POLI 2057
Introduction to International Politics
Fall 2008

Professor Mark Schafer
Office: 235 Stubbs Hall, 578-2531
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 1:15 to 2:15, and by appointment.

Course Overview

This course is designed to introduce you to the theories and practices of global politics. The course deals with two primary dimensions of international politics. The first dimension covers the important theories and concepts of international relations. This will be covered primarily in class lectures and discussions. You may wish to supplement this with optional textbook readings in Dynamics of International Relations, 2004, by Walter C. Clemens; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. But please note that this book is optional. The only required book for this course is a wonderful piece of literature by Ursula Leguin called The Dispossessed. This novel deals fictitiously with many issues pertaining to international relations in general and will be the basis for some provocative discussion throughout the semester. Both books should be available at the LSU Union Bookstore (and perhaps elsewhere in town).

The second primary dimension of the class deals with current issues, practices and problems in today’s international setting. In order to accomplish this you are required to read daily editions of the New York Times online. This is a free service and can be found at www.nytimes.com. Pay particular attention to international and global happenings such as events in Iraq, Afghanistan, Russia, the former Yugoslavia, Africa, the Middle East, global trade issues, and others as they emerge. Note that you must read the paper before class each day. We will spend a portion of class time each week discussing current international topics and how those topics fit into the theories we have studied and discussed in class. In addition to reading the New York Times, you can get supplemental international news from the following sources (but remember that the New York Times is required):

1. Listen to National public Radio (NPR) news programs (particularly “All Things Considered” in the late afternoon and “Morning Edition” in the morning). NPR can be found on the FM dial at 89.3 and is an excellent source of interesting and in-depth international news.
2. Read the international news stories in major magazines such as Time, the Economist or Newsweek.
3. Watch national news on television and pay particular attention to the international news stories.

Course Objectives

The course objectives can be organized into two broad areas: development of international knowledge as discussed above (theories and current events), and development of skills. The skills objective can be further defined: students are expected to develop and enhance their reading, writing, and speaking skills, and most importantly, their critical thinking skills. All activities in this course are geared toward accomplishing these objectives. By the end of this
course, you should have learned much about international politics and you should have
developed better skills that will serve you well in many places.

**General Education Objectives**

This course can be used to satisfy a General Education requirement. According to the *LSU General Catalog*, General Education courses are not hurdles to be overcome; rather, they are means by which students learn to think, describe, interpret, and analyze the world. The primary aim is to educate, rather than train, and instill a desire for lifelong learning. POLI 2057 is designed to address the following General Education goals:

* An effective command of written and spoken English
* An understanding of the diversity of thought on the nature of the human person
* Improved critical and analytical thinking
* An ability to deal with moral and ethical issues
* An understanding of other cultures and other times
* An exploration of patterns of imagined best societies.

**Course Requirements**

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<tr>
<th><em>Course Requirement</em></th>
<th><em>Portion of Final Grade</em></th>
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<tr>
<td>1. First exam, October 3</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>2. Second exam, November 7</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>3. Final exam Friday, December 12, 12:30</td>
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<td>4. First short paper, due October 17</td>
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<td>5. Second short paper, due November 21</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Exams will be a combination of multiple choice and short-answer/short essay questions. Grades will be posted when available to your PAWS account using Moodle.

*You may also receive an additional bonus to your grade, up to 5%, based on your participation in class discussions (see note below).*

**Class discussion is a central component of this class.** Students should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings and current international events. Class participation can take several forms such as commenting on a topic or asking or answering a question. Based on participation in class discussions, students may earn up to 5% bonus added to their final score in the course. Because I won’t know everyone’s name in this class until later in the semester, I have a system of keeping track of class participation: any time you contribute to class discussion, write down a brief version of what you said on a piece of paper with your name on it and turn it in to me after class. That allows me to keep track of how often everyone participates in class. I will also occasionally give pop quizzes and in-class assignments that will count toward your participation bonus, but the majority of the bonus will come from actually participating in class discussion.
Course Calendar

(Note: The following calendar is organized into one or two week segments. There may be some minor deviations from this schedule depending on a variety of scheduling factors.)

August 24 through September 12: Realism, Idealism, and Interdependence: Core Theories of International Relations.
Read Chapters 1 and 2 in The Dispossessed.
Optional readings: Introduction and Chapter 1 in Dynamics of International Relations.

Week of September 15: Foundations of the “Nation-State” System.
Optional readings: Chapters 2 and 8 in Dynamics of International Relations.

Week of September 22: Foreign Policy Decision Making and the Levels of Analysis.
Optional reading: Chapter 3 in Dynamics of International Relations.

Week of September 29: Catch up, review, and prepare for exam.
Read Chapters 3-5 in The Dispossessed.

**First Exam: October 3**

Week of October 6: Power, Conflict, and War
Optional readings: Chapters 4 and 5 in Dynamics of International Relations.

Weeks of October 13 and 20: International Organizations; Organizing for Peace.
Optional reading: Chapter 14 in Dynamics of International Relations.

**First Short Paper Due October 17**

Week of October 27: More on Peace: Arms Control; International Law
Optional readings: Chapters 9 and 15 in Dynamics of International Relations.

Week of November 3: Catch up, review, and prepare for exam.
Read Chapters 6-9 in The Dispossessed.

**Second Exam: November 7**

Week of November 10: International Political Economy: Liberalism, Mercantilism, and Marxism
Optional reading: Chapter 11 in Dynamics of International Relations.

Weeks of November 17 and 24: Development and Underdevelopment.
Optional reading: Chapter 12 in Dynamics of International Relations.

**Second Short Paper Due November 21**
Week of December 1: Contemporary Global Issues and Challenges; and catch up, review and prepare for final exam.
Finish reading *The Dispossessed.*
Optional reading: Chapter 13 in *Dynamics of International Relations.*

**Final Exam – Friday December 12, 12:30**

Policies

I welcome and encourage questions, comments and discussion either in or out of the classroom. I love teaching and I love what I teach, so remember my door is open!

Any papers or assignments must be turned in on or before the due date. Emailed papers will not be accepted unless previously arranged with me due to dire circumstances. Exams and quizzes may not be rescheduled or postponed. *Exceptions will be allowed only under extreme, documented circumstances.* Under such circumstances, you are required to notify Professor Schafer (or, if he is unavailable, the Department of Political Science) prior to the date or as soon as possible if prior notice is impossible.

Late papers are generally not accepted. If I accept a late paper because of circumstances, I will deduct 10% from the paper grade for every day it is late, up to a maximum of 75% deduction.

According to the Dean of Students, cell phones, pagers and other such things going off in class are a violation of PS29 (the University policy that regulates conduct in the classroom), and therefore are not permitted in class.