

Gov 102 Section 02
INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL POLITICS
Fall 2009

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Office Hours: by appointment and on Tuesday and Thursday, 4 – 5.30 p.m.
(with the exception of every first Tuesday of the month)

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This class introduces the main concepts, the central theoretical perspectives, and the prevalent practices that provide a structured understanding of international politics. Upon finishing this course, students will become more informed citizens of the world.

Making sense of international relations is not an easy task. To guide us in this undertaking, we will address these sets of questions:

How did history shape our contemporary international environment?
Do rules matter in international politics?
Why are there wars?
What roles do TNCs play?
What is globalization and what causes it?

If everyone wants development, why is it so hard to achieve it?
Why do individuals and states care about the human rights of others?
Did globalization increase or decrease security?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Imparting **descriptive** knowledge and developing **analytical** skills, Govt102 provides an opportunity **to apply** and **evaluate** newly acquired information.

1) DESCRIPTIVE KNOWLEDGE:

- obtain substantive knowledge of the most important theoretical approaches to international relations,
- develop a balanced and well-informed understanding about the historical development and the main controversies in international politics.

2) ANALYTICAL SKILLS:

- appraise the historical processes, main theories and principal outcomes of international politics,
- connect current events to historical trends.

3) APPLICATION:

- enhance reading comprehension, critical and analytical thinking, verbal and written communication,
- use a computational software and interpret its results,
- assess current news from various alternative perspectives.

4) EVALUATION:

- critically evaluate the main global political trends affecting today’s world,
- assess the desirability, feasibility and effects of a variety of coping strategies and solutions,
- develop an appreciation for the diversity of politics.

READINGS:

John Baylis, Steve Smith, Patricia Owens, eds. 2009. *The Globalization of World Politics*. Oxford University Press.

John T. Rourke, ed. 2009. *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in World Politics*. 13th edition.

Richard Paul and Linda Elder. 2006. *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools*. The Foundation for Critical Thinking

The New York Times <http://global.nytimes.com/>

ASSESSMENT:

	Weight	Date due
Attendance/ Participation	10%	all semester long
Presentation	5%	once during the semester
Quizzes/Short Essay	10%	as announced
Midterm Exam	20%	Oct. 22
Final Comprehensive Exam	35%	per Registrar’s schedule
Research Paper (two stages)	20%	preliminary: Nov. 12, final: Dec. 14
Extra Credit	5%	one week after the respective event

❖ ***Class Participation***

Attendance

A maximum of two absences are allowed without penalty. An absence is defined as missing class or coming more than five minutes late. More than two unexcused absences (including lateness) will lower the final grade. The amount lowered will depend on the number of absences, up to one full grade.

Participation

Participation starts with attendance, but it includes active engagement: thoughtfully and respectfully responding to what others said. No previous knowledge of history, international relations or current events is needed for effective participation, but it is necessary to prepare for class by completing the assigned readings. During class discussion of the issues from *Taking Sides*, class participation is required and will be graded. Each student (even those not presenting) is required to read the assigned readings and come prepared to discuss them.

❖ **Group Presentation**

There are nine issues from the *Taking Sides* book that groups will present in class. On the dates that we have presentations scheduled (indicated by a *number [yellow highlights] in the syllabus), the last 30 minutes of the class will be dedicated to presentations and discussions. Students will be assigned to groups. Each group is responsible for presenting *both* sides of the issue they have been assigned. The presentation should take no more than 15 minutes total for the group, after which the rest of the class will have the chance to participate in the discussion.

❖ **Writing Assignments**

Periodic writing assignments will provide the opportunity for more in-depth analysis of particular ideas and issues.

- Quizzes and short take-home essays: There will be scheduled and unannounced occasions when you need to synthesize what you have learned from the assigned readings. In these exercises you need to combine elements from the assigned texts and respond to multiple-choice questions and/or write a short critical analysis.
- Midterm and Final (comprehensive) exams
- Research paper: see Guidelines
- Extra credit: With the Professor's approval, students can take the opportunity to do extra credit assignments such as a one-page review of talks attended where the subject matter clearly relates to topics discussed in class. The review needs to accomplish three tasks: a) provide a brief summary of the topics and arguments covered, b) identify significant insights gained, c) explain how the event enhanced your understanding of topics covered in the course.

EVALUATION:

Grades will be assessed by bringing together two sets of criteria.

1) Participation and presentations will be evaluated on the basis of clarity, organization, coherence, logical flow, creativity, depth and intensity.

Evaluations of written assignments will also measure the above characteristics by condensing and quantifying them through the following three aspects:

- (A) **Accuracy** of content: use of lecture/class discussions and reading materials,
- (I) **Integration**: conceptualize and analyze problems,
- (F) **Format**: adequate and appropriate usage of language and style.

2) Since each of us is in a different stage in our educational process, the assessment will also be based on the progress relative to each student's starting point in the course. General improvement, excellence, creative and positive attitudes that facilitate the learning experience will be considered.

Each student is encouraged to meet with the Professor one-on-one at least once during the semester to discuss progress in the class.

Please note that you are responsible for saving all your graded materials until the semester ends.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY:

In compliance with Lafayette College policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with disability. Requests for accommodations need to be made during the first two weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students must register with the Office of the Dean of the College for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without proper citation and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. In case of doubt, please consult the "Principles of Intellectual Honesty" in the *Student Handbook* and feel free to discuss your concerns with the Professor and reference librarians.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS are immediately penalized one letter grade that increases one additional grade per day. Assignments will not be accepted four days after the due date.

SCHEDULE:

Weeks 1-4 HISTORY AND THEORIES OF WORLD POLITICS

Sept. 1, 2009 **Syllabus and expectations**

Sept. 3 **The historical context of international relations (IR)**

Baylis et al. [B] ch. 2, 3

Selection of presentation topics

Sept. 8 The uses of **critical thinking in the end of the Cold War**

[B] ch. 4

The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking (all)

Video segment from: *Globalization is good* (2005)

Sept. 10 **Globalization and the international system**

*1 [B] ch. 1, Rourke issue 1

Sept. 15 **Realism and Liberalism**

[B] ch. 5, 6

Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points (web)

Sept. 17 Group exercise based on **Thucydides: The Melian Dialogue** (on Moodle)

Video: The Peloponnesian Wars

Sept. 22 **Contemporary mainstream and a challenger**

[B] ch. 7, 8, review Chavez in Rourke, pp. 13-20

Sept. 24 **Alternative approaches**

*2 [B] ch. 10, Rourke issue 3

WEEKS 5-8 THE ROADS TO SECURITY

Sept. 29 **The changing character of war**

[B] ch. 12, "Climate Change Seen as Threat to U.S. Security" *NYTimes*, Aug. 9, 2009

"Cadets Trade the Trenches for Firewalls" and related video "At West Point, Training for Cyber Foes" *NYTimes*, May 10, 2009

Oct. 1 **Global security**

*3 [B] ch. 13, Rourke issue 12

Oct. 6 **IPE--Global Political Economy**

[B] ch. 14, 17

Video segments: *Life and Debt* or *T-Shirt Travels*

Oct. 8 **The Island of Ted** -- simulation

October 12-13: Fall Break

Oct. 15 **International law**

*4 [B] ch. 16, Rourke issue 17

Oct. 20 **International Organizations**

[B] ch. 18, 19, Rourke issue 16

Oct. 22 **Midterm exam**

WEEKS 9-14 GLOBAL ISSUES

Oct. 27 **Gender in world politics**

[B] ch. 15, “The New Gender Agenda: Interview with Hilary Clinton” and related issues on the “Women’s Crusade” *NYTimes Magazine*, August 23, 2009

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/23/magazine/23clinton-t.html?hpw>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/23/magazine/23Women-t.html?hpw>

“National security and gender training exercises”

Oct. 29 **Terrorism and globalization**

*5 [B] ch. 21, Rourke issue 13

Nov. 3 and 5 **Development—Uses of computation in IR**

[B] ch. 27 Review: [B] ch. 17

Clive Crook. 2006. “The Height of Inequality” *Atlantic Monthly*, Sept. (on Moodle)

Explore: GAPMINDER.ORG <http://www.gapminder.org>

Invited: Professors Rob Root (Mathematics) and Frank Xia (Computer Science)

First part of Research Paper (data download and graph printout) due: Nov. 12

Nov. 10. **Global trade and finance**

*6 [B] ch. 26, Rourke issue 9

Video segment from: *Illicit* (2008)

Nov. 12 **Human security**

[B] ch. 28, Rourke issue 5

video segment from: *Bullshit* (2005)

Nov. 17 **Environmental issues**

*7 [B] ch. 20, Rourke issue 19

Video segment from: *Darwin's Nightmare* (2004)

Nov. 19 and 24 **Nuclear proliferation**

*8 [B] ch. 22, Rourke issue 14

Thomas C. Fox. 2009. “A world without nukes” Jul. 31.

<http://ncronline.org/news/peace/world-without-nukes>

November 25-27 Thanksgiving Holiday

Dec. 1 **Nationalism and culture in world affairs**

*9 [B] ch. 23, 24, Rourke issue 2

Dec. 3 **Human rights and humanitarian intervention**

[B] ch. 29, 30

Dec. 8. **Globalization and the transformation of political community**

[B] ch. 25, 31

Dec. 10. **Globalization and post-Cold War order**

[B] ch. 11, 32

Research Paper is due: December 14

Final comprehensive exam: as scheduled by Registrar