

Fall, 2004
BEL 112
TR 8:00-9:15AM
<http://garnet.acns.fsu.edu/~hkim>

Professor HeeMin Kim
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Office Hours TR 9:30-11:00AM
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ISS 2937 – 1. Social Science Honors Seminar: "Game Theory"

The objective of this course is to apply elementary theories of individual and group decision-making to the analysis of politics. Theoretical material treats decisions by rational individuals, the strategy of conflicts, cooperation and bargaining, and group choice. These tools are applied to analyze, among other things, arms race, legislative politics, majority rule and democracy, voting and elections, and coalition governments in Western Europe. Students will have opportunity to analyze these real world events.

Since the materials we cover in this course are quantitative, familiarity with basic college algebra will be assumed.

Although this is a “seminar” course, it will include many “lectures,” given the nature of the material we study in this course. I also intend to make this course unofficially a “hybrid” course in which some of the class meetings are replaced by on line discussion sessions. We will use the discussion board feature on Blackboard (see below). This means you will need to check the announcements on blackboard regularly to see when we are having on-line discussion sessions.

Texts

Henry Hamburger, *Games as Models of Social Phenomena* (required).
Steven Brams, *Game Theory and Politics* (required).

William Riker, *The Art of Political Manipulation* (optional).
Michael Laver, *Playing Politics* (optional).
Shepsle, Kenneth, and Mark S. Bonchek, *Analyzing Politics* (optional).
Dixit and Nalebuff, *Thinking Strategically* (optional)

Access to Blackboard:

The course is supported by a website: go to <http://campus.fsu.edu> to login. You will need an FSU computer account to log in. Once you are in the course site, you will have access to syllabus, announcements, assignments, discussion board, your grades, and so on.

Course Requirements

Grades for this course will be derived according to the following schedule:

Midterm Exam.....	25%
Final Exam (Cumulative).....	35%
Problem Sets.....	20%
Participation.....	20%

Exams: Both midterm and the final exams will contain application questions: you will be given several real world situations and will be asked to analyze them using the tools we study in this course. The final exam will be cumulative.

Problem Sets: There will be three homework assignments. These assignments will collectively account for 20 points (i.e., 20% of your semester grade). The course schedule below shows approximately when these assignments will be given. No late submission of these problem sets will be allowed.

Participation: Students are expected to read the assigned material before the class and actively participate in the class discussion as well as discussion board interactions. I will also introduce some journal articles and ask you to discuss them. In addition, you are expected to do the exercise questions in the Hamburger book as we go along. This is mainly for your own good not only to help you understand the material discussed in the class, but to prepare for the exams which will include similar types of questions. If you have any difficulty with them, just ask!

Important Dates to Remember

Tuesday, August 24: The first day of the class.

Thursday, September 2, Tuesday, September 28, Thursday, September 30: The instructor will be out of town to attend professional meetings, No classes or discussion.

Tuesday, October 19: Midterm.

Thursday, November 11: Veteran's Day, No class or discussion.

Thursday, November 25: Thanksgiving Day, No class or discussion.

Thursday, December 2: The last day of the class.

Tuesday, December 7, 10:00-12:00 noon: Final Exam.

University Final Examination Policy (from *the Directory of Classes*)

All students enrolled in a course having a final examination, including graduating seniors and graduate students, are required to take the exam at the time scheduled.

Scheduling a final examination or a test in lieu of a final exam at any other time than the regularly scheduled final exam period is a violation of University policy.

Approval by the appropriate academic dean is required for an individual undergraduate student seeking an exception to the examination policy.

Make-up examinations are permitted for an undergraduate student when justified by illness, conflicting examinations, four or more examinations within a 24 hour period, or for certain emergencies. Arrangements should be made prior to the scheduled exam.

Grading Policy

You will not be given letter grades for individual components of the course (i.e., midterm, final, problem sets, and participation). Instead, you will be given numerical scores. At the end of the semester, I will add your scores from the midterm (out of maximum possible 25), the final (out of

maximum possible 35), problem sets (out of possible 20), and participation (out of possible 20) to get your semester total score. Then you will be given a letter grade based on your total score. So, please don't ask what your letter grade is in the middle of the semester.

There will be no extra reward for the improvement. That is, a better performance on the final exam than the midterm does not mean that you will somehow get credit on top of what you will actually have earned. So, if you want a good grade, keep your motor running from the beginning of the semester rather than wait until after the midterm exam.

Other Announcements

Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honor Code published in The Florida State University Bulletin, and the Student Handbook.

The Academic Honor System of Florida State University is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the University community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the University community.

Persons violating the Honor code in any assignment or test in this class will receive a minimum penalty of a grade of zero (0) for the assignment in question and may receive an "F" for the course at the option of the instructor.

Students with disabilities who require individualized testing or other accommodations should identify themselves to the instructor and express their needs. Where the disability is not immediately apparent, verification will be required. The Department is happy to do whatever it can to assure each student a full and rewarding participation in classes.

Course Schedule

Read the four optional books when you have time throughout the semester.

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
Orientation	Hamburger ch. 1
The Language of Games	Hamburger ch. 2
Problem Set #1	
Games with Two Players	
Games of Pure Conflict (A.k.a. Zero-Sum Games)	Hamburger ch. 3 Brams pp. 1-25
Problem Set #2	
Mixed Motive Games (A.k.a. Variable-Sum Games)	Hamburger ch. 4 Brams pp. 26-30

Midterm Exam (Tuesday, October 19)

Voting Games (Games played by voters)	Brams ch. 2 Hamburger ch. 8.2
Election Games (Games between candidates)	No reading
Coalition Games	Brams ch. 6 Hamburger ch. 8.1
Circumstances of Play; Super Games (A.k.a. Repeated Games)	Hamburger ch. 5.1-5.2 Brams pp. 30-50

Also read the following articles:

Axelrod, "The Emergence of Cooperation among Egoists" *APSR*, 1981
Selten, "The Chain Store Paradox" *Theory and Decision*, 1978

Cooperation Problem with Many Players (A.k.a. Collective Action Problem)	Hamburger ch. 7
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Problem Set #3

Bargaining Games	Hamburger chs. 5.3, 6
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Final Exam (Tuesday, December 7, 10:00-12:00 noon)

You will notice that no dates are set for each topic. Since these are new materials to you, we will proceed as slowly as possible, and I will try to make sure that most of you understand what's being discussed in the class. The material is cumulative, so if you get lost in the beginning of the semester, you will be lost for the rest of it. Do the required reading before the class and make sure that you understand the materials we discuss in the class. If anything is unclear, do not hesitate to ask.