



Introduction to International Relations

Political Science 106

Spring 2015

Imperial Valley College

Syllabus

“All of us who are concerned for peace and triumph of reason and justice must be keenly aware how small an influence reason and honest good will exert upon events in the political field. ~Albert Einstein.”

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Office Hours: Wed,

3:45 - 4:45pm

Or by appointment...

OVERVIEW

Why does war occur? Is Einstein's quote above about the nature of politics correct? If so, then what does this suggest about our human nature? For example, does an aggressive human nature inevitably lead us to war? Or does war occur because some types of states, perhaps fascist ones, are more prone to war? Or because of some greater general uncertainty underlying the anarchic nature of world order? Is a world full of democratic-capitalist governments the solution? Is it possible or even desirable? Can states cooperate to solve global environmental problems like climate change? This course addresses such questions in its survey of the field of international relations. The first part introduces the major theoretical traditions and their applications to world events over the past several hundred years. The second portion of the course will focus on several important issues in global politics, including: humanitarian interventions, national and global security—terrorism and nuclear proliferation, political economy, globalization, poverty and development, the environment/climate change, and global governance *vis-à-vis* international law and organizations. Finally, the course considers current and future challenges in the practice and study of international relations.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course...

1. You will know more about important problems in world politics from the past, the present and the future *and why they are directly relevant to our everyday lives.*
2. You will understand and be able to evaluate several major theoretical approaches to world politics.
3. You will be able to think and argue critically about the numerous and complex issues in international relations *and convey your thoughts in written form.* While not every one of you plan to continue in a career path in international relations, the same skills we stress in this class—critical thinking, analytical reading, and writing—will be important no matter your field of endeavor.
4. You are responsible for all chapter and website content for purpose of exams.

READINGS

The following are REQUIRED:

- Kegley & Raymond. *The Global Future, 5th ed.*
- Website- *Global Issues in Context.* (Access code required)
- Website- *The Economist.* <http://www.economist.com>
- Additional articles and videos will be made available on Blackboard

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING PLAN

Exam(s) I & II

There will be two exams for the course. The exams will be based on chapter readings from the texts and required readings--there will be a study guide. The exams will consist of essay questions and ID's. The purpose of the exams will be for you to synthesize what you have learned in the course. Grade weight: 200 pts (100 pts per exam).

Note: Make-up exams will only be given to students with approved excuses for their absence. Missing an exam without an excused absence will result in an automatic failing grade. See the instructor or TA to schedule make-up exam. Make-up exams should be scheduled ASAP following the missed test

Classroom Engagement: Participation and Attendance

This course requires not only attendance but also active participation. This entails doing the readings before class, thinking critically about them and the topics we are discussing. Active participation can significantly help your grade in the course, non-participation can significantly lower your grade, and non-attendance WILL significantly lower your grade.

Attendance and active participation

- (a) You must attend class. Students are expected to arrive on time for every meeting. If you have commitments that conflict with your attendance then you should consider other course options.
- (b) You are expected to come prepared for each class meeting; this includes reading, taking part in all discussions or lectures, and participate in all in-class projects.
- (c) You can miss two classes without any serious consequence. If you miss more than four classes you will receive a failing grade for the course.

IR Simulation (Group Project)

Students will be divided into groups to create and facilitate an original debate, simulation on topics in international relations. All students will be assigned a specific (country/NGO/IGO) group for the simulation. The simulation will cover a specific international issue in which each group will play the role, and support the respective position of their represented country. Each group will select two group leaders who will be responsible for coordinating and submitting all group activities and assignments, they will also be the primary group liaison to the professor and TA's. We will work directly with all group leaders to deal with any group issues and/or problems. In conjunction with the simulations, each group will be required to do a powerpoint presentation and submit a detailed overview of their country, and all pertinent research data and analyses concerning the issues discussed. We will provide more details in class. Grade weight: 150 pts.

Research Paper

5 pages- Max. You are required to write a research paper based on the case study. Your analysis should clearly reflect your position and understanding of the issue/policy. Your paper should reflect thorough analysis and research utilizing web resources, articles, journals and/or books. A minimum of 5 citations is required! No, you cannot use Wikipedia (except for web links)— My advice is to complete and submit the paper as early as possible!!! You do not have to wait for the due date. You will be required to submit both an electronic and “hard-copy” of your paper as it will be checked electronically for plagiarism. You cannot use papers from other courses— It must be original work. Grade weight: 100 pts.

