

## **International Relations at Indiana University**

**International Relations** (or **IR**) is the study of political processes that occur outside the domain of any single political entity. IR scholars focus on military, diplomatic, and economic interactions among national governments as well as their interactions with trans-national corporations, inter-governmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations. Analysts have to take account of such widely disparate factors as the personalities of individual leaders, the dynamics of small-group decision processes, the institutional structures of particular governments, the cultural and social determinants of behavior, the uncertainties of strategic interaction, and long-term trends associated with large-scale changes in the global system as a whole. IR is an incredibly complex subject, and a remarkably diverse set of research approaches have been used to try to understand this subject.

At **Indiana University** prospective IR scholars will be exposed to a significant proportion of the wide array of these research approaches. In particular, students will have the opportunity to learn from leading figures in methodologically sophisticated forms of research. The Department of Political Science at Indiana University has a long tradition of leadership in the rigorous application of social scientific research methods to international relations.

The fact that Indiana University has an outstanding reputation as a leading center for the study of international relations was clearly demonstrated when four members of the IU political science department (Jeffrey Hart, Michael McGinnis, Karen Rasler, and William Thompson) were selected by the International Studies Association to serve as the editors of *International Studies Quarterly* for the years 1994-98. The International Studies Association is the largest multidisciplinary organization of international relations scholars in the world, *ISQ* is one of the most prestigious journals in international relations, and the IU team was selected over several worthy competitors.

## **International Relations Faculty**

The **Department of Political Science** at Indiana University has assembled a group of international relations scholars with diverse but overlapping interests and expertise. The IR group at IU consists of the following faculty members:

**Jeffrey A. Hart**, Ph.D. University of California, Berkeley, 1975

**Michael D. McGinnis**, Ph.D. University of Minnesota, 1985

**Karen Rasler**, Ph.D. Florida State University, 1981

**Dina Rome Spechler**, Ph.D. Harvard University, 1973

**William R. Thompson**, Ph.D. University of Washington, 1972

This brochure highlights the ways in which the diverse backgrounds and interests of these five scholars collectively produce a solid foundation for an outstanding program of study for graduate students.

## Research on Conflict, Political Economy, and Foreign Policy

Research in international relations falls into the three standard categories of conflict (security studies), international political economy, and foreign policy analysis. As a whole the IR group at IU covers all these categories, but none of us fits neatly into any single category.

We begin our tour in the subfield of international political economy. Jeff Hart co-authored the fifth edition of one of the most widely used textbooks on this subject, *The Politics of International Economic Relations* (St. Martin's, 1996), with Joan Spero. He also co-edited a volume entitled *Globalization and Governance* (Routledge, 1999) with one of his students, Aseem Prakash. Hart's research focuses on multinational corporations and political responses to emerging technologies. His earlier book *Rival Capitalists: International Competitiveness in the United States, Japan, and Europe* (Cornell University Press, 1992) could be equally well described as falling under the rubric of comparative political economy.

For Bill Thompson the international political economy is closely intertwined with the historical evolution of the global balance of power over the last several centuries. In *On Global War: Historical-Structural Approaches in World Politics* (University of South Carolina Press, 1988), he summarizes a broad array of research on the political economy of global conflict. His own perspective on long cycles in the global political economy is summarized in *Leading Sectors and World Politics: Coevolution in Global Economics and Politics* (University of South Carolina Press, 1996), co-authored with George Modelski.

Political economy and conflict are also interwoven in research by Karen Rasler and Bill Thompson on processes of state-building, with particular emphasis on those states with the potential to become dominant military powers. Their findings are reported in their books *War and State-Making* (Unwin Hyman 1989) and *The Great Powers and the Global Struggle 1490-1990* (University Press of Kentucky, 1994). Karen Rasler has also investigated the domestic side of state security. In several articles she has analyzed state responses to domestic unrest, using statistical methods to isolate the natural dynamics of dissent and repression.

