

# Introduction into International Relations

Pol\*103 CRN 1162 3 credits,

January 17 to May 14, 2018

A distance learning, on-line course

Richard Patrick, Instructor

## I. Scope of course

This course examines international politics and has a focus on the United States in its superpower role. Relationships between nations which range from constructive engagement and peacemaking to war making will be examined. The Vietnam, Middle East, Balkan, Northern Ireland, and other conflicts will serve as case studies for understanding the forces shaping international politics. Present day topics concerning the United Nations, international terrorism, global capitalism, and others will be studied.

Course text: How the World Works, R. Bova, 3rd. ed., Pearson pub.

## II. Welcome

Welcome to this course. It is constructed to be supportive and encouraging of your interest in the study of global international relations. Whatever advice you may want to communicate to me at any time to enhance your success in the course will be taken into consideration.

This course has been constructed to foster discovery and learning about range of topics and issues. It requires individual effort from each of you. Please recognize and remember that there is an ongoing expectation that you are willing and able to be an independent learner within the unique circumstances of an on-line distance learning course. Let me assure you that I will be regularly communicating with you as to how you might/can be self initiating for achievement in the course.

## III. Pol\*103 International Relations learning objectives

I am hearten by your interest in wanting to learn about significant political events at the global level. Indeed the world is in tumult with upheavals that have immediate and/or potential impacts on the United States.

In guiding your learning, the general objectives are 1. expand your awareness of international tensions, challenges, and issues, 2. become more informed and knowledgeable about them, 3. learn the course's concepts to apply in analyzing them, and 4. perhaps even become active in related civic organizations with an international scope and goals.

The course can provide a framework for other college majors such as in businesses with international clients, military studies, criminology with a national or international security focus, etc. It is part of the Gen Ed Competency: Social Phenomena

Fulfills a “D” course requirement for students who enrolled in a degree program prior to the Fall 2016 semester.

You will discover in this syllabus below that there many specific objectives for each unit we study. These objectives inform you on what the course is about and what you should achieve, with motivated, diligent effort by the end of the semester. No one should be in a fog as to what can be learned in this course.

### **Studying IR broadly**

With a world in tumult and the U.S. being confronted by assorted perceived threats, our study of global events is no easy task, nor will we easily form generalizations in making sense of “how the world works.” What we will be doing is learning ideas/concepts towards some understandings— which changes as global events shift. So, I commend all of you for having an interest and motivation in our daunting study of global international relations.

Given the complexities our our subject matter, I provide and require you to learn from more than just the material of the course text book—which is a useful/helpful beginning base. This course provides many internet links and readings for studying IR broadly, more deeply, and for useful insights. You are required to view the internet links and there will be Discussion questions for your postings as a framework in your thinking.

Note importantly that the Final and research papers require a **synthesis of the concepts of the course to the questions are posed**. And be assured that I will provide guidelines and sample topics with questions as support for you to engage in a “higher level” of understanding beyond glib, simplified, conventional notions. Note, too, that higher scores/grades for your study are based on your motivation and effort to engage in synthesized understanding. The expectation is that you must go beyond relying on Wikipedia and similar shortcut sources. Past students have achieved solid successful learning and grades. You can/will likely also do so.

### Reclamation of “buried” facts

The assigned reading begin with Chapter 2 and its version of “history.” Revisionism is an approach in thinking anew about old facts with more recent tools/concepts and thus gaining more “nuggets” of understanding. In other words, we are like miners going into history’s underground to reclaim overlooked, passed-up resources. The generalizations of your discussion postings and the exams will have higher scores or “value added” if you **bring newly-minted concepts to polish-up old issues in IR to present-day questions**.

For example, we will dig into the concept of “liberal institutionalism” in polishing-up that “mineral vein” towards more productive usage of that conceptual resource.

Internet links and other related sources will be provided as some of the tools in your re-visioning/re-thinking ongoing IR issues/questions.

## IV. Grading standards and application

Scores and grades are for assigned, required activities and are useful/necessary as indications of the quality of your efforts and learning. Areas for scores and grades: discussion board postings, the research paper, and exams. I provide feedback by assigning a numerical score to each of your discussion postings. When warranted, my feedback will be provided as to how a particular posting could be improved for a higher score.

The following is the grading schema for the learning activities indicated in the syllabus.

The exams and course paper are assigned the standard "A" through "F" grades. Exams are weighed at 40% of the course grade, discussions combined and the paper are weighted at 30% each. Discussion postings are scored from 10 to 0 points.

**Note** that your course grade is not solely from the averaging of scores. As is an instructor's responsibility, I look for signs of a pattern of progressive improvement for determining a course grade. So having a momentary slump does not destined you to a low grade, but the converse also can occur.

In other words, a high term paper does not resultantly "save" a weak exam product that might indicate weak understanding of important course concepts. As indicated in the "Welcome" section, "synthesized learning" from applying and integrating concepts to the course's questions is the key.

#### Discussion postings scoring general criteria

In responding to required questions for discussing, your comments should connect with the assigned reading material and related ideas you have obtained other significant sources, such as from the Internet which must be cited.

Try to be concise and stay on topic as to the question posed. If the question logically leads to another area, make the connection clearly as you develop your position.

Do not ramble or sermonize, as in a rant. I know we each may feel strongly about various issues, but endeavor to develop your position logically, and based on facts or data, that can be verified from sources you cite.

Be a critical thinker. Ask yourself if you're being objective about the topic. Your moral or normative orientations are relevant, but you need to decide how much they should shape your position on a particular question or issue.

I recommend that you check this link to a Ted Talk which is very informative about the useful elements in critical thinking: "<https://youtu.be/dltUGF8GdTw>"

Overall, then, I will be assessing your comments as to a. reflecting that you accurately read the assigned material that is related to the question, b. your inclusion of facts that make for sound generalizations, c. the logic of your position, and d. independent and original thoughts brought to the discussion question for all of us to be challenged by as a community of learners.

If you self-question my allotted score to a posting, ask yourself if the posting actually does include all the required elements required of a question when you might want to appeal a score.

As to points which will be allotted to a particular posting, the following are other considerations/criteria in my grading your discussion analyses. When a posting is rated a 8 or higher, then I do not usually provide further explanation.

A discussion posting which is allotted a 10 to 9, which is an "A," entails what I spelled out above. It references terms from the assigned readings, and from news events. An "A" posting has details and logically, more fully develops ideas. It also contributes new with independently thought out ideas in response to the topic or questions.

Analysis which is rated an 8.9 to 8 or "B" includes some terms, but may also have errors in what is said and is not entirely accurate as to what is described. Some of the generalizations may not be adequately developed and thus is less informative and persuasive.

A "C," that is, a 7.9 to 7 rated posting is somewhat general and displays only sketchy information about the topic. Comments less than a 7 lack elements of these 3 levels of and is thus very weak and is typically underdeveloped in constructing generalizations. Lower grades may also be because the required discussion was posted very late or not at all.

#### **More on scores and grades:**

A—90-100—10-9 points (to a posting)

Analysis is excellent with many connections to course concepts. Has supporting examples or evidence, unusual insights, and independent reasoning in the explanation.

Information is factually correct and provides verifiable details from cited sources.  
Conclusions logically following from the provided information.

**B—80-89—8-8.9 points (to a posting)**

Good explanation which uses pertinent supporting examples and reasoning. Most information is factually correct and several valid generalizations, but also has some weak or under-developed propositions

**C—70-79—7-7.9 points(to a posting)**

A mix of some solid and some weak generalizations which meets minimum required by the assignment, but some statements are questionable and insufficiently developed. Sketchy or minimal application of pertinent course concepts.

**D—60 – 69—6-6.9 points (to a posting)**

Posting does not meet the minimum required for assignment by lacking application of concepts and not pertinent to the topic or question. Factual inaccuracies or reasoning flaws, and response is too general and lacks specific evidence overall.

**F— 59-0—5.9-0 points (to a posting)**

Posting does not directly address the discussion questions or assigned topic. The response fails to support assertions with relevant examples, major flaws in reasoning, explanations are unclear, displays inadequate understanding of main concepts. Did not complete the assignment.

(Note: This grading format is solely for the instructor's political science courses.)

And by the way, I encourage valid, considerately made corrections to anyone's comments made in the postings. I certainly am not infallible and if I state something that is erroneous, or from anyone else for that matter, then, please make your contribution in correcting any misinformation with verifiable info.

As to your concerns about your grades, I will, of course, discuss any of your questions via e-mail and, if the matter is a generalized concern, I will post any clarifications in my Instructor's Add-ons (follow-up) file.

While grades are an understandable concern, please be reassured that I am open to constructive, confidential e-mail discussions as to a fair grade regarding your various efforts. So try not to stress over them too, too much. While most of our email communication will occur through the course's formatted system, more confidential matters can be communicated via my other email address: [richard.Patrick00@gmail.com](mailto:richard.Patrick00@gmail.com).

## **Paper Assignments**

A short paper is required and I will indicate its requirements and due dates through the Announcement file. Summaries of papers are to be posted on the Discussion Board and I will announce in advance the specific due date.

To re-emphasize, the guidelines indicated above for discussion postings concerning critical thinking, logic, verifiable facts, etc. also apply to the paper assignments.

**Extra credit**---While I prefer students to focus more on putting the time in to doing well on the assigned activities and thus get maximum points, some may be interested in extra credit and there may be optional, related study which might be undertaken, but after mutual, written agreement between instructor and student.

## **V. Other college policies and standards**

For information on the college academic policies and your "due process" as a student, please check out the following link as well as note these other provisions.

<http://mxcc.edu/catalog/academic-policies>

The following provisions are required by the college for your notification. Academic Standards."At Middlesex CC we expect the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in accordance with the Board of Trustees' Proscribe Conduct Policy in Section 5.2.1 of the Board of Trustees' Manual. This policy prohibits cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, unauthorized access to examinations or course materials, plagiarism, and other proscribe activities. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's ideas(s) or phrases(s) and representing that/those ideas as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally."

ADA Accommodations Note. "Students with physical or learning disabilities, who may require accommodations, are encouraged to contact the Counseling Office. After disclosing the nature of the disability, students are urged to discuss their

needs with individual instructors. This should be done at the beginning of each semester. Instructors, in conjunction with appropriate college officials, will provide assistance and/or accommodation only to those students who have completed this process."

Withdrawal Policy---" You may withdraw from this class any time before the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> week of the semester. A completed and signed withdrawal form must be on file in the Records Office by the deadline in order to receive a "W" on your transcript. If you fail to complete this process on time, you will receive a letter grade at the end of the semester, which will include zeroes for any work not submitted. Course withdrawals may affect financial aid and veteran's benefits. Please make this decision carefully and with the help of your advisor. See the Academic Calendar and the College Catalog for specific dates and procedures regarding the withdrawal process."

## VI. College Internet Access

You may look for journal articles