

B.Pol.4  
**Power in World Politics**  
Winter semester 2014/15

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**Prof. Dr. Tobias Lenz**

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**Time and place**

Wednesdays (starting 26 November 2014!)	16:00-18:00	Weekly seminar	Oec 0.169
Wed, 26 Nov, 3 Dec, 17 Dec, 14 Jan	18:00-20:00	Extra sessions	VG 1.101
Wed, 3 Dec	18:00-20:00	Extra session	VG 3.101

**Course description**

Why is Israel unable to defeat Hamas despite its superior military technology? Is US hegemony in decline? Do transnational non-governmental organizations such as Amnesty International or Greenpeace exert influence in world politics? And what renders so-called 'rising powers' such as India or Brazil increasingly important in international relations? All of these questions point to the importance of the concept of power to the study of world politics. Due to the anarchic nature of the international system – i.e. the absence of a central government with the legitimacy to impose binding rules – the international exercise of power is less constrained by rules and institutions than it is in domestic politics; it occurs in 'purer' form. Yet despite decades of scholarly debate, no agreement has emerged on the nature of power and its role in world politics. In short, power remains an essentially contested concept.

This English-speaking course introduces students to various facets of the concept of power in analyzing world politics. It is based on the premise that power conceptions are theory-dependent, i.e. different theories of international relations espouse different ideas about the essence of power, its role in world politics and the nature of its effects. We both examine different conceptions theoretically and review empirical applications of power analysis from various substantive areas of international relations. The course is structured in three parts. In the first part, we learn the basics of power analysis in International Relations by discussing different definitions and examining central concepts. In the second part, we discuss different conceptions of power as advanced by the main theories of international relations. In the third part, we review selected empirical applications and contemporary themes in power analysis, including the role of rising powers, the impact of globalization, and the power of international organizations.

## Course objectives

In this course students learn:

- to develop a solid understanding of the concept of power, as used in international relations scholarship, and to get a sense of the methodological difficulties involved in using it;
- to understand alternative conceptions of power associated with the main theories of International Relations;
- to apply these alternative conceptions to key questions and debates in world politics, including normative ones;

## Course assessment

The module B.Pol.4 'Introduction to International Relations' (*Einführung in die Internationalen Beziehungen*) – composed of two parts: an introductory lecture and an accompanying seminar (*Begleitseminar*) – is assessed via a written exam at the end of the semester. The exam takes place on Tuesday, 9 February 2015, and it contains an essay question on this seminar. Students must register for the exam **via FlexNow!**

## Teaching arrangements

This course is designed primarily as a reading and discussion course, geared towards preparing for the final exam. Each week, students are assigned one or two texts that they are *required* to prepare based on one or several guiding questions. Preparing means that students read the assigned readings carefully, mark and/or extract central ideas and arguments, note down your own ideas as well as issues that you do not understand, and sketch out – in bullet points – your answer to the guiding question(s). Such preparation is time-consuming! Expect to spend three to four hours on *each* text – and even more if you have difficulty reading English. Yet you will soon realize that such preparation is worth your time: the better prepared you come to class, the more you get out of class discussions.

*Required readings* will be posted on StudIP. Additional readings, most of which are available in the *Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek (SUB)* or the *Bereichsbibliothek Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften*, serve to deepen specific topics individually; they are generally not discussed in class. Note that some of the readings are relevant to more than one class topic.

The course seeks to strike a balance between conceptual work and empirical application. Besides in-class discussion of the weekly readings, we will regularly apply the conceptual and theoretical insights gained from the readings to contemporary issues in world politics. Students are therefore advised to stay up to date with international political developments.

## Course content

### Part 1: Overview and basics

- {Session 1} Introduction and overview
- {Session 2} Defining power
- {Session 3} Power analysis in International Relations

### Part 2: Conceptions of power

- {Session 4} Military power (Realism)
- {Session 5} Interdependence and power (Neoliberal Institutionalism, Liberalism)
- Session 6 Structural power (Marxism)
- {Session 7} Legitimacy and power (Constructivism)
- {Session 8} Attraction and soft power

### Part 3: Themes and applications

- Session 9 State power in world politics
- {Session 10} Are international organizations powerful?
- {Session 11} Is *Amnesty International* powerful? The influence of non-governmental organizations
- Session 12 Power shifts in times of the Internet
- Session 13 Power and the European Union
  
- Session 14 Concluding discussion: The future of power in world politics

{ } indicates double session

## General reading

I recommend the following books as general works on the topic.

- Berenskötter, Felix and Michael Williams (Eds.) (2007) *Power in World Politics*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Barnett, Michael and Raymond Duvall (Eds.) (2005) *Power in Global Governance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nye, Joseph (2004) *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Dowding, K. (2011) (ed) *Encyclopedia of Power*. London: Sage.

## Syllabus

### Part 1: Overview and Basics

#### **26 November [double session]**

##### Session 1: Introduction and overview

In this introductory session, I give an overview of the content and structure of the course, and outline its main requirements.

