

POL*K103: INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: POL*K103 Introduction to International Relations

Course Schedule: MWF 10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.

Location: D105

Instructor: Prof. Steven Neufeld

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Office Hours: Mon and Wed 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., and by appointment (always check with me first!)

I. Course Description and Outcomes

International relations is the study of cooperation, competition, and conflict between countries, or nation-states, as we refer to them in the social sciences. This course will examine international relations from a political-economy perspective. This means that we will look at both political and economic relationships between nation-states and how political and economic relationships between nation-states influence each other. We will also consider how international political and economic factors influence domestic political and economic situations within countries and vice versa.

The first part of the course will begin by discussing key institutions and actors in international relations. We begin with the nation-state, which is the main actor in international relations, and different theories of international relations. We then discuss the United Nations (the UN), the main international organization attempting to manage political relations between nation-states, and its efforts to address problems of ethnic conflict and genocide through the International Criminal Court (ICC). Finally, we discuss globalization and its effects on nation-states, and we examine the main global institutions promoting globalization and managing the global economy: the International Monetary Fund (the IMF), the World Bank (the WB), and the World Trade Organization (the WTO). In addition to examining the functions and activities of each global institution, we will also discuss who has power and control over these institutions and the consequences of their activities. A key theme in this part of the course will be differences in the political and economic strength of nation-states, the control that developed countries (especially the U.S) have over global institutions, and the relationships of competition and conflict between developed countries (often referred to as “the North”) and developing countries (often referred to as “the South”) in the world today.

In the second part of the course will examine important geopolitical issues challenging the position of the United States as the dominant political and economic power internationally, and discuss ways that the U.S. can and should respond to them. This includes the rapid economic development of China, the Arab-Israeli conflict, terrorism, current democracy movements in the Middle East, and the potential

proliferation of nuclear weapons in N. Korea and Iran. We will examine the underlying causes giving rise to these issues, and discuss and debate how the U.S. should respond to them.

II. Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes refer to knowledge, skills, and abilities you are expected to develop and demonstrate in this course. The learning outcomes for the course are to:

1. Understand and apply major theoretical perspectives in international relations
2. Understand the various levels of analysis (systems, individual, and state) that influence why states interact the way they do
3. Demonstrate knowledge of major concepts and theories in the field of international political economy
4. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and functioning of major international institutions such as the United Nations, the International Criminal Court, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization
5. Demonstrate understanding of globalization and neo-liberalism and their political and economic consequences
6. Identify and explain political and economic conflicts between developed and developing countries in the world today
7. Explain various contemporary geopolitical issues confronting the United States and articulate appropriate foreign policy responses
8. Analyze and synthesize original writings in international relations
9. Develop and present oral arguments based on secondary research

III. Course Readings

The required text for the class is:

- John T. Rourke, *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in World Politics, Expanded 16th Edition*, Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, 2013.

Most of the required weekly readings are available on-line as listed in the Course Schedule in Section VI. If you are unable to access the website by clicking on the link in the syllabus, you should copy and paste the website address into your browser. Assigned weekly readings should be done by the beginning of the week.

IV. Grading and Assignments

Course evaluation will be based on the following:

- There will be two take-home exams, one at the end of each section of the course. The last take home exam will be the final exam, which will not be cumulative. Each exam will count for 25% of the final grade.
- There will be several student team debates throughout the course. Students will be expected to participate in two debates, one for each half of the course. For the weeks that you are not a debate participants, you will write an evaluation of the debate. The two debates you participate in will count for 25% of your final grade, and your written evaluations of the other debates will count for 50% of your final grade.

All assignments and exams involve written work, and poor quality writing, including poor spelling and grammar, will negatively affect your grade. **You should proof read all work before it is submitted and use the Spell Check and Thesaurus functions that are available in Word or other software programs.** If you need assistance with your writing skills, I strongly urge you to visit The Writing Center in room C117.

All assignments and exams are due at specified times. Work received up to one day late will receive up to a partial letter grade deduction. Work received more than one day late will receive a full letter grade deduction. Once I have graded and returned assignments and exams, late work will no longer be accepted without my permission. **Failure to complete assignments and/or exams will hurt your final grade more than submitted work that receives an F but reflects appropriate effort.** Class participation will help boost your final GPA for the course.

Students are expected to follow to standards of academic honesty. If there is a question about cheating or plagiarism, the college's **Academic Integrity Policy** (revised 8 January 2003) will be followed.

