

Political Science 184 Introduction to International Relations

Summer 2006

Classroom: Behavioral Sciences Building, Room 369

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:45-1:15

Instructor: Kevin Navratil

Office: 1145 BSB

Office Hour: 1:15-2:15 Tuesdays and Thursdays and by appointment

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(Email is best way to reach me)

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Textbook and Supplemental Resources

Text: Duncan, W. Raymond, Barbara Jancar-Webster, and Bob Switky. 2006. *World Politics in the 21st Century* Third Edition. New York: Pearson Longman.

Course Compass: <http://www.coursecompass.com/> You must first register prior to accessing our course website. You will need a valid email address the course ID, and the student access code, which should be bundled with the course textbook.

Course ID: navratil69576

Handouts: I will distribute additional required readings as needed throughout the semester.

Recommended: I strongly recommend reading the international and world politics portions of major newspapers and other media outlets, such as *New York Times* (www.nytimes.com), *Washington Post* (www.washingtonpost.com), *The Economist*, CNN (www.cnn.com), etc. in order to stay abreast of international events. International relations and world politics are complex, continuously changing, and difficult to understand. By staying abreast of the happenings in the world, your ability to understand and apply the concepts of the course will improve dramatically.

Course Description

This course is designed to give you an overview of world politics by exposing you to the major theories of international relations, levels of analysis, and key concepts and issues in world affairs. We will discuss, analyze, and apply the major theoretical approaches including: realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Historical and current debates in international relations will be covered to develop and challenge our existing perspectives. Systemic, state, and individual causes of conflict and peace will be analyzed.

Course Overview

This course is designed to develop students' understandings of world politics and international relations. Class readings, projects, and assignments are designed in order to develop and challenge students' perspectives regarding major issues in world affairs. We will begin the course by examining competing approaches to world politics and the major theories of international relations. These theories will be used as a lens through which major concepts, themes, and issues in world politics are viewed. At the conclusion of the course I expect each student to be able to describe the key theories and concepts in international relations, as well as be capable to critically analyze them. I have established a course syllabus to guide us through the semester, however, we will proceed through the course at a pace dictated by the dynamics of our class and may substitute some readings as we progress.

Course Goals

By the end of this semester, each student should be able to:

- 1) Apply the key theories of international relations to aspects of world politics
- 2) Develop and challenge our existing perspectives of international relations
- 3) Understand and distinguish the different levels of analysis that account for conflict
- 4) Understand the key concepts and issues in world affairs
- 5) Understand the interrelationship of states, intergovernmental organizations, and non-state actors in international relations.

Instructional Methods

This course will employ active learning techniques. We will work and learn through exercises that depart from traditional lecture where the instructor is the sole dispenser of information. Instead, we will use a significant portion of class time to engage in activities such as case study simulations, short reports, debates, presentations, discussions, collaborative work, and applications. As such, you will need to do more than just listen in class. It is imperative that you come to each class prepared by having read all assigned material. Throughout the semester I will employ various instructional methods to cover course content including: overheads, power point slides, charts, diagrams, news clips, documentaries, and instructional videos. You are responsible for all content covered in-class, as well as the text for course exams. In-class work may also constitute portions of your homework and class participation grades.

Policies and Expectations

Assignment Deadlines, Tests, Makeup Work

All assigned work must be turned in in-class on the dates they are due. Five percent of the final grade for the assigned work will be deducted for each day it is late. It is important to stay current with your work, as there are many assignments throughout this course and falling behind will be detrimental to your overall success.

Attendance and Class Participation

Class attendance will not be taken formally. However, meaningful class participation does constitute a significant portion of your final grade. Moreover, there will be projects conducted during class time. If you miss class you will not be able to make up these points. Finally, missing class material will make it more difficult to do well on exams as each class constitutes a weeks worth of material. Please do NOT email me asking, "Sorry I missed class, did I miss anything?" Of course you missed something, but it is your responsibility to find out what. I would advise making friends or study partners in class in case you do miss class so you can still have access to the material you missed. In sum, missing class is a risk to your course success.

Classroom Decorum

Unfortunately there are some ground rules that must be put in writing to ensure we all have the same classroom expectations. It is expected that students will turn off their cell phones, pagers, etc. before coming to class. In this class, several controversial and polarizing topics

will be broached during discussion. If you have very strong feelings about these, great, but remember that this is a classroom. As such, try to keep an open mind and realize that others may have an equally valid alternative opinion. If you disagree with anything said during discussion, even if the instructor has said it, you should feel obliged to counter their view point. Please do so with tact and refrain from personal assaults.

Academic Honesty

Course work is designed to be a scholarly endeavor in which our work is our own ideas supported by evidence. As such, all written work should contain only your own ideas and when necessary ideas that are supported by cited references. I strongly believe in this concept and will enforce UIC policy regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism to the fullest extent.

