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Fall 9-1-2015

### PSCI 230X.01: International Relations

Eric H. Hines

*University of Montana - Missoula*, [eric.hines@umontana.edu](mailto:eric.hines@umontana.edu)

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Introduction to

# International Relations



**Instructor:** Eric H. Hines  
**Office:** NCOR 332  
**Office Hours:** MWRF 3:00-4:00  
**Email:** [eric.hines@umontana.edu](mailto:eric.hines@umontana.edu)

**Course Number:** PSCI 230X  
**Class Location:** NULH 101  
**Meeting Time:** TR 9:40AM-11:00AM  
**Website:** Moodle (<http://umonline.umd.edu>)  
**CRN (Add/Drop):** 72309

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

International relations (IR) is the study of the conflict and cooperation in global politics. It asks both empirical (i.e., what happened and why?) and normative (i.e., what should have happened?) questions. To answer these questions, this course introduces three different empirical perspectives used to understand patterns of international conflict and cooperation — realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Each perspective offers different answers to the core questions of IR: who gets what, when, and how in global politics.

## COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

| After completing this course's learning objectives, students will have enhanced knowledge and skills to: |  | This will be assessed by:    |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| 1  | Use theoretical approaches to explain current events in the individual, domestic, and systematic contexts. | Exams<br>Written Assignments |
| 2  | Place human behavior and cultural ideas into a global framework and explain complex interdependence.       | Exams<br>Written Assignments |
| 3  | Demonstrate an awareness of the diverse ways humans structure their social, political, & cultural lives.   | Exams<br>Written Assignments |

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

There are two *required* textbooks available at the UC Bookstore:

Drezner, Daniel. 2014. *Theories of International Politics and Zombies*. Revied Ed. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. ISBN: 9780691163703.

Shiraeve, Eric, and Vladislav M. Zubok. 2014. *International Relations*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199746514.

Participants in the *Statecraft* simulation can register for \$30 at <http://ir.statecraftsim.com> using the course code UMpsci230fall2015. All other texts are available for download on Moodle.



## COURSE PHILOSOPHY, PEDAGOGY, AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning is more than memorizing facts and answering questions on a test. It is the process of enhancing your ability to use information to understand of how things work and how to make them better. This course will enhance your ability to:

- Ask the right questions
- Frame good problems.
- Acquire information.
- Evaluate sources of information.
- Critically investigate & solve problems.
- Make choices among alternatives.
- Explain abstract ideas to others.
- Generalize to new situations.

### Pedagogy

The structure of this course is influenced by a taxonomy of cognitive skills developed by Benjamin Bloom. He identified six steps to the learning process students must complete to master a subject and organized them into a pyramid (see figure below) to show how more complex skills developed on a foundation of simpler ones. In this course, we will focus on remembering and understanding concepts outside of class, while in-class time will be focused on applying concepts.

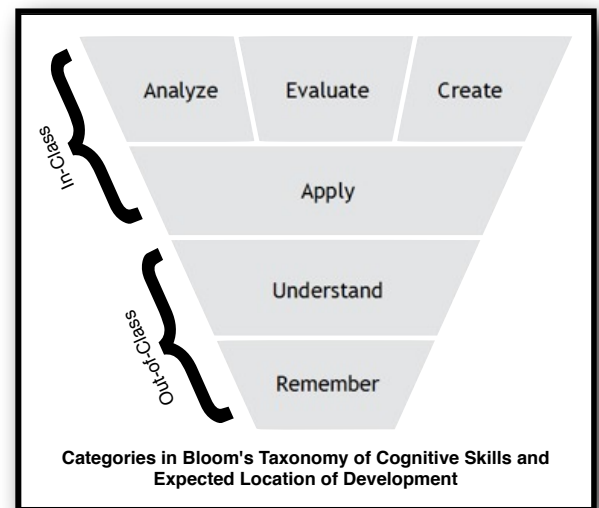
### Learning Objectives

Bloom translated his taxonomy into discrete and measurable actions called learning objectives, which are statements that start with an action (verb) associated with the intended skill and end with an object describing the knowledge that must be acquired or constructed. Learning objectives for each course topic are the basis for all instruction and assessment.