For Mike McGinnis political economy and conflict interact in quite another way, with conflict providing the subject matter while political economy provides the theory and the methods of analysis. In collaborative research with John T. Williams, McGinnis has used rational choice theory in general, and rational expectations models in particular, to examine the underlying logic of the long-standing rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. This collaborative project has produced several journal articles as well as a forthcoming book entitled *Compound Dilemmas: Democracy, Collective Action, and Superpower Rivalry*. Whereas Rasler and Thompson treat rivalries between Great Powers as an important component of the international system as a whole, for McGinnis rivalry is rooted in domestic political competition among individuals pursuing their own interests in a rational manner, whether the rivals be superpowers or regional powers in the Third World.

Dina Spechler also emphasizes the domestic basis of foreign policy, as reflected in her book *Domestic Influences on Soviet Foreign Policy* (University Press of America, 1978). She has been particularly interested in comparative analysis of the foreign policy making processes in the

United States, Russia and the former Soviet Union. Her research highlights the institutional and cognitive milieu which shapes political debates within each country, arguing that organizational routines or cognitive tendencies are more important than rational calculations of interest or system level structures.

This wide diversity in theoretical and methodological approaches constitutes a real advantage to students, who are then better able to define and defend their own position in ongoing debates within international relations and political science. It also makes for some interesting colloquia presentations, in which these differing perspectives are discussed in a frank and open manner.

### **Graduate Seminars**

This interweaving of conflict, political economy, and foreign policy is also reflected in our repertoire of graduate seminars. These seminars serve the dual purposes of (1) introducing students to the research literatures with which they must become familiar and (2) giving them the opportunity to begin crafting their own research projects into publishable papers.

All IR students are expected to take our core seminar (**Y569**) on Approaches and Issues to International Relations. This seminar gives students a first introduction to the wide scope of the research literature. It is currently taught every other year. Students are expected to gain some degree of mastery over the entire field by the time of their Ph.D. preliminary examination, taken usually in the student's third year. To do so, students must complete readings beyond those covered in seminars. The IR faculty provides students with reading lists and other guidance as they prepare for this examination.

Other graduate seminars in international relations are taught under the number **Y669**. Topics and instructors vary from semester to semester. Jeff Hart and Bill Thompson offer two completely different seminars in the area of International Political Economy. Thompson has also offered seminars comparing the grand strategies and rivalries of Great Powers in different historical eras. Karen Rasler offers seminars in Comparative Political Violence, Ethnicity and Nationalism, and Theories of Political Contention. Dina Spechler offers seminars on Foreign Policy Analysis or Comparative Foreign Policy. Mike McGinnis teaches a **Y673** seminar on Democracy and World Order that addresses tensions between democratic theory and global security.

These seminars closely reflect faculty research interests, by the logic that we can best prepare students for doing research if we give them a better sense of the type of research we ourselves are doing. Most of these courses require students to start to develop their own research projects, either in the form of a research design paper or a seminar paper. Recently our department has instituted a requirement for completion of a second-year research paper, with the intention that an acceptable second-year paper would go beyond the confines of a seminar paper and approach publishable quality. The point of these requirements is to make it easier for students to make the transition to the original research needed to complete a Ph.D. dissertation.

Students in the political science program are required to select two fields of study. Many

IR students take their second field in comparative politics; others select public policy, American politics, theory and methodology, or political philosophy. One reason the international relations-comparative politics link is so strong is that seminars taught by Jeff Hart, Karen Rasler, and Mike McGinnis cover material traditionally assigned to the subfield of comparative politics.

### **Instruction Beyond the Classroom**

More of a student's graduate education occurs outside the seminar room than faculty are usually prepared to admit. Students learn a great deal from each other and in informal discussions with faculty. Each student will work closely with his or her faculty mentor and dissertation advisor, as well as other members of the student's progress review and dissertation committees.

Students can learn a great deal about how to go about doing research by working as a research assistant or in explicit collaboration with a faculty member. IU also has a long-standing tradition of collaboration between faculty and students sharing a common interest on some particular research project. There is, of course, no guarantee that each student will be able to collaborate with a faculty member, but the possibility is always open.

