Political Science (POLS) 3360: International Relations (CRN 34814)

Summer II, July 5-August 1, 2016
106 Liberal Arts Building

Instructor: Dr. Charles Boehmer
Office: 307 Benedict Hall
Email: crboehmer@utep.edu
Phone: 747-7979
Class Website: Blackboard through your MY UTEP PORTAL

Office Hours
By appointment, typically right after class or in the afternoon

Course Goals and Overview

The goal of this course is to cover the basic concepts and theories of international relations, providing students with an understanding about how world politics is professionally studied. Students will also explore the nature of international cooperation, conflict, organization, and conflict, including terrorism and ethnic conflict. Other topics to be covered include weapons of mass destruction, international law and organization, international environmentalism, and international political economy. I teach this as an introductory survey course that should be seen as a pre-requisite to other upper level courses in international relations and security studies. However, although the subject matter is taught as an introduction, some students may find the topic harder to understand than American politics; the difficulty springs from the lack of effective and strong international institutions, which has a profound effect on international politics.

After the completion of this course, students should have the following skills or knowledge:

- Have knowledge of the location of countries around the world
- Be able to compare and apply theories of international relations to world politics
- Have a basic understanding of terrorism, civil war, international conflict, women in IR, weapons of mass destruction and their proliferation, IPE, and international organization and law.

Tips for Passing this Course

1. Purchase or borrow the textbook and read it. Many quiz and exam questions are based on the textbook. If you attempt to take this course and do not read the textbook, then you will likely lower your course grade. When you do read and study, do not just do it to memorize the material. Study with an aim towards comprehension. Additionally, sometimes are minds stray when we read, or we are distracted; even when the book is open sometimes we do not read carefully. If you are confused about ideas or concepts, speak with the instructor. Utilize the instructor’s office hours or make appointments.

2. Stay informed about what is going on in the course by following the syllabus, paying attention to your miner email account (including emails that come through Blackboard), and not missing or being late to class in case there are stated announcements or instructions.
3. Review the power point slides, but remember that they do not suffice as a reminder of everything that was covered in a lecture. For this reason, you need to take notes, which forces you to concentrate on lecture and class discussions.

4. Typing up notes is an excellent way for you to study from your notes because it forces you to think again about what was said. Try to include your responses or ideas that you have in conjunction with the notes or content of the course as a way to connect it to your life in a way that you care about the subject matter. Typing these thoughts will also trigger in your mind what we discussed. Take an active interest in the subject matter, even if it is not your top interest. After all, you are not going to learn what you don’t want to know.

5. Study from your old exams and quizzes for the final exam. Make sure you get these back from the instructor.

Assessments of Student Performance

Exams: 30% (10% each)
   Final Exam: 20%
   Map Quizzes: 10%
Class Participation: 5% (see attendance policy below)
Research Paper References and Classifications 10%
Country Foreign Policy Paper: 20%
Simulation Participation: 5%

Exams: Three exams will be given prior to the final exam based on the readings and lectures, and will consist of a variety of multiple choice, true/false, essay, and short-answer questions.

Final Exam: The final exam will be similar to the other tests but will be cumulative and longer. This exam evaluates your ability to integrate the readings and require a synthesis of the subject matter. The material from the last week of class will be new content.

Map Quizzes: These test for geography knowledge because a spatial understanding of the international system is vital in the analysis of geopolitics. I will provide you with a random list of countries that you will need to identify on a blank map. You will not need to know capitals.

Class Participation: Students who participate actively in class by asking relevant questions, fostering discussion, or debates, will earn up to five points in the course. Students that never participate will receive a zero. Those students who participate will receive between one to five points depending on quantity and quality. This is a grade above and beyond attendance. See the policy below.

Research Paper References and Classifications: This assignment is part of the research paper project and involves demonstrating that you are researching your topic. This paper will include a list of what references you have found relevant to include in your paper. Briefly discuss why each reference may be relevant to your paper and the classification of its type of reference (primary or secondary and what type, such as book, article, etc.). This requires meeting with a UTEP reference librarian, especially Mr. Jacob Galindo and Ms. Angela Lucero who have been working with my courses in this capacity. They will know the assignment better than other reference librarians. Identify with which librarian you met. This paper incentivizes a gradual building of the paper and some contact with the reference librarians to increase library and information literacy.
**Country Foreign Policy Paper:** Using the research references in the above paper, students will write a policy brief paper describing a country’s foreign policy with other countries. This paper forms the basis for the role the student will play in the simulation in the final days of the semester.

**Simulation Participation:** This grade will be based on the quality of the student’s participation in the UN Crisis simulation at the end of the semester. Students who are present the whole time but do not talk will receive one point, whereas those students who participate will receive more points. The simulation is most interesting and fun when students participate.

