

POLITICAL SCIENCE 451 - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Term I / T & R 11:20-12:35

Briggs 125

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Purpose of the Course: Political Science 451 - International Relations - examines issues and questions germane to the academic study of this political science sub-field: the several dominant approaches to the study of international relations, the evolution of world politics, the forces that motivate nation-state's behavior toward one another, and the sources and instruments of both conflict and cooperation in international politics. The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with these questions and issues. Students can thus expect to become more literate about both international relations and politics in general.

In addition, Political Science 451 subscribes to and is designed to emphasize and promote several broad educational goals germane to a liberal arts curriculum: (1) the ability to **read** actively and critically; (2) the ability to **think** logically, analytically, and independently; (3) the ability to **communicate** clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing; and (4) the ability to **learn** on one's own. The class format and assignments are structured to enhance the achievement of these goals.

Political Science 451 – International Relations – is one of two courses (the other is POL 260 – Comparative Politics) that can be taken to satisfy one of the six required courses for the undergraduate major in Political Science.

Course Format: The format of this class may be different from what you are used to. Specifically, it is not a traditional lecture course. Rather, the course is based on the premise that you will learn more if you actively contribute to the learning process by participating, as opposed to sitting passively, merely absorbing what you are “taught.” Although I may, very occasionally, offer a lecture, that teaching/learning method will be the distinct exception. Instead, my more usual role will be to organize the course material for our class discussions, and to focus and direct, and refocus and redirect, our discussions to ensure that we cover important course material. Therefore, **discussion**, and your preparation for discussion, is central, expected, and required.

What, exactly, will we discuss? In addition to being **discussion-centered**, this class is **text-based**. Our discussions will center on the assigned readings (rather than on whatever opinions we may happen to come to class with on a particular day), so it is imperative that you come to each and every class period prepared to discuss the text. This means you must complete the readings prior to the day they will be discussed. More importantly, you must complete the work in such a way that you are prepared to thoughtfully discuss reading assignments and, in general,

to make a positive contribution to the class and the learning environment therein.

Course Requirements & Grade Determination: There are **five** grade-related requirements. They are equally weighted: each counts 1/5th, or 20%, of your final grade. The **first** requirement is class participation/contribution: you must attend *all* of *each* and *every* class and make an informed contribution to the learning experience therein. You will be continually evaluated on the quantity and, more importantly, the quality of that contribution. The **second, third** and **fourth** requirements are in the form of examinations: the first mid-term, covering chapters 1 through 3 of the text, on **Thursday 30 September**; the second mid-term, covering chapters 4 through 7, and the final exam, covering chapters 8 through 10, on (per the Registrar's final exam schedule) **Tuesday 14 December, 11:00 a.m.-12:50 p.m.** The **fifth** requirement is your term paper, in which you critically review several recent articles from international relations journals. I will discuss this assignment and requirement at our first class session.

I understand how important grades are to you. They are important to me as well, and I work very hard on two grade-related issues: first, to provide as much assistance as possible to ensure you get the highest grade you are capable of and willing to work for, and, second, to make sure that you get nothing more or less than the grade you deserve. In this context, please feel free to discuss any and all aspects of your grade with me at any time.

Policy Concerning Attendance: To do your best, you need to attend each and every class. Since the majority of administrative information (i.e., changes in the schedule, readings, exam dates) is announced at the beginning of each class period, it is important to come to each and every class, and on time. Coming to class late is disruptive and disrespectful to those already at work, myself included. On the same topic: **disable the audio alert (i.e., ringing, beeping) on all pagers and cell phones during class time.**

Policy Concerning Late Work: My policy concerning late work is simple: I accept it, without regard to how late it is (so long as it is turned in by the last day of class) and penalize it by one full grade. Regarding scheduled exams, you should plan to take the exams on the days and times they are scheduled. If you are faced with an impossible set of circumstances over which you have no control that makes this impossible, you must, for me to consider a make-up, let me know **in advance** of the exam.

Policy Concerning Incompletes: My policy on Incompletes is equally straightforward: I will not consider an "I" grade unless (a) a student who has taken the course seriously is, at the very end of the term, suddenly faced with an impossible set of circumstances over which s/he had no control, **and** (b) the student requests that I consider a grade of "I" and makes specific arrangements to complete the outstanding work. Under no circumstances will the "I" grade be used in lieu of the earned grade in the course.

Readings: The following text has been ordered at the bookstore. You should bring it with you to each class:

Karen A. Mingst. Essentials of International Relations, 3rd edition, 2004, W. W. Norton & Co., ISBN: 0-393-92448-3.

In addition, I strongly encourage you to purchase a term-long subscription to The New York Times. Not only is it full of information on issues germane to international relations, it will be an invaluable resource for you term project. I will provide you with information on subscriptions at the lowest possible student rates. I may, from time to time, direct you to or make available to you additional readings.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus.

COURSE SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENTS

I. INTRODUCTION, FOUNDATIONS & APPROACHES: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- T 9/7 Introduction to the Course & the Discipline
Read: the syllabus, and in Mingst, Contents (pp. v-x), Preface (pp. xiii-xv), Maps (pp. xvii-xxiv), Glossary (pp. 315-324).
- R 9/9 Approaches to International Relations
Read: Mingst, Ch. 1, pp. 1-11.
- T 9/14 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 1, pp. 11-14.
- R 9/16 The Historical Context of Contemporary International Relations
Read: Mingst, Ch. 2, pp. 17-35.
- T 9/21 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 2, pp. 35-53.
- R 9/23 Contending Perspectives of International Relations
Read: Mingst, Ch. 3, pp. 55-71.
- T 9/28 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 3, pp. 71-80.

MID-TERM EXAM #1: Thursday, 30 September

II. LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

- T 10/5 International System Level Analysis
Read: Mingst, Ch. 3, pp. 59-61 & Ch. 4, pp. 83-94.

- R 10/7 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 4, pp. 95-99.
- T 10/12 State Level Analysis
Read: Mingst, Ch. 5, pp. 101-121.
- R 10/14 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 5, pp. 121-134.
- T 10/19 Individual Level Analysis
Read: Mingst, Ch. 6, pp. 137-147.
- R 10/21 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 6, pp. 147-156.

III. ORGANIZATIONS (IGOs & NGOs) & INTERNATIONAL LAW

- T 10/26 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 7, pp. 159-180.
- R 10/28 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 7, pp. 180-194.

MID-TERM #2: Tuesday, 2 November

IV. WAR & CONFLICT

- R 11/4 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 8, pp. 197-216.
- T 11/9 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 8, pp. 217-230.

V. INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

- R 11/11 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 9, pp. 233-256.
- T 11/16 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 9, pp. 256-271.

VI. GLOBALIZING ISSUES

- R 11/18 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 10, pp. 273-295.

THANKSGIVING BREAK

- T 11/30 **Read:** Mingst, Ch. 10, pp. 296-313.
- R 12/2 Student Project Reports

T 12/7 Student Project Reports

R 12/9 Student Project Reports

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, 14 December, 11:00 a.m.-12:50 p.m.