POLSC 250 / International Relations

LECTURE / DISCUSSION / DEBATE
POLITICAL CULTURE AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS THEORIES

Terms and concepts to know:

State / government	Sovereign(ty)
Foreign policy	Regimist / Civilizationist
Political culture	Liberal democracy / Pluralism
Authoritarianism / Elitism	"End of History"
Cultural fault lines	Bureaucracy
Decision-making / SOP's	Incrementalism
Rational actor model	Organizational process model
Bureaucratic politics model	

Study and discussion questions:

1. First off, we should discuss the differences between system level theories and state level theories. What are the benefits to studying international relations at the state level? What are the drawbacks?
2. According to Russett, are democracies more or less prone to war than other systems of government? How would a realist respond to this essay?
3. According to Fukuyama, what are the major factors leading to the "end of history"?
4. What are Huntington's primary criticisms of Fukuyama's essay "The End of History?"
5. Fukuyama contends in "The West Has Won" that radical Islam does not constitute a serious alternative to Western liberal democracy. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
6. Why does Barber believe that the realist paradigm fails to provide U.S. guidance for U.S. foreign policy in the 21st century?
7. Compare and contrast the organizational process model and the bureaucratic politics model. How do these models differ from realism?
8. Explain the main arguments presented in the film *Islam: What the West Needs to Know.* What are the major contradictions and inconsistencies in their argument?

Readings:

Genest. *Conflict and Cooperation*, chapters 6 and 7, pp. 370-485.

Video:

The Rise of ISIS.