If you have a disability that may affect your progress in this course, please meet with a Disability Service Provider (DSP) as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations cannot be provided until you provide written authorization from a DSP.

TRCC Disabilities Service Providers Counseling & Advising Office Room A-119	
Matt Liscum (860) 383-5240	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Disabilities • Sensory Disabilities • Medical Disabilities • Mental Health Disabilities
Chris Scarborough (860) 892-5751	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Disabilities • ADD/ADHD • Autism Spectrum

V. Cell Phone Policy

Students are notified that cellular phones and beepers are allowed in class or in the Learning Resource Center only if they are turned off or turned to a silent mode. Under no circumstances are phones to be answered in class. When there are extenuating circumstances that require that a student be available by phone or beeper, the student should speak to the instructor prior to class, so that together they can arrive at an agreement.

VI. Weekly Outline and Readings

Part I. Perspectives and Major Actors

Week 1: Introduction
 Fri, 1/23: Introduction

Readings: Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Introduction

Week 2: The State
 Mon, 1/26: The State
 Wed, 1/29: Nation-States and Ethnic Nationalism
 Fri, 1/30: Failed States

Readings:

- James V. DeLong, “America’s Crisis of Political Legitimacy”, at <http://www.american.com/archive/2012/august/americas-crisis-of-political-legitimacy>

- *The Economist*, “Where Life is Cheap and Talk is Loose”, at <http://www.economist.com/node/18396240>
- Interview, “Friedman: Chinese Believe Tibetans, Other Ethnic Groups, Should be Incorporated into China”, <http://www.cfr.org/china/friedman-chinese-believe-tibetans-other-ethnic-groups-should-incorporated-into-one-china/p16052>

Week 3: Theoretical Perspectives

Mon, 2/2: Realism

Wed, 2/4: Liberalism and Constructivism

Fri, 2/6: World Systems Theory

Readings:

- *University of Chicago Magazine*, “Liberal talk, realist thinking”, at <http://magazine.uchicago.edu/0202/features/index.htm>
- Jack Snyder, *Foreign Policy*, “One World, Rival Theories”, at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2004/11/01/one_world_rival_theories?print=yes (you will have to open a free account to access this article)
- Carlos Martinez-Vela, “World Systems Theory”, at <http://web.mit.edu/esd.83/www/notebook/WorldSystem.pdf>
- “World Systems Theory”, at <http://www.faculty.rsu.edu/users/f/felwell/www/Theorists/Wallerstein/Presentation/Wallerstein.pdf>

Week 4: The United Nations

Mon, 2/9: The United Nations

Wed, 2/11: UN Debate

Fri, 2/13: Debate Wrap-Up

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 14: “Is the UN a Worthwhile Organization?”
- Zachary Laub, “The UN Security Council”, Council of Foreign Relations, December 6, 2013, at <http://www.cfr.org/international-organizations-and-alliances/un-security-council/p31649>
- “UN, Criticisms and Controversies”, Sustainable Community Action, at http://sca21.wikia.com/wiki/UN,_Criticism_and_Controversies
- James Dobbins, Rand Review, “Nation-Building: UN Surpasses U.S. on Learning Curve”, at <http://www.rand.org/publications/randreview/issues/spring2005/nation.html>

Week 5: Genocide and International Law

Mon, 2/16: President’s Day Holiday—No Class

Wed, 2/18: Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing

Fri, 2/20: The ICC

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 15: “Is U.S. Refusal to Join the International Criminal Court Wise?”
- BBC News, “Q&A: International Criminal Court”, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-11809908>
- *The Economist*, “Courting Disaster?”, at <http://www.economist.com/node/16219717>
- Diva Subrahmanyam, “Whiting Offers Views on the International Criminal Court’s Impact”, Harvard Law School at http://www.law.harvard.edu/news/2012/10/15_whiting-on-international-criminal-courts-impact.html
- Birju Kotecha, “The ICC: What Counts as Success”, Justice in Conflict at <http://justiceinconflict.org/2013/09/13/the-icc-what-counts-as-a-success/>

Week 6: Globalization and the Nation-State

Mon, 2/23: ICC Debate

Wed, 2/25: ICC Debate Wrap-Up

Fri, 2/27: Globalization

Readings:

- Readings: Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 8: “Is Economic Globalization Good for Both Rich and Poor?”
- Paige Rushbrook, “Globalization’s Eclipse of the Nation-State: How Globalization is Overriding the Autonomy of the Nation-State”, at <http://geography.about.com/od/economic-geography/a/Globalisations-Eclipse-Of-The-Nation-State.htm>
- Jayantha Dhanapala, *Global Policy Forum*, “Globalization and the Nation-State”, at <http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/172/29952.html>

Week 7: Free Trade and the World Trade Organization (WTO)

Mon, 3/2: Perspectives on Trade

Wed, 3/4: The WTO

Fri, 3/6: WTO Debate

Readings:

- Deborah White, “Pros and Cons of Free Trade Agreements”, at <http://usliberals.about.com/od/theeconomyjobs/i/FreeTradeAgmts.htm>
- Anup Shah, “The WTO and World Trade”, at <http://www.globalissues.org/article/42/the-wto-and-frehttp://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/172/29952.htmlle-trade>
- Julian Ensby, “Obama Should Fight American Protectionism and Ditch Farm Subsidies”, The Comment Factory at <http://www.thecommentfactory.com/obama-should-fight-american-protectionism-and-ditch-farming-subsidies-1632/>

- Paige McClanahan, “Why the WTO Agreement in Bali has Finally Helped Developing Countries”, *The Guardian*, December 6, 2013, at <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2013/dec/06/wto-agreement-bali-helped-developing-countries-india>

Week 8: The IMF and the World Bank

Mon, 3/9: The Debt Crisis

Wed, 3/11: The IMF and the World Bank

Fri, 3/13: Debt Relief Debate

Readings:

- The Bretton Woods Project, “What are the Bretton Woods Institutions”, at <http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/item.shtml?x=320747>
- The Bretton Woods Project, “What are the Main Concerns and Criticisms about the World Bank and the IMF?”, August 23, 2005, at <http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/2005/08/art-320869/>
- The International Monetary Fund, “Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative”, at <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hipc.htm>
- H. O. Kaya, “The Debt Crisis and Its Effect on African Women and Children”, Pambazuka News, March 10, 2005, at <http://pambazuka.org/en/category/features/27189>
- William Easterly, “Think Again: Debt Relief”, *Foreign Policy*, November 1, 2001, at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2001/11/01/think_again_debt_relief

First Exam handed out; Due Friday 3/28

Week 9: Spring Break

Part II. Issues and Challenges for the U.S.

Week 10: U.S. Hegemony and U.S. Foreign Policy

Mon, 3/23: Polarity and U.S. Hegemony

Wed, 3/25: U.S. Foreign Policy

Fri, 3/27: Hard Power vs. Soft Power

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 4, pp. 48-69
- Andrea Edoardo Varisco, “Towards a Multi-Polar International System: Which Prospects for World Peace?”, E-International Relations Students, June 3, 2013, on-line at <http://www.e-ir.info/2013/06/03/towards-a-multi-polar-international-system-which-prospects-for-global-peace/>
- Roslyn Fuller, “The Ukraine and the Beginning of the Multi-Polar World”, March 7, 2014, on-line at <http://rt.com/op-edge/ukraine-beginning-multipolar-world-430/>

- Joseph Nye, Jr., *Foreign Policy*, “The War on Soft Power”, at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/04/12/the_war_on_soft_power
- Joseph Nye, Jr. *Foreign Policy*, “Think Again: Soft Power”, reprinted in Yale Global on-line at <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/think-again-soft-power>
- Shane Smith, “Sanctions: Diplomatic Tool, or Warfare by Other Means?”, at <http://www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/sanctions>

Week 11: U.S. Relations with China

Mon, 3/30: The Rise of China

Wed, 4/1: China and the U.S.

Fri, 4/3: China Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 3: “Is China Becoming a Dangerous Superpower?”, Issue 9: “Does China’s Currency Manipulation Warrant International and National Action?”
- Matt Chiavenza, “What Exactly Does It Mean That the U.S. is Pivoting to Asia?”, *The Atlantic*, April 15, 2013, at <http://www.theatlantic.com/china/archive/2013/04/what-exactly-does-it-mean-that-the-us-is-pivoting-to-asia/274936/>
- Andrew Billo, CNN, “The Risk of America’s Asia Strategy”, at <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/01/06/opinion/billo-asia-us/index.html>
- Stephen Harner, “The NYTimes’ ‘China Threat’ Myth, the ‘Pivot to Asia’, and Obama’s Foreign Policy Legacy”, *Forbes*, 6/22/14, at <http://www.forbes.com/sites/stephenharner/2014/06/22/the-nytimes-china-threat-myth-the-pivot-to-asia-and-obamas-foreign-policy-legacy/>

