

POL*K103: INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: POL*K103 Introduction to International Relations

Course Schedule: MW 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Location: D104

Instructor: Prof. Steven Neufeld

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.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.

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 govern 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 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 international institutions and who benefits from their actions. A key theme in this part of the course will be differences in the political and economic power of nation-states, and the control that powerful countries (especially the U.S) have over global institutions. These inequalities in power and control often create 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 the changing balance of power among states and the challenges that and other current geopolitical issues present to the United States as the dominant global political and economic power. This includes the rapid growth in China's political and economic power; current political conflicts in the Middle East, especially the Syrian Civil War and the international refugee crisis it has created; Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism; relations with the Russia; and the issue of nuclear proliferation, especially North Korea's nuclear program. We will examine the underlying causes of these issues, the extent to which they threaten the United States, and discuss and debate whether and 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, 17th 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

Wednesday 1/17: Introduction

Week 2: The State

Monday 1/22: The State

Wednesday 1/24: Nation-States, Ethnic Nationalism, and Failed States

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Introduction
- Claire McCloughlin, “State Legitimacy”, Developmental Leadership Program, December 2014, on-line at <http://publications.dlprog.org/Statelegit.pdf>
- Barry Mirkin and Joseph Chamie, “Failing States: Many Problems, Few Solutions”, Inter Press Service, January 22, 2017, at <http://www.ipsnews.net/2016/04/failing-states-many-problems-few-solutions/>
- *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 2: Theoretical Perspectives

Monday 1/29: Realism and Liberalism

Wednesday 1/31: Constructivism and 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 3: The United Nations

Monday 2/5: The United Nations

Wednesday 2/7: UN Debate and Debate Wrap-Up

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 10, “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 4: The International Criminal Court

Monday 2/13: Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing

Wednesday 2/15: The ICC

Readings:

- BBC News, “Q&A: International Criminal Court”, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-11809908>
- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 11, “Is U.S. Refusal to Join the International Criminal Court Justifiable?”

Week 5: The International Criminal Court

Monday 2/19: Presidents’ Birthday Holiday—No Class

Wednesday 2/21: The ICC Debate and Debate Wrap-Up

Readings:

- Owen Bowcott, “Rising Nationalism Leaves International Criminal Court at Risk”, *The Guardian*, December 29, 2016, at <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2016/dec/29/rising-nationalism-leaves-international-criminal-court-at-risk>
- Somini Sengupta, “As 3 African Nations Vow to Exit, International Court Faces Its Own Trial”, *The New York Times*, October 26, 2016, at https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/27/world/africa/africa-international-criminal-court.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FInternational%20Criminal%20Court&action=click&contentCollection=timestopics®ion=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=1&pgtype=collection
- 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: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank

Monday 2/26: Globalization and Neo-Liberalism

Wednesday 2/28: The IMF and The World Bank

Readings:

- Mike Collins, “The Pros and Cons of Globalization”, Forbes, May 6, 2015, at <http://www.forbes.com/sites/mikecollins/2015/05/06/the-pros-and-cons-of-globalization/#58a922032170>
- 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>
- David Driscoll, “The IMF and The World Bank: How Do They Differ?”, The International Monetary Fund, August 1996, at <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/exrp/differ/differ.htm>
- The Thistle, “The IMF and The World Bank: Puppets of the Neo-Liberal Onslaught”, Sept/October 2000, on-line at <http://www.mit.edu/~thistle/v13/2/imf.html>
- Steve Schifferes, “How Bretton Woods Reshaped the World”, BBC News, November 14, 2008, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7725157.stm>
- Stewart Patrick, “Bretton Woods Redux”, The National Interest, November 17, 2008, at <http://nationalinterest.org/article/bretton-woods-redux-2918>

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

Monday 3/5: Free Trade and the World Trade Organization (WTO)

Wednesday 3/7: WTO Debate and Debate Wrap-Up

Readings:

- Deborah White, “Pros and Cons of Free Trade Agreements”, at <http://usliberals.about.com/od/theeconomyjobs/i/FreeTradeAgmts.htm>
- Kimberly Amadeo, “Trade Protectionism: 4 Methods with Examples, Pros and Cons”, The Balance, January 20, 2017, at <https://www.thebalance.com/what-is-trade-protectionism-3305896>
- Kimberly Amadeo, “Free Trade Agreement Pros and Cons”, The Balance, September 29, 2016, at <https://www.thebalance.com/free-trade-agreement-pros-and-cons-3305845>
- Reem Heikal, “What Is the World Trade Organization?”, Investopedia, August 17, 2017, at <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/03/040203.asp>
- Andrew Beattie, “The Dark Side of the WTO”, Investopedia,
- The Economist, “Who Elected the WTO?”, September 27, 2001, at <http://www.economist.com/node/796140>

Week 8: Spring Break—No Class

Week 9: Global Warming

Monday 3/19: Global Warming and The Paris Agreement

Wednesday 3/21: Global Warming Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 13, “Is President Obama's U.S. Global Warming Policy Wise?”
- John D. Sutter, Joshua Berlinger and Ralph Ellis, “Obama: Climate Agreement ‘Best Chance We Have’ to Save the Planet”, CNN, December 14, 2015, at <http://www.cnn.com/2015/12/12/world/global-climate-change-conference-vote/index.html>
- John Sterman, “The Paris Climate Agreement: Deliverance or Disappointment?”, HuffPost, December 15, 2016, at https://www.huffingtonpost.com/alliance-for-research-on-corporate-sustainability-/the-paris-climate-agreement_b_8812466.html
- Bob Bryan, “Trump's Pulling the US Out of the Paris Climate Agreement Could be Disastrous for the Economy”, *Business Insider*, June 1, 2017, at <http://www.businessinsider.com/trump-leaving-paris-climate-agreement-effect-on-us-global-economy-2017-6>
- Daniel B. Baer, et al, “Why Abandoning Paris Is a Disaster for America”, *Foreign Policy*, June 1, 2017, at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/01/why-abandoning-paris-climate-agreement-is-bad-for-america-trump/>

First Exam handed out; Due Wednesday 3/28

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

Week 10: Hegemony, Polarity, and Power

Monday 3/26: Polarity and U.S. Hegemony

Wednesday 3/28: Hard Power vs. Soft Power

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 1, “Should the United States Seek to Remain the ‘Indispensable’ Country?”
- 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/>
- Shane Smith, “Sanctions: Diplomatic Tool, or Warfare by Other Means?”, at <http://www.beyondintractability.org/bi-essay/sanctions>
- 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>

Week 11: U.S. Relations with China

Monday 4/2: The Rise of China

Wednesday 4/4: China Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 3, “Is China Being the Aggressor in the Issue of the Disputed Island in the Pacific Ocean?”
- 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/>
- “Xi Jinping: ‘Time for China to take centre stage’”, BBC News, October 18, 2017, at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-41647872>
- Christopher Bodeen, “Make China Great Again! Xi Leads China Into Muscular New Era”, U.S. News and World Report, October 20, 2017, at <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2017-10-19/make-china-great-again-xi-leads-china-into-muscular-new-era>
- William Pesek, “Trump Will Make China Great Again”, *Barron’s*, November 15, 2016, at <https://www.barrons.com/articles/trump-will-make-china-great-again-1479171797>
- Michael Schuman, “America starts making China great again”, *The Japan Times*, January 26, 2017, at <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/01/26/commentary/world-commentary/america-starts-making-china-great/#.Wk5ITminHIU>
- Evan Osnos, “Making China Great Again”, *The New Yorker*, January 8, 2018, at <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/01/08/making-china-great-again>

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

Monday 4/9: The Modern Middle East

Wednesday 4/11: Islamic Fundamentalism and Its Consequences

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 4, “Is Chaos in the Middle East Largely the Fault of U.S. Policy?”
- James Graham, HistoryOrb.com, “Samuel P. Huntington’s Clash of Civilizations”, at <http://www.historyorb.com/world/clashofcivilizations.shtml>
- Ernesto Antunez, “The Rise of Islamic Extremism”, International Policy Digest, March 1, 2015, at <https://intpolicydigest.org/2015/03/01/the-rise-of-islamic-extremism/>
- Garry Leech, “Islamic Extremism is a Product of Western Imperialism”, CounterPunch, March 30, 2016, at <https://www.counterpunch.org/2016/03/30/islamic-extremism-is-a-product-of-western-imperialism/>
- “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>
- “The Sunni-Shia Divide”, The Council on Foreign Relations, February, 2016, at <https://www.cfr.org/interactives/sunni-shia-divide#!/sunni-shia-divide>