##### Session 2: Defining power

In this session, we begin to sharpen our understanding of power by asking about the nature of power and discussing the centrality of understanding power in political systems characterized by the absence of formal hierarchy, i.e. world politics.

##### *Questions:*

- ❖ What is power?
- ❖ Why is it central to analyzing world politics?

##### *Required reading:*

- Weber, M (1972) *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Vol 1, pp. 53-54.
- Masters, R. (1964) 'World Politics as a Primitive Political System', *World Politics* 16(4): 595-619 [read only to p. 615]

##### *Additional reading:*

- Dahl, R. (1957) 'The Concept of Power', *Behavioural Science* 2(3): 201-215.
- Bachrach, P. and M. Baratz (1962) 'Two Faces of Power', *American Political Science Review* 56(4): 947-952.
- Lukes, S. (1974) *Power: A Radical View*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Sprout, H. and M. Sprout (Eds.) (1945) *Foundations of National Power*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

##### Session 3: Power analysis in International Relations

##### *Question:*

- ❖ What are the difficulties involved in using the concept of power to analyze world politics?

*Required reading:*

- Baldwin, D. (1979) 'Power Analysis and World Politics', *World Politics* 31(2): 161-194.

*Additional reading:*

- Barnett, M. and R. Duvall (2005) 'Power in International Politics', *International Organization* 59(1): 39-75.
- Bueno de Mesquita, B. (2006) *Principles of International Politics: People's Power, Preferences and Perceptions*. Washington: CQ Press, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, chapters 7 and 8.
- Baldwin, D. (2013) 'Power and International Relations', in: W. Carlsnaes, T. Risse and B. Simmons (Eds.) *Handbook of International Relations*. London.
- Berenskoetter, F. (2007) 'Thinking About Power', in: F. Berenskoetter and M. Williams (Eds.) *Power in World Politics*. London, New York: Routledge, pp. 1-22.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Part 2: Conceptions of Power</b></p>
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*Overarching questions:*

- How is power conceptualized?
- How is power exercised?
- What effects does power generate?

**3 December [double session]**

Session 1: Military power (Realism)

*Required reading:*

- Schmidt, B. (2007) 'Realist Conceptions of Power', in: Berenskoetter, F. and M. Williams (Eds.) *Power in World Politics*. London, New York: Routledge, pp. 43-63.

*Additional reading:*

- Morgenthau, H. (1948) *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: Knopf.
- Waltz, K. (1979) *Theory of International Politics*. London: Addison-Wesley.
- Mearsheimer, J. (2001) *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York, London: Norton.

- Guzzini, S. (1993) 'Structural Power: The Limits of Neorealist Power Analysis', *International Organization* 47(3): 443-478.

## Session 2: Interdependence and power (Neoliberal Institutionalism, Liberalism)

### *Required reading:*

- Keohane, R. and J. Nye (1977) *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. New York: Longman. Only pp. 7-16, 20-32 (parts of chapters 1 and 2).

### *Additional reading:*

- Baldwin, D. (1980) 'Interdependence and Power: A Conceptual Analysis', *International Organization* 34(4): 471-506.
- Moravcsik, Andrew (1996) 'Robert Keohane: Political Theorist', in: Milner, Helen und Andrew Moravcsik (Eds.) *Power, Interdependence, and Nonstate Actors in World Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 243-264 [online verfügbar].
- Moravcsik, A. (1997) 'Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Relations', *International Organization* 51(4): 513-553.
- Milner, H. (1991) 'The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory: A Critique', *Review of International Studies* 17(1): 67-85.

## **10 December: Structural power (Marxism)**

### *Required reading:*

- Strange, S. (1987) 'The Persistent Myth of Lost Hegemony', *International Organization* 41(4): 551-574 [skim first part to p. 559].
- James, S. and D. Lake (1989) 'The Second Face of Hegemony: Britain's Repeal of the Corn Laws and the American Walker Tariff of 1846', *International Organization* 43(1). Read pp. 1-9; skim the empirical sections.

### *Additional reading:*

- Cox, R. (1983) 'Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 12(2): 162-175.
- Cox, R.W. (1981) 'Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 10(2): 126-155.
- Guzzini, S. (1993) 'Structural Power: The Limits of Neorealist Power Analysis', *International Organization* 47(3): 443-478.
- Isaac, J. (1987) *Power and Marxist Theory: A Realist View*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Bell, S. (2012) 'The Power of Ideas: The Ideational Shaping of the Structural Power of Business', *International Studies Quarterly* 56(4): 661-673.

## **17 December [double session]**

### Session 7: Legitimacy and power (Constructivism)

#### *Required reading:*

- New Lebow, R. (2007) 'The Power of Persuasion', in: Berenskoetter, F. and M. Williams (Eds.) *Power in World Politics*. London, New York: Routledge, pp. 120-140.
- Hurd, I. (2002) 'Legitimacy and Authority in International Relations', *International Organization* 53(2). Only read pp. 379-399.

