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
Office: Mohegan Campus Annex Room 1
Phone: 383-5233
Email: SNeufeld@trcc.commnet.edu
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 neoliberalism
- 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:


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.
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 The Middle East  
Mon, 4/9: The Arab-Israeli Conflict
Wed, 4/11: OPEC

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