

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.

The first part of the course will discuss the nation-state, theories of international relations, and the main international political and economic institutions and actors, including the United Nations (the UN), the International Monetary Fund (the IMF), and the World Trade Organization (the WTO). It will also examine the phenomena of globalization and neo-liberalism, and their impact on countries in the world today. A key focus will be 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.

The second part 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

The learning outcomes for the course include:

- Describing major theoretical perspectives on international relations, including realism, liberalism, mercantilism, and world systems theory
- Understanding the political and economic consequences of globalization and neo-liberalism
- Explaining the role of international economic institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO in the global economy
- Identifying North-South political and economic conflicts in the world today
- Understanding various contemporary political issues, including the rise of China, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Iraq War, nuclear proliferation, and terrorism
- Developing oral presentation and critical thinking skills through debates of current issues
- Developing research and writing skills through an original research paper

III. Course Readings

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

- John T. Rourke, *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in World Politics, 12th Edition*, Dubuque, IA: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, 2007.
- Gregory M. Scott, Randall J. Jones, Jr., and Louis S. Furmanski, *21 Debated Issues in World Politics, 2nd Edition*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004.

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 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.
- You will write an original research paper due at the end of the course. The research paper will count for 25% of your final grade.
- Beginning in the third week, there will be weekly debates based on the assigned readings on the Wednesday of each week. Students will be expected to participate in two debates, one for each part of the course. For the weeks that students are not participants, they will write a short evaluation of the debate due at

the end of the class. The two debates plus the written evaluations will count for 25% of 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. The Nation-State and International Political and Economic Relations

Week 1: Introduction to IR

Mon, 1/22: Introduction to IR

Wed, 1/24: The Nation-State

Readings: Rourke and Boyer, Chapter 4, pp. 70-92, on library reserve

Week 2: Theoretical Perspectives

Mon, 1/29: Realism and Liberalism

Wed, 1/31: World Systems Theory

Readings: Rourke and Boyer, Chapter 1, pp. 1-24, on library reserve; Bradshaw and Wallace, Chapter 3, pp. 39-57, on library reserve

Week 3: The United Nations

Mon, 2/5: The United Nations

Wed, 2/7: Hotel Rwanda

Readings: Rourke, Issues 17 pp. 266-283; Scott, Jones, and Furmanski, Issue 6, pp. 82-103.

Week 4: Genocide and Internal Law

Mon, 2/12: Hotel Rwanda (cont'd)

Wed, 2/14: The U.N. and the U.S.

Readings: Rourke, Issues 18, pp. 284-299; Scott, Jones, and Furmanski, Issue 9, pp. 140-151.

Week 5: International Economics

Mon, 2/19: President's Day

Wed, 2/21: International Economics

Readings: G & P, Chapter 5, pp. 202-230

Week 6: Globalization

Mon, 2/26: Globalization and Trade

Wed, 2/28: Multi-National Corporations

Readings: Rourke, Issues 1 and 12, pp. 2-15 and pp.172-190; Scott, Jones, and Furmanski, Issue 1, pp. 1-11.

Week 7: International Economic Organizations and Neo-liberalism

Mon, 3/5: The WTO

Wed, 3/7: The IMF and the World Bank

Readings: Rourke, Issue 13, pp. 191-205; Scott, Jones, and Furmanski, Issues 17 and 19, pp. 248-258 and pp. 279-293

Week 8: Globalization and the Nation-State

Mon, 3/12: Regional Economic Integration: NAFTA and the EU

Wed, 3/14: Globalization and the Nation-State

Readings: Rourke, Issues 2, 3, pp. 16-49; Scott, Jones, and Furmanski, Issue 2, pp. 12-32

First Exam Handed Out; Due

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

Week 9: Spring Break

Week 10: U.S. as Hegemon

Mon, 3/26: The End of the Cold War

Wed, 3/28: Perspectives on U.S. Hegemony

Readings: Rourke, Issue 4, pp. 52-70; Scott, Jones, and Furmanski, Issue 12, pp. 177-199

Week 11: The Rise of China

Mon, 4/2: Economic Development in China

Wed, 4/4: Is China a threat to U.S. hegemony?

Readings: Rourke, Issue 7, p. 100-112; handout

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

Mon, 4/9: The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Wed, 4/11: OPEC

Readings: Rourke, Issue 9; Scott, Jones, and Furmanski, Issue 7, pp. 104-115.

Week 13: Islamic Fundamentalism Terrorism

Mon, 4/16: The Rise of Islamic Fundamentalism

Wed, 4/18: The U.S. "War on Terrorism"

Readings: Rourke, Issue 15; Scott, Jones, and Furmanski, Issue 8, pp. 116-139;
Council on Foreign Relations handout

Week 14: The Iraq War

Mon, 4/23: Causes and Consequences

Wed, 4/25: Prospects for Democracy

Readings: Rourke, Issues 10 and 14; pp. 137-151 and 208-229; Scott, Jones, and
Furmanski, Issue 4, pp. 48-64; NYROB handout

Week 15: Nuclear Proliferation and WMD

Mon, 4/30: Iran and North Korea

Wed, 5/2: Concluding Remarks

Readings: Rourke, Issues 8, pp. 113-125; Scott, Jones, and Furmanski, Issues 14
and 15, pp. 217-239.

Final Exam Handed Out; Due Wed, 5/9

Week 16: Conclusion

Mon, 5/8: No Class

Wed, 5/9: Final Exam Due