Week 12: The U.S. and the Middle East

Mon, 4/6: The Modern Middle East

Wed, 4/8: Islamic Fundamentalism

Fri, 4/10: The Arab Awakening

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 7: “Does the Islamist Movement Threaten the Democracy Gained in the “Arab Spring”?”
- James Graham, HistoryOrb.com, “Samuel P. Huntington’s Clash of Civilizations”, at <http://www.historyorb.com/world/clashofcivilizations.shtml>
- “A Struggle that Shames”, *The Economist*, January 15, 2015, at <http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21639536-islamist-violence-stems-much-more-recent-history-faiths-essentials-struggle>
- Schneider, “Arab nations lag behind rest of world economically, despite oil and natural gas”, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/02/23/AR2011022303586.html?hpid=topnews>
- Robert Blackburn, “Arab Burden of Crony Capitalism” at <http://fw.ifslearning.ac.uk/Archive/2011/May/Features/arabburden.aspx>

Week 13: Terrorism

Mon, 4/13: Terrorism

Wed, 4/15: The War on Terrorism

Fri, 4/17: Terrorism Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 12: “Does Using Drones to Attack Terrorists Globally Violate International Law?”
- Noam Chomsky, “Who are the Global Terrorists?”, at <http://www.chomsky.info/articles/200205--02.htm>
- Jason Wiseman, “Al-Qaeda’s New Structure and Frontier: The Operational Shift”, *The Toronto Standard*, January 21, 2014, at <http://torontostandard.com/the-sprawl/al-qaedas-new-structure-and-frontier-the-operational-shift/>
- Sarah Birke, “How ISIS Rules”, *New York Review of Books*, February 5, 2015, at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2015/feb/05/how-isis-rules/>
- Seth Jones and Martin Libicki, “How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al Qaeda”, at http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG741-1.sum.pdf

Week 15: Relations with Russia

Mon, 4/28: Russia and the Rise of Putin

Wed, 4/30: The Ukraine Conflict

Wed, 5/2: The Ukraine Debate

Readings:

- Robert McMahon, “Ukraine in Crisis”, Council on Foreign Relations, March 18, 2014, at <http://www.cfr.org/ukraine/ukraine-crisis/p32540>
- Interview with John Beryle, “Is the West at a Breaking Point with Russia?”, Council on Foreign Relations, March 28, 2014, at http://www.cfr.org/russian-federation/west-breaking-point-russia/p32681?cid=rss-analysisbriefbackgroundundersexp-is_the_west_at_a_breaking_poin-032814
- Richard Haas, “The Sources of Russian Conduct”, Council on Foreign Relations, April 10, 2014, at <http://www.cfr.org/ukraine/sources-russian-conduct/p32785>
- Interview with Stephen Sestanovich, “Where is Putin Leading Russia?”, Council on Foreign Relations, December 10, 2014, at <http://www.cfr.org/russian-federation/putin-leading-russia/p33926>
- Interview with John Bellinger III. “Punishing Russia Carries Risks”, Council on Foreign Relations, April 18, 2014 at <http://www.cfr.org/ukraine/punishing-russia-carries-risks/p32798>.

Week 16: Nuclear Proliferation and WMD

Mon, 5/5: Nuclear Proliferation

Wed, 5/7: Iran

Fri, 5/9: Nuclear Weapons Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 5: “Should Force Be Used if Necessary to Prevent Iran from Acquiring Nuclear Weapons?”
- Council on Foreign Relations, “The Global Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime”, at <http://www.cfr.org/proliferation/global-nuclear-nonproliferation-regime/p18984>
- Max Fisher, “9 Questions about Iran’s Nuclear Program that You Were Too Embarrassed to ask”, *The Washington Post*, November 25, 2013, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/11/25/9-questions-about-irans-nuclear-program-you-were-too-embarrassed-to-ask/>
- Leslie Gelb, *The Daily Beast*, “The Wrong Way on Iran”, at <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2010/02/21/the-wrong-way-on-iran.html>
- “Clock Ticking on Iran Nuclear Deal”, Interview with Daryl Kimball, Council on Foreign Relations, September 17, 2014, at <http://www.cfr.org/iran/clock-ticking-iran-nuclear-deal/p33457>

Final Exam handed out; Due Friday 5/16 by 9:00 a.m.