

The University of Kansas
Political Science 170
Introduction to International Relations
Summer 2015

Instructor: Brian Turnbull
Department of Political Science
bturn@ku.edu

Introduction:

The world today is changing rapidly, and the study of international relations is changing along with it. Conventional views of nation states as independent "unitary" actors dwelling in an international world of "anarchy" have been increasingly challenged. As a result, several competing theoretical perspectives or "schools of thought" now dominate the discipline. For this reason, theory plays a crucial role in the subfield. Another notable difference between the past and the modern world concerning international relations is that political scientists and scholars are increasingly interested in the globalization of politics and society. In fact, a better name for international relations today might be world politics or global politics. The process of globalization—that is, the increasing integration and interrelationships of culture, economy, and politics across nations—is the most important recent development for the study of international relations. The first lesson discusses the nature of the discipline and how it has changed, especially in recent decades.

The field of international relations brings together elements of history, geography, philosophy, economics, and other social sciences. This course is designed to help you over the rough spots, but you are certainly encouraged to put any questions you have to me or your fellow students.

Course Objectives:

- To demonstrate an understanding of the various theoretical perspectives of international relations and to show how they can be used to help us explain, understand and interpret international behavior, foreign policy, and world politics in general.
- To develop an understanding of the modern state, how the international system developed, the major state and non-state actors who are part of the international system.
- To become familiar with current international affairs. For instance, The causes of international conflict, war, terrorism, and how states respond
- To develop a critical perspective of international relations.

Important Information regarding email:

- I will generally respond to student emails within 24 hours of receiving them. Circumstances change and so there may be times when it is a bit longer or shorter, but I will try to respond to your inquiries as quickly as possible.

Required Books:

1. **TEXTBOOK:** Karen Mingst and Ivan Arreguin-Toft, Essentials of International Relations, 6th ed.
2. **READER:** Jack Snyder and Karen Mingst, Essential Readings in World Politics, 5th ed.

These are both available on Amazon to rent thru August for under \$20. No textbook associated access codes or CDs are required for this class.

Assignments and Course Calendar:

Week 1 June 7-June 10: Chapter 1

Week 2 June 13-June 17: Chapters 2-3; Reader pgs 23-30, 32-36, 73-82

Discussion Board Question #1

Week 3 June 20-June 24: Chapters 4-5; Reader pgs 127-135, 256-262, 279-287

Quiz 1 closes Saturday, June 25 by 11PM

Week 4 June 27-July 1: Chapter 6 & Reader pgs 264-275

Paper 1 for chapters 1-6 due Friday, July 1 by 11PM

Midterm closes Saturday, July 2 by 11PM

Week 5 July 4 -July 8: Chapters 7-8; Reader pgs 338-351, 382-391, 425-438

Quiz 2 closes Saturday, July 9 by 11PM

Week 6 July 11 -July 15: Chapter 9; Reader pgs 532-536, 537-551

Discussion Board Question #2

Week 7 July 18-July 22: Chapter 10; Reader pgs 686-700

Paper 2 for chapters 7-10 due July 22 by 11PM

Quiz 3 closes Saturday, July 23 by 11PM

Week 8 July 25-July 29: Chapter 11

Final closes Saturday, July 30 by 11PM

*This exam is NOT comprehensive. It will cover text chapters 7-11.

Writing Assignments: You will be required to write a total of 2 papers throughout the class, each worth 200 points. Pick a chapter and respond to the chapter questions: Paper 1 should be from chapters 1-6 and the Paper 2 from chapters 7-10.

- You must choose from chapters 1-10
- Use the "essentials of IR" book to write your responses and, if applicable, feel free to use the articles in the reader for that week too.
- Papers for chapters 1-6 will be due by June 28th.
- Papers for chapters 7-10 will be due by July 19th.

**** Submit through the blackboard upload portal on the relevant week.** Each essay assignment is due by 11 p.m.

Quizzes

There will be 3 total short quizzes at various stages during the semester. The purpose of these is to provide a further assessment of reading comprehension and understanding. These quizzes will be a mixture of True/False, multiple choice and short answer. **PLEASE NOTE THAT EACH QUIZ CAN ONLY BE TAKEN DURING THE WEEK IT IS ASSIGNED, IT WILL CLOSE BY THE SATURDAY OF THAT WEEK AT 11PM**

Writing Expectations

As you will notice, there is considerable writing expected in this course. The clear and sustained organization of thoughts and argument on paper is a vital part of not only assessing your knowledge of international relations, but also develops the skills necessary for a critical engagement with complex topics and situations of any sort. As such, this is a vital component to learning. To achieve your best results and receive marks that truly reflect what you've learned and understood, you *must* be able to write clearly and effectively.

Much of your writing explains and/or analyzes a topic to show your understanding of the issues you're writing about. Moreover, because a major learning objective is to demonstrate an ability to think critically about the subject matter and ideas relevant to it, you must also demonstrate your ability to construct valid arguments concerning your position.

KU's Writing Center may be of further help as you go about your writing and editing your papers. Their website is: www.writing.ku.edu. I highly recommend setting up an appointment, they are enormously helpful.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work or words as your own. Plagiarism applies to materials taken from a book, article, or the internet, and to material taken from another person. Paraphrasing another writer, substituting words, or rearranging sentences from the work of another also constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is easily detected with databases and search engines.

Plagiarism is academic misconduct and is a violation of rules and regulations of the University of Kansas. Penalties for academic misconduct range from failure of the assignment to expulsion from the University. In this course, plagiarism on an assignment will result in failure of the course and possible further penalties. Plagiarism on an examination will result in failure of the course, regardless of the current status of your grade. If plagiarism is discovered after you complete the course, your instructor may reexamine your work and will notify you of the proposed penalty.

Late Submissions

The course is set up such that students have a full week in which to complete the required reading and writing *plus* each week's schedule and assignments are already in full view; please plan accordingly. As such, late submissions of writing assignments **will not** be accepted. There are, however, extenuating circumstances, family and personal emergencies which arise quickly and for which one cannot plan. In these instances, I'm fully understanding. I would, however, appreciate the most prompt notice that you are able to give as well as a plan for when and how you will complete the required week's assignment.

Reading Expectations

In addition to the extensive writing expectation, there is a fair amount of reading required in this course. The field of international relations encompasses many subtopics and as such, extensive reading is required in order to do our due diligence to the field in 8 weeks. Attempting to "catch up" during the

light weeks will limit your ability to write quality analytical essays and participate in the discussion in the weeks required.

Discussion Board

A major part of learning is engagement in discussion with your peers. As an online course, the face to face discussion, engagement and argumentation with your peers and the instructor is a bit different than what takes place in the classroom. However, in lieu of this participation you will be expected to contribute regularly on the course discussion board found on Blackboard. You are to engage your peers in a discussion of either a question(s) I pose and/or topical issues relevant to the subject material. In addition, you are free to start your own thread with assertions, observations, and/or criticisms of the material you have read for the week.

Exams and Grading

There are two online exams for this course: a midterm and a final. Each exam consists of key terms, short answer and possibly an essay. **PLEASE NOTE THAT EACH EXAM CAN ONLY BE TAKEN DURING THE WEEK IT IS ASSIGNED, IT WILL CLOSE BY THE SATURDAY OF THAT WEEK AT 11PM**

Getting Started

Start your first lesson by clicking the Assignment tabs on the left hand Navigation bar. Required readings, quizzes, tests, discussion boards links, and the paper assignments can be found in the relevant week's folder.

Grade Distribution and Formula:

2 Writing Assignments (200 points each) = 400 points (40%)

3 quizzes (quiz 1=50 pts; quiz 2= 25 pts; quiz 3= 25pts) = 100 points (10%)

Discussion Board Participation = 100 points (10%) 2 discussions worth 50 points each.

Midterm Exam = 200 points (20%)

Final Exam = 200 points (20%)

1000 points total

90-100% = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60-69 = D

Below 60 = F