

Introduction to International Politics

PSC 103-H001—Spring 2010—T/TH 1:40-2:55—FH 300

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Introduction

Introduction to International Politics (referred to as 'IR' for international relations) is a course that explores how the world works, why events occur, and who affects these events by examining relations between actors. While international relations are often thought of as only the interaction between countries, in this course you will find that there are any number of actors—ranging from countries (states) to nations, leaders, diplomats, organizations, domestic constituents, businesses, and even private citizens—who affect international politics. These actors have an ever-increasing impact as the world becomes more interdependent and, some argue, globalized. In this introductory course, we will cover different theories developed to explain world events and, in turn, look at various facets of IR that include: the composition of the international system; diplomacy and policy making; international law and organization; conflict, cooperation, and security; and socioeconomic issues.

The goal of this course is for you to gain a better understanding of the political world in which we live. As we explore the various facets of IR, you will discover ways you are connected to the rest of the world that you might not have considered. Not only does this course offer a way to learn international politics concepts, it also promotes the development of decision-making, critical-thinking, and analytical skills in a dynamic environment.

Student Learning Outcomes: In taking this course, you will:

- Learn important concepts relating to international politics and apply them to current political problems.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how political scientists apply principles and standards to the study of actors in the international system.
- Examine ethical issues relevant to the study of international politics.
- Examine the impact of diversity in international politics.
- Communicate an understanding of international politics through performance on examinations, applied exercises, and participation in class discussion.

Readings

The following readings will be required in this class:

- Rourke/Boyer 8th Brief Edition, **International Politics on the World Stage**, ISBN: 0073378992
 - Note: an ebook text is also available through <http://instructors.coursesmart.com/0077284305> for less than the hard copy.
- Pew Cases, available only at <http://www.guisd.org/> (see your course page for the 3 specific cases you need)
- Additional readings are linked to your course webpage at www.nku.edu/~weirk/courses.html

Course Requirements

- Assignments = 60% of overall grade
- Web presentation = 20% of overall grade
- Class Participation= 20% of overall grade

Assignments: Assignments include exercises, papers, reading assessments (RAs), and if necessary, quizzes. Exercises and papers are assigned to help you apply what you've learned. On days that assignments are due, if you are late to class, you will automatically lose points off of your assignment grade.

Reading assessments (RAs) are one-page **summaries** that cover the main argument and/or thesis and supporting sub-points of the reading. An RA is **not** an analysis or opinion paper. The RA must follow the *Standard Format for Written Work* (detailed below), particularly the margins for the page set-up.

No RAs will be accepted after the end of class under any conditions. That means if you forget to bring your assignment, weren't able to print it out, were out sick, or forgot to do it, don't ask if you can turn it in after class. You get one free miss that won't count against you, so use it wisely. If you turn in all of the assignments, the lowest grade will be dropped.

Exercises are designed to help you connect concepts with real world examples. On days these assignments are due, if you are late to class, you will automatically lose points (determined by me based on the total points of the assignment) off of your assignment grade. If you fail to submit a paper by the end of class, you have until the start of the next class to turn in a paper, with a deduction of 50% off of the paper grade.

No assignments will be accepted except in class. Assignments left under my door anytime after the start of class-will not be accepted or counted. If you will miss class, you may send your assignment as an email attachment prior to the start of class, along with your reason for missing class. If I feel it is a sufficient reason, I will accept your assignment without penalty.

Standard format for written work: You will be penalized for failing to follow the standard format, with the exception of the last bullet, which will result in a zero grade for exceptionally poor work.

- Single space name, date, assignment number on top right hand side of paper
- Typed, in hard copy form
- Stapled (Paper-clipped **IS NOT** stapled, nor is dog-eared)
- Page numbers
- Double-spaced
- Prescribed margins: 1" all around
- Times New Roman 12 pt. font (or Mac comparable)
- Edited and proof-read so that paper is well-written
 - clarity in writing
 - well-organized
 - grammatically sound
 - appropriate length paragraphs

Web presentation: At the end of the semester, you will give a 20 minute presentation on an international relations topic of your choice (see evaluation details below). No two people may cover the same topic. The objective is to develop a website that comprehensively brings together information and resources about your topic: think of it as a one-stop resource for anyone who wants to know about your issue and what the world's institutions are doing about it. Just a friendly reminder that copying information from or mirroring websites is plagiarism.

