

## **POL 242: INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

Term 5: January, 2005

Aparna Thomas, Instructor

**Amanda Swygart-Hobaugh, Consulting Librarian**

**Class Meets: M-F, 9-11, South Hall 302**

**My office: South Hall 305**

**Office hours: MWF: 11-12, TTH: 1-2**

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### **Course Description**

International Politics is a rapidly evolving field. The study of international politics encompasses the interaction between various levels of international actors -- international system, countries, international organizations and individuals. All these are important players on the global stage. With the expansion of global network of communications, transportation and technology, there is growing complexity and interdependence between the actors at all levels. In this course, we will study the theoretical perspectives that explain the nature of international interaction and predict cooperation or conflict. We will also look at specific empirical examples of various types of interactions at specific levels.

During the course of the term we will examine some of the theories of international relations that can be applied to various levels: the system, state and individual. Next, we will focus on the nation state: its definition, emergence, development, components and elements of its power, and tools available to foreign policy actors such as diplomacy, economy and war. Finally, we will study the role of international organizations in shaping international politics.

### **Course Objectives:**

International Politics affects each of us in countless ways. Ranging from issues like the environment and rising oil prices, conflict in Iraq and anti-war demonstrations, to issues like the recent tsunami disaster in Asia. Although we will not be able to discuss all the issues in detail, I hope that this course will spark your interest in understanding the complex ways in which these issues affect your life and how you can in turn, be involved in shaping the future destiny of our world.

By the end of the term, it is expected that you will 1) acquire appreciation and knowledge of the complexity and interdependence of the international arena; 2) develop theoretical perspectives and master scientific tools to analyze international relations; 3) understand the major current international developments; and 4) practice your critical thinking, writing, and public speaking skills.

### **Required Readings**

Rourke, John T. 2005. *International Politics on the World Stage*. 10<sup>th</sup> edition. Boston: McGraw Hill/Dushkin.

Rourke, John T. 2004. *Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in World Politics*. 11<sup>th</sup> edition. Boston: McGraw Hill

### **Additional Readings**

In addition to the required readings, you should familiarize yourself with world events throughout the term. Keeping in mind that a significant portion of your grade consists of in-class participation, you should come to class prepared with some knowledge of current events. Often we will begin class with a brief summary of the major international news. A good place to start is with reading the international or world sections of major newspapers. I recommend the following:

- Christian Science Monitor ([scmonitor.com](http://scmonitor.com))
- The New York Times ([nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com))
- The Guardian ([guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk))
- The Washington Post ([Washingtonpost.com](http://Washingtonpost.com))
- BBC News ([news.bbc.co.uk](http://news.bbc.co.uk))
- NPR Online ([news.npr.org](http://news.npr.org))

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Exams**

There will be two exams. Exams may consist of multiple-choice, short-answer questions and essays. The first exam will test your understanding of the theoretical framework of this class. The second will be comprehensive.

#### **Quizzes**

There will be **at least 2** quizzes. This requirement is designed to better prepare you for the exams and test your immediate understanding of the material. Prior notice of quiz date will be given. Make-up quizzes will be given only in case of properly documented illness. Quizzes will be given in the beginning of class. **No make-up quizzes will be given for the latecomers.** Quizzes will consist of several short answer or multiple-choice questions.

One quiz will be a **Map Quiz**. Our world is presently divided into approximately 190 sovereign states. Despite states' theoretical and practical significance in studying international relations, most Americans are unfamiliar with the vast majority of them. Accordingly, this introductory course has established as an educational objective that students should become familiar with the names and geographic locations of states. For the quiz, you will be asked to identify 10 geographical entities on the map.

**Term Paper and Presentations:** Students are required to write a research paper of 6-8 pages on an important international problem. For the paper, you should analyze an issue in international relations and recommend a specific course of action. For example, you might consider issues like immigration, US foreign policies in various countries (North Korea, Iraq etc). Examples of other acceptable topics include analyzing the role of international organizations in solving conflicts, NATO, UN, global warming etc. The detail requirements will be distributed in another handout. *All students need to get their term paper topics approved by me. Unapproved paper topics may not be accepted.* You should write a one-page description of your topic and bring it to class on **Monday, Jan 10<sup>th</sup>**. The paper is due on **January 26<sup>th</sup>** by noon. We will have paper presentations from **January 24-26<sup>th</sup>**. Sign up sheets will be distributed. No late papers will be accepted, unless in case of emergencies. The term paper and presentation will comprise 30% of your final grade.

