

PSC 240 - The International System

MWF 10:00 AM

Graham 204

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Graham 411 - Office Hours Tues 12:00- 2:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class will provide an overview of important topics and key debates in international politics. The course will discuss general theoretical approaches to studying international relations, as well as examining specific contemporary issues relevant to US foreign policy.

The course is divided into four parts. The first section outlines the historical development of the contemporary international system and traditional approaches to understanding international relations, with a focus on nation-states as the key actors. The second section involves forces beyond the nation-state- transnational actors, globalization, and international organization and law. The third section examines issues related to security, conflict, and human rights, with a focus on three specific topics – prevention of genocide and the Darfur crisis, international terrorism, and nuclear weapons. The fourth section discusses international economic issues, and international efforts to preserve the environment. Each of the four sections will be followed by an in-class exam.

READINGS

The main reading for the course is a textbook:

John T. Rourke and Mark A. Boyer, *International Politics on the World Stage (Brief)*. 6th Edition. 2005. McGraw-Hill

Additional readings to supplement the textbook chapters will be posted on the class's Blackboard site under "Course Documents." **The outline of supplemental readings here is tentative: during the semester I may add, remove, or change assignments. A week-by week outline of topics and readings will be maintained on Blackboard and will be the definitive schedule.** I will announce any changes as far in advance as possible.

In addition, you will be expected to keep up with current events in international affairs by reading the "World" section of the *New York Times* (available online at www.nytimes.com). There will five quizzes on current events; the quizzes will be announced in advance.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

The course grade will be calculated as follows:

Four in-class exams: 65% (20% for the first, 15% for the other three)

Final Exam: 20%

Current events quizzes: 5%

Attendance (required) and Participation: 10%

OUTLINE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

I. The International System – General Themes and Traditional Approaches

- a. Studying International Relations
 - Rourke, Chapters 1 and 3
- b. Development of the International System
 - Rourke, Chapter 2
- c. Nationalism and the state
 - Rourke, Chapters 4 and 6
- d. Power and Diplomacy
 - Rourke, Chapter 9
 - Stephen Walt “Taming American Power”
 - Joseph Nye "The Decline of America's Soft Power"

II. Globalization, Transnationalism, and International Organization

- a. Globalization and Transnational Actors
 - Rourke, Chapter 5
 - Stanley Hoffman, "Clash of Globalizations"
 - Bassam Tibi, " The Challenge of Fundamentalism"
 - Benjamin Barber, "Jihad vs. McWorld"
 - Ann Florini and PJ Simmons, "What the World Needs Now?"
- b. International Organization and the United Nations
 - Rourke, Chapter 7
 - Shashi Tharoor, "Why America Still Needs the United Nations"
 - Nile Gardiner, "Reform the United Nations"
- c. International Law
 - Rourke, Chapter 9

III. Human Rights, Conflict, and International Security

- a Human Rights and the Darfur crisis
 - Rourke, Chapter 13
 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights
 - Samantha Power, "Dying in Darfur"
 - Scott Straus, "Darfur and the Genocide Debate"
- b. International Security, Terrorism, and Nuclear Weapons
 - Rourke, Chapter 10
 - John Deutch, "A Nuclear Posture for Today"
 - Graham Allison, "The Ongoing Failure of Imagination"
 - John Mueller, "Is There Still a Terrorist Threat?"
 - Foreign Policy* magazine, "The Terrorism Index"

IV The International Economy and The Environment

- a. The International Economy
 - Rourke, Chapters 11 and 12
 - Joseph Stiglitz, "Globalism's Discontents"
 - Anne Krueger, "Expanding Trade and Unleashing Growth"
 - Rawi Abdelal and Adam Segal, "Has Globalization Passed Its Peak?"
- b. International Environmental Issues
 - Rourke, Chapter 14
 - John Browne "Beyond Kyoto"