
Political Science 333: Introduction to World Politics

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Office Hours:
Tues. 10:00-11:00, 4:00-5:00
Thurs. 10:00-11:00, 4:00-5:00
Or By Appointment

Time and Location:
T U 2:30-3:45 p.m.
Kedzie 106

Course Website

Visit K-State Online at

<http://public.online.ksu.edu/>

Why You Should Take This Course

As citizens of the most powerful nation in the world, we hear about a plethora of events occurring in other nations and in the international arena. Conflicts arise or fizzle out, regimes change or become entrenched, tariffs are raised or lowered, and international cooperation is grasped and just as quickly passes through our fingers. We live in an active and changing world, but as this course will demonstrate, not one driven by purely accidental occurrences. Conflict and cooperation do not “just happen,” regardless of what the media might tell you. They, like other political and social phenomena, can be explained through, careful theoretical analysis of the underlying causes.

The objectives of this course are three-fold:

- To introduce you to some of the central concepts of and analytical approaches to the study of world politics,
- To apply those ideas to historical and current international events,
- To provide you with a foundation of basic knowledge and skills that will enable you to analyze and digest information about international issues outside of the context of the class.

This class will teach you how to think about world politics theoretically, and in so doing improve upon your understanding of a seemingly random and accidental world. When you leave the class, you will take with you the tools to engage rather than simply accept international events.

What's Different About This Course

This course has lectures and exams like most other courses, but it differs from other such courses in several key ways.

Classroom Polling System

The first key difference between this and other courses is that you will be required to purchase, in addition to one text book, a classroom polling system transmitter that resembles a television remote control, and you will also be required to subscribe to a news magazine called the *Economist*. We will use the polling system in at least the following four ways:

1. Ungraded comprehension checks during lectures.
2. Anonymous opinion polls.
3. Awareness quizzes.
4. Interactive-path current events lectures (“Choose Your Own Adventure” lectures).
5. Policy thought experiments with extra credit opportunities.

Interactive-Path Current Events Lectures

Every other week, one of the two lectures will focus on providing in-depth background on a crisis or major issue in international politics, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Similar to the “Choose Your Own Adventure” books for children, at various stages in each lecture, we will use the classroom polling system to choose a path for the lecture to take. For example, after providing some general information in a lecture on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I may give the class the choice to learn more about how Arafat became the leader of the PLO or to learn about why the United Kingdom and others supported the creation of Israel. The direction of the lecture will then depend on the response from the class. In this way, we will follow a path through these lectures that reflects the interests of the majority of the students. Slides from all of the possible paths will be available after class via K-State Online.

Thought Experiments

On a regular basis, I will use the classroom polling system to pose a challenging policy scenario (not always from the U.S. perspective) and ask you to vote on a response. After initial polling, volunteer advocates will have an opportunity to speak on behalf of one of the policy options, after which you will vote again. When it is evident that a speaker has persuaded the class effectively, the speaker will receive a small amount of extra credit. There is no limit to the extra credit that you can receive in this way, but I will favor students who have not yet spoken when selecting advocates.

Evaluation

Two Multiple Choice Exams (25% each)

Two multiple choice exams will be given during the course, each worth 25% of your course grade. The final exam will not be cumulative (it will only deal with material covered after the midterm). The exams will cover both the lecture material *and* the readings. Special scheduling of individual students' midterm exams will only occur in extreme circumstances (documented medical or family emergencies). For guidelines on rescheduling final exams, see the university's policy at:

<http://courses.k-state.edu/spring2007/information/xam.htm>

Awareness Quizzes (40% total)

In addition to the midterm and final exams, a substantial proportion of your course grade will be determined by weekly current events quizzes that will test your awareness and understanding of recent international events. Each week, I will assign a small number of articles in the week's issue of the *Economist* that will be the subject of the next week's quiz. Quiz questions will be straightforward, so as long as you read the assigned articles each week, the quizzes should be relatively easy. There will be a total of 12 quizzes (or slightly fewer if subscriptions are delayed) on roughly a weekly basis, and I will drop the worst 2 scores for each student.

Attendance (10%)

Your attendance in this class is required. While Tegrity (integrated video and PowerPoint) recordings of the lectures will be available via K-State Online at the end of each week, I am providing this as a way for you to review the material, revisit any points that you may have missed in class, and prepare for the exams. The web lectures are *not* an alternative to being in class. Using the classroom polling system, I will check attendance throughout the semester. If you have up to four absences for any reason (medical or otherwise), you will receive the full 10% for attendance. If you have more than four absences for any reason, you will lose 1% of your total course grade for each additional absence, up to a total of 10% maximum. Of course, missing class frequently will also affect your ability to do well on the tests and will severely affect your quiz grade. I will grant exceptions rarely and on a case by case basis (extended, serious illnesses, for example).

Evaluating Me

I value your feedback as members of this class. In order to solicit feedback in a forum that moves beyond issues of relative position and authority, I have created an anonymous web survey that will be available on a weekly basis. I hope that you will respond every week, offering constructive criticism, positive feedback about things you liked, suggestions for new directions, etc. When possible, I will do my best to alter my direction to respond to your

suggestions and interests. My hope is that this will make the class more fun and interesting for all of us.

