International Politics

The purpose of this course is to broaden our knowledge of international politics and to sharpen our analytical ability in interpreting world events. To accomplish this, we will focus on both traditional/classical as well as modern theories of international relations. Since many believe that there has not been a complete break or departure between traditional and modern theories, the two traditions will receive our attention throughout the next six weeks. Whether it is the balance of power theory or any of the many political economy theories, all will be examined to assist in developing a scholarly approach to and an informed understanding of world politics. Thus there will always be a twofold emphasis: an introduction to theories and concepts in international relations, and an application of these theories to explain world conflicts, both in the past, in the post Cold War period, and the present.

STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURSE: Class meetings will consist of lectures, discussions on topics of contemporary world politics and occasional documentaries or films.

There will be two in-class examinations, including a final, as well as one take-home written assignment. The first in-class exam is both subjective (definitions and short essays) and objective (multiple choice and true and false), worth 40 points; the second, a final, is both subjective and objective, worth 50 points. There is one take-home assignment, five pages in length and is worth 10 points. This brings your total up to 100 points. The grading system for this class is as follows: the grade of A begins at 87.5; B at 77.5; C at 67.5; and D at 57.5. The course also provides you with the opportunity to earn an additional 8 points over the 100. This opportunity is in the form of four unannounced quizzes (each is worth 2 points; they are multiple choice & true and false), which can be given at anytime during the course (or the period during which the class meets) and will cover the materials discussed up to and including the day of the quiz. Since these quizzes are not part of the basic course assignments, there will be no makeup or substitute assignments if they are missed. (Attendance is a must in this class). In-class exams require a SCANTRON form #882 and a No. 2 pencil. DROPPI NG THE CLASS REMAINS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

The written take-home assignment consists of a research question you will receive from the instructor. You will be asked to do research on a topic and come out with a statement of purpose that includes a brief outline and a thesis statement, five sources documented according to a standard style. Only after this statement is approved, will the writing process begin.
REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Recommended & Background Books
Harper & Row.

FIRST WEEK
General Introduction
Idealism and Realism in World Politics.
The Development of International Politics as a Science
Idealist and Realist Positions on War and Peace
Balance of Power as a Realist Theory of World Politics

SECOND WEEK
Approaches to International Relations
International Relations in Daily Life
Thinking Theoretically
Making Sense of International Relations
Readings: Chp. 1

The Historical Context of Contemporary International Relations
The Pre-Westphalian World
The Emergence of the Westphalian System
Europe in the Nineteenth Century
The Interwar Years and World War II
The Cold War
The Post Cold War Era
Learning from History
Readings: Chp. 2

THIRD WEEK
Contending Perspectives
Theory and the Levels of Analysis
Liberalism and Neoliberal Institutionalism
Realism and Neorealism
The Radical Perspective
Seeing the World through Theoretical Lenses
Readings: Chp. 3
The International System
The Notion of a System
The International System According to Liberals
The International System According to Realists
The International System According to Radicals
Advantages and Disadvantages of the International System as a Level of Analysis
From the International System to the State
Readings: Chp.4

FOURTH WEEK

The State
The State and the Nation
Contending Conceptualizations of the State
The Nature of State Power
Using State Power
Models of Foreign-Policy Decisionmaking
Challenges to the State
Readings: Chp.5

The Individual
Foreign-Policy Elites: Individuals Who Matter
Private Individuals
Mass Publics
How Much Do Individuals Matter?
Readings: Chp.6

FIFTH WEEK

Intergovernmental Organizations, Nongovernmental Organizations, and
International Law
Realist Views of International Organization and Law
The Radical View of International Organization and Law
Organizations, and International Law Make a Difference?
Readings: Chp.7

War and Strife
The Causes of War
The Changing Character of Warfare and Its Instruments
The Just War Tradition
Approaches to Managing Insecurity
Other Threats to International Security
International Security, Old and New
Readings: Chp.8

SIXTH WEEK
International Political Economy
Contending Theoretical Approaches
Key Concepts in Liberal Economics
Power, Competition, and Development in the International Political Economy
The Role of Institutions in Managing Power, Competition, and Development
Readings: Chp. 9

Globalizing Issues
Health and Disease—Protecting Life in the Commons
The Environment—Protecting Space in the Global Commons
Human Rights—Protecting Human Dignity
The Impact of Globalizing Issues
Do Globalizing Issues Lead to Global Governance
Readings: Chp. 10

Readings will be handed out in class.

Final Examination