

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS
Department of Political Science

WORLD POLITICS
PSC 231 Section 003

Spring 2006
Timing: Friday 2:30 PM – 5:20 PM
Room Assignment: WRI C301

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COURSE OBJECTIVES, CONTENT, PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

This is an introductory course in World Politics. As such, it is designed to achieve the following:

1. **Content:** International Relations (IR) is a sub-field of Political Science, concerned with international and world politics. As a field of study, International Relations (IR) has uncertain boundaries and it is interdisciplinary. It has numerous overlaps with other disciplines such as history, economics, psychology, sociology, geography, communications, cultural and environmental studies. Notwithstanding the breadth and scope of IR, it focuses primarily on the theoretical and scientific study of international and global systems, structures, institutions, and actors, and in-depth interactions among them. IR analyzes politics, law, development, environment, power, conflict, war, cooperation, trade, and policy-making at the international and global level.
2. We will gain insight into the main sub-fields of IR such as security studies, international organization, foreign policy formation and execution, and international political economy. IR is a dynamic and evolving field, undergoing constant change and development. We will analyze various international and global phenomena, actors, issues, institutions, and their continuity and change.
3. We will first address international security issues. The second half of the course will address international political economy and international development issues.
4. **Objectives:** Students will be able to apply the basic methodological, theoretical, and conceptual tools used for the analysis and study of International Relations and World Politics. We will discuss current events and will apply concepts, theories, and methods used in the study of IR in explaining the events of the day.
5. Students will become familiar with the historical and philosophical basis for the present-day “state” of the nation-states.
6. We will analyze contemporary global issues and policy implications for the present and for the future. We will gain insight into the workings and the dynamics of international and global systems and structures.
7. We will take a closer look at the mechanics of *power politics* as it relates to the nation-states and their relations with each other. We will analyze patterns of power relationships among states today and will try to make predictions for the future. We will analyze various Intergovernmental and Nongovernmental Actors (IGOs and NGOs), and their interactions with each other.
8. We will gain insight into and review such important topics as **Nationalism, Geopolitics, Failed States, Poverty, Underdevelopment, Genocide, National Defense, Global Security, Globalization, National Sovereignty, Human Trafficking & Slavery, Human Rights, Nuclear Proliferation, Terrorism, War, International Law & Order, Global Environment, Water Shortages & Droughts, Population Growth, Deforestation, Natural Disasters, Epidemics, Flu Outbreaks, AIDS, Cloning, and Job Outsourcing.**
9. Seek understanding into such fundamental concepts as **Realism, Liberalism, Mercantilism, Idealism, Feminism, Socialism, Dependency, Democracy, Development, Democratization, International Anarchy, Balance-of-Power, Conflict, War, Ideology, Nationalism, Terrorism, Legitimacy, Sovereignty, Globalization, Integration, Supranationalism, Human Rights, International Law, Interdependence, etc.**

Course Structure and Expectations:

Each session will consist of three parts.

The *first* ‘warm-up’, *introductory part* will help us “activate” our international political vocabulary. During this part, we will tackle various concepts to enlarge our political vernacular and enhance our knowledge of world politics. This part, as well as all other parts of the class, will be based on the *required* reading, which will be assigned *prior* to that week. The *second part* will consist of a lecture, where the topic at hand will be discussed at length. The *third part* will be based both on **theory and practice**. Students will participate in **interactive activities, games, debates, case studies, discussion groups and policy formulation assignments**.

We will be actively engaged in discussions and presentations, as well as “question-answer” time. This will be a chance for students to shine and show active participation. We will **conclude each class** with a brief summary of the subject matter. Homework and assignments for the next week’s class will be discussed. Students will leave the classroom with a list of discussion topics for the next class and will be asked to ponder over some probing issues, as they relate to international politics and our own experience.

I will expect everybody **to read the required materials prior** to each class to allow you to participate in each session to your full potential. Students will be **required and expected** to follow **current events** by watching the news, reading newspapers and magazines, listening to the radio, researching political issues on the Internet, etc.