Week 13: The Arab Awakening and The Syrian Civil War

Monday 4/16: The Arab Awakening and the Syrian Civil War
Wednesday 4/18: The Refugee Debate

Readings:

- 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>
- 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>
- Patrick Wintour, “Vladimir Putin briefs Donald Trump on plan to end Syrian civil war”, The Guardian, November 21, 2017, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/21/syria-military-operation-wrapping-up-putin-tells-assad-in-russia-talks>

Week 14: Terrorism

Monday 4/23: The War on Terrorism

Wednesday 4/25: Terrorism Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 8, “Does Using Drones to Attack Terrorists Globally Violate International Law?” and Issue 9, “Is Closing the Prison for Alleged Terrorists at the U.S. Naval Base, Guantanamo, Cuba Justified?”
- Zachary Laub, “The Islamic State”, The Council on Foreign Affairs, November 16, 2015, at <http://www.cfr.org/iraq/islamic-state/p14811>
- Saphora Smith and Michelle Neubert, “ISIS will remain a threat in 2018, experts warn”, NBC News, December 27, 2017, at <https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/isis-terror/isis-will-remain-threat-2018-experts-warn-n828146>
- Peter Bergen, “16 Years after 9/11: The State of the Terrorist Threat”, CNN, September 11, 2017, at <http://www.cnn.com/2017/09/09/opinions/terrorism-16-years-after-9-11-opinion-bergen/index.html>
- Michael Zenko, “Bush and Obama Fought a Failed ‘War on Terror.’ It’s Trump’s Turn.” *The News York Times*, August 25, 2017, at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/25/opinion/trump-afghanistan-war-on-terror.html>

Week 15: Relations with Russia

Monday 4/30: Russia, the Rise of Putin, and The Ukraine Conflict

Wednesday 5/2: The Russia Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 2, “Is Russia Being Demonized for Pursuing Its National Interests?”
- Uwe Klubman, Matthias Schepp, and Klaus Wiegrefe, “Did the West Break Its Promise to Moscow?”, *Der Spiegel*, November 26, 2009, at <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/nato-s-eastward-expansion-did-the-west-break-its-promise-to-moscow-a-663315.html>
- 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
- Susan Glasser, “This Myth About the Great and Horrible Putin”, *Politico Magazine*, October 23, 2017, at <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/10/23/this-myth-about-the-great-and-horrible-putin-215735>
- Maura Reynolds, “How to Tame Putin”, *Politico*, October 2, 2017, at <https://www.politico.com/story/2017/10/02/russia-cybersecurity-transatlantic-solutions-243170>

Week 16: Nuclear Proliferation

Monday 5/7: Nuclear Proliferation

Wednesday 5/9: Nuclear Weapons Debate

Readings:

- Rourke, *Taking Sides*, Issue 7, “Should the United States Ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty?”
- Council on Foreign Relations, “The Global Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime”, at <http://www.cfr.org/proliferation/global-nuclear-nonproliferation-regime/p18984>
- Eleanor Albert, “North Korea’s Military Capabilities”, Council on Foreign Relations, January 3, 2018, at <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/north-koreas-military-capabilities>
- Eleanor Albert, “The China-North Korea Relationship”, Council on Foreign Relations, September 27, 2017, at <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-north-korea-relationship>
- Eleanor Albert, “What to Know about the Sanctions on North Korea”, January 3, 2018, at <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-know-about-sanctions-north-korea>
- Patricia Kim, “A Grand Bargain for the Long Game on the Korean Peninsula”, Council on Foreign Relations, November 1, 2017, at <https://www.cfr.org/blog/grand-bargain-long-game-korean-peninsula-0>
- Mark Bowden, “How to Deal with North Korea”, *The Atlantic*, July/August, 2017, at <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/07/the-worst-problem-on-earth/528717/>

Final Exam handed out Wednesday 5/9; Due **Monday 5/14 by 5:00 p.m.**