

PSCI 350: Global Governance Levels of Analysis Paper Assignment (235 points)

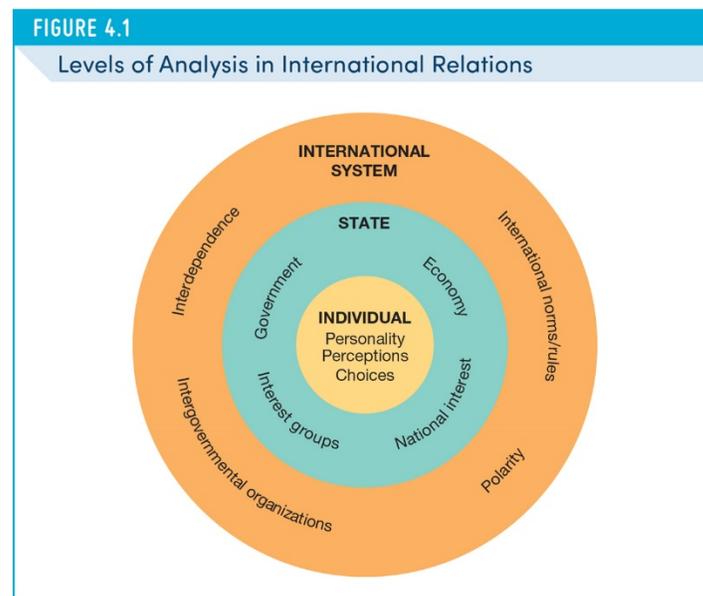
The major writing assignment for this class is a **seven-page research paper** that describes an event in world politics and applies one level of analysis to that event. Your goal in this paper is to use the level that you feel best explains your event/action and explain why. This is not a history of the event; it is an analysis of the reasons why the event occurred.

What is a Level of Analysis? Level of analysis is a methodological way of understanding world politics. It is one way to divide the huge, complex, confusing picture of world politics into manageable analyzable pieces. Paying attention to levels of analysis helps us make logical deductions and enables us to explore all categories of explanation. Below are the three levels of analysis as outlined in Figure 4.1 on page 109 in the Mingst, et. al. book.

International System Level: when one takes an international or systemic, that person is taking a big picture analysis; they are looking at the forest, not the trees. At this level, a scholar believes that a state's relationships and behaviors can be better explained by the nature of the international system itself. This could include the relative distribution of power between states or with international and regional organizations and their relative strengths and weaknesses

State (Domestic) Level: at the state level of analysis, the focus is on domestic factors. These factors are derived from characteristics of the state: the type of government (e.g., democratic or authoritarian), the type of economic system (e.g., capitalist or socialist), interest groups within the country, and/or the national interest.

Individual Level: at this level of analysis, the focus is on the individual leaders themselves. The leader's personality, perceptions, choices, and activities of individual decision makers and individual participants provide the explanation.



Keep in mind that the level of analysis approach is simply an analytical tool. And the levels are not mutually exclusive. In addition, any issue can be explained using every level of analysis, especially today as we have become integrated globally. Thus, no one level of analysis will perfectly explain everything.

If this is the case, then why only stick with one level of analysis? Why not incorporate all three? Several reasons. As stated above, world politics is a huge, complex, confusing picture. We need to narrow any analysis into manageable analyzable pieces. No analyst tries to understand everything all at once. It is simply not possible. Instead, we work to explain just enough to better understand a specific aspect of politics.

So how would the levels of analysis look like in a research paper? Let us take World War II (WWII) as an example. If we wanted to explain why WWII started in Europe, which level of analysis would better explain this?

- If we use an International System level of analysis, we could say that the onerous reparations and sanctions placed on Germany in the Treaty of Versailles led the country to eventually adopt a more aggressive foreign policy. Or that the balance of power in Europe shifted as the UK, France, the U.S., and the Soviet Union did not stop German aggression towards its neighbors.
- If we use a State (Domestic) level of analysis, we could argue that the economic depression and the fragility of the Weimar Republic led to the rise of an authoritarian regime (Nazis) that desired conflict as a way to reestablish national pride.
- Or, if we used an Individual level of analysis, we would focus on the rise of Adolph Hitler and how his desire for power is what drove the eventual conflict. We would look at his personality traits and how he saw Germany's place in the world.

Clearly, all three explanations could help explain why WWII started in Europe. However, the goal of this paper is for students to learn how to focus their analysis. Learning how to stay on topic and not drift into every available explanation is valuable when working in a government agency, or working on a legal brief.

Paper Requirements

1. Your paper is due through Cougar Courses no later than **Sunday, November 8th, 11:55pm.**
2. This is a 7-page research paper. You need to pick an international event (from any time period) **and apply only one of the levels of analysis to that event.**

Note: If you fail to complete the minimum required substantive & complete pages you will be penalized. Students will lose **10%** for every substantive page that student fails to complete.

3. Please keep in mind that certain recent topics will lack resources for your paper. For example, if you want to discuss the ongoing pandemic and its effect on politics, you most likely will not be able to as scholarly articles are still in the process of being written and peer reviewed. So be sure before you make a final decision on your topic that there are enough resources for you to complete your paper.

4. Make sure you have chosen an **international event** – or some phenomenon that has occurred between at least two or more countries. In addition, your paper **cannot be U.S. focused**. In other words, this is not a U.S. history class. Please pick a phenomenon outside of the U.S. context.

Note: Students will be marked down severely if their paper is U.S. focused.

5. You need to be sure that you have an opening paragraph and a thesis statement. I need to know your topic choice and level of analysis from the outset.
6. Although there will obviously be a portion of the paper describing the event, your focus should be on how your chosen level explains that event. Your focus should be on explanation, not history.
7. Spelling and grammar do count, so please PROOFREAD and SPELL CHECK!
8. You must properly cite your sources using **APA citation style**. If you are unfamiliar with the APA citation system, please click on the link below to access Purdue's University Online Writing Lab (OWL). This website does a great job of walking students through the formatting and style expectations

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

9. Documentation: **Avoid long direct quotations**. Instead, you should paraphrase the author(s). When paraphrasing the author(s) from the text, make it clear “who” is speaking, and follow with a page reference.
10. It is important that you use legitimate, **scholarly** sources. Do not write your paper using all articles from newspapers, news magazines, or web pages. If you need to use these sources for factual information, that is fine, but your paper needs to be based on scholarly analysis of your topic. Thus, you need to use articles from scholarly journals and/or books. You should have at least ten (5) scholarly sources. Please do not wait until the last minute to look for resources because you may need to use interlibrary loan and it takes time.

Sources: **At least three references per page in APA style, coming from at least ten (10) different scholarly sources.**

11. Remember that most web pages are not scholarly in nature. You can access scholarly sources from the web (via the library), but be very careful what websites you use. Do not, under any circumstances, use Wikipedia.

Students can look for books and for scholarly journal articles through the CSUSM Library website: <https://biblio.csusm.edu/>, or through Google Scholar at scholar.google.com. Please be careful that if you use Google Scholar, you may not be able to download the resource. My advice is to start with the CSUSM library website.

Academic books and scholarly journal articles are different from the information found on the Internet. To be considered scholarly, the book or the article need to be peer-reviewed. Peer review means that other scholars in the field of study have looked at the work and verify that the information is worthy enough to be included in the discourse. This does not mean that the peer

reviewed work is 100% accurate, nor that the book/article is the “end all be all”. All it means is that the work should be included in any discussion on that topic.

12. Please include a title page. The title page should have the following information: YOUR NAME, PSCI 350, TITLE, INSTRUCTOR NAME.
13. Please be sure to number the pages of your paper.

If you need help in any way, please come see me during online office hours or email me. I am happy to help you pick a topic, find sources, or organize your paper.