Evaluation:

Grades will be determined based on the following and the score of 100% will be distributed as follows:

1. Attendance and participation can greatly affect your grade! **(10%)**
2. **A written mid-term examination, consisting of 3 PARTS (25%):** multiple choices and/or true/false statements, a short quiz based on concepts and terms, and a short 3-page essay (in-class). With regards to essays, students will be free to select their favorite topic from an extensive list, provided by the instructor. Most essay topics will be phrased in the form of a question or a probing issue to allow students to expand on an idea or a theory.
3. **A written final examination, consisting of 3 PARTS (25%):** multiple choices, a quiz based on concepts, terms, and a short 3-page essay (in-class). Students will be free to select their favorite topic from an extensive list, provided by the instructor. Again, most essay topics will be phrased in the form of a question to allow students to expand on an idea or a policy issue.
4. Throughout the semester, I will be conducting short *pop quizzes* **(5%)**, based on **concepts and terms**.
5. Each student will be assigned **1 (one) oral group presentation (15%)** and **1 (one) 7-page research paper (20%)**. You will be given ample time to research a topic; presentations and research paper assignments will encompass a vast array of topics – foreign policy issues, NATO, UN, WTO, IMF, leaders, various countries and organizations, etc. **Oral presentation assignments will require work in groups**. Your group will have a great opportunity to polish the presentation before you have to present it to the rest of the class. The quality of your oral presentation can greatly improve your overall grade evaluation. Your group will be required to distribute a **short 1-page outline** to the class with the most important highlights of your presentation. I will be happy to make copies of the outlines for you provided you give it to me ahead of time. **You will be required to make a copy of your entire oral presentation for the instructor prior to the class. You are welcome to e-mail it to me ahead of time. Students will have *two months* to work on their research paper, which should allow everyone to produce an outstanding paper.**

Attendance policy:

Throughout the entire semester I will be tracking down and taking everyone's attendance. Students who arrive late or leave early will be marked absent. Since this is such a significant part of your grade, you must have a legitimate and compelling excuse to miss a class (with proper documentation). Please, e-mail me or call me *in advance* if you are going to miss a class. Failure to take your mid-term or final exam on a scheduled date may result in an inferior grade. Mid-term make-up exams may be arranged for those students with legitimate and compelling excuses. Make-up exams are NOT offered for the final exam.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR: Please, note that ANY disruptive and rude behavior will be penalized and you might be dropped from the class. Everyone must follow the rules of civilized discourse. Disruptive and rude behavior will not be tolerated. I urge everyone to use common sense and respect everyone's *right to learn*.

Important Announcements: The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **YOU ARE INDIVIDUALLY AND SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR VIOLATIONS OF COPYRIGHT AND FAIR USE LAWS. THE UNIVERSITY WILL NEITHER PROTECT NOR DEFEND YOU NOR ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR EMPLOYEE OR STUDENT VIOLATIONS OF FAIR USE LAWS.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. To familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use policies, the University encourages you to visit its copyright website at: www.unlv.edu/committees/copyright/.

The UNLV Disability Resource Center (DRC) houses the resources for students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact the DRC for the coordination of services. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC), Room 137. Their numbers are: VOICE 895-0866 / TDD 895-0652 / FAX 895-0651. For additional information, please visit: www.unlv.edu/studentlife/drc.

Course Outline:

Note: The following topics and dates are subject to minor changes to accommodate your interests, requests and needs. Your suggestions and ideas are very welcome.

Week #1 (1/20/06) – Introductions. Overview of the syllabus: policies, procedures, and expectations. What is **World Politics**? The dichotomy between *what is vs. what should be*. **Perceptions and Misperceptions** - how do we **perceive** the world? What **IS real**? **War & Conflict; Cooperation & Reason** – natural tendencies? **International Anarchy** – what does it mean?

Please, bring 1 SCANTRON to the next class!

Reading: *W. Raymond Duncan, Chapters 1 & 2.*

PLEASE, BRING 1 (one) SCANTRON TO THE CLASS ON 1/27/06! (pre-assessment)

Week #2 (1/27/06) – A framework for analysis and the tools of analysis in World Politics. **Approaches** to World Politics: **Political Realism, Neorealism, Idealism, Liberalism, Neoliberalism, Marxism, Imperialism, Dependency Theories, Feminism, Structuralism, Constructivism, Ecological Paradigm, Peace Studies** – conflicting theoretical approaches? **Alternatives to Power Politics. Towards an Eclectic Approach.**

Reading: *W. Raymond Duncan, Chapters 3 & 4.*

Week #3 (2/3/06) – **The Levels of Analysis and Relations Between Actors in the International System. The State and its Primary Characteristics. POWER in World Politics. The Multiple Dimensions of Power. The Major Elements of Power. Sovereignty and the Modern Nation-state. Leverage and Power.**

Reading: *W. Raymond Duncan, Chapter 5.*

Week #4 (2/10/06) – Foreign Policy Formation and Execution. Models of Foreign Policy Decision Making. Short Overview of US Foreign Policy. America’s War on Terrorism. The Bush Doctrine. The Theory of Just War. Globalization and the Sovereign State. Cultural Imperialism - Global Culture?

Reading: *W. Raymond Duncan, Chapter 6.*

Week #5 (2/17/06) – Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and their Role. Cooperation and Reciprocity. Integration: Supranationalism and the European Union. The United Nations and Global Security. International Organization & Law: Law and Sovereignty, the UN, and World Order. International Anarchy.

Reading: *W. Raymond Duncan, Chapters 7 & 8.*

Week #6 (2/24/06) - The Rise of Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs). The Relationship between States and NGOs. Political Geography & Geopolitics. Location, Development, Climate, Natural Resources. Geography and Security. Geography and Human Perceptions.

Reading: *W. Raymond Duncan, Chapter 9.*

Week #7 (3/3/06) – Nationalism and National Identity. Religious Nationalism. Nationalism and Foreign Policy. Self-determination Movements. War of Aggression and Preemptive War.

Brief Overview of the covered material in preparation for the mid-term exam.

GET READY FOR THE MID-TERM EXAM!

Reading: **REVIEW CHAPTERS 1-9 and ALL THE LECTURE NOTES!**

Week #8 (3/10/06) – **MID-TERM EXAMINATION- MARK YOUR CALENDARS! (Good Luck!) BRING 2 (two) SCANTRONS TO THE EXAM.**

Week #9 (3/17/06) – **SPRING BREAK!**

Week #10 (3/24/06) – Global Violence & International Conflict. Wars, Weapons, and Terrorism. The Causes of War. Weapons and Military Force: the use of force. Types of Terrorism. Deterrence. International Law and Its Limitations. The International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court. The UN – its Effectiveness and Limitations in Controlling Global Violence.

Reading: *W. Raymond Duncan, Chapter 10.*

Week #11 (3/31/06) – The Origin of Human Rights. The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. International Conventions on Human Rights. Sovereignty Versus Global Rules. Women’s Rights as Human Rights. Five Feminist International Relations Theories. Human Rights Violations.

Reading: *W. Raymond Duncan, Chapter 11.*

Week #12 (4/7/06) – PLEASE, NOTE: ORAL PRESENTATIONS ARE DUE TODAY!

GROUPS WILL START PRESENTING THEIR TOPICS IN CLASS. (Make sure to e-mail your complete presentation to the instructor ahead of time. Thank you in advance!)

Reading: W. Raymond Duncan, Chapter 12.

Week #13 (4/14/06) – International Political Economy. Theoretical Approaches to IPE. Free Trade and Protectionism. Comparative Advantage and the Rationale for Free Trade. International Markets, Trade Regimes, and Global Trading System. GATT & the World Trade Organization. The Global Financial System: Currency, Exchange Rates, and Money Supply. The International Monetary System and Global Banking. The IMF & the World Bank. The Role of Multinationals and Implications for Sovereignty.

Reading: W. Raymond Duncan, Chapter 13.

Week #14 (4/21/06) – PLEASE, NOTE: YOUR RESEARCH PAPERS ARE DUE TODAY!

The Political Economy of Development. What is Meant by *DEVELOPMENT*? The North-South Gap – Poverty, Imperialism, Revolution. Underdevelopment and Income Inequality. Development Models. Foreign Assistance & Aid. Dependency Relationship - Colonial Legacy. Economic Liberalism, Economic Nationalism, and Dependency Theories.

Reading: W. Raymond Duncan, Chapter 14.

Week #15 (4/28/06) – The Global Environment. Natural Resources, Population, and Climate Change. Renewable and Nonrenewable Natural Resources – Scarcity. The Industrial and Scientific Revolutions. The Green and Biotech Revolutions. Global Commons. Air Pollution, Water Pollution, Water Scarcity, Natural Disasters, and Epidemics – International Response.

Reading: W. Raymond Duncan, Chapters 1- 14.

Review ALL the materials and lecture notes in preparation for the final exam.

Week #16 (5/5/06) – World Politics and International Relations Revisited: Review and Concluding Remarks. Study Guides will be discussed and any remaining questions answered.

Reading: W. Raymond Duncan, Chapters 1- 14.

Review ALL the materials and lecture notes in preparation for the final exam.

Get ready for the FINAL EXAM!

Week #17 - 5/12/06 – FINAL EXAM – GOOD LUCK!

PLEASE, BRING 2 (two) SCANTRONS, PENCILS, AND ERASERS TO THE EXAM.

REQUIRED READING:

W. Raymond Duncan, Barbara Jancar-Webster, Bob Switky, *WORLD POLITICS in the 21st CENTURY, 3rd Edition, 2006, Longman.*

