POLITICAL SCIENCE 2057: INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, SUMMER 2011

Instructor: Jeremy Wells
jwell33@lsu.edu
Stubbs Hall 324
Class: M-F 12:10-1:10
Audubon 112
Website: introtoir.com

Description

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.

William Shakespeare (As You Like It II, 7)

Most people go on living their everyday life: frightened, half indifferent, they behold the ghostly tragedy
comedy that has been performed on the international stage before the eyes and ears of the world.

Albert Einstein

We live in a complicated, dynamic, and sometimes dangerous world. By registering for this course you have decided not to be one of Einstein’s “most people,” not to be indifferent toward or frightened of our world. We will spend the semester attempting to make as much sense out of our world’s politics as possible. Experts and great thinkers have spent centuries trying to figure our world out, so we probably will not reach many, if any, definitive answers; however, our goal is less about answering questions and more about learning how to ask, develop, and approach those and other questions in the first place.

The goals of this course are as follows:
1. To gain an understanding of the fundamental theories, concepts, structures, actors, and issues of international relations;
2. To develop, more generally, critical reading, writing, and thinking skills by applying them, more specifically, toward the study of international relations;
3. And to gain an awareness of the effects of international politics on one’s daily life and appreciation for those who affect and study international relations.

The requirements of this course, necessary for fulfilling the goals listed above, are as follows:
1. Students and the instructor must attend class, arrive on time, and be prepared, having read any assigned readings and completed any assignments due.
2. Students must come to class having thoughtfully considered the arguments and topics of the day’s discussion and arrive with open minds, willing to consider classmates’ thoughts. The instructor must maintain an atmosphere conducive to free and critical thinking and open and productive discussion.
3. Students must seek to integrate the lessons of the course with their exposure to facts of and opinions about current events and issues in world politics. The instructor must use relevant examples to assist students in making these connections.
4. Finally, the students and instructor must fulfill the goals and requirements of the class while maintaining an amiable, enjoyable learning environment. After all, this is a summer class!

Finally, this course can be used to fulfill in part your general education requirement. According to the LSU faculty senate, “General education courses are not hurdles to be overcome; rather, they are the means by which students learn to think, describe, interpret, and analyze the world.” This is, in fact, my central aim in this class.
Readings

Required readings come from articles accessible through the LSU Libraries’ indices and databases. Assignments must be read before the class meeting for which they are assigned. In-class discussions may not cover all points, topics, terms, or other important aspects within each reading assignment; therefore, it is imperative that you not depend solely on discussions, for homework, quizzes, and other assignments will test you over both readings and discussions. For each reading, I will post a brief reading guide on my website (introtoir.com) that will help guide you through the reading and suggest optional supplemental readings.

In addition to the core text readings, you are also expected to pay attention to current politics of our world. This necessitates remaining up to date with quality journalistic coverage of world events and leaders. The Economist, The New York Times, and the BBC are generally considered to be among the best sources of objective coverage of and learned opinions about current affairs. Check the websites of these publications daily and, if you can, pick up print copies of the Economist (weekly) and The New York Times (daily).

Assignments and Grading

There are two introductory points that must be made about grades in this class. First, graded work serves two purposes: to develop your understanding of the concepts covered in this class and to assess your progress in that development. There will be no busy work in this class. That means these assignments have been thoughtfully and carefully planned, and you are expected to thoughtfully and carefully complete them. This includes, but is not limited to, producing legible, organized written work that conforms to expectations and standards given in both mechanics (grammar, spelling, length, use of terms) and content (development of a coherent and supported argument or analysis), and submitting that work on time. These expectations and standards compose the quality of your work, which leads to the second point: grades are earned, based on their quality, not given. Along with not being given, grades are also not distributed, curved, or negotiated. In accordance with LSU Policy Statement 44, individual students are not permitted extra credit projects or reexaminations.

Each student should keep graded copies of all assignments; a student may not question or protest a grade that cannot be produced. If you believe a grade is incorrectly recorded, you have until the next regular class meeting after the assignment is returned to schedule an appointment or attend my office hours to report the potential error; however, I will not hear appeals during or immediately after the class in which the grade assignment was returned. Any further appeal should follow the procedure explained in LSU Policy Statement 48.

The following are the graded requirements for this class:

Simulation (60 percent)

In the final full week of the term, the class will simulate world politics, specifically the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Students will be assigned individual leadership roles in relevant countries and organizations. Each student is expected to research the conflict and her individual role throughout the term. We will spend three class days—July 20-22—negotiating a settlement between the Israeli and Palestinian governments. Following the simulation, on July 25, the class will present a final proposed solution. Progress will be gauged by discussion and written assignments throughout the term. Details will be presented throughout the term.

This is obviously the major concern of the course. Each student’s grade will be based upon how well she has prepared for and represented her role in the simulation, her contribution to the final proposal, her ability to apply concepts and theories learned throughout the term to the issues at hand, and finally a written statement of what the role she represents would think of the final proposal, and how she personally feels about the proposal.
Participation, quizzes, and homework (40 percent)

This class is about concepts and ideas; you are expected to come to each class prepared to contribute discussions of these issues. This includes presenting informed, reasoned opinions about the arguments you will read and hear, and posing questions you may have regarding them. Shyness, a fear of being “wrong,” and, of course, not being prepared or being absent are never excuses for a lack of participating. Bring written questions or comments if you believe this will help.