#### *Additional reading:*

- Bially Mattern, J. (2001) 'The Power Politics of Identity', *European Journal of International Relations* 7(3): 349-397.
- Digeser, P. (1992) 'The Fourth Face of Power', *Journal of Politics* 54(4): 977-1007.
- Ikenberry, J.G. and C.A. Kupchan (1990) 'Socialization and Hegemonic Power', *International Organization* 44: 283-315.
- Franck, T. (1990) *The Power of Legitimacy Among Nations*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hall, R.B. (1997) 'Moral Authority as a Power Resource', *International Organization* 51: 591-622.

### Session 8: Attraction and soft power

#### *Required reading:*

- Nye, J. (1990) 'Soft Power', *Foreign Policy* 80(3): 153-171.

#### *Additional reading:*

- Bially Mattern, J. (2005) 'Why 'Soft Power' Isn't so Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics', *Millenium* 33(3): 583-612.
- Manners, I. (2002) 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40(2): 235-258.
- Nye, J. (2004) *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.

<h2><b>Part 3: Themes and Applications</b></h2>
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### **7 January: State power in world politics**

*Question:*

- Under what conditions can states exercise power successfully? Answer with reference to different theoretical perspectives.

*Required reading:*

- Pressman, J. (2009) 'Power Without Influence: The Bush Administration's Foreign Policy Failure in the Middle East', *International Security* 33(4): 149-179.

*Additional reading:*

- Johnston A. (2003) 'Is China a Status Quo Power?', *International Security* 27: 5-56.
- Art, R. (1996) 'American Foreign Policy and the Fungibility of Force', *Security Studies* 5(4): 7-42.
- Sperandei, M. (2006) 'Bridging Deterrence and Compellence: An Alternative Approach to the Study of Coercive Diplomacy', *International Studies Review* 8: 253-280.

## **14 January: Non-state actors in world politics**

*Overarching questions:*

- In what ways can non-state actors (international governmental and non-governmental organizations) be powerful? Are there fundamental differences between the ways in which states and non-state actors exercise power?
- Can some actors exercise power more legitimately than other actors? If so, why?

### Session 10: International organizations

*Required reading:*

- Eaton, S. and R. Stubbs (2006) 'Is ASEAN Powerful? Neo-realist Versus Constructivist Approaches to Power in Southeast Asia', *The Pacific Review* 19(2): 135-155.

*Additional reading:*

- Mearsheimer, J. (1994/95) 'The False Promise of International Institutions', *International Security* 19(3): 5-49.
- Barnett, M. and M. Finnemore (1999) 'The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations', *International Organization* 53(4): 699-732.

### Session 11: Is Amnesty International powerful? The influence of non-governmental organizations

*Required reading:*



- Holzscheiter, A. (2005) 'Discourse as Capability: Non-State Actors' Capital in Global Governance', *Millennium* 33(3): 723-746.

*Additional reading:*

- Keck, M. and Sikkink, K. (1998) *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Mathews, J. (1997) 'Power Shifts: The Rise of Global Civil Society' *Foreign Affairs* (January/February): 50-66.
- Holzscheiter, A. (2011) 'Power of Discourse or Discourse of the Powerful? The Reconstruction of Global Childhood Norms in the Drafting of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child', *Journal of Language and Politics* 10(1): 1-28.
- Epstein, C. (2005) 'Knowledge and Power in Global Environmental Activism', *International Journal of Peace Studies* 10(1): 47-67.

## **21 January: Power shifts in times of the Internet**

*Question:*

- Does the Internet fundamentally change the nature and exercise of power in world politics?

*Required reading:*

- Nye, J. (2002) 'The Information Revolution and American Soft Power', *Asia-Pacific Review* 9(1): 60-76.

*Additional reading:*

- Strange, S. (1996) *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Keohane, R. and J. Nye (1998) 'Power and Interdependence in the Information Age', *Foreign Affairs* 77(5): 81-94.
- Rosecrance, R. (2014) 'The Partial Diffusion of Power', *International Studies Review* 16(2): 199-205.

## **28 January: Power and the European Union**

*Question:*

- ❖ Is the European Union a Normative Power? If so, why? What does this debate tell us about the legitimacy of exercising power in world politics?

*Required reading:*

- Manners, I. (2002), 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40(2): 235-58.

- Hurt, S., Lee, D. and U. Lorenz (2013) 'The Argumentative Dimension to the EU-Africa EPAs', *International Negotiation* 18: 67-87.

*Additional reading:*

- Aggestam, L. (2008), 'Introduction: Ethical power Europe?', *International Affairs* 84(1): 1-11.
- Damro, C. (2012), 'Market power Europe', *Journal of European Public Policy* 19(5): 682-99.
- Kagan, R. (2002) 'Power and weakness', *Policy Review*, No. 113 (June–July).
- Hyde-Price, A. (2006), "'Normative" power Europe: a realist critique', *Journal of European Public Policy* 13(2): 217-34.

#### **4 February: Concluding Discussion**

In this session, we summarize what we have learned about the concept of power in analyzing world politics. And we will talk about the final exam.