Your presentation needs to include the following:

- An overview of the issue and be sure to identify why this is an international issue
- A comprehensive view of how countries align themselves with one another regarding the issue
- A comprehensive view of the IGOs and NGOs involved in addressing the issue
 - International IGOs: IMF, WB, UN (WHO, UNICEF, etc.), WTO, CITES, International Panel on Climate Control, INTERPOL, OECD (International Energy Agency, Nuclear Energy Agency, etc.), etc.
 - Regional IGOs: APEC, NAFTA, SADC, EU, Caribbean Basin Initiative, ECOWAS, Mercosur, ASEAN, SAARC, etc.
 - NGOs: Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Human Rights Watch, WWF, International Order of the Red Cross/Red Crescent, etc.
- Consideration of what MNCs are confronted with addressing with this issue for their public image as well as which ones see this issue as an entrepreneurial opportunity
- Recent media coverage of the issue

At least 2 hours prior to the start of your presentation, you must email me the URL for your presentation so I can link it to the course website.

At the time of your presentation, you must give me a hard copy outline of your presentation. The due date corresponds with the date you present. If you fail to give me a hard copy of your outline at the start of your presentation, you will automatically lose 5 points off of your overall presentation grade.

Presentation times will be determined on a voluntary basis about two weeks before presentations begin. Since we only have enough time slots to accommodate the number of presentations, once presentation times are established, if you fail to give your presentation on the established date, you will fail for the assignment unless you arrange to trade time slots with someone else in the class.

Class Participation: As international relations are interactive, so is the approach to learning about what goes on in the world in this class. Thus, this course involves lectures, case studies, and exercises—all of which involve class participation. Participation grades are based on the **quality** of your participation, not solely the **quantity**. Since it is necessary to give everyone an opportunity to participate, it is imperative that you raise your hand and wait to be called on before speaking. I keep track of not only how often you participate, but take note of what you contribute. At any point during the semester, you can ask where you stand for your class participation grade. Work is not a legitimate excuse for missing class.

I expect that you have all of the reading done for the class day on which it is assigned. Because class participation is 20% of your overall grade, it is imperative that you attend regularly and do all of the assigned reading. If you aren't prepared to answer questions in class, it will negatively affect your participation grade.

Participation is based on the following:

1) *Showing Up and Feigning Interest*

Class participation is based on the following elements: class attendance, punctuality, participation, attention, and respect. Text messaging, cell phone use of any kind, instant messaging by laptop, passing notes, and sleeping in class are disrespectful not only to me, but to other students. Any and all of these activities will affect your final class participation grade.

2) *Pew Case, Exercise, and Readings Discussions*

We will discuss the Pew case studies, assigned exercises, and reading assignments in class. The exercises provide you with an easy way to participate, as you will have completed the exercises prior to the class discussion. The articles and case discussions will help to ground the abstract concepts we discuss in class with real world events and situations.

3) *E-mail Responses to News Items*

This option provides a way for those of you who might feel less comfortable talking in class to enhance your participation grade, though email responses **are not** a substitute for in-class participation. You will not lose participation points for not emailing responses to me. Your responses must be in formal writing style—that is, you are not text messaging me.

You have two options for email participation: (1) Throughout the semester, I will post news items on your course webpage. As part of your participation grade, you may choose to respond to these articles by emailing me with your responses. (2) Another option is for you to send me news items related to Canada. Along with the link for the news story, email me with your comments, criticisms, and/or any insights you have regarding the news item, and particularly, how the news relates to what we cover in class. You may send me up to one news item per week, with the last one submitted no later than April 30.

