

COURSE SYLLABUS: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Course: POL*K103

Course Title: International Relations

Course Schedule: Monday and Wednesday, 2:00 p.m.– 3:20 p.m.

Instructor: Prof. Steven Neufeld

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Office Hours: Tues and Thurs 10:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.—3:00 p.m., or by appointment

I. Course Description

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. In doing so, we will examine the role of international political and economic institutions such as the United Nations (the UN), the International Monetary Fund (the IMF), and the World Trade Organization (the WTO), and the impact of globalization on countries in the world today.

In addition to a political-economy perspective, the course will adopt a “world system” perspective that focuses on the position of nation-states within the global capitalist economy and how that shapes their economic and political relationships with other nation-states. Specifically, we will examine the role of developed (often referred to as “the North”) and developing countries (often referred to as “the South”) in the world capitalist economy and on relationships of competition and conflict between developed and developing countries. We will also examine economic development in different regions of the world, including cases of successful development in Asia.

A key focus of the course will be on how political and economic developments in the world today are affecting the position of the United States as the dominant political and economic power internationally. Especially with the collapse of Communism, the U.S. has become the global “hegemon”—the dominant political and economic power in the world today. Nevertheless, it is facing a variety of developments that threatens its status, including a growing trade deficit, the rapid economic development of China and other newly industrialized countries (NICs) in Asia, the formation of the European Union, and problems of terrorism in the Middle East. In the course, we will discuss these

changes, as well as whether or not the current war in Iraq and the spread of democracy as proposed by the Bush administration is a viable solution to the problem of terrorism.

II. Learning Outcomes

A student who successfully completes this course should be able to:

- Describe major theoretical perspectives on international relations, including realism, liberalism, mercantilism, and world systems theory
- Explain the process of globalization and its political and economic consequences
- Explain the role of international economic institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO in the global economy
- Identify North-South political and economic conflicts in the world today
- Understand recent and contemporary political and economic developments, such as the collapse of Communism, economic development in China and Asia, and the global terrorism
- Do a group presentation based on an original research paper

III. Course Readings

Assigned readings are to be done before coming to class. The required texts for the class are:

- Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *International Relations, Brief 3rd Edition*, New York: Pearson Longman (2006). (Henceforth known as G & P)
- John T. Rourke, *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in World Politics, 12th Edition*, Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin.

There will be additional required readings that will be passed out during the class as noted in the course schedule in Section VI.

IV. Grading and Assignments

Course evaluation will be based on the following:

- There will be two 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.
- You will submit weekly assignments summarizing newspaper and magazine articles addressing international issues through the semester. This will count for 20% of you final grade.

- You will work in a group writing an original research paper and making a class presentation. The original research paper and class presentation will count for 30% of your final grade.
- Class attendance and participation can positively influence your final grade.

All exams and assignments must be typed. Late work will be penalized accordingly.

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. Global Political and Economic Relations

Week 1: Introduction to IR

Mon, 1/23: Introduction to IR

Wed, 1/25: The Nation-State

Readings: G & P, Chapter 1

Week 2: Theoretical Perspectives

Mon, 1/30: Realism and Liberalism

Wed, 2/1: World Systems Theory

Readings: G & P, Chapter 2, pp. 45-76; Balaam & Veseth, Chapter 4, pp. 70-92

Week 3: International Political Institutions

Mon, 2/6: The United Nations

Wed, 2/8: The Rwandan Genocide

Readings: G & P, Chapter 6

Week 4: Conflict and Warfare

Mon, 2/13: Hotel Rwanda

Wed, 2/15: Conflict and Warfare

Readings: Rourke, Issues 17, 18, and 19, pp. 265-313

Week 5: International Economics
Mon, 2/20: President's Day
Wed, 2/22: International Economics
Readings: G & P, Chapter 5, pp. 202-230

Week 6: International Trade
Mon, 2/27: Liberal and Mercantilist Perspectives
Wed, 3/1: Free Trade Slaves
Readings: G & P, Chapter 5, pp. 174-202

Week 7: Global and Regional Economic Integration
Mon, 3/6: The WTO
Wed, 3/8: NAFTA and the European Union
Readings: Rourke, Issue 5 and 12, pp. 70-83 and 172-190

Week 8: Globalization
Mon, 3/13: Globalization and Neo-Liberalism
Wed, 3/15: Consequences of Globalization
Readings: Rourke, Issues 1, 2, and 3, pp. 1-49;

First Exam Handed Out; Due

Part II. U.S. Hegemony and the Changing World Order

Week 9: Spring Break
Mon, 3/20: No Class
Wed, 3/22: No Class
Readings: None

Week 10: U.S. Foreign Policy in the Post-WWII Era
Mon, 3/27: The Cold War
Wed, 3/29: Nuclear Proliferation and WMD
Readings: G & P, pp. 160-173; Rourke, Issues 8 and 11, pp. 113-125 and 152-168

Week 11: The Rise of China
Mon, 4/3: Economic Development in China
Wed, 4/5: Is China a threat to U.S. hegemony?
Readings: G & P, Chapter 7, pp. 318-329; Rourke, Issue 7, p. 100-112

Week 12: The U.S. and the The Middle East
Mon, 4/10: The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Wed, 4/12: OPEC
Readings: Rourke, Issue 9; Nassar handout

Week 13: Terrorism
Mon, 4/17: The Rise of Islamic Terrorism
Wed, 4/19: The U.S. "War on Terrorism"
Readings: Rourke, Issue 15; Council on Foreign Relations handout

Week 14: The Iraq War
Mon, 4/24: Causes and Consequences
Wed, 4/26: Prospects for Democracy
Readings: Rourke, Issues 10 and 14; pp. 137-151 and 208-229; NYROB handout

Week 15: Student Presentations
Mon, 5/1: Round 1
Wed, 5/3: Round 2
Readings: None

Week 16: Conclusion
Mon, 5/8: Concluding Remarks
Wed, 5/10: No Class
Readings: None

Final Exam Handed Out; Due Wed, 5/15