

POLITICAL SCIENCE 3501 - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

University of West Georgia, Fall 2008

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Course Web Page: www.westga.edu/~gdixon (Online material is also available via WebCT)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a survey course in international relations. This course will introduce and explore the key concepts related to the study of international relations, the key theoretical approaches to the study of international relations, and how these concepts and theoretical approaches are applied in key areas of concern in contemporary international politics. This course will begin with a discussion of the international system: its origins in global history and how these impact our thinking in the present. From the discussion of the international system we will progress to a discussion of the broad theoretical approaches to international relations. Major focus will be given to Realism, Liberalism, Social Constructivism, Structuralism, and Critical Theory. Lastly we will explore major issue areas in international relations such as the following: international political economic relations, international conflict and conflict management, globalization and global governance, international governmental institutions, non-governmental international relations, international law, and international human rights. This course will be rigorous and shall maintain a fast pace.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Mingst, Karen *Essentials of International Relations, 4th Edition* (ISBN: 978-0393928976) (This book is also available as an ebook from the publisher at the following site: <http://www.nortonebooks.com/disciplines/polisci.asp> The ebook is less expensive than the physical book)
- Mingst, Karen, and Jack Snyder *Essential Readings in World Politics, 3rd Edition* (ISBN: 978-0-393-93114-3)
- Art, Robert J. and Robert Jervis *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues, 9th edition* (ISBN: 978-0205642724) (The 8th edition of this text [ISBN 978-0-321-43603-0] will also be fine)
- Allen, John L. *Student Atlas of World Politics* (ISBN: 978-0073379722)
- *Among Nations: Readings in International Relations* (ISBN: 9780536882797) This is a custom-published book designed for use in this class. This text must be purchased through the University Bookstore
- Additional readings shall be placed on electronic reserve at the University Library and on WebCT
- Students are required to subscribe to the *Economist* Newspaper. This will be the favored source for the current events we will use to apply the information we have learned. Student discount rates are available; go to www.economistacademic.com. The faculty ID number for Dr. Dixon is 4994. This will take you to the student subscription page. The 12 issue subscription will do for the duration of the course and is \$19.95 (as of 8/1/08). *Be sure to use the student subscription* as it is offered at a discounted rate compared to the standard subscription.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

- Scott, Gregory M and Stephen M. Garrison *The Political Science Student's Writer's Manual, 6th edition* (ISBN: 978-0-13-6029458)

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Understand the basic nature and structure of the international system and its historical origins
- Impart a basic understanding of world geography and its role in international politics
- Explore the major theoretical approaches to the study of international relations (Realism, Liberalism, Social Constructivism, Structuralism, and Critical Theory)
- Discuss a range of key issue areas in contemporary international relations
- Provide a foundation of skills and vocabulary in international relations in preparation for future coursework in international relations
- Develop an understanding of the process of critical thinking and analysis in the scientific study of global issues
- Provide an understanding of international relations to aid in becoming an informed and critical citizen

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

Exams (3)	30% each*
Map Quizzes (4)	5% each**
Research Paper	25% (2% research proposal, 3% literature review, 20% final paper)

* the two highest scores will be used, the lowest score will be dropped

** the three highest scores will be used, the lowest score will be dropped

NATURE OF THE EXAMS AND QUIZZES:

Dates for the exams and quizzes appear on the course map.

Map Quizzes: There are four map quizzes in this course. Students are expected to memorize the map of the world. Each of the quizzes will ask the student to identify 25 countries chosen by the professor from all of the countries of the world. The entire world will appear on all four map exams. Countries may appear on multiple map exams. Maps may be of the entire world or they may be detailed maps of specific regions. NOTE: There have been several recent changes to the world map and there are several areas where territories are disputed. The maps for the purposes of this course (most importantly, the exams) are those found in the *Student Atlas of World Politics* assigned for this course. Students are forewarned that maps from other sources may be different and may lead to incorrect answers on the quizzes. There will be no make-up quizzes permitted for the map quizzes.

Exams: The exams in this course are take-home exams. They will consist of identification and essay questions. The exams will be posted on Dr. Dixon's web page no less than one week before the due date of the exam. Students should expect these exams to be the equivalent of 7 – 10 page papers in overall length. Detailed instructions for completing the exams will be included in the exam instructions. Take home exams must be submitted in hardcopy format. Electronic submission is not acceptable

NATURE OF PAPER:

Students are required to complete a research paper for this course. Students are required to select a topic of interest that is relevant to international relations. This topic will be framed in the form of a research question that the student will seek to answer with their research. The assignment has three parts:

- The Research Proposal
- A Literature Review
- The Completed Paper

Details of the paper assignment will be provided separately on Dr. Dixon's web page.