### Student Responsibilities

This learning philosophy and pedagogy imposes upon students the responsibility to:

1. Review the learning objectives for each topic.
2. Complete all assigned readings and exercises before class.
3. Ask the professor for assistance if they difficulty with specific learning objectives.
4. Attend class regularly, but only when they are fully prepared to participate.
5. Complete all course assignments by their deadlines (Late work is not accepted).
6. Review all feedback from the instructor, including feedback posted online.
7. Ask for clarification if instructions or feedback are not fully understood.
8. Finish the class (University policy on incompletes will be strictly enforced).
9. Inform the instructor beforehand if they cannot fulfill these responsibilities.



## CLASS POLICIES

### Academic Misconduct

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code, which is available for review online at: [http://www.umd.edu/vpsa/policies/student\\_conduct.php](http://www.umd.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php).

### Students With Disabilities

If you have a disability and feel you need accommodations in this course please present me with a letter from Disability Services for Students (DSS), Lommasson Center 154 (243-2243), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations.

## GRADING AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS



The grading system used in this course is distinguished from a traditional point-based grading system by the following principles:

1. **Pass/fail grading:** Students earn either full credit or no credit on an assignment depending on whether they meet specifications defined for each assignment.
2. **Tokens and Power-ups:** Students start with a single token they can exchange for different "power-ups" like resubmitting unsatisfactory work, buying out an exam, or additional experience points. More tokens can be earned via "side-quests."
3. **Quests for Knowledge:** Students select their own path to knowledge from a series of assignments bundled together in "Quests" to earn experience points.
4. **Leveling-up:** As students earn experience points from successful quests, they will level-up to a different letter grade for the course.

### Quests For Knowledge

The following are the quests for knowledge available at the start of the semester:

*Quest 1 (Trice a Celebration of Knowledge):* This quest consists of three independent short-answer tests of basic recall and understanding of course material. Students that receive a 70% or higher on an exam receive full credit. Each exam is worth up to 100 x.p. (300 x.p. total)

*Quest 2 (Simulation):* In this quest, students participate in teams in an online simulation called *Statecraft*. Your grade is based on weekly 200-word analytical memos linking your role in to the material we cover in class and participation (100 x.p.) with up to 50 x.p. more for performance.

*Quest 3 (Current Events Analysis):* In this quest, students will write three 2-page analyses of current events using the theories of international relations to describe and explain patterns of conflict and cooperation in international relations. (200 x.p.) Cannot be combined with Quest 4.

*Quest 4 (Policy Briefing):* In this quest, students complete a series of tasks to produce a six-page policy briefing that examines a major international issue and makes recommendations on how to address the issue considering institutional, ideational, and historical barriers (200 x.p.). Cannot be combined with Quest 3.

*Side-Quest 1 (Ye Olde Library Assignment):* Students passing a short library research assignment will receive an additional token to exchange for power-ups.

### Leveling Up

Your final grade is based on how much x.p. you earn. Each additional 100 experience points will result in leveling up on level. Levels will be translated to grades by the simple formula that Level 0-1 = F, Level 2 = D, Level 3 = C, Level 4 = B, and Level 5 = A.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

I reserve the right to make changes to this course schedule. Changes will be posted to Moodle. Material and assignments marked with (M) are on Moodle.

| Date  | Topic                                      | Assignment                                    |
|-------|--|---|
| 9/1   | Introduction; Distribution of Syllabus     |   |
| 9/3   | How to Think about International Relations | S & Z, Ch. 1                                  |
| 9/8   | The Realist Perspective                    | S & Z, Ch. 2; Drezner, Ch 5.                  |
| 9/10  | The Realist Perspective, Continued         | <b>Registration for Statecraft Simulation</b> |
| 9/15  | The Liberal Perspective                    | S & Z, Ch. 3; Drezner, Ch 6.                  |
| 9/17  | The Liberal Perspective, Continued         |   |
| 9/22  | The Identity Perspective                   | S & Z, Ch. 4; Drezner, Ch 7.                  |
| 9/24  | The Identity Perspective, Continued        |   |
| 9/29  | The Critical Perspectives                  | Drezner, Chs. 8-9                             |
| 10/1  | <b>Celebration of Knowledge #1</b>         |   |
| 10/6  | International Security                     | S & Z, Ch. 5                                  |
| 10/8  | Democratic Peace                           |   |
| 10/13 | WWI: A Century of IR Theory                |   |
| 10/15 | International Law                          | S & Z, Ch. 6                                  |
| 10/20 | Global Governance: IGOs                    | Readings TBD                                  |
| 10/22 | Global Governance: United Nations          | Readings TBD                                  |

| Date  | Topic   | Assignment              |
|-------|---|-------------------------|
| 10/27 | International Political Economy                     | S & Z, Ch. 7            |
| 10/29 | International Political Economy, Continued          |                         |
| 11/3  | International Terrorism                             | S & Z, Ch. 8            |
| 11/5  | <b>Celebration of Knowledge #2</b>                  |                         |
| 11/10 | World Environment: Pollution & Population           | S & Z, Ch. 9            |
| 11/12 | <i>The Climate Game and the World's Poor</i> (Film) |                         |
| 11/17 | Humanitarian Problems                               | S & Z, Ch. 10           |
| 11/19 | <i>Ghosts of Rwanda</i> (Film)                      | Power, "Bystanders" (M) |
| 11/24 | <i>Ghosts of Rwanda</i> (Film)                      |                         |
| 12/1  | Global Governance: NGOs & Human Rights              |                         |
| 12/3  | Identity in International Relations                 | S & Z, Ch. 11           |
| 12/8  | Forecasting the World of 2025                       | S & Z, Ch. 12           |
| 12/10 | <b>Celebration of Knowledge #3</b>                  |                         |

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

## QUESTS OF KNOWLEDGE MAP

| Week     | Quest 1: Exams<br>(300 x.p. total) | Quest 2: Simulation<br>(100 x.p.) | Quest 3: Current Events<br>Analyses (200 x.p.) | <u>OR</u> Quest 4: Policy Briefing<br>(200 x.p.) | Side Quests (4 tokens)   |
|----------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------|
| 1        |                                    |                                   |  |  | Free Token               |
| 2        |                                    |                                   |  |  |                          |
| 3        |                                    | 9/17: Memo #1                     |  | 9/18: Issue Selection                            |                          |
| 4        |                                    | 9/24: Memo #2                     |  |  | 9/25: Library Research   |
| 5        | 10/1: Exam (100 x.p)               | 10/3: Memo #3                     |  |  |                          |
| 6        |                                    | 10/10: Memo #4                    |  | 10/9: ID of Barriers                             |                          |
| 7        |                                    | 10/17: Memo #5                    | 10/16: Close Reading #1                        |  |                          |
| 8        |                                    | 10/24: Memo #6                    |  |  | 10/23: Wikipedia Article |
| 9        |                                    | 10/31: Memo #7                    |  |  |                          |
| 10       | 11/5: Exam (100 x.p)               | 11/6: Memo #8                     |  | 11/6: Annotated Bib.                             |                          |
| 11       |                                    | 11/13: Memo #9                    | 11/13: Close Reading #2                        |  |                          |
| 12       |                                    | 11/20: Memo #10                   |  |  |                          |
| 13       |                                    |                                   |  |  | 11/27: Policy Letter     |
| 14       |                                    |                                   | 12/6: Close Reading #3                         | 12/4: Final Paper                                |                          |
| 15       | 12/10: Exam (100 x.p)              |                                   |  |  |                          |
| Subtotal | / 300                              | / 100                             | /200   | /200   | / 4                      |
| Grade    | 0-100 (F)                          | 200 (D)                           | 300 (C)  | 400 (B)  | 500 (A)                  |