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PSC 230X.01: Introduction to International Relations

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Introduction to

International Relations

Class Location: [Social Science 344](#)

Meeting Time: MTWR 9:30-11:20 a.m.

Course Duration: June 28-July 30

Website: <http://courseware.umt.edu>

CRN (Add/Drop): 52267

Instructor: Eric H. Hines

Office: LA 349

Office Hours: MTWR 11:30-12:00

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International relationships are ... preordained to be clumsy gestures based on imperfect knowledge.

— Rebecca West, *The Strange Necessity*, ch. 10 (1928)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

International Relations (IR), the study of the conflict and cooperation in global politics, 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 the identity perspective. Each perspective offers different answers to the core questions of IR: *who gets what, when, and how in global politics*.

With this background, students gain a better understanding of the behavior of three key international actors — states, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations — as they address contemporary issues and current events in global politics. Students also gain a greater ability to proscribe the actions international actors should take in future situations and to defend their own perspective on international relations.

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

Learning is more than memorizing facts and answering questions on a test. It is using information to gain an understanding of how things work and how to make them better. In this course, learning will be defined as the process of enhancing your ability to:

- Ask the right questions and frame good problems,
- Acquire information and evaluate sources of information,
- Critically investigate and solve problems,
- Make choices among different alternatives,
- Explain concepts to others both orally and in writing and,
- Generalize to new situations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After this course, students are expected to be able:	This outcome will be assessed by:
Explain current events using concepts and patterns of inference from three major theoretical perspectives.	Writing Assignments 1-4 Current Events Discussion
Compile and compare explanations for current events at three distinct levels of analysis.	Writing Assignments 1-4 Clicker questions
Identify the underlying ethical positions informing the actions of others in international relations.	Writing Assignment 2 Clicker questions
Evaluate competing ethical claims about how international relations should be conducted.	Writing Assignments 2 & 4 Clicker questions
Defend held ethical commitments about how international relations should be conducted.	Writing Assignment 4
Resolve simulated conflicts using the major policy instruments available in international relations.	Global politics simulation Clicker questions
Place human behavior and cultural ideas into a global framework and explain complex interdependence.	Writing Assignment 3-4 Clicker questions
Identify the affects of the diverse ways humans structure their social, political, and cultural lives.	Writing Assignments 1-4 Clicker questions
Analyze and compare the rights and responsibilities of global citizenship in the 21st century.	Writing Assignment 4 Clicker questions

REQUIRED MATERIALS

All required texts are available on Blackboard. Students must purchase an *i>clicker remote* (ISBN: [9780716779391](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9780716779391)) online or [from the bookstore](#).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The following paragraphs outline the basic requirements for this course. More detailed information on specific assignments can be found under on Blackboard.

Simulation

Depending on enrollment, students will be assigned to groups representing nation-states in a simulation of global politics. Students will be graded on participation and engagement.

Clickers

In lieu of examinations, students will be asked a series of clicker questions throughout the semester. Some questions are graded for points and others are scored for participation only.

Current Events

Students are expected to be current on current events during the five-week term. Students should read the World Section of the *New York Times*. To facilitate discussion, students will be sent articles prior to class and clicker questions will be asked about them.

Short Papers

Students will write a set of four short papers (2-3 pages each) that are due on Thursdays at midnight. *All papers must be submitted through Blackboard.* In the first paper, students identify their IR perspective. In the second, students use theory to explain a current event. In the third, students justify the international community's response to the Rwandan Genocide. In the fourth, students proscribe solutions to a global issue using IR theory. Full instructions and grading rubrics for each assignment are on blackboard.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have the responsibility to:

1. Attend class regularly.
2. Complete assigned readings before class.
3. Complete assignments by their deadlines.
4. Inform the instructor beforehand of any reasons why they are unable to do this.
5. Complete all requirements within the timeframe of the semester. University policy on incompletes will be strictly enforced.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

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://life.umt.edu/VPSA/name/StudentConductCode>.

STATEMENT ON DISABILITIES:

I encourage students with documented disabilities to discuss appropriate accommodations with me. 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

Points are distributed between short papers (600), the simulation (200), and clickers (200).

Grading uses this scale: A = 1000-930, A- = 929-900, B+ = 870-899, B = 830-869, B- = 800-829, C+ = 770-799, C = 730-769, C- = 700-729, D+ = 670-699, D = 630-669, D- = 600-639, F = < 600.

COURSE SCHEDULE

I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule.

Prologue

06/28/10	Topic: Course Introduction; <i>State of Nature & Foreign Policy Simulations</i>
06/29/10	Topic: Why we disagree about International Relations. Required Reading: Nau, "Why We Disagree About International Relations"
<i>Introduction: Explaining and Predicting Conflict and Cooperation</i>	
06/30/10	Topic: Perspectives on the Prisoner's Dilemma: Realism, Liberalism, and Identity Required Reading: Jack Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories" <i>Recommended Reading:</i> Stephan Walt, "One World, Many Theories"
07/01/10	Topics: Prisoner's Dilemma Cont.; Introduction to Global Politics Simulation
<i>Part I: A Brief History of International Conflict and War</i>	
07/06/10	Topic: Global Perspectives on History
07/07/10	Topic: The Causes of WWI and WWII
07/08/10	Topic: The Origins and End of the Cold War Required Reading: Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" Writing Assignment #1 Due at Midnight
07/12/10	Topic: Global Integration and Global Terrorism Required Reading: Huntington, "Clash of Civilizations" <i>Recommended Reading:</i> Fukuyama, "The End of History?"
07/13/10	Simulation (Two Turns)
<i>Part II: Globalization and the World Economy</i>	
07/14/10	Topic: What is Globalization and How does it Work? Required Reading: Friedman, "It's a Flat World, After All"
07/15/10	Topic: Trade, Development, and Extreme Poverty Writing Assignment #2 Due at Midnight
<i>Part III: Fragmenting and Unifying Issues in Global Politics</i>	
07/19/10	Topic: Ethnic, religious, and national conflicts (Film: Ghosts of Rwanda) Required Reading: Samantha Powers, "Bystanders to Genocide"
07/20/10	Topic: Ethnic, religious, and national conflicts (Continued).
07/21/10	Simulation (Two Turns)
07/22/10	Topic: The Environment and Managing Collective Goods Writing Assignment #3 Due at Midnight
07/26/10	Topic: Can global governance end global anarchy? (Read Nau, Chapter 15)
07/27/10	Simulation (Two Turns)
<i>Conclusion</i>	
07/28/10	Topic: Are Democracies More Peaceful? (Film: Why We Fight) Topic: "Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?"
07/29/10	Required Reading: Gause, "Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?" Writing Assignment #4 Due at Midnight

