International Studies: The emerging global inter-discipline

Patrick Thaddeus Jackson The American University @profptj • www.kittenboo.com

My Day Job

- Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education as of 1July 2012
- SIS: largest school of international affairs in the U.S.
- no undergraduate curriculum to speak of when I started



International Relations

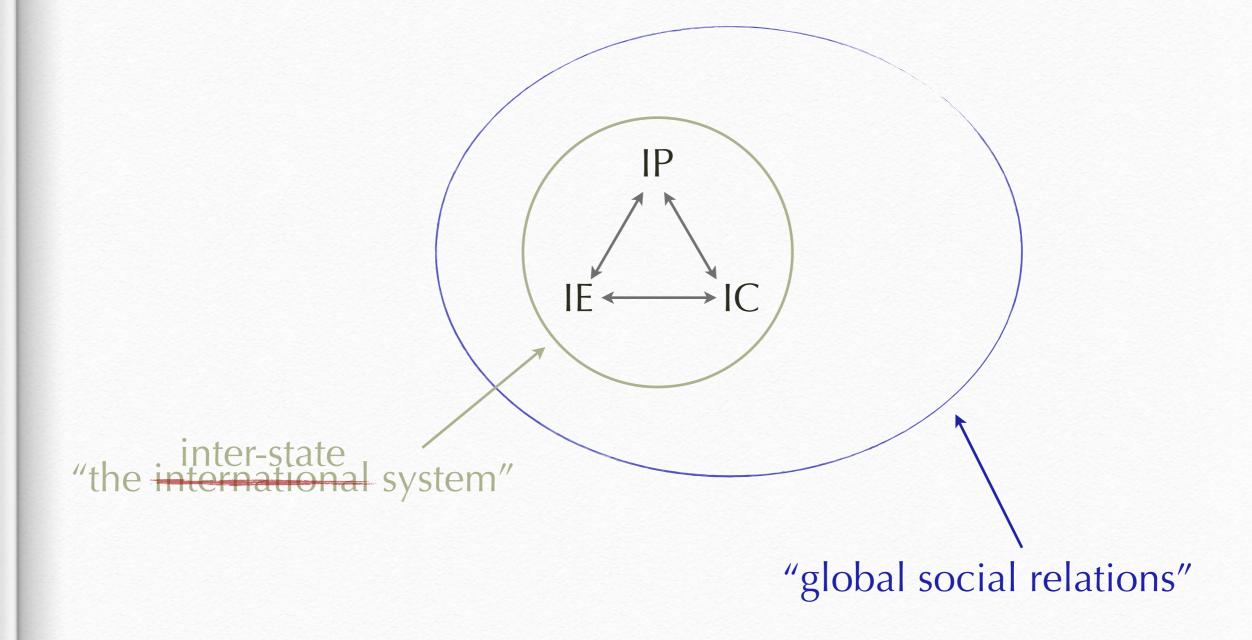
- the usual story and the usual suspects
- dominated globally by U.S. (and "U.S.") scholars / scholarship...
- ...which is dominated by U.S. Political Science
- theory: soft-rationalist individualism
- methodology: neopositivism

International Studies

- a "successor science" -- and a successor "beyondscience"
- the pursuit of knowledge of international phenomena
- <u>international</u>:
 - "encounter with difference across boundaries"
 - spills over borders
 - bigger than just (inter-state) politics

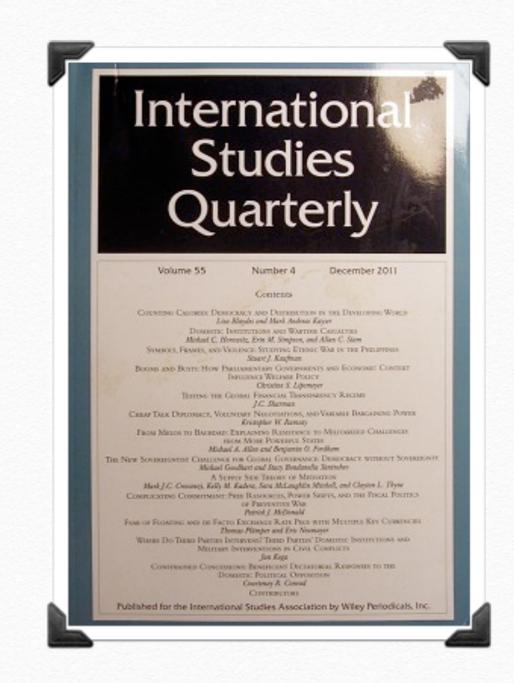
International Studies

"transactions among multiple worlds"



The Global Field

- Political Science is a discipline like
 Economics or
 Sociology
- discipline: rough consensus on overall approach
- international studies encompasses many disciplines
- a field, not a discipline



Scientific Methodologies

| | phenomenalism | transfactualism |
|---------|---------------|---------------------|
| dualism | neopositivism | critical realism |
| monism | analyticism | reflexivity |

Scientific Methodologies

| methodology | status of knowledge | evaluation procedure | causal explanation |
|------------------|---------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| neopositivism | unfalsified conjecture | hypothesis- testing | subsume under general law |
| critical realism | best approximation | laboratory* | INUS-complex |
| analyticism | useful account | analytical narrative | counterfactuals |
| reflexivity | focused perspective | theorizing social conditions of production | disclose unresolved tensions |

Boundaries of Science

- science and "knowing-that"
- at least two other kinds of knowing:
 - "know-how" (skills)
 - "knowing from within" (judgment)
- a grammatical analysis of how "science" is used

