

Department of International Relations  
BILKENT UNIVERSITY

IR543

**INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC POLICY DECISION MAKING**

**Fall 2010-2011**

Monday 15:40-17:30

Classroom: A 329

**Instructor**

Özgür Özdamar

Room: 326 B

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Office Hours: M 13:40-14:30, T 10:40-11:30

**Course**

This class will introduce you to the study of decision-making in international relations. Our focus will be game theoretic approaches to decision-making and their application in international studies. Game theory is a branch of applied mathematics that is used to analyze strategic interactions. Strategic interactions occur when choices made by two or more actors influence each others' outcomes. These kinds of situations are very common to political life, especially to international politics. In this class, you will be introduced to the basic tools of elementary non-cooperative game theory and learn how game theory is used to analyze strategic interactions among international actors.

We begin with a basic introduction to game theory, followed by a discussion of sequential and simultaneous moves. Different models of decision-making are discussed in the next section. Collective action problems and international bargaining are the last two subjects.

NOTE: Mathematical requirements of this class are not high and not beyond your abilities.

**Readings and Required Textbooks**

The assigned readings for each week are listed in the course schedule below. There is a reasonable amount of readings for each week. Therefore, please do keep up with the readings each week. This class will be far more rewarding for you if you do so. Reading the material every week will enable you to be more engaged while listening to lectures and contributing to discussions. Both your exam and participation grades will be positively affected by reading the material on a regular basis and prior to class. Main books used are:

Dixit, Skeath and Reiley. *Games of Strategy*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Norton.

Bueno de Mesquita. *Principles of International Politics*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. CQ Press.

Starkey, Boyer and Wilkenfeld. *Negotiating a Complex World*. New Millennium Books in IS.

**Additional readings will be uploaded to Moodle.**

**Course Requirements**

Midterm 1	30%
Midterm 2	35%
Presentation	25%
Participation	10%

## **Exams and Presentations**

There will be two midterm examinations and NO final. These exams will be in-class exams. 25 percent of your grade will be based on a presentation you will make in class. Short essays will be based on film presentations related to the subject matter. Your essays should demonstrate you can use the material learned in the class to understand and analyze foreign policy decisions.

## **Attendance and Participation**

Your progress in this class is highly dependent on your perfect attendance and meaningful participation to classroom discussions. Therefore, participation constitutes a substantial part of your grade (10%).

## **Make-up Policy**

No make-up examinations will be granted without a university-approved excuse to miss a scheduled exam or quiz. In cases of severe illness or deaths in the family, I require proof (e.g. a signed doctor's note and an explanation on the doctor's letterhead describing why you cannot take the exam; obituaries; e-mails from your academic adviser explaining the specific situation). Make-up exams will be possible only if you contact me in advance by e-mail and provide me with the appropriate document. **There will be no make-up assignments or tests for unexcused absences. Also, I usually require a research paper as a replacement of a make-up exam.**

## **Classroom Etiquette**

I expect you to observe all rules of proper classroom conduct to provide an appropriate environment conducive to learning by all:

1. Please turn off your cell phones and pagers. No calls, incoming or outgoing, or text messaging are allowed.
2. Please refrain from talking, eating or other disruptive activity during class;
3. Please come to class on time and do not leave early; if you must do so, let me know beforehand and please sit near the door so your exit will be less disruptive. Unpunctuality will result in a lower participation grade.
4. Please do not read newspapers or any other publications in the classroom. Also, please do not play games or surf on the web when you use a laptop computer.

## **Policy on Academic Honesty**

The academic work of all students must comply with all policies that appear in the Bilkent Website: <http://www.provost.bilkent.edu.tr/procedures/AcademicHonesty.htm>

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following: cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized possession of examinations, unauthorized changing of grades. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that

range from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting or collaboration, consult the course instructor.

## **Office Hours**

Please visit me during the following hours for questions regarding the class: M 13:40-14:30, T 10:40-11:30.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Lecture 1 Game Theory or Why You Can't Always Get What You Want!

Reading: BdM Ch3: Christopher Columbus and IR

Lecture 2 Game Theory: Assumptions and Basics

Reading: Dixit et al. Ch1, Ch2

Lecture 3 Game Theory and Two-person Decision-making, Sequential Moves

Reading: Dixit et al. Ch3

Lecture 4 and 5 Game Theory and Two-person Decision-making; Prisoners' Dilemma and IR

Reading: Dixit et al. Ch4 and Ch5

## **Midterm 1**

Lecture 6 Graham Allison's Three Models of Decision-making and Movie Presentation:

*Crimson Tide*

Reading: Allison and BdM Ch4 and Ch5

Lecture 7 Strategic Perspective: How do Leaders Decide?

Reading: Allison and BdM Ch4 and Ch5

Lecture 8 Cuban Missile Crisis and Brinkmanship: Game Theoretic Analysis and Movie

Presentation: *13 Days*

Reading: Dixit et al. Ch 15

Lecture 9 and 10 N-person games, Collective Action Problems in IR

Reading: Dixit et al. Ch 11 and Ch 12

Lectures 11-14 Negotiating a Complex World: An Introduction to International Negotiations

Reading: Starkey et al. Whole book.

## **Midterm 2**