Assignments and Activities

Participation/Quizzes/Homework/in-class projects (25%)

Each class is designed to consist of presentation of course material on my part and active learning and meaningful discussion on your part. I will lecture on the assigned material and as I do, I will ask class members questions. I want to ensure you are keeping up on the assigned reading, as well as comprehending it. If you have questions regarding the content, feel free to ask them. If there is something you do not understand or do not know there is a very high probability that other students in the class also have the same question. I want the classroom environment to foster different perspectives and interpretations of course material so we can each learn from one another. This will assist you in integrating the content and enhance your reasoning skills, which will be beneficial for the exam essays and the course paper. If there is a lack of meaningful discussion and I detect people are not keeping up on the readings, random quizzes will be given. I understand that some are not as comfortable talking as others, in which case your participation grade can be offset by homework assignments, but you cannot be completely silent every class. Quizzes and homework assignments will be developed throughout the semester as needed. The combination of class participation, quizzes, homework, and in-class projects will constitute 25% of your course grade.

Examinations: two each worth 25%

There will be two exams, each worth 25% of your course grade. The exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and a short essay. In theory the second exam will not be comprehensive and will only consist of the content after your midterm exam. However, the key theories of international relations discussed in the first part of the course may be helpful in answering portions of the second exam. Although I will not incorporate all assigned reading material in lecture, you will still be responsible for all assigned reading for exams. Material for exams will come from assigned reading and anything covered during class time.

Term Paper 25% (Final Paper 20% and Paper Proposal 5%)

You must choose one of the following two options for the term paper.

Research Paper

The research paper should be 5-8 pages in length. In your paper you will analyze an international event through the lens of two or more of the major theories discussed in the first half of the course. You will evaluate the theories and make an argument of which theory best explains your chosen event. The paper will illustrate whether you can successfully apply the

major theories. The proposal of your research paper is due on July 6th. Your proposal should include your research topic (i.e. event, issue, or world politics aspect), the theories you plan to apply and a general outline of how you plan to approach your paper. The proposal should be about a page in length. Further instruction will be given in-class. Your final paper is due on July 18th.

Film Analysis Paper

The film analysis paper should be 5-8 pages in length. The objective of this paper is to summarize, analyze and compare and contrast two films that contain material related to international relations or world politics. You will choose one film from a list that I will provide and I will select an appropriate match for the second film of your film analysis paper. In the paper you will be asked to summarize the films, describe and discuss the major international relations and world politics issues, themes, or events that are covered in the film, whether the films were covered accurately and objectively, the primary level of analysis that best explains the nature of conflict, the international relations theory that is best captured in each film, address how the films cover the nature and source of political power and structure of government, and compare and contrast how the films cover the material and what they use for evidence. The proposal of your film analysis paper is due on July 6th. Your proposal should include the films that you have chosen (be sure they are available!), discuss why you have chosen the film you did, and discuss what sources you plan on consulting in determining how accurately and objective the film was presented. The proposal should be about a page in length. Further instruction will be given in-class. Your final paper is due on July 18th.

Course and Topic Outline

5/30/06: Introduce Course and begin Chapter 1 “The Importance of World Politics”

Read Chapter 1

6/2/06: Finish Chapter 1 and begin chapter 2 “Approaches to World Politics”

Read Chapter 1 and 2

6/6/06: Finish Chapter 2 and begin chapter 3 “Analyzing World Politics”

6/8/06: Finish Chapter 3

In Class: Watch *Fog of War* Video

6/13/06: Chapter 4 “Power in World Politics”

Read Chapter 4 and “America’s Sticky Power” by Walter Mead in *American Foreign Policy*

6/15/06: Chapter 5 “Foreign Policy Formation and Execution

Read Chapter 5 and “Hegemony on the Cheap” by Colin Dueck in *American Foreign Policy*

In Class: Review for Exam I

6/20/06: Exam I

- 6/22/06: Chapter 6 “Intergovernmental Actors”
Read Chapter 6
In class: “You be the Playwright: Santa Claus or Scrooge? The United States and the UN Budget.
- 6/27/06: Chapter 7 “Non-Governmental Actors”
Read Chapter 7
- 6/29/06: Chapter 8 “Political Geography”
Read Chapter 8
- 7/4/06: NO CLASS Independence Day Holiday
- 7/6/06: Chapter 9 “Nationalism”
Read Chapter 9
Due: Paper Proposals
- 7/11/06: Chapter 10 “Global Violence: Wars, Weapons, Terrorism”
Read Chapter 10
Read “Lifting the Veil” by Henry Munson in *American Foreign Policy, National Strategy for Combating Terrorism February 2003*
Suggested Reading: Michel Feher’s 2002 “Robert Fisk’s Newspapers” from *Theory and Event* 5(4).
In class: “You be the Playwright: Prioritizing for the War on Terrorism”
- 7/13/06: Chapter 12 “International Political Economy and Developed Countries”
Read Chapter 12
- 7/18/06: Finish Chapter 12
In Class: Watch *Life and Debt*
Review for Second Exam
Due: Final Paper
- 7/20/06: Second Exam