

MEREDITH COLLEGE
Politics 210: International Politics
Autumn 2009

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Course Description and Goals:

This course is an introduction to world politics and a survey of current issues and trends in major regions and the principles or interactions among nations, blocks, international organizations and multinational corporations.

As an introductory course, the class will focus on the breadth of issues that the discipline of political science attempts to understand in the area of international relations. Students will finish the course having feasted on a cornucopia of information regarding the “who, what, where and when” of international circumstances, if with appetites only whetted in terms of understanding “why” those circumstances have obtained and how they can be addressed. This necessary first step, however, will nonetheless leave them well-prepared to seek those answers in both future coursework and in their lives outside of academia. The course content and objectives are, in this sense, designed to equip students to understand not only historical but also emerging phenomena of international politics.

Educational Outcomes:

By semester-end, students will

- 1) know basic theoretical frameworks within the field of political science;
- 2) explain scientific discovery and process, and the ability to explain the primary research methods of the field;
- 3) connect primary supporting research with a particular theoretical position in the field;
- 4) apply theoretically-based explanations and solutions to individual behavior or societal phenomena;
- 5) solve problems by analyzing data, thinking critically, and selecting optimal results.

Texts

The following text is required for this course:

International Relations: Perspectives and Controversies
By Keith Shimko (2004)
ISBN 0618215484

In addition to the above texts, students are required to keep abreast of world news by reading one of the major national newspapers with significant international coverage. These include, ***The New York Times***, ***The Washington Post***, ***The Wall Street Journal***, and ***The Christian Science Monitor***. All are available on-line. Unfortunately, smaller papers like ***The News & Observer*** are not sufficient for this purpose.

Finally, other short readings may be assigned by the instructor during the course. These will be provided in electronic or hardcopy format by the instructor to students.

Requirements

The course is centered on a comprehensive text which investigates– using different methods and demonstrating a variety differing conclusions – the history, form and functioning of the international political order. Daily reading assignments are brief (approximately 30 pages) but dense, therefore requiring careful consideration. Students are expected to have finished all assigned readings prior to class in order to participate in discussion. In addition, each student will complete three exams (two midterms and one final), and two short essays. Each of these requirements is elaborated in detail below.

The grading weights and the dates when requirements are due are as follows:

Quizzes	Various and unannounced	20%
Map Test	November 23	25%
Short Essay	December 10 at 1 PM	25%
Final Exam	December 10 at 1 PM	30%

Detailed descriptions of each of these requirements are provided below:

Quizzes:

There will be approximately fourteen previously unannounced, short quizzes (1-3 questions, five minutes to complete) on the readings and class discussions. Quizzes may be distributed at the beginning, middle or end of class. Each student's lowest quiz score will be dropped, so that only thirteen count towards the grade. Quizzes may take place at any time during class, will be short answer, multiple-choice and/or map-based and are meant to gauge students understanding of the material on an on-going basis. An unexcused absence from a quiz will result in a grade of zero for that quiz. Excused absences are those that involve documented medical or family emergencies.

Map Test:

An extensive map test will gauge the student's ability to spatially locate regions, states, organizations, peoples and wars of the present and past. An unexcused absence from the map test will result in a grade of zero for that test.

Short Essay:

Students will submit one short essay, an approximately ten-page (typed, 12 point font, double-spaced) analysis and response to questions raised by the "controversies" chapters of the Shimko text. Students should consult the further readings listed at the end of their

chapter of choice for additional information about the controversy. The essay should not be a “book report” or reiteration of what the authors have said, but rather the student’s own insightful analysis of their arguments on the subject area of interest. Students will not be graded on whether they agree or disagree with the authors’ points, but rather on how well they argue their own personal viewpoints using the authors as their touchstone. Since spelling, grammar and style problems can weaken otherwise strong arguments (and your objective is to make a strong argument) students should pay careful attention to proofreading before submitting their papers. Essays are due on the date listed above, by the beginning of class. Email submissions will not be accepted, and late papers will be penalized 10% per day.

Final Exam:

The exam will test the student’s comprehensive learning at the end of the semester. It will include multiple choice and short essay questions. Study guides and sample questions will be circulated well in advance of the exam. Excused absences from examinations can only be obtained in advance or for medical or other emergencies. Such emergencies must be documented to the satisfaction of the instructor. An unexcused absence from an examination will result in a grade of zero for that examination.

Final Letter Grades

Final scores are determined using the weights mentioned above and according to the breakdowns listed below:

A: 93-100 B: 84-92 C: 70-83 D: 60-69 F: 0-59

Meredith Code of Honor

We, the Meredith Community, are committed to developing and affirming in each student a sense of personal honor and responsibility. Uncompromising honesty and forthrightness are essential elements of this commitment. The Honor System is a method by which individual honors are protected and maintained. Any dishonorable action will be regarded as a violation of this commitment, and corrective action will be taken. If I am in violation of the Honor Code, to prevent jeopardizing the Honor System or weakening our system of self-government, I have an obligation to report myself to the proper authorities. If I am aware of a violation of the Honor System by another student, I shall call this matter to the attention of that student as a violation of responsibility to the community. In choosing Meredith College, I am accepting the Honor System as a way of life. As a Meredith student, I am responsible for insuring that the Honor System is at all times carried out.

Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. In order to receive accommodations, students must go through the Counseling Center/Disability Services Office. Disability Services is located in 106 Carroll Hall and can be reached at 760-8427 or disabilityservices@meredith.edu. For additional information see the website at <http://www.meredith.edu/students/counsel/disability>.

Weather

We will follow the college policy on inclement weather.

Course Timeline

The following lists the tentative assignments for the semester. Readings are from ***International Relations*** (henceforth, ***IR***).

8/19 –	Intro/ Philosophies of Learning
8/21, 24, 26, 28 –	IR Ch 1 Global Problems of Yore
8/31, 9/2 & 4 –	IR Ch 2 International Politics: The Study of Global Problems
9/9 –	Maps
9/11, 14, 16, 18 –	IR Ch 3 Power
9/21, 23, 25, 28, 30 –	IR Chs 4 & 5 War
10/2 –	Maps
10/5, 7, 12, 14 –	IR Chs 6 & 7 International Political Economy
10/16 –	Maps
10/19, 21, 23 –	IR Ch 8 Globalization
10/26, 28, 30 –	IR Ch 9 International Law
11/2, 4, 6 –	IR Ch 10 IOs
11/9, 11, 13 –	Maps
11/16, 18, 20 –	IR Chs 11 & 12 Future War
11/23 –	** Map Test **
11/30 –	IR Ch 13 Global Commons
12/2 –	Evaluations/ Review
12/10 –	** Essay Due ** Final Exam (1 PM) **