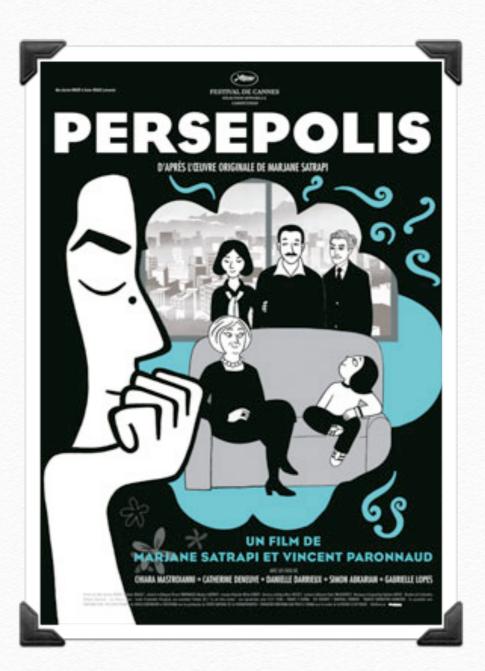
Engineering

- "getting things done"
- consistency matters less than results
- diplomacy
- local knowledges



Art

- "expressing a vision"
- hard to evaluate "progress"
- representations of politics...
- ...and political representations



Ethics

- "what should be"
- expresses a point of view
- evaluates what we actually have
- theology, and "secular theology"



Global Knowing

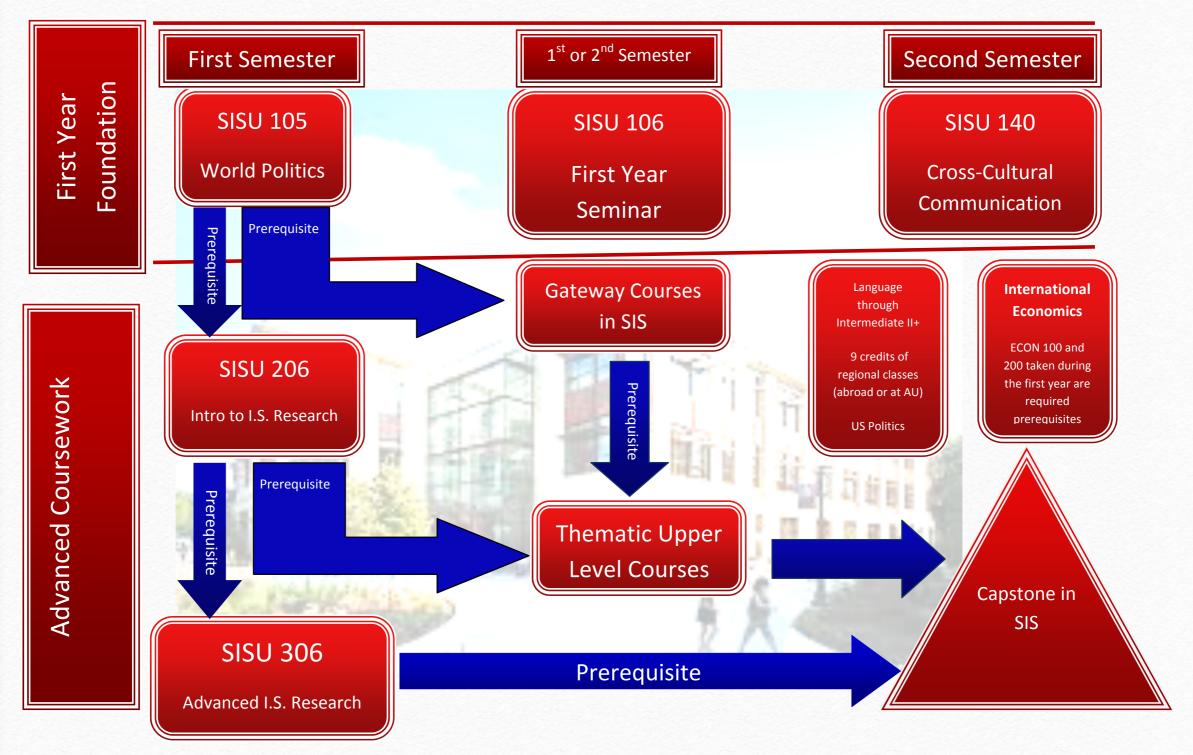
- different flavors of science
 - facts established differently
 - explanations generated differently
- more than just science
 - depends on what we want to know for

How do we teach this?

- initial emphasis on *close reading* and *civil argumentation*
- provisional separation of theory and methodology
 - theories drawn from different disciplines, organized around *themes* or *challenges*
 - broad methodological menu, to facilitate *informed choices*: tools for the job
- reassembly in higher-level courses



ACADEMIC PLANNING FOR SIS MAJOR



Learning Outcomes

- least important: "knowing-that," factual recall
 - (which is a *skill*, not immediately equivalent to "being educated")
- more important: "know-how," technical skills related to research and writing
- most important: "knowing from within," acknowledging global diversity and exercising judgment

http://www.american.edu/ sis/degrees/BA-INST.cfm

@profptj
www.kittenboo.com

Boundaries of Science

- science vs. engineering: be more *methodical*
- science vs. art: make room for *progress*
- science vs. ethics: stick to the world
- overall: science = impersonal, factual knowing

Forms of Knowing