Grading Policy

I make decisions about curving exam scores on a test by test basis. If the class average is reasonable on any particular exam, I reserve the right not to apply a curve or bonus of any kind. If the average is unusually low, however, I will take this as a sign that the test itself has issues and will adjust grades accordingly. I will *not* make adjustments on individual tests except in cases of machine grading errors.

Letter grades for the course will be assigned along the following scale:

- A: 90% or greater
- B: 80-89.99%
- C: 70-79.99%
- D: 60-69.99%
- F: Below 60%

Required Books and Materials

- James Lee Ray and Juliet Kaarbo, *Global Politics* (8th Edition). Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005. ISBN: 0-618-05202-X (paper).
- “Quizdom” Classroom Polling System transmitter. Available at Varney’s with the textbook. Note that this can be used in future courses without any new fees.
- The *Economist* magazine, 12 week subscription. To order your subscription, go to:

<http://www.economistacademic.com>

and use 3858 as the Faculty ID. Feel free to subscribe for a longer period, but the minimum is 12 weeks. Issues usually arrive on Mondays.

Schedule

Politics Among Great Powers

January 16: Theories, Realism

- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapters 1 and 4

January 18: Power Transition Theory and World War I

- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 2

January 23: Current Events (The U.S.–China Competition)

- Quiz 1

January 25: Neorealism and the Cold War

- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 3, Chapter 5 pp. 148-151, Chapter 6 pp. 162-174

January 30: “Dr. Strangelove” (Film)

Note: Class meets in evening instead of at usual time.

- Quiz 2

Beyond the Great Powers

February 1: The Security Dilemma and Weapons Proliferation

- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 7 pp. 244-245 (“Policy Choices”)
- The Economist, “An American Dream” (K)
- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 7 pp. 239-249
- Betts, “The New Threat of Mass Destruction” (K)
- Keller, “The Thinkable” (K)
- Jack, “Russia’s Nuclear Archipelago Challenges Clean-Up Experts” (K)

February 6: Current Events (North Korea, Iran, and Nuclear Weapons)

- Quiz 3

February 8: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide

- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 6 pp. 193-211
- Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Conflict” (K)

February 13: Terrorism

- Quiz 4
- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 13 pp.464-485
- Combs, “An Idea Whose Time Has Come” (K)
- The Economist, “Martyrdom and Murder” (K)

February 15: Current Events (The Birth of Al Qaeda and Wahhabism)

Building a Lasting Peace

February 20: The Democratic Peace

- Quiz 5
- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 5 pp. 122-137, Chapter 6 pp. 175-184
- Trofimov, “Islamic Democracy? Mali Finds a Way to Make It Work” (K)
- Steele, “The Middle East Needs Its Democracy Home-Grown” (K)
- Chua, “Our Most Dangerous Export” (K)

February 22: The Prisoner’s Dilemma and Its Solution

- Oatley, “The Prisoner’s Dilemma and the Problem of Cooperation” (K)
- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 7 pp. 227-239

February 27: International Institutions and the United Nations

- Quiz 6
- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 8 pp. 257-283, Chapter 11
- Weiss et al, “The United Nations and Changing World Politics” (K)
- IISS, “The Future of the UN Security Council” (K)
- The Economist, “The UN’s Mission Impossible” (K)

March 6: Current Events (Reforming the UN)

- Quiz 7

March 8: Midterm Exam Review

March 13: Midterm Exam

The Rich, the Poor, and International Trade

March 15: The International Trade System and the World Trade Organization

- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 9
- Dombrowski, “The ABCs of Global Money and Finance” (K)

March 27: Globalization, MNCs, and FPE

- Quiz 8
- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 13 pp. 446-459, Chapter 14
- Onishi, “Deep in the Republic of Chevron” (K)
- Waldman, “More ‘Can I Help You?’ Jobs Migrate from U.S. to India” (K)
- Friedman and Ramonet, “Dueling Globalizations” (K)

March 29: Current Events (Outsourcing)

April 3: Competing Theories of Development I

- Quiz 9
- Ray and Kaarbo, Chapter 10

April 5: Competing Theories of Development II

- The Economist, “Africa’s Women Go to Work” (K)

April 10: The Debt Crisis and Solutions

- Quiz 10
- Oatley, “Developing Countries and International Finance” (K)
- Birdsall et al, “How to Help Poor Countries” (K)

April 17: Current Events (The Millennium Development Goals)

- Quiz 11

What to Expect Next

April 19: The End of History?

- Fukuyama, “History is Still Going Our Way” (K)

April 24: The Resource Struggle

- Quiz 12
- Homer-Dixon, “On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict” (K)
- Kaplan, “The Coming Anarchy” (K)

April 26: Current Events (The Kyoto Protocol Debate)

May 1: To Be Announced

May 3: Final Exam Review

May 10: Final Exam 9:40-11:30 a.m.