Additional Information

Cell Phone & Laptop Policy : Use of laptops or phones is not allowed during class time. The first time I see you with an open laptop or a phone (and I don't care if the phone is on or not - if it's in your hands, it qualifies as 'in-use' to me) I will deduct 2 percent from your final course grade. The second time, I will deduct an additional 3 percent from your final course grade. For each subsequent infraction, the deductions will continue in this way. So, for example, if you're caught with a cell phone three times, 9 percent (2% + 3% + 4%) will be taken off your final course grade.

If your phone rings and you pick it up to answer it or turn it off, the above penalty applies. So be sure you turn off your phone or set it to silent before class.

If you have what you believe to be a legitimate reason for keeping your cell phone on during a class, you must clear it with me before that class. If you don't get my approval, I will apply the cell phone use deduction - even if I agree that your reason was legitimate.

Contact Information: My primary objective is to help you learn and succeed. Please visit me during my office hours and/or contact me by email with any questions, clarifications, or concerns you have about this course. If you cannot come to office hours, you can arrange to meet me by appointment. If you opt to contact me, you will get a much faster response by emailing me, as I generally check my email at least once a day Monday through Friday.

Occasionally it may be necessary to contact you outside of class. For any correspondence outside of class, I will send messages to your NKU email account. I will post this information as well on your course webpage as soon as possible.

Extra credit projects are not an option.

All University policies apply, including the honor code. The work you will do in this course is subject to the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code is a commitment to the highest degree of ethical integrity in academic conduct, a commitment that, individually and collectively, the students of Northern Kentucky University will not lie, cheat, or plagiarize to gain an academic advantage over fellow students or avoid academic requirements.

Plagiarism is any instance of attempting to pass off the work of others as your own. This is not limited solely to directly quoting the work of others- it also includes paraphrasing the work of others without giving appropriate credit. Put another way, if you take someone else's work and change, add, or delete some words here and there, you are still plagiarizing if the essential meaning remains the same. This applies to all papers, exams, quizzes, and exercises. Plagiarizing from other students, or even from your own previous work, is not acceptable.

You are expected to do your own work, properly cite the contribution of others, and use only expressly authorized materials on exams, quizzes, or assignments. If you aren't sure about when or how to credit the work of others, let me know and I will be happy to help you out.

The penalty for the first instance of lying, cheating, or plagiarizing is an automatic zero for the assignment in question. The penalty for a second instance of lying, cheating, or plagiarizing is a grade of 'F' for the class and dismissal from class. All instances of lying, cheating, or plagiarizing will be brought to the attention of the Dean of Students.

Additional problems: Work is not an excuse for missing classes or assignments. If you encounter any problems throughout the semester regarding this class or your ability to attend and participate, please let me know **ASAP**. It is not advisable to wait until the end of the semester to inform me of difficulties you are having; that is after the fact.

Web Presentation Evaluation

General

- Hard copy of outline
- Preparedness
- Present v. read notes
- Clear conveyance of ideas
- Clear speaking
- Eye contact
- Distracting motions and mannerisms (fidgeting, rocking back-and-forth, lots of 'ums,' etc.)

Presentation of website

- Overview
- Organization
- Clear flow of ideas
- Clear and coherent presentation of information
- Explained all information included on site

Web content

- Issue synopsis
- Relevant source links
 - Intergovernmental organization sites
 - Nongovernmental organization sites
 - Multinational organization information
 - Government sites
 - News links
 - Academic readings
- Appropriate background/colors/font/etc.
- Grammatically sound
- Proofed for errors
- Creativity
 - Web-enhancing features like pictures, video, charts, graphs, audio, etc.

Common Course Policies Approved April 2005

The following policies apply to all courses taught by faculty in the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice. Please note that individual faculty may have specific applications of these policies in their syllabi.

1. Classroom and Electronic Participation:

Classroom participation is essential to the educational process. It is vital to your understanding of the course material, and to your overall performance. It is also a student responsibility. Class participation is generally defined as regular class attendance, proper class preparation, completing assignments and activities in a timely manner, completing assignments in the format requested, and participating in discussions both during and outside of class (e.g. Black Board discussions). Participation also refers to regular monitoring of and responding to electronic contact by professors via email, Black Board or other means. Participation may have a specific grade percentage in your class; see your course syllabi for specifics.

