wars, and reviews historical power transition cases. The third part focuses on the international order that might emerge from the end of great power wars and ways to maintain the order. Finally, the course concludes by looking at the prospects for great power relations amid China's rise.

Course learning outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence the global system
2. Students will be able to use their knowledge of international affairs in a practical way to address issues of immediate international concern.
3. Students will be able to understand current political events through an analytical lens of major theories of international relations.

Required course materials:

Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017)

G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000)

Grading policy:

Your grade in this course will be determined by two midterms, one discussion handout, one policy analysis essay, and your participation score.

Midterms: There will be two midterms; each midterm will account for **20%** of the final grade. The exams will test students' understanding of the lectures and textbooks.

Policy Analysis: This assignment asks you to analyze one foreign policy issue that a great power is ignoring, mishandling, or addressing well in its relations with other great powers. In this analysis, you will need to (1) clearly describe the issue; (2) describe the current policy measures; (3) analytically evaluate the status quo policy by applying the knowledge learned in class; (4) discuss the prospect assuming no change in status quo policy (and be clear about the timeframe you are using to answer this question); (5) recommend either "no policy change" or "policy change," and the recommendation should follow logically from your evaluation of the status quo policy. The policy analysis accounts for **30%** of your final grade.

Participation: You are required to present a short (one-page) policy analysis proposal (with preliminary bibliography) in mid-March. Your participation grade is determined by your feedback on others' projects, your participation in class, and your Q&A on two guest speakers' talks and the symposium on April 17. Participation accounts for **20%** of the final grade.

A discussion handout: You are required to submit a handout (no more than one page) of your policy analysis proposal to facilitate discussion.

Your discussion handout is due at 12:30 p.m. the day before your presentation. The handout should include background information on the issue and your plan for studying it. The handout accounts for **10%** of the final grade.

Attendance policy:

Students are expected to attend lectures and have completed the assigned readings before class.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Cheating, plagiarism, or any form of academic dishonesty is a serious offense and is a direct violation of the Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code. Plagiarizing is defined by Webster's as "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (another's production) without crediting the source." If caught cheating or plagiarizing, you will be dealt with according to the GT Academic Honor Code. For any questions involving these or any other Academic Honor Code issues, please consult the professor or www.honor.gatech.edu.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

INTA 2100A Great Power Relations, Fall 2025

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion