Political Science 130: Introduction to International Relations (Online)
Course Description and Syllabus

Fall 2015

Instructor: Dr. Justin Mueller
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Office hours: I am not on campus this semester, so I won't be able to physically meet. Email me with any questions about signing forms, etc.

Course Description

This course is designed to familiarize you with major issues, problems, and concepts in world politics, and provide you with the tools to analyze and understand them. There are no prerequisites for this course, nor does it require prior knowledge. What it DOES require is attention to what we cover in lectures and readings, and toward ongoing world events. World politics is complex, constantly in flux, and seemingly small events can lead to major consequences for societies and individuals, including yourself. Regular engagement with these events and issues will help you understand the social and political dimensions of our world, and empower you as a political actor and analyst.

In some ways, we will be learning how to read and think from scratch as we explore some of the most enduring and problematic issues of human life through a political and global lens. What kind of creatures are we? How and why do we kill? How should we relate to each other? What does it mean to “belong” to a society or country? What is power? Why is the world so profoundly unequal? How should we relate to our environment? These may not be questions with simple answers, but neither are they questions we can afford to ignore.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be:
- Familiar with the major theoretical approaches to analyzing world politics
- Familiar with the major dimensions of and actors in world politics
- Familiar with several major and pressing issues in world politics, and the major disagreements surrounding those issues
- Able to analyze current and historical events with basic tools of power analysis
- Able to better define, articulate, and refine your own worldview

Course Readings

The textbook for this course is Keith Shimko's *International Relations: Perspectives, Controversies & Readings, 4th edition*. I recommend using the 4th edition so that you can follow assigned page numbers. There is a 5th edition, but it is expensive, mostly has the same content, and is not the version we will be using for the course. Used copies can run from $20+ on places like Amazon.com, while new editions can usually be found for $40-65. You should be able to
rent copies for cheaper. You should also be able to find them at Follett's or University Bookstore.

All other readings and assignments will be provided for you on Blackboard and/or via email.

**Assignments**

**Reading/lecture quizzes**

*Description*: There will be a reading/lecture quiz **each week**. These quizzes will check on your understanding of some of the major concepts and ideas from the readings and video lectures that week. They will usually consist of 15 multiple-choice questions, and you will be given 20 minutes to finish the quiz from the time you begin. I recognize that unexpected events can happen, so **I will drop your lowest reading/lecture quiz score**.

*Purpose*: The purpose of these quizzes is to hold you accountable for the information in the readings, videos, and lectures.

*Due*: Each quiz will be made available on Sunday of the week it is due, and must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) of the Saturday of that week. **No late quiz will be accepted for non-University approved emergency reasons. This includes cases of technology failure.** This includes submitting the quiz one minute after the deadline. You have a whole week to do it, so don’t wait until Saturday night.

**News reflection journal**

*Description*: You will maintain a news reflection journal throughout the semester (beginning in Week 3). In this journal, you will provide **one entry each week, due on that week**. No late entries will be accepted. In each entry, you will write in a free-form style, providing your thoughts about one event, situation, problem, or other item that appeared in the news that week pertaining to world politics. Free-form means that I will not be concerned with the grammar or structure of your entry (though I need to be able to understand it). An entry should be **at least 250 words long**. I will provide a separate instruction sheet containing potential questions that you can use to think about a news article and generate your entries.

*Purpose*: The purpose of the news reflection journal is to get you used to reading about and actively reflecting on contemporary events occurring in the world around you.

*Due*: Each news reflection journal entry must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) of the Saturday of that week. **As with quizzes, no late entries will be accepted for any non-University approved reasons.**

**Film responses**

*Description*: You will be periodically asked to watch a film or documentary and write a short prompted response to it. Further instructions will be provided regarding the
specific requirements of each response.

*Purpose:* The purpose of these response essays is for you to practice:
- Summarizing the significant features of a problem, event, or situation
- Understanding the perspective and arguments of the filmmakers
- Making connections between issues raised by the film and other issues and events pertaining to world politics.

*Due:* Each film response essay must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) of the Saturday of that week. **As with quizzes, no late essays will be accepted for any non-University approved reasons.**

**(30%) Final paper**

*Description:* You will be required to write a final 8-10 page political analysis paper for this course. This constitutes the “final exam,” so there will be no separate final exam. Instructions will be provided closer to the due date.

*Purpose:* The purpose of this final political analysis paper will be for you to demonstrate your ability to use all three levels of analysis, your understanding of the concepts we have covered throughout the course, your own ability to analyze and draw out what is significant in a concrete political situation, and your ability to think about possible solutions to a political problem.

*Due:* To ensure that you do not put your paper off entirely until the night before it is due, you will be required to submit elements of your paper at earlier intervals. You will need to:
- Submit a 1-2 sentence topic proposal to me by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on October 17th.
- Submit a list of approximately 8-10 sources you anticipate using by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on November 14th.
- Final paper due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on December 12th.

**Missing the deadline on any of the earlier submission requirements will result in half of a letter grade penalty being applied to your final paper score for each item missed!!!!!!**

**Late Work**

No late quizzes, assignments, film response papers, or final paper early submission requirements will be accepted for any reason other than University-approved and documented extenuating circumstances and emergencies. Make sure that you don’t put off your assignments until right before they are due.

The only late work exception is the final paper, which will receive half of a letter grade reduction if it is turned in within 24 hours after the turn-in time, and a cumulative full letter grade reduction for every day it is late after the due date.
**Grade Guideline**

I will be using this scale when calculating and adjusting your grades. I will round up at .5, and round down below that:


For your ultimate course grade there won't be a curve. You will get whatever your weighted total score from across the semester amounts to.

I will provide a more specific rubric for how I will be evaluating your final paper at a later date.

**Cheating/Plagiarism**

Plagiarism refers to the reproduction of someone else's words or ideas without proper attribution. It is your responsibility as a student to understand and comply with University standards concerning academic integrity. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing may receive an F for the course. If the matter is in dispute, it will be brought to the department Chair and, if necessary, to the Office of Judicial Affairs. If you are not sure if something counts as plagiarism, ask! For more information, refer to Purdue's student guide for academic integrity:

http://www.purdue.edu/odos/aboutodos/academicintegrity.php

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability that requires special academic accommodation, please make an appointment to speak with me in order to discuss any adjustments. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Disability Resource Center (http://www.purdue.edu/drc) and the instructor of an impairment/condition that may require accommodations and/or classroom modifications.

**Nondiscrimination Policy Statement**

Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life.

Purdue University prohibits discrimination against any members of the University community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability, or status as a veteran. The University will conducts its programs, services, and activities consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws,
regulations, and orders and in conformance with the procedures and limitations as set forth in Executive Memorandum No. D-1, which provides specific contractual rights and remedies.

**Violent Behavior Policy**

Purdue University is committed to providing a safe and secure campus environment. Purdue strives to create an educational environment for students and work environment for employees that promote educational and career goals. Violent behavior impedes such goals. Therefore, violent behavior is prohibited in or on any university facility or while participating in any university activity.

In an online course, violent behavior includes harassment, intimidation, making threats against the health or well-being of the instructor or another student, and similar obstructions to the safety and sense of security of course participants.

**Miscellaneous**

I reserve the right to change any aspect of this course at any time. Note that if extenuating circumstances arise, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may require a revised semester calendar. Students will be given notification of changes to assignments or readings.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1: August 24-29**

*Topic for the week:* Introductions to the course and world politics

*Readings:*
- Keith Shimko textbook, Chapter 1, p.1-6
- Thucydides, “The Melian Dialogue”

*Lecture/Videos:*
- Lecture: “Thinking politically”
- Lecture: “Thinking globally” [Watch after doing Shimko and Thucydides readings]

*Assignments:*
- To provide a buffer period for new people who might join the course, the reading/lecture quiz for Week 1 will be available for submission until the Saturday of Week 2 (September 5th) at 11:59pm (Eastern time).
- To provide a buffer period, the Syllabus Quiz will be available for submission until the Saturday of Week 2 (September 5th) at 11:59pm (Eastern time).
**Week 2: August 30-September 5**

*Topic for the week: Theoretical perspectives- Realism, Liberalism, Marxism*

*Readings:*
  - Shimko textbook, Chapter 2, p.35-47
  - Thomas Hobbes, “Of the Natural Condition of Mankind, as Concerning Their Felicity, and Misery”
  - Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace”
  - Vladimir Lenin, “Imperialism”

*Lecture/Videos:*
  - Lecture: “Power, force, and Realism” [Watch after doing Shimko and Hobbes readings]
  - “Theory in Action: Realism” [Watch after doing Shimko and Hobbes readings]
  - Lecture: “Institutions, cooperation, and Liberalism” [Watch after doing Shimko and Kant readings]
  - “Theory in Action: Liberalism” [Watch after doing Shimko and Kant readings]
  - Lecture: “Class, inequality, and Marxism” [Watch after doing Shimko and Lenin readings]

*Assignments:*
  - The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 5th
  - Week 1’s reading quiz must also be submitted by this time if you have not already!

**Week 3: September 6-12**

*Topic for the week: Theoretical perspectives- Feminism, Constructivism*

*Readings:*
  - Shimko textbook, Chapter 2, p.47-53
  - J. Ann Tickner, “Man, The State, and War”
  - Christopher Ferrero, “Constructivism and US-Iran relations”

*Lecture/Videos:*
  - Lecture: “Sex, gender, and Feminism” [Watch after doing Shimko and Tickner readings]
  - “Gendered toy commercials” [Watch a few of the boy and girl commercials when prompted during the feminism lecture video]
  - Lecture: “Beliefs, perceptions, and Constructivism”
  - “Theory in Action: Constructivism”

*Assignments:*
  - The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 12th
  - First news reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 12th
Week 4: September 13-19

*Topic for the week:* Levels of analysis- The international system

*Readings:*
- Karen Mingst, “The International System”
- Hans Morgenthau, “The Balance of Power”

*Lecture/Videos:*
- Lecture: “The balance of power” [Watch after doing Mingst and Morgenthau readings]
- Lecture: “International society and institutions” [Watch after doing Mingst reading]
- Lecture: “World System Analysis” [Watch after doing Mingst and Wallerstein readings]

*Assignments:*
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 19th
- News reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 19th

Week 5: September 20-26

*Topic for the week:* Levels of analysis- The state

*Readings:*
- Shimko, Chapter 1, p.6-16
- Mingst, “The State”
- Charles Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime”

*Lecture/Videos:*
- Lecture: “The state” [Watch after assigned readings]

*Assignments:*
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 26th
- News reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 26th

Week 6: September 27-October 3

*Topic for the week:* Levels of analysis- The individual

*Readings:*
- Mingst, “The Individual”
- Robert Jervis, “Hypotheses on Misperception”
- Stephen Ambrose on the Cuban Missile Crisis
**Lecture/Videos:**
- “The Milgram Experiment: Obedience” [Watch first]
- Lecture: “The individual” [Watch after reading Mingst and Jervis, and watching Milgram Experiment]
- “The Armageddon Letters: Be Kennedy” [Watch after reading Ambrose]
- “The Armageddon Letters: Be Khrushchev” [Watch after reading Ambrose]
- “The Armageddon Letters: Be Castro” [Watch after reading Ambrose]
- “Zimbardo’s Stanford Prison Experiment: Evil and Hierarchy” [Watch when prompted in lecture]

**Assignments:**
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 3rd
- News reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 3rd

**Week 7: October 4-10**

**Topic for the week:** War and Peace

**Readings:**
- Frieden, “Why are there wars?”
- Barash and Webel, “The Meanings of Peace”

**Lecture/Videos:**
- Lecture: **NO LECTURE** this week
- Documentary: “The Fog of War”

**Assignments:**
- Film response essay must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 10th
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 10th
- News reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 10th

**Week 8: October 11-17**

**Topic for the week:** War and Human Nature

**Readings:**
- Shimko textbook, Chapter 5, p.111-126
- Margaret Mead, “Warfare Is Only an Invention – Not a Biological Necessity”
- Chris Hedges, “War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning”

**Lecture/Videos:**
- Lecture: “War and human nature” [Watch after doing assigned readings]
Assignments:
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 17th
- Submit a 1-2 sentence final paper topic proposal by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 17th
- News reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 17th

**Week 9: October 18-24**

*Topic for the week:* International political economy

*Readings:*
- Shimko textbook, Chapter 6
- Shimko textbook, Chapter 7

*Lecture/Videos:*
- Lecture: “International political economy”
- Documentary: “Life and Debt”

Assignments:
- Film response essay must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 24th
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 24th
- News reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 24th

**Week 10: October 25-31**

*Topic for the week:* Non-state actors

*Readings:*
- Lamy, “Nongovernmental Actors”
- Mingst, “Nongovernmental Organizations”
- Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, “Transnational Advocacy Networks”

*Lecture/Videos:*
- Lecture: “Non-state actors” [Watch after assigned readings]
- “Sea Shepherd Conservation Society Shuts Down Japanese Whaling” [Watch when prompted in lecture]
- “Brookings Institute: Breaking the Bonds Between Al-Qaeda and Its Affiliates” [Watch when prompted in lecture]

Assignments:
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 31st
- News reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 31st

**Week 11: November 1-7**
**Topic for the week:** The environment

**Readings:**
- Shimko textbook, Chapter 13 - “The Global Commons”
- Herman and Treverton, “The Political Consequences of Climate Change”

**Lecture/Videos:**
- Lecture: “The environment”
- Documentary: “Waste Land”

**Assignments:**
- Film response essay must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 7th
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 7th
- News reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 7th

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**Week 12: November 8-14**

**Topic for the week:** Nuclear weapons, proliferation, and war

**Readings:**
- Shimko textbook, Chapter 11 - “Nuclear Proliferation”
- Wilson, “The Bomb Didn't Beat Japan... Stalin Did”
- Blight and Lang, “Zero: The Surprising and Unambiguous Policy Relevance of the Cuban Missile Crisis”

**Lecture/Videos:**
- Lecture: “Nuclear weapons, proliferation, and war”
- “The medical, environmental, and humanitarian consequences of nuclear war”
- “Nuclear-Armed Iran Would Bring 'Stability' But Risks”

**Assignments:**
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 14th
- News reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 14th
- Submit a list of approximately 8-10 sources you anticipate using by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 14th

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**Week 13: November 15-21**

**Topic for the week:** Terrorism

**Readings:**
- Shimko textbook, Chapter 12, p.297-314
- Osama bin Laden, “Winds of faith – Terror for terror”

Lecture/Videos:
- Lecture: “Terrorism”

Assignments:
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 21st
- News reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 21st

Week 14: November 22-28

- Nothing! Thanksgiving Break!

Week 15: November 29-December 5

Topic for the week: Genocide and Mass Murder

Readings:
- Gellately and Kiernan, “The Study of Mass Murder and Genocide”
- Shimko textbook, Chapter 10 - “The United Nations and Humanitarian Intervention”
- Zimbardo, “Crimes against humanity: Genocide, rape, and terror”

Lecture/Videos:
- Documentary: “Rwanda's Untold Story”
- Lecture: “Genocide and Mass Murder”

Assignments:
- Film response essay must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 5th
- The reading/lecture quiz must be submitted by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 5th
- Final news reflection journal entry due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on the 5th

Week 16: December 6-12

Topic for the week: Write your paper.

Readings:
- None

Lecture/Videos:
- None

Assignments:
- No quizzes this week
- Your final paper is due by 11:59pm (Eastern time) on December 12th