**Other Course Policies**

This instructor abides by university policies, such as excused absences and attendance, as stated in the UTEP undergraduate catalog: [http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/](http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/). It is the student’s responsibility to understand their rights and university policies. In addition to university policies, I add the following:

**Attendance Policy (and make-ups):** UTEP expects that students will not miss classes without valid excuses. To deter absences, I will drop students, counting against the six course drop limit, who miss more than one class session without a valid excuse. Valid excuses include religious holidays, recognized university related activities (with Dean of Students letter), and military leave. In addition, I add the following policies:

- The instructor reserves the right to accept, or not, excuses related to medical issues. Naturally, it is not usually feasible to document in advance any time lost due to illness. The exception is planned surgeries and appointments (not normal check-ups). Any class time missed will not be excused without medical or other valid documentation. I have the ability to read in Spanish, so documentation from Mexico is permissible. Students with severe medical problems that result in missing a majority of the semester may want to consider a complete withdrawal from the university for medical purposes. That is an option when multiple courses are affected. In cases where there is a significant, and documented, loss of time, the instructor may withdrawal a student (excused) or work with the student to set up an “incomplete” grade and course of action. The course of action will depend on how much time and assignments the student missed and the chance of the student passing the course. The more the work of a course is completed, the more an incomplete grade may be coordinated.

- Absences due to conflicts with work, child care, etc. that make it impossible for you to regularly attend this class are not permitted. If you know you will have scheduling conflicts with this class, then you should make other arrangements or post-pone this class until a future semester. Treat this course as you would a professional job in which you cannot miss many days; set yourself up for success.

- Missed exams or quizzes due to family hardship or family medical problems may not be accepted by the instructor as valid excuses. For example, helping family members move, picking up at the airport, driving family members to medical appointments when you know they conflict with class, and other such activities, will not be permitted as valid excuses. Emergencies such as deaths in the family must be documented, unfortunately.

- Missing any course assessments and work due to vacations and pre-booked travel arrangements are not valid excuses for make-ups. Note the date for the final exam on the course calendar. Moreover, please note that the university has used language on the academic calendar that confuses some students by stating the “last day of classes”, which
means last normal class session excluding the final exams. There is a separate final exam calendar for each academic semester and term. See: http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=8910.

Safety and Disruption: It is expected that students will treat the instructor and other students with respect, including refraining from disparaging remarks, personal insults, derogatory comments, and other unprofessional behavior, in person or electronically. Any problem related to rude conduct, or any threats to violence, etc., may result in the student being dropped from the course by the instructor and/or reported to the Dean of Students. Please also note that this course involves discussion of countries hostile to the USA, but it is important to maintain an objective and analytical approach to this subject matter and not debase course discussions with comments that are racist in regard to other races, nations, and cultures. There are at least two sides to every dispute.

Outside work or electronic disruptions: Outside work and other non-class related activities are not permitted in our classroom. If you engage in behaviors that distract others or create a disturbance, you will be asked to leave the class. If you refuse to leave class, university police will be contacted.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: The instructor follows the university policies on academic honesty concerning cheating and plagiarism. Such acts will not be tolerated. Plagiarizing is the use of other people’s words, ideas (concepts, sentence or paragraph structure or phrasings), songs, or images without documentation or their consent. Anti-plagiarism software will be used in this course to evaluate papers. One can avoid plagiarism by being honest and using proper style guidelines concerning citations, footnotes, or endnotes for passages in the text that are borrowed or inspired by other person’s works. See the paper guidelines for other instructions and tips.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, or otherwise seek additional information, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in Union East, Room 106. CASS’ staff are the only individuals who can authorize accommodations for students with disabilities. The Student is responsible for presenting to the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions before arrangements need to be made for exams, quizzes, or other needs.

Readings


Schedule of Classes

Week 1: Basic Terms, Concepts, and the Realist theoretical perspective:

a. Basic Terms and Concepts: The Field, Actors, the State System, Anarchy, the Security Dilemma, and Power. G&P, Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 40-45, sections on power, anarchy, sovereignty, and the security dilemma)

b. The Realist conception of World Politics and Prescription for Foreign Policy: G&P Chapter 2

**Friday, July 8 – Map quiz on states of Asia**
**Week 2: Alternative theoretical perspectives to realism and International Organization and law**

c. Idealism: Lecture (please notice that I place theoretical perspectives such as liberalism, Marxism, etc., under the category of “Idealism” because of shared assumptions, first-most that the world can be changed for the better – the differences in idealist perspectives offer different conceptions of a better world and contend on how to achieve such)

d. Liberalism: G&P Chapter 3 (pp. 71-81)

e. Social Theories, Gender Theories, and Peace Studies: G&P Chapter 3 (pp. 81-105)


**Friday, July 15 – Map quiz on states of Europe**

**Monday, July 18 -- Exam #2 on the lectures and readings from the past week**

**Week 3: Conflicts, Militaries, and International Trade**

g. Conflict: Types of Wars and Terrorism: G&P Chapter 5

h. Military Force and Terrorism: G&P Chapter 6

i. International Trade: G&P Chapter 8

**List and Classification of Research References due July 21**

**Friday, July 22 – Map quiz on states of Africa**

**Monday, July 25 Exam #3 on the lectures, and readings from the past week**

**Week 4: Global Finance, Business, Environmentalism, and Demographics**

j. Global Finance and Business: G&P Chapter 9

k. Environment and Population: G&P Chapter 11

**UN Crisis Simulation (details to be discussed in class)**

**Country Foreign Policy Paper due on 7-28 at the start of class**

**Final Exam**: Monday, August 1 10:00 – 12:45 p.m. This exam is cumulative by drawing on questions from earlier exams and countries on map quiz from regions already covered. In addition to the older subject matter, the exam will include questions based on the readings since exam #3 and countries in the western hemisphere (the Americas), plus Australia and New Zealand.