

## **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

Office: C142

Phone: 860-215-9457

Email: [SNeufeld@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:SNeufeld@trcc.commnet.edu)

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. These relationships are shaped by political, economic, social, and cultural factors within countries, as well as political, economic, social, and cultural factors external to countries, including factors that are occurring on a global scale. In particular, this course will examine international relations from an international political-economy perspective that focuses on both political and economic relationships between nation-states and how they influence each other. We will also consider how international political and economic factors influence domestic political and economic situations within countries and vice versa. Among the external factors that influence international relations between countries are various international organizations, such as the United Nations, the International Criminal Court, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization.

The first part of the course will begin by discussing key institutions and actors in international relations. We begin by looking at the nation-state, which is the main actor in international relations, as well as different theoretical perspectives on the behavior of nation-states. We then discuss major international organizations that attempt to influence political and economic relationships between countries. This includes the United Nations (UN), the main international organization attempting to manage political relations between nation-states; the International Criminal Court (ICC) and its efforts to address problems of ethnic conflict and genocide; and the International Monetary Fund (the IMF), the World Bank (the WB), and the World Trade Organization (the WTO), the main international organizations involved in promoting globalization and managing the global economy. 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 current geopolitical issues, the challenges they present to the United States as the dominant political and economic power internationally, and ways that the U.S. can and should respond to them. This includes the rapid growth in China’s political and economic power; the Syrian Civil War and the international refugee crisis, terrorism and the rise of ISIS, and the issue of nuclear proliferation. We will examine the underlying causes of these issues, the extent to which they threaten the United States, 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, 17<sup>th</sup> Edition*, Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, 2016.

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 of any kind that may affect your progress in this course, please contact Matt Liscum, the TRCC Disability Service Provider (DSP) at 860-383-5240. His office is Room A-119 in the Counseling and Advising Office. Please note that accommodations cannot be provided until you provide written authorization from a DSP.

#### **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, 1/22: Introduction

Readings: Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Introduction

Week 2: The State

Mon, 1/25: The State

Wed, 1/27: Nation-States and Ethnic Nationalism

Fri, 1/29: 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>
- Richard Hill, “Civic Nationalism & Ethnic Nationalism”, on-line at <https://www.msu.edu/user/hillrr/161lec16.htm>

Week 3: Theoretical Perspectives

Mon, 2/1: Realism

Wed, 2/3: Liberalism and Constructivism

Fri, 2/5: 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://slantchev.ucsd.edu/courses/pdf/Snyder%20-%20One%20World,%20Rival%20Theories.pdf>
- 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, 2/8: The United Nations

Wed, 2/10: UN Debate  
Fri, 2/12: Debate Wrap-Up

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Unit 4.1 pp. 252-265: “Is the UN a Worthwhile Organization?” (Issue 14)
- 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](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, 2/15: President’s Day Holiday—No Class

Wed, 2/17: Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing

Fri, 2/19: The ICC

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Unit 4.2, pp. 266-288: “Is U.S. Refusal to Join the International Criminal Court Wise?” (Issue 15)
- 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](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, 2/22: ICC Debate

Wed, 2/24: ICC Debate Wrap-Up

Fri, 2/26: Globalization

Readings:

- Readings: Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Unit 2.1, pp. 158-173: “Is Economic Globalization Good for Both Rich and Poor?” (Issue 8)
- 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, 2/29: Perspectives on Trade

Wed, 3/2: The WTO

Fri, 3/4: WTO Debate

Readings:

- Deborah White, “Pros and Cons of Free Trade Agreements”, at <http://usliberals.about.com/od/theeconomyjobs/i/FreeTradeAgmts.htm>
- The Economist, “Who Elected the WTO?”, September 27, 2001, at <http://www.economist.com/node/796140>
- Max Borders and H. Sterling Burnett, “Farm Subsidies: Devastating the World’s Poor and the Environment”, National Center for Policy Analysis, at <http://www.ncpa.org/pub/ba547>
- David Bacon, “Globalization and NAFTA Caused Migration from Mexico”, Political Research Associates, October 11, 2014, at <http://www.politicalresearch.org/2014/10/11/globalization-and-nafta-caused-migration-from-mexico/#sthash.k31R6KqC.dpbs>
- 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, 3/7: The IMF and the World Bank

Wed, 3/9: The Debt Crisis and Debt Relief

Fri, 3/11: 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](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2001/11/01/think_again_debt_relief)

First Exam handed out; Due Friday 3/18

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

Week 9: U.S. Hegemony and U.S. Foreign Policy

Mon, 3/14: Polarity and U.S. Hegemony

Wed, 3/16: U.S. Foreign Policy

Fri, 3/18: Hard Power vs. Soft Power

Readings:

- 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*, “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>
- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Unit 3.4, pp. 234-247: “Is the Use and Threat of Force Necessary in International Relations?” (Issue 13)

Week 10: Spring Break—No Classes

Week 11: U.S. Relations with China

Mon, 3/28: The Rise of China

Wed, 3/30: China and the U.S.

Fri, 4/1: China Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Unit 1.3, pp. 55-71: “Is China Becoming a Dangerous Superpower?”, (Issue 3); Unit 2.2, pp. 174-185: “Does China’s Currency Manipulation Warrant International and National Action?” (Issue 9)
- 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, 4/4: The Modern Middle East

Wed, 4/6: Islamic Fundamentalism

Fri, 4/8: The Arab Awakening

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Unit 1.7, pp. 137-153: “Does the Islamist Movement Threaten the Democracy Gained in the “Arab Spring?”” (Issue 7)
- 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: The Syrian Civil War and the Refugee Crisis

Mon, 4/11: The Syrian Civil War

Wed, 4/13: The Refugee Crisis

Fri, 4/15: The Refugee Debate

Readings:

- BBC News, “Syria: The Story of the Conflict”, October 9, 2015, at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26116868>
- Jeanne Park, “Europe’s Migrant Crisis”, The Council on Foreign Affairs, September 12, 2015, at <http://www.cfr.org/migration/europes-migration-crisis/p32874>
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Week 14: Terrorism

Mon, 4/18: Terrorism

Wed, 4/20: The War on Terrorism

Fri, 4/22: Terrorism Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Unit 3.3, pp. 219-233: “Does Using Drones to Attack Terrorists Globally Violate International Law?” (Issue 12)
- Noam Chomsky, “Who are the Global Terrorists?”, at <http://www.chomsky.info/articles/200205--02.htm>
- Zachary Laub, “The Islamic State”, The Council on Foreign Affairs, November 16, 2015, at <http://www.cfr.org/iraq/islamic-state/p14811>



- 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/>

Week 15: Relations with Russia

Mon, 4/25: Russia and the Rise of Putin

Wed, 4/27: The Ukraine Conflict

Wed, 4/29: The Russia Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Unit 1.2, pp. 35-54: “Should Russia Be Considered a Hostile Country?”, (Issue 2)
- 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-analysisbriefbackgroundersexp-is\\_the\\_west\\_at\\_a\\_breaking\\_poin-032814](http://www.cfr.org/russian-federation/west-breaking-point-russia/p32681?cid=rss-analysisbriefbackgroundersexp-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 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, 5/2: Nuclear Proliferation

Wed, 5/4: Iran

Fri, 5/6: Nuclear Weapons Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Unit 1.5, pp. 92-117: “Should Force Be Used if Necessary to Prevent Iran from Acquiring Nuclear Weapons?” (Issue 5)
- 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>

Week 17: Conclusion  
Mon, 5/9: Conclusion  
Wed, 5/11: No Class  
Fri, 5/13: No Class

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