COURSE OVERVIEW
This course is designed as a graduate-level introduction to the field of International Relations (IR). The aim of the course is to provide an overview of major approaches, debates, and issues in IR. The readings include both the classic and recent IR literature with different theoretical, empirical, and methodological orientations. We will discuss topics such as the scientific study of IR, alternative perspectives in IR, international security, and international political economy. Therein, students will acquire the ability to synthesize and critique various theoretical arguments through a systematic understanding of international politics.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
I believe, with adequate effort and willingness, all of you are capable of doing well in this course. By the end of this course, you can expect to accomplish the following learning outcomes:

- To define, grasp, and apply major concepts, principles, theories, and perspectives used in the field of International Relations
- To distinguish and apprehend major analytical methods and research design approaches used for the scientific study of International Relations
- To apply and critique a body of factual knowledge relevant to understanding and examining international politics
- To identify, comprehend, and evaluate key questions in the field of International Relations

OBJECTIVES FOR PROFESSIONALISM
It is essential that the utmost respect and professionalism be adhered in all exchanges between class members. This is a political science course and we will be discussing at times sensitive and controversial topics. Avoid any unnecessary arguments with other class members, such as political polemical arguments (e.g., negative partisan talking points targeting those of opposing ideological perspectives or particular political figures) or, even worse, personal attacks on others for having different views.
No inappropriate behavior will be tolerated. Unprofessional conduct will be dealt with swiftly through the university and it is at the professor’s full discretion to have a student dropped from the course for any inappropriate behavior.

**GRADING POLICY**

Your final grade in this class will be based on the following requirements:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Essays</td>
<td>20 percent (total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Leader Duty</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Talking Points</td>
<td>15 percent</td>
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All grades (including the final grade) are based on the following distribution of points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Letter</th>
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<tr>
<td>≥ 89.50</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>79.50-89.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>69.50-79.49</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>59.50-69.49</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>≤ 59.49</td>
<td>F</td>
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I do not change grades. If you are concerned about your grade, please come and see me during my office hours so that I can give you feedback and suggestions on how to improve your performance in the class.

**EXAMS**

There are two take-home exams for the course: a midterm exam and a comprehensive final. Both exams will be in essay format and questions will be based on the readings and class discussions.

Exams should be submitted electronically by the designated due date and time via “SafeAssign” (embedded in Blackboard), which is an online originality checking service made available by UTEP. Exams submitted late will lose 10 points (1 letter grade) per day (including weekends).

**CRITICAL ESSAYS**

Throughout the course, each student will write two critical essays (approximately 3-5 pages in length, excluding the references). Each essay will be based on the readings and topic of a particular week. The essays must effectively synthesize and critique the readings rather than merely summarize the material. The students will sign up in advance for the weeks that they plan to write these essays. The due date is the beginning of the class meeting (6:00pm) of the particular week you sign up for. Below are the major guidelines:
• The essays should be double-spaced; 3-5 pages long; typed in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins; and pages should be numbered. Essays that do not follow the formatting guidelines will lose 10 points.
• There should be no more than two extensive quotations (in excess of three lines of text).
• Make sure you are aware of the scholarly pitfalls of plagiarism, which are discussed in detail in the document on academic misconduct (available on Blackboard). Specifically, whenever you use an idea or information from another source, you must give credit to the author by properly citing her/him within the text as well as by including a list of all references at the end of the text. Not doing so constitutes an act of plagiarism, which will result in a score of zero for the assignment. Refer to the document on citation and reference requirements (also available on Blackboard), which discusses the American Political Science Association (APSA) style.
• In addition to the substantive quality of your essays, grades will also be based on the clarity of one’s writing (e.g., appropriate tone of writing, organization, lack of spelling and grammar errors). Please note that the University Writing Center (UWC) provides writing assistance to all UTEP students. The UWC is located on the second (ground) floor of the library in Room 227 Library; phone: (915) 747-5112.
• Essays should be submitted electronically via “SafeAssign.” Essays submitted late will lose 10 points (1 letter grade) per day (including weekends).

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation grade will comprise 40% of your course grade and will be based on the following criteria:

(a) Attendance and participation in seminar discussions (15%)
(b) Performance as a discussion leader (10%)
(d) Weekly talking points (15%)

Attendance and Participation in Seminar Discussions
I expect everyone to attend class on the scheduled dates and times. Keep in mind that class participation is more than just attending the class meetings—you should come to class alert, be willing to ask and answer questions, and contribute intellectually to class discussions. To do so, you should complete the assigned readings before each class meeting. Exams will cover material from the readings and the lectures, so doing just one or the other will leave you at a disadvantage. Only those students who prepare well-written weekly talking points, attend class regularly, and actively participate in and effectively lead class discussions will receive full credit (100) for their class participation grade. You will be asked to sign an attendance sheet at each class meeting and it is your responsibility to make sure to sign-in.

After one unexcused absence, I will begin to deduct 20 points from your participation grade for each absence thereafter. If you arrive late and request to sign-in at the end of the class meeting, I will deduct 10 points from your participation grade for each incident of tardiness after one late arrival. The same policy will apply to incidents of leaving class early (Note that if you leave the class early, the time of your departure will be recorded). The class participation portion of the grade is non-negotiable and left solely to the discretion of the instructor.
Discussion Leader Duty
During the course of the semester, each student will have the opportunity to lead the seminar discussions. Specifically, the discussion leaders will briefly present and critique that week’s readings to set the stage for class discussion on the topic. The leaders are also expected to comment on other students’ talking points.

Weekly Talking Points
Beginning from the second week of the semester, each student will be required to submit two “talking points” on the readings for that week. These talking points will help shape the seminar discussions, so they should be the most interesting questions or arguments that the student has identified based on the week’s readings. They should be submitted in the form of a short paragraph outlining the question or argument. Each talking point should refer to one or more specific sections of the weekly readings with appropriate page references. Further, each talking point should refer to a different chapter or article from the weekly readings. Talking points less than 250 words or in excess of 500 words and/or that arrive late will not be accepted. The talking points must be submitted on Blackboard by Monday 8:00pm (MT) each week that the class meets.

EXCUSED ABSENCES
I will excuse absences and late work only when a student participates in an official university-recognized activity, observes a recognized religious holiday of her/his faith that happens to coincide with a class session, is called to and participates in active military service for a reasonably brief period, or confronts a medical emergency. To be excused, you must notify me in writing prior to the date of absence. That said, in cases where advance notification is not feasible (e.g. a medical emergency), you must provide notification as soon as possible following your absence. Such notification must include an explanation of why notice could not be sent in advance. You must also provide satisfactory documentation verifying the reason for the absence. In case of an illness, a doctor’s note is the proper documentation required.

For my records, you should e-mail me a scanned copy of the documentation that verifies the reason for your absence (if you don’t have access to a scanner, you can take a photo of the documentation). Documentation that is not provided in a timely manner will not be accepted. Please do not ask me to excuse absences for minor illnesses or scheduling conflicts. I am aware that students have other interests and obligations, but you should nevertheless make this class a priority. If you are likely to have recurring conflicts, please take another course that better fits your schedule.

See academic regulations in UTEP Undergraduate Catalogue for a list of excused absences: http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=54418. According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, “When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of “W” before the course drop deadline and with a grade of “F” after the course drop deadline.”
CLASSROOM AND E-MAIL PROTOCOL

Chatting, e-mailing, internet browsing, or any activity not related to official class activity is prohibited. The best way to contact me is via UTEP e-mail. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24 hours of receipt during weekdays. I will respond to weekend messages by Monday at the latest. When e-mailing me, please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your university identification number.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT AND DISHONESTY

Academic misconduct and dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. This includes, but is not limited to cheating, collusion, and plagiarism. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student and possessing unauthorized materials during a test. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act.

Plagiarism is commonly defined as passing off the ideas, works, writing, etc., of another person as your own. Accordingly, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own work, even if you have the permission of that person. If you are unsure whether a citation is required, err on the side of caution and provide one. A document detailing different forms of plagiarism is provided on Blackboard. Here is an informative webcast on plagiarism: http://www.plagiarism.org/resources/webcasts. Just as the Internet has made it easier to find material, it has also made it easier to trace the source of any written work. All written work submitted for this course will be checked by the instructor for originality via SafeAssign—an online originality checking service made available by UTEP.

Any act of academic misconduct and dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. Refer to http://studentaffairs.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=4386 for further information.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT FOR COURSE MATERIALS

All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further retained or disseminated.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you require specific accommodations and support services, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS).
Please keep in mind that accommodations need to be requested at least two weeks (or a month if advance planning, such as the acquisition of books-on-tape, is required) prior to the beginning of the semester. Here is the contact information for CASS: web: http://sa.utep.edu/cass/; phone: (915) 747-5148; fax: (915) 747-8712; e-mail: cass@utep.edu; location: UTEP Union Building East Room 106.

UTEP TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The University of Texas at El Paso offers complete technical information and Help Desk support at: http://issweb.utep.edu/techsupport/.
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Note: This is a provisional schedule of our course. With advanced notice, I may introduce specific changes based on progress in class.

SECTION I – INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL OVERVIEW

Week 1 (August 29) - Welcome and Course Introduction
Introductory Reading on International Relations:

Week 2 (September 5) – Systematic Study of International Relations

SECTION II – PERSPECTIVES IN IR

Week 3 (September 12) – Realism: Classical & Neo
**Week 4 (September 19) – Liberalism: Classical & Neo**


**Week 5 (September 26) - Constructivism**


**Week 6 (October 3) – Feminist Theory & Gender Perspectives in IR**


*Midterm Exam is distributed (due by October 10, 6:00pm [MT]*)
SECTION III – INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Week 7 (October 10) - Structural Theories of War and Peace
Waltz, Kenneth N. 1979. Theory of International Politics. New York: McGraw Hill. Chapter 8.*Midterm Exam is due by October 10, 6:00pm [MT]*

Week 8 (October 17) - Strategic Theories of War and Peace

Week 9 (October 24) - Psychological Approaches to War and Peace

**Week 10 (October 31) - Domestic Politics and IR I: Regime Type, Audience Costs, and Other Key Domestic Factors**


**Week 11 (November 7) - Domestic Politics and IR II: Ethnic Conflict, Civil War, Terrorism, and the International Response**


**SECTION IV – EXPLAINING COOPERATION: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION**

**Week 12 (November 14) - International Political Economy**


Week 13 (November 21)
Documentary and discussion session

Week 14 (November 28) - International Organization


Week 15 (December 5) – Policy Implications and Directions for Future Research


Final Exam is distributed (due by Tuesday, December 12, 9:45pm [MT])