It is possible that ad hoc quizzes and homework assignments may be given. For quizzes, you should be prepared, both mentally and materially, to answer questions or provide open responses to prompts relevant to any issues considered throughout this course. “Pop quizzes” are not meant to punish students, but may be used if there is a need to encourage artificially greater efforts toward reading and understanding course material.

Policies

Contacting me

Office hours are for your benefit; feel free to come see me during these times. You are also more than welcome to schedule an appointment with me or e-mail me, but keep in mind that I am busy too; please allow at least one business day for a response.

Special needs

It is the responsibility of any student to report any disability that may affect his performance in this class to the University in accordance with LSU Policy Statements 1 and 26. I will make every reasonable effort to accommodate any student’s disability and to maintain students’ privacy regarding these matters according to established guidelines.

Privacy

In accordance with LSU Policy Statement 30, all records produced in this class, including assignments, grades, and any other materials may only be accessed by the identified student, myself, and any person authorized in the Policy Statement. These materials will not be publicly displayed without the permission of the identified student, and even then without identifying information.

Assignments

Correct spelling, proper grammar, logical organization, reasoned argumentation, scientific objectivity, and proper documentation are essential minimal requirements for all assignments; failure to meet any of these is justification for significant grade reductions. Ignorance of expectations and means of fulfilling them is never an excuse; if you do not understand any technical, procedural, or substantive aspect of an assignment, it is your responsibility to seek assistance, whether from fellow students, an instructor, a specialist (librarian or learning center staff member), or, of course, me.

Out-of-class assignments should be typed, on standard sized paper, with margins no greater than one inch, in a standard, 10 to 12 point, serif font, with double-spaced lines, and pages stapled together. In-class assignments must be written, using black or blue ink in standard pen size, on letter-sized (8.5” by 11”), standard- or (preferably) college-rule paper with clean edges and proper margins. Pollution and use of resources is a critical issue in international as well as domestic politics, so double-sided printing is preferred. Each student should include his initials and the page number centered at the bottom of each subsequent page. Handwritten assignments must be written clearly, neatly, and legibly.

Assignments are always due in hard copy at the beginning of the class meeting listed in the schedule below. If you cannot attend a meeting, you must turn your work in before the deadline. There are no excuses for not turning an assignment in on time, and this includes team and organization functions. Efforts have been made to provide you plenty of time to complete assignments, and failing to turn them in on time adds to my stress level and workload. Do not request extensions.
Participation and respect for fellow students

Each of you is a unique, independent, valued member of the class. This has two serious implications: first, you have the freedom to express reasoned, coherent, relevant arguments and questions in class; second, everyone has the responsibility to attend class prepared to contribute to discussion and to be respectful of the other members of the class. You owe it to yourselves as well as your fellow students to come to class prepared, willing to participate, and with an open mind.

Respect for your classmates also includes limiting distractions during meetings. Refrain from bringing meals or crunchy snacks to class or engaging in side conversations; silence all electronics before class; and do not use laptops, cell phones, or other devices during meetings unless given permission prior to class. Please ask for permission before you bring a child or pet to class, and only do so if you have no alternative; remember, you are responsible for your child’s or pet’s behavior, so you may be asked to leave if it becomes distracting. According to LSU Policy Statement 29, it is my responsibility to maintain “an environment conducive to study and learning” and prevent any “situation or deportment which disrupts the learning process.”

Academic honesty

Students are expected to maintain academic honesty and integrity in all written assignments and oral discussions. The LSU Student Code of Conduct Section 5.1.C defines academic misconduct; commission of any of these or related acts will be reported in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Students of this class are afforded several avenues for seeking assistance with assignments; please avail yourself of these options, especially coming to see me during office hours or an appointment, if you are struggling to keep up with assignments. Do not resort to measures that can and will lead to an outcome that is not worth the risk of earning a better grade.

When documenting your research, consult the American Political Science Association’s Style Manual for Political Science and the most recent edition (15th) of the Chicago Manual of Style. Regardless of style and method used, citations are absolutely necessary whenever using arguments, ideas, data, or any information from a source, regardless of whether you use a direct quotation or paraphrase. Failure to use citations, whether knowingly or not, constitutes plagiarism, and therefore is academic misconduct. A citation must be placed at the end of every phrase or sentence (not paragraph or section), whether directly quoted or paraphrased, from a source. This ensures that there is no question as to the ownership of the argument, idea, or data.

Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 6</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Thucydides, “Melian Dialogue.” (Check post for link)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 7</td>
<td>Realism</td>
<td>Morgenthau, Hans J. 1978. “Six Principles of Political Realism.” (Check post for link)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 8</td>
<td>Liberalism</td>
<td>Wilson, Woodrow. 1918. “Fourteen Points.” Speech given to Congress. (Check post for link)</td>
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June 24  |  Recuperation  |  Review the assignments to this point


July 4  |  No class  |  Happy Fourth of July!


July 7  |  The UN  |  Charter of the United Nations Preamble, Chapters I-V, IX-XIX (Check post for link)

July 8  |  The UN  |  Charter of the United Nations Chapters VI-VIII


July 15  |  Recuperation  |  Review the assignments to this point


July 19  |  The Middle East  |  Posen, Barry R. 2006. *A Nuclear-Armed Iran: A Difficult but Not Impossible Policy Problem*. (Check post for link)

July 20  |  Simulation  |  Negotiations

July 21  |  Simulation  |  Negotiations

July 22  |  Simulation  |  Negotiations

July 25  |  Simulation  |  Final presentations

July 26  |  Simulation  |  Debriefing

July 27  |  No class  |  Good luck with finals!

July 28  |  Final  |  Paper due in my inbox by 9 p.m.