Students also have many opportunities to observe research presentations by members of the IU faculty and by visitors from all over the world. In recent years, Bill Thompson and Jeff Hart have organized international conferences on the topics of rivalry and globalization, respectively. The department houses an informal **Center for the Study of International Relations (CSIR)** which brings in a few speakers a year. Students are encouraged to present their own research. In recent years, students have taken the initiative to organize their own Annual Graduate Student Research Conference, in which some twenty student projects are presented each year. Those students on the job market each year are required to make practice job talks before an audience of students and faculty, in order to better prepare them for the rigors of job interviews.

### **Preparing for a Job**

Our department's graduate program is designed for students seeking a faculty position at a college or university. The job market remains competitive, but IU continues to have success placing students in quality positions. In recent years IU graduates in IR have obtained tenure-track or short-term teaching positions at Purdue University, Penn State University, University of Kentucky, Vanderbilt, George Washington University, Brigham Young University, Miami University of Ohio, Bowling Green State University, and Wooster College.

To be competitive in today's job market it is absolutely necessary that students complete their dissertation in a reasonable period of time, and that they have other publications early in their career. We encourage students to present papers at professional conferences and to submit their second-year paper (or other completed projects) for review at appropriate journals.

Potential employers typically express considerable interest in a candidate's previous

teaching experience. Virtually all of our graduate students will serve as associate instructors, with responsibilities ranging from grading exams to running discussion sections. Most students will have an opportunity to teach one or more courses of their own during their graduate career, especially during summer sessions. Our department has recently established a Preparing Future Faculty program in which some students will be given the opportunity to teach courses at small liberal arts colleges in the region.

### **Multidisciplinary Resources at Indiana University**

There are still more reasons why Bloomington is a great place to learn about the world. The **Russian and East European Institute (REEI)**, **West European Studies (WEST)**, and the **African Studies Program** are regional area studies institutes at Indiana University with international reputations for excellence in the study of the languages, culture, and history of their respective regions. Since the study of international relations is an inherently multidisciplinary subject, students in international relations at Indiana University will find these institutes a great resource.

Another important resource for IR scholars interested in environmental problems or other policy issues is I.U.'s **School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA)**, a multi-campus institution that gathers together experts in environmental science and public administration. SPEA and the political science department have established a **Joint Ph.D. Program in Public Policy** for students interested in a solid grounding in both academic social science and applied policy analysis. This joint program is especially attractive to students interested in international environmental issues

The relevance of another IU institution may not be immediately apparent from its title. Established in 1973 as a center for multidisciplinary research on urban metropolitan areas in the United States, the **Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis** has since expanded to a global scope. Workshop-affiliated scholars have demonstrated that self-organized groups throughout the world have successfully managed such common pool resources as fisheries, forests, and irrigation systems. Elinor Ostrom and Mike McGinnis have argued that many of the same principles crucial to the success of small-scale resource regimes are also very relevant for the management of such global commons problems as ozone depletion or climate change. Everyone may agree that global environmental issues are vitally important, but the Workshop and SPEA can provide future IR scholars with the analytical tools necessary to study environmental issues in a more rigorous fashion.

Indiana University offers still more multidisciplinary resources. The **Center for the Study of Global Change** concentrates on the practical effects of globalization on the lives of people throughout the world. This center also offers an interdisciplinary seminar on research methods applied to countries in the developing world.

In addition to IR seminars discussed above, students are required to complete a minor in another department or program. Minors typically consist of four courses in economics, sociology, SPEA, REEI, WEST, or the Business School. Some students pursue an eclectic minor

of courses specifically relevant to their own interests.

Students are also required to take a program of courses that develop the research skills necessary to complete their chosen line of research. Comprehensive language training is available through the area studies institutes. It is particularly important for prospective IR scholars to become adept at the formal models and statistical methods so frequently employed in the current research literature. The political science department offers a full array of courses in basic and advanced statistical methods as well as courses in game theory, social choice theory, public choice, and dynamic models. Additional specialized technical courses are available from economics, sociology, or other departments. Our department has provided financial support for students taking courses at the summer consortium at the University of Michigan, and students have attended or presented papers at the annual political methodology conference sponsored by the National Science Foundation.

### **The Bottom Line**

The graduate program at Indiana University is set up to provide prospective scholars in international relations with all the tools necessary to succeed in their academic career. In short, IU is a great place to learn how to study IR.