2. Class Professionalism:

- A. Out of respect to your fellow learners, **electronic devices should be turned off** during class time unless you are required to be on-call by your employer. In that case, please set your beeper / phone to a non-audible signal. If you are required to leave a beeper or cell phone on during class, inform the professor of this prior to class.
- B. **Disruptive behavior or conduct** (whether in-class or electronic) that demeans fellow class members or the instructor will not be tolerated. Please see the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities Section 4.3 for "What the Professor May Expect of the Student." Instructors reserve the right to dismiss or remove a disruptive student from a classroom in accordance with the appropriate College of Arts and Science Policy.
http://www.nku.edu/~deanstudents/disruption_guidelines.html
- C. It is important that work with your name attached is, in fact, **solely your work** unless properly referenced or cited. In these days of increased access to information, it is critical that you understand the meaning, seriousness and consequences of plagiarism. If you ever have a question about giving proper credit for academic work, please consult your instructor **well in advance of an assignment due date**.

D. The work you will do in this course and your behavior in this course are subject to the **Student Honor Code**. The Honor Code is a commitment to the highest degree of ethical integrity in academic conduct. By being a student at NKU you make a commitment that individually and collectively, you will not lie, cheat, or plagiarize to gain an academic advantage over fellow students or avoid academic requirements. You also make a commitment to behavior in a professional manner, especially when involved in academic activities off campus such as travel courses or CCSA Study Abroad. For specifics concerning the honor code, see the Dean of Students website: http://www.nku.edu/~deanstudents/student_rights/honor_code.htm.

3. Right to Revise a Syllabus:

A syllabus is required for every class and will be distributed at the beginning of each semester. Faculty reserve the right to **revise the course syllabus** as needed. Changes in the specific course schedule may happen frequently, so you need to keep abreast of these changes regularly. Should a major change occur in the syllabus (e.g. moving a specified test date, changing the grading percentages, changing the assignment types, etc.) the specific change will be announced at least a week in advance of any activity due date (e.g. paper, test). Major revisions in a course grading scheme or mechanism will also be in writing, which may include paper distribution, email, or posting to Blackboard or an appropriate online forum.

4. Student Responsibilities to Meet Course Obligations:

You are responsible for all course assignments including class preparation, class attendance, class activities, tests, papers, labs, projects, group work or other course assignments. By reviewing the syllabus at the beginning of a course, you are responsible for meeting all specific course obligations. Additionally, some faculty may even require that each student initial a document to recognize their course obligations. Failure to attend classes, or meet course obligations is a serious matter and it is your responsibility to communicate with the instructor should you have difficulty with meeting any course obligation. Faculty may, at their discretion, reduce grades or even fail you for not meeting specified course obligations, including but not limited to, class attendance, taking tests at a specified time, turning in papers on time and in the format required and other assignments. It is the faculty's discretion to determine the consequences of not meeting a course obligation, and many times the specific provisions and penalties are specified in the syllabus. Faculty may also require written documentation verifying your inability to meet a course obligation.

5. Final Examination:

With rare exception, all classes will meet at the time prescribed, will meet until the last scheduled day of classes, and will **meet during the final exam period** printed in the *Schedule of Classes*. This is an Arts and Science College policy.

Your syllabus should include the date and time of the final exam period scheduled for the course. There is also a final exam schedule posted on the NKU website. Faculty will provide an indication of the final exam's nature (cumulative final, regular test, return of take-home exam, presentation of final project, etc.) well in advance of the final exam.

There may be courses for which a cumulative final exam is not appropriate. However, these courses will still meet as scheduled during their final exam period. The final exam period will used, as appropriate for the course, including, but not limited to, a non-cumulative exam, project presentation, return of take-home exam, or paper presentation.

6. Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or services) for this course must register with the Office of Disability Services. Please contact the Disability Service Office immediately in the University Center, Suite 320, or call (859) 572-6373 for more information. Verification of your disability is required in the Office of Disability Services for you to receive reasonable academic accommodations.