The paper **MUST** be submitted in hardcopy format. Electronic submission of the paper is not acceptable.

GRADING:

Grades will be assigned using the following scale:

90% and greater = A

80% to 89% = B

70% to 79% = C

60% to 69% = D

below 60% = F

No curves or other mathematical adjustments will be used in the calculation of grades.

ASSUMPTION OF ADULTHOOD:

This is a college course. All students are assumed to be adults and will be held to adult standards of accountability and decorum. You are expected to familiarize yourself with the requirements of the course. You are expected to meet the requirements of the course without having to be reminded of such clearly posted things as exam dates. It is expected that you will do the required reading for the course prior to attending class. It is expected that you will complete all required assignments on time. If you have questions, you are expected to ask the professor to seek clarification.

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

This course is primarily a lecture course, but it is expected that students will participate in the course by asking questions when they have them. Education is not simply a one-way process. Further, the subject matter in this course is complex at times and may require clarification. Students are encouraged to ask questions regarding material in the lectures and the readings. Students are also expected to stay informed on current events as we will periodically discuss events that directly relate to the material in the course.

LATE AND MAKE-UP EXAMS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

No make-ups will be allowed for map quizzes. As the exams are in a take-home format, there is no need for make-up exams. Extensions to the due date of take-home exams will be given only in the most extreme circumstances. Written documentation of all such circumstances will be required. The professor reserves the right to refuse to grant an extension of the due date even in extreme circumstances. Late exams and late papers shall be penalized one letter grade for each business day late (if due on Friday, assignments turned in on Monday are considered 1 day late.)

ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL ACADEMIC NEEDS:

Students with special needs as identified by the University will be accommodated in accordance with University policy. Please inform the instructor **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** of any special needs that will require accommodation.

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance will not be taken and is not required as part of the course grade. However, this course will move very quickly and covers a large amount of material. *Attendance is vital to success in this course.* While the professor does not deduct points for missed classes, students are forewarned that missing lectures may significantly reduce their chances of success in the course. If it is necessary to miss a class, it is the responsibility of the student to get the notes from that day of class from another student in the class.

ACTS OF THE GODS, AND OTHER VERY BAD THINGS:

On very rare occasions truly terrible things happen to students that severely interfere with the ability to function in the class. If such an event happens to you, don't wait until the last day of the semester to bring it to the professor's attention. While the professor is strict, he's not inhuman and accommodations for students who experience *truly exceptional* life events may be made if the circumstances warrant.

PRIVACY RIGHTS AND EMAIL CONTACT

Federal law (FERPA) protects the privacy rights of students. This law was written before the age of email and the interpretation of student privacy over email remains unclear. As a result, the professor is very limited as to what can be discussed over email and also very limited in which email accounts he can correspond with regarding the course. Nothing related to grades, exams, or any other course information specific to a student will be discussed via email. Exam grades, course grades, or any other grade related information will only be discussed in person during office hours or after class. General questions about the course material, lectures, etc. may be asked via email, but only through the student's official university accounts or through the WebCT interface. Gmail, hotmail, Yahoo, etc. accounts cannot be used for the purposes of this class.

EXTRA CREDIT:

There will be NO extra credit given in this course.

CLASSROOM DECORUM, CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, AND OTHER CURSES OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY:

Please arrive on time. Please turn off any device that makes noise. Cell phones should be turned off during class. Laptops should be muted if they are to be used during class. Please do not read the newspaper, sleep, send text messages (your phone should be off), or work on material for other courses during the class time.

At various times during the course we will be discussing highly controversial topics. Students may have strong feelings that conflict with the feelings of others on these issues. Mutual respect and politeness is required in the classroom at all times. Violations of appropriate classroom decorum will result in penalties including, but not limited to reduction in the student's grade in the course, administratively dropping the student from the course, and reporting the student's behavior to the University for further action under the Conduct Code.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

All students should be aware of the University of West Georgia rules regarding academic honesty. Cheating, fabrication, and/or plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Any student caught committing any violation of the Honor Code on any assignment will receive an F in the course (regardless of the relative value of the assignment in question) and will be reported to the University for further action as per University policy. **The professor reserves the right to seek the harshest possible penalty (expulsion from the university) for any and all violations of the University of West Georgia Honor Code regardless of the value of the individual assignment.** If you are unsure as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult the University of West Georgia Student Handbook. Ignorance of the Code will not be accepted as an excuse for violations of it.

MODIFICATIONS TO THIS SYLLABUS:

The professor reserves the right to make changes to any and all elements of this syllabus as necessary for the success of the course as defined by the professor. Such changes will be announced verbally in class. Such changes may only be announced once. Such changes may include modifications to any and all aspects of this syllabus.