NO Late Papers: Late papers will only be accepted with medical excuse or doctor's note.

The Grading Scale

450 total points are possible for this course. I will be using the following grading scale in this course:

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|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| A range = 90- 100% | B range = 80-89% | C range = 70-79% |
| D range = 60-69% | F range = Below 59% | |

Rules of the Game

Class Protocols:

1. Students are expected to arrive on time for every meeting. If you have commitments that might conflict with your attendance then you should consider other course options.

assignments (without prior approval or proof of illness) will receive a 10 point deduction—up to 50 points max.

4. I reserve the right to make new rules and changes to the course. I will provide information concerning deviations from the syllabus when they affect reading and/or writing assignments, and/or grading criteria.

5. Laptops and Cell phones and other communications devices are not allowed during class unless you have a doctors note (except during simulations) and must be turned off during class. I expect you to comport yourself as adults. You will be given ONE warning, followed by a full letter grade deduction from your final grade—I'm not kidding.

4. ***Diversity in discussion.*** Throughout the course of the semester, we will be addressing a variety of issues on which people will have strong and diverse opinions. It is critical that we respect one another's thoughts, and address our comments at the ideas, not the person. Our class is not a forum for demeaning or threatening language

5. ***Academic Integrity.*** Plagiarism and Cheating. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. I feel especially strong about this when it comes to student writing. Please remember that the consequences for any kind of cheating or plagiarism can result in an "F" for the class and possibly other actions by the university.

SDSU's policies can be found online at: <http://csrr.sdsu.edu/conduct1.html>

If you have any questions about the appropriate way to use or cite a source, please do not hesitate to ask me or the TA's *before* you hand in your paper.

7. ***Disability-Related Accommodations***

Students with disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss options with their professors during the first two weeks of class. It is the policy of SDSU to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students, however, are responsible for registering with Student Disabilities Services, in addition to making requests know to me in a timely manner. If you require accommodations in this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. The procedures for registering with Disabilities Services can be found at: <http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/sds/>

Course Calendar- Assignments

Note: This is a general schedule of events for the semester and is subject to modification.

Reading Assignments:

| | Course Schedule | | |
|---------------------|--|---------------------|--|
| | Readings, Assignments, and Exams | | |
| Date: | Readings / Assignments | Class Activity | |
| Week 1 2/16-2/20 | Introduction to course and Orientation | In-class discussion | |
| Week 2 2/23-2/27 | Ch. 1 Analyzing the World | In-class discussion | |

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|------------------------------|--|---------------------|--|
| Week 3 3/2-3/6 | Ch.2 Theories of World Politics | In-class discussion | |
| Week 4 3/9-3/13 | Ch.3 The Historical Setting of Contemporary World Politics | In-class discussion | |
| Week 5 3/16-3/20 | Ch.4 States and Foreign Policy Decision Making | In-class discussion | |
| Week 6 3/23-3/27 | Ch.5 Global and Regional Intergovernmental Organizations | In-class discussion | |
| Week 7*** 3/30-4/3 | MIDTERM 1 | | |
| 4/6-4/10*** | SPRING BREAK!!! | | |
| Week 8 4/13-4/17 | Ch.6 Nongovernmental Organizations | In-class discussion | |
| Week 9 4/20-4/24 | Ch.7 Patterns of Armed Conflict | In-class discussion | |
| Week 10 4/27-5/1 | Ch.8 Military Power and the Use of Force | In-class discussion | |

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| 5/4-5/8 | MIDTERM 2 | | |
| Week 12 | | | |
| 5/11-5/15 | Ch. 9 International Law and Human Rights | In-class discussion | |
| | Ch. 10 The Globalization of Trade and Finance | | |
| Week 13 | | | |
| 5/18-5/22 | Ch.11 The Political Economy of Global Poverty and Inequality | In-class discussion | |
| Week 14 | | | |
| 5/25-5/29 | Ch.12 Global Ecological Trends and the Transformation of World Politics | In-class discussion | |
| Week 15 | | | |
| 6/1-6/5 | Final Review | | |
| Week 16 | | | |
| 6/8-6/12 | Final Exam | | |
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