

POLS 2303: Introduction to International Politics Course Syllabus Online

Description: This course introduces students to the field international politics. We will think about how to answer important political questions, compare political systems around the world, and study potential solutions to some of the world's most challenging problems.

Course goals: In this course, students are expected to gain substantive knowledge about politics through the study of facts and cases, as well as to gain transferrable skills. At the end of this course, students should be able to compare and evaluate regime types, government structures, and political behaviors, and to identify the incentives and philosophies underlying the political choices of individuals and states. Students will also improve their writing and researching skills, and gain experience communicating in groups, leading class discussions, and presenting complex information.

Required readings:

- Understanding the Political World, Twelfth Edition, by Danziger and Smith via REVEL. This book is entirely online! And there is an app! You will never fall behind on readings again. You can buy the code in the bookstore or on the bookstore website and access the book through Blackboard. You can also buy the code directly from the publisher (that is cheaper, but you can't use financial aid).
- Major daily news source. I recommend a major newspaper (the newspaper's online site is fine), NPR, and/or a major cable news channel. All of these sources have their biases, which we will talk about in our class, but they will help you know what is going on in the world so we can have informed discussions.
- Other readings listed in the syllabus and posted online.

Course assignments and grading standards: Letter grades will be based on the traditional scale (90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, 70-79 is a C, 60-69 is a D, and below 60 is an F). Course assignments and their percentage of the total grade are as follows:

- REVEL Readings and Quizzes: 15%
- Participation (discussion posts and pop quizzes): 10%
- Online Discussion Leadership: 10%
- Discussion Leader Outline: 5%
- Discussion Topic Annotated Bibliography 10%
- Satire Assignment: 10%
- 3 Exams: 20%
- Final Exam: 20%

Calculating your Grade

I realize the calculating your grade can get confusing. I definitely don't want it to be! The first rule of grade clarity in our class, it to not trust Blackboard to calculate your aggregate grade for the class. It sucks at weighting things appropriately. Instead, in the Assignments folder on Blackboard, I have uploaded a spreadsheet with the formula I use to calculate your final grade, along with some example student data in there so you can see how it works. At any point in the semester, you can download this spreadsheet and plug in your own grades so far, see where you stand, and look ahead to see what you need to score on upcoming assignments in order to earn the grade you want in the class. Wondering what you need to make on the final to earn an A? The answer is in your hands! If you need any help using the spreadsheet, please send me an email and I will be happy to help. We can talk about it in office hours, do a Google Hangout, or talk it through over the phone.

Expectations

Students are expected to have the assigned readings completed by the date they are assigned; to participate in online class discussions, activities, and simulations; to complete and hand in assignments on time; and to ask questions. Students are expected to be respectful in their interactions with the professor and with their fellow students. Online classes can move quickly, so check out the document "What to Expect Each Week" to be sure you are on top of the material.

Class format

This class will move quickly and be very challenging. Keeping up with the material posted online requires no small amount of self-discipline. Let me be very clear: you have to be disciplined in keeping up with the readings and lecture materials. If you fall even one week behind, it is unlikely that you will do well in the class. In order to help you stay on schedule and keep up with the material, I will post new learning modules and release new discussion threads every Monday morning.

I recommend that you check in with our Blackboard site at least 3 times a week. It can be really helpful to treat it like a "regular" class and schedule a meeting time (like Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:00-10:00 am) that you always spend working on our class. There will be at least 2 graded discussion threads ongoing at all times and students are expected to regularly contribute substantive comments. This is how you earn participation points, which make up 10% of your total grade for the course. To find out more about how discussion will work in this course, please check out the "Guide to Online Discussion in POLS 2303" posted on Blackboard.

The textbook for this course is entirely online, which means that it can tell me whether or not you have logged in and completed the assigned reading. Isn't that great for me/marginally disconcerting for you? There are also short quizzes to check comprehension and completion for every section of the assigned textbook reading. Check out the document "How this Online Textbook Thing Works" to learn more. And do the readings!

Communication

Maintaining good communication is really important in life and especially important in an online course. You must have reliable Internet access to take this course. I do not accept excuses for not taking exams, not participating in discussion, or not knowing the material or policies if they are based on insufficient Internet access or your failure to read the policies that are available to you online. You will need to check Blackboard regularly for course assignments, updates, and feedback. Any major announcements will be made through the announcements feature on Blackboard. And

please read the emails I send you! I email you because I want you to succeed in the class. If you don't read my emails, you are shooting yourself in the foot.

Email Policy

The best way to get a hold of me is through email. The Blackboard email system is terrible, so I have disabled it. Take that, technology! To get ahold of me, send me an email at raglazier@ualr.edu. If you send me an email, please make sure to 1) put a reasonably informative subject in the subject line, 2) address the email to Dr. or Professor Glazier, and 3) close with your name. Please feel free to ask me any questions about the course, but out of courtesy please check the syllabus and the course website to see if the answer is already available. We aren't even into the course material yet and you are already learning valuable life skills like how to write a professional email! This class is going to be great. If you want to make any special arrangements or for any reason want me to remember something, please send it in an email. If I don't have it in email, it never happened.

Exam Format

All exams will be administered online through Blackboard. The exams will be closed book and closed note, timed exams. Questions will be presented one at a time and you will not be able to revisit past questions. Under no circumstances should students cut and paste material from the Internet or take direct statements from the textbook or lecture notes in answering essay questions for these exams. That is called cheating. Students who cheat will be punished according to the cheating policy describe below. The exams are timed and only available during the scheduled window (listed in the schedule below). If you anticipate being unable to take the exam during the scheduled time, be sure that you are familiar with the make-up exam policy listed below. You will take 3 short exams over the course of the semester, plus the final exam.

Missed Exams and Making up Assignments

The exam and assignment due dates are indicated in the class schedule. If this class does not fit into your schedule, then you should consider taking it at a later date. No make-up exams will be given, except in the case of serious, documented emergencies. The documentation must have contact information that allows me to call and verify your story. Vacations, birthdays, or hangovers do not qualify as emergencies. Note that what qualifies as a valid excuse is at the discretion of the instructor, so you should make arrangements in advance if at all possible. Failure to comply with this requirement will lead to an "F" for the exam. Students taking a make-up exam will not be given the same exam assigned to the rest of the class, and the format of the make-up exams may vary. Hold yourself to a high standard and get your stuff done on time. I also want you to know that I understand that life can come at you quick. If you need extra time or extra help, just let me know! You have to email me BEFORE you miss an exam or assignment though if I am going to do anything about it.

Assignment Submission

The satire paper and the discussion topic annotated bibliography must be submitted through Blackboard using the Safe Assign tool on the homepage of the course Blackboard site. All submissions will be run through plagiarism screening software, which will compare the material used to online sources, library books, and papers submitted by other students. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Dean of Students. Please read the cheating policy described below carefully. Plagiarism excuses that are based in ignorance are not acceptable. If something happens that prevents you from submitting an assignment on time, email me! We can figure out a solution. Don't just disappear from the class.

The Discussion Leader Outline assignment should be turned into Dr. Glazier via email at least 48 hours before your discussion begins. Also, “the computer ate my homework” is not a valid excuse for failing to turn in a paper in 2019. Email your paper to yourself, sync it in the cloud, use Google Drive, or sign up for a free Dropbox account. Just because your computer breaks, doesn’t mean you shouldn’t be able to turn in your assignments.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is taken very seriously in this course. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, cheating on an exam, unauthorized collaboration on an assignment, and plagiarism. The professor is REQUIRED to report any academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students, and students caught cheating will receive an F for the assignment and may receive an F for the course. In order to ensure that you understand what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty, please read the complete description of the UA Little Rock policy on academic dishonesty, which is available in the student handbook at www.ualr.edu/www/handbook/student_rights.html. Claiming to not know the definition of plagiarism is not an excuse for plagiarism.

Students with Disabilities

Your success in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have a documented disability (or need to document a disability) and need an accommodation, please contact me privately as soon as possible so that we can discuss with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) how to meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. The DRC offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process among you, your instructor(s) and the DRC. Thus, if you have a disability, please contact me and/or the DRC, at 501-569-3143 (V/TTY) or 501-683-7629 (VP). For more information, please visit the DRC website at ualr.edu/disability. (UA Little Rock Policy 404.9)

Approved Learning Objectives

Most students have no idea how much bureaucracy goes on behind the scenes of a university. One of the things this bureaucracy requires me to do is post the learning objectives that have been set and approved by a committee for this course. They are as follows:

- Develop foundational knowledge of the theoretical perspectives used in one or more social science disciplines.
- Develop foundational knowledge of how to use scientific methods and various analytic techniques to answer questions about societal issues.
- Develop foundational knowledge of real world applications of the social sciences.
- Develop oral and/or written skills while communicating about social science theories, methods, and applications.
- Develop an understanding of how evidence from different methods of inquiry supports or weakens various theoretical perspectives.
- Develop an awareness of contextual impacts and personal assumptions on inquiry, methods, and analysis within a social science discipline.
- Develop abilities to use current technologies for inquiry, exploration, and communication.

- Develop commitment to academic integrity and take responsibility for completing assignments in an ethical manner, working on one's own when required, and acknowledging resources when used.
- Develop an understanding of the ethical obligation to be precise and accurate with data and understand how this obligation applies to communication of information.
- Understand the ethics of research with humans.
- Develop an understanding of the ethical implications of social science research, methods, and knowledge in addressing social issues.
- Develop awareness of multiple cultures and respect for alternate world views.

Whew! Now, you may be thinking to yourself (if you actually read all that) that those learning objectives are pretty broad. Not to fear! Another committee completed a rubric that identifies specific things in our class that will directly address each of those, along with assignments and explanation. If you really want to read that rubric, you can access it here:

<http://ualr.edu/facultysenate/files/2013/12/POLS-2303-Introduction-to-International-Politics.pdf>.

Inclement Weather Policy

Sometimes bad weather makes it difficult to have class. Lucky for you, this is an online class! Despite that, university administration requires me to put the inclement weather policy in our syllabus. It is available at this website: <https://ualr.edu/policy/home/admin/weather/>. Basically, check your email or the website if you don't know whether class will meet due to weather. And, for us, just keep on keeping on because our class is online!

Regular and Substantive Contact

This portion of the syllabus comes to you courtesy of the Department of Education. This is where I get to tell you about the many and varied ways I plan to be available to you this semester. I love teaching and I love helping my students learn. Because of that, I will hold office hours every Wednesday from 9:00 to 11:00 am and by appointment. I am also readily available by email and promise to respond within 24 hours during the work week (usually sooner) and within 48 hours on the weekend. If you ever need anything at all, I hope you will email me. I even share my personal cell phone number with my students, but I do ask you to use it judiciously: 501-813-2079. I will be online in our Blackboard course pretty much every day, and posting new content every Monday. I will personally email you at least 5 times during the semester. I hope that all of this sends you the intended message: I want you to succeed in this course!

Schedule and Reading Assignments

Please read the schedule very carefully. It is very detailed so that you will always know what is expected of you in the course. You are responsible for this information. "Forgetting" that we had an exam is not a valid excuse for missing it. You have the exam dates and other due dates available to you now and you are responsible for your performance in this course. Put it on your calendar. Go forth and adult!

Just Checking

Are you really reading this syllabus? It is actually shockingly important to your success in the class. It is like a contract between you and me. It is like a map to getting an A. It is really important! Once you finish reading the whole syllabus—including the schedule and reading assignments below; those

are super important—email me a picture of a panda (raglazier@ualr.edu) and I will give you an extra credit point.

Course Schedule

The readings are due at the START of each week. That is on Monday. You may notice that there are a few readings in this list with unusual titles. These are (usually) pieces of political satire. Political satire is going to be an important part of our course and you will have the opportunity to share some satire with the class. More detail on that in the lectures and in the assignments folder.

Date	Topic	Readings	Discussion 1	Discussion 2
Week 1: Tuesday 1/21- Sunday 1/26	Welcome!	Syllabus and all the assignments in the Assignments folder; “An Intro to Satire”	Introductions	Advice for succeeding in an online class.
Week 2: Monday 1/27- Sunday 2/2	Defining Politics	Danziger chapter 1.1 and 1.2	Politics or not politics?	Delta or Gamma?
Week 3: Monday 2/3- Sunday 2/9	Scientific Method	Danziger chapter 1.3 and 1.4	Seen any fake news lately?	Example student-led discussion led by Dr. Glazier: “Is Political <i>Science</i> Possible?”
Week 4: Monday 2/10- Sunday 2/16	Political Theory and Political Beliefs	Danziger chapter 2, a comic called “Believe” by The Oatmeal.	When have you felt cognitive dissonance?	Student-led discussion: “Is There a Clash of Civilizations?”
Week 5: Monday 2/17- Sunday 2/23	Political Actions	Danziger chapter 3	How politically active are you?	Student-led discussion: “How Interested are Interest Groups in Democracy?”
Exam 1 is available at 10:00 am on Friday, February 21 to 11:59 pm on Sunday, February 23.				
Week 6: Monday 2/24- Sunday 3/1	Influences on Beliefs and Actions	Danziger chapter 4, “Simple Framing” by George Lakoff	Comparing Political Frames	Student-led discussion: “Do New ICTs Change our Political Beliefs and Actions?”
Week 7: Monday 3/2- Sunday 3/8	Political Systems, States, and Nations	Danziger chapter 5, “Three years after Brexit, global nationalism is still ascendant” by Connor Lynch	Is nationalism a positive or a negative global trend?	Student-led discussion: “Does Humanitarian Intervention Violate State Sovereignty?”

Date	Topic	Readings	Discussion 1	Discussion 2
Week 8: Monday 3/9- Sunday 3/15	Institutions Part 1	Danziger chapter 6, NYT Editorial “When Politicians Pick Their Voters”, “American People Ruled Unfit to Govern”	Is gerrymandering causing polarization?	Student-led discussion: “Is Judicial Review Democratic?”
Week 9: Monday 3/16 Sunday 3/22	Institutions Part 2	Danziger chapter 7, “New Freedom House Rankings Show Democracy Ebbing” by Emily Tamkin, “Rebels Immediately Regret Seizing Power in Zambia”	What is the future of democracy?	Student-led discussion: “Which Form of Government is Preferable: Parliamentary, Presidential, or Hybrid?”
Exam 2 is available from 10:00 am on Friday March 20 to 11:59 pm on Sunday March 22.				
Spring Break is March 23-29. Take a break and don't hang out on Blackboard!				
Week 10: Monday 3/30 Sunday 4/5	Political Economy	Danziger chapter 8, “Marxists Apartment a Microchasm of Why Marxism Failed”	How involved should the government be in the economy?	Student-led discussion: “Is Communism Dead?”
Week 11: Monday 4/6 Sunday 4/12	Change and Political Development	Danziger chapter 10	What might demographic changes bring?	Student-led discussion: “Is Economic Development a Necessary Prerequisite for Democracy?”
Week 12: Monday 4/13- Sunday 4/19	Public Policy and Poverty Simulation	Danziger chapter 9, “Why people prefer unequal societies” by Starmans, et al. Play Ayiti online.	What happened to your fictional family?	Equality or fairness?
Annotated Bibliographies are due by 11:59pm on Friday, April 17. Turn them in through the link in the Assignments folder.				
Week 13: Monday 4/20 Sunday 4/26	Politics Across Borders	Danziger chapter 11	Applying realism, liberalism, and constructivism to current events.	What international problem will we be worrying about in 10 years?
Exam 3 is available from 10:00am on Friday April 24 to 11:59 pm on Sunday April 26.				

Date	Topic	Readings	Discussion 1	Discussion 2
Week 14: Monday 4/27- Sunday 5/3	Political Violence	Danziger chapter 12	What kinds of political violence by the state are acceptable?	Student-led Discussion: “Is Terrorism Ever a Justifiable Form of Political Violence?”
The Final Exam is available from 10:00 am on Thursday May 7 to 11:59 pm on Sunday May 10.				