### **Preliminary Guidelines for the Term Paper and Presentation**

An excellent oral presentation and term paper must conform to the following criteria:

- Good, clear and complete description of the problem  
Clear thesis statement on the selected problem (your own argument) developed out of empirical evidence or theoretical perspective
- Theoretical framework(s) that explain your problem the best
- Empirical evidence and/or plausible examples to support your argument  
Your own contribution to the problem -- e.g., unique arguments supported by evidence that others missed, synthesis of previous findings or new empirical updates of previous findings that prove one side to be correct
- Possible predictions  
Few errors in grammar, punctuation, excellent spelling and writing style as well as proper citation
- Complete and appropriate bibliography  
Finally, it must be submitted on time. Late papers will be accepted only under extraordinary circumstances.  
Missing one or more of the above elements will negatively affect the general grade

**Attendance and Participation:** Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Students will be expected to participate actively in sharing their ideas on various classroom discussions. I will take attendance throughout the term. The students who fail to maintain a regular attendance cannot expect to score well on classroom participation that will comprise 20% of the final grade. More than one unexcused absence will result in lowering the participation grade by ½ letter grade. However, in case of repeated absences, I reserve the right to lower the final grade.

**Class Discussions:** Students will be assigned specific issues from the *Taking Sides* book to present in class. The Taking Sides reader covers various issues and presents arguments for opposing views. It allows us to engage more deeply in current and relevant issues. These arguments will be discussed in conjunction with our readings from the textbook. A sign up sheet will be provided and specific instructions will follow.

## **Grades Breakdown:**

**Exam 1- 20%**

**Exam 2- 20%**

**Quizzes- 10%**

**Term Paper and Presentation- 30%**

**Attendance and Participation- 20%**

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

The following section is reprinted from Compass, the Cornell Student Handbook. Please see me if you have any questions.

A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty.

Dishonesty in academic work includes both cheating and plagiarism. Please refer to the Cornell Student Handbook for more details or come and talk to me.

A safe guide is to provide a full citation for every source consulted. Sources may include, but are not limited to, published books, articles, reviews, Internet sites, archival material, visual images, oral presentations, or personal correspondence. In addition, students should always keep previous drafts of their work in order to provide documentation of their original work. Finally, due to disciplinary differences, students should consult their professor, a librarian, and/or the Writing Studio for specific instructions on properly providing citations for sources.

## **SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

#### **Week 1- January 3- 7**

### **THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

#### **Monday, January 3**

Introduction

What is International Relations?

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapter 1.**

#### **Tuesday, January 4**

Evolution of World Politics

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapter 2**

**Wednesday, January 5**

9-11: Meet with Amanda Swygart-Hobaugh regarding research in the library. We will meet in 2 groups of 10 each for an hour.

**Thursday, January 6**

Levels of Analysis

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapter 3**

**Friday, January 7**

Levels of Analysis Continued

**Reading Assignment: Chapter 3**

**Week 2- January 10-14**

**NATION STATES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

**Monday, January, 10**

Nationalism and Transnationalism

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapters 4, 5**

**Taking Sides: Group 1**

**Tuesday, January 11**

National States

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapter 6**

**Taking Sides: Group 2**

**Wednesday, January 12**

**EXAM 1**

**Thursday, January 13**

International Organizations

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapter 7**

**Taking Sides: Group 3**

**Friday, January 14**

National Power, Diplomacy, and International Law

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapters 8, 9**

**Taking Sides: Group 4**

**Week 3- January 17- 21**

**INTERNATIONAL CONDUCT**

**Monday, January 17**

Pursuing Peace and Security: War and Its Alternatives

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapters 10, 11**

**Taking Sides: Group 5**

**Tuesday, January 18**

Pursuing Prosperity and International Economic Cooperation: National Economic Competition and Its Alternatives

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapter 12**

**Taking Sides: Group 6**

**Wednesday, January 19**

Pursuing Prosperity Continued

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapters 13, 14**

**Taking Sides: Group 7**

**Thursday, January 20**

Pursuing Human Rights and A Cleaner Environment

**Reading Assignment: Rourke, Chapters 15, 16**

**Taking Sides: Group 8**

**Friday, January 21**

**EXAM 2**

**Week 4- January 24-26**

**Monday, January 24**

**Class Presentations**

**Tuesday, January 25**

**Class Presentations**

**Wednesday, January 26**

**Final Paper Due by noon!!**

*Note: This syllabus is subject to revision in the event of extenuating circumstances*