

POLS 480: International Politics
Spring 2009
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Meeting Times: 1:00 – 1:50 p.m., MWF
Classroom: 1222 Faner
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Office Hours: 10:30-11:30 and 2:00-3:00 MWF
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Course Description

This is a seminar course in international relations for advanced undergraduates. This means that there will be no lecturing, and the main activity we will be engaged in is critical analysis and discussion of the readings. Therefore, you must come prepared for every class by having done and thought about the reading for that day. The penalty for being unprepared will be harsh.

The course seeks to develop your substantive understanding of a broad range of issues in international relations, and to hone your critical thinking and communication skills.

Course Requirements and Grades

Final Exam—35%
Discussion—55%
Oral Presentation —10%

The exam will be a three-day take home exam on which you will write approximately 15-20 pages. You will also be required to give a ten-minute presentation on a scholarly journal article in the field of international relations. In the presentation you should a) outline the main argument(s) of the article and b) evaluate it. You **MUST** turn in to me a one-page outline of your presentation the day you give it. Journals you can use to find articles include *World Politics*, *International Security*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *International Organization*, *Global Society*, *Survival*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, *Global Governance*, *World Policy Journal*, *Orbis*, *Human Rights Quarterly*, and *Ethics and International Affairs*.

Important Course Policies

Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be checked randomly about 15-20 times during the course. You are allowed two absences without penalty. For every absence thereafter, your grade on the final exam will be reduced 2/3 of a letter grade (e.g. A to B+)

WARNING: if you arrive late or leave early, you will be considered absent. It is your responsibility to make sure you sign the attendance sheet on days when I take attendance. I will not accept the excuse that the attendance sheet did not make its way to a student.

Absence Policy: There is no such thing as an excused absence in this course. All absences after the first two will be penalized, **REGARDLESS OF THE REASON FOR YOUR ABSENCE, INCLUDING ILLNESS.** However, there is a way to erase the penalty for each absence you earn. You may write a two page synopsis (double-spaced, 12-point Times font, with separate cover sheet) outlining the main arguments of a journal article on international relations (minimum length—15 pages), and turn in both the synopsis and a photocopy of the journal article within 7 days of the absence. Synopses will be evaluated “pass/fail”: if you write a coherent and accurate summary, your penalty will be removed. Otherwise, the penalty will remain. Sometimes a student turns in a synopsis that suggests to me that he or she has read very little of the article, as they do not accurately discuss the article’s main arguments. These putative “synopses” will not receive any credit.

WARNING: If you are caught absent SEVEN times or more, you will automatically receive an F for the course. This holds true regardless of whether the student erases the penalty for absences applied to the final exam. Exceptions to this rule will be made only in rare circumstances where there is a prolonged illness or other problem that I am informed about.

WARNING: After the conclusion of this course I will not permit any backdated withdrawals from the course. If you are having problems that hinder you from successfully completing the course, you should discuss them with me during the semester, not after.

List of Readings

We will read approximately 100-125 pages per week. At the beginning of each class I will announce the material that you will need to read for the following class.

John Mueller, *The Remnants of War*
ISBN-10: 080147387X

Stephen M. Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Response to U.S. Primacy*
ISBN-10: 0393329194

Michael Mandelbaum, *The Case for Goliath: How America Acts as the World's Government in the Twenty-First Century*
ISBN-10: 1586484583

J. Martin Rochester, *Between Peril and Promise: The Politics of International Law*
ISBN-10: 1933116498

Jagdish Bhagwati, *In Defense of Globalization*
ISBN-10: 0195330935

Rebecca Todd Peters, *In Search Of The Good Life: The Ethics Of Globalization*
ISBN-10: 0826418589

Peter Singer, *One World: The Ethics of Globalization, 2nd edition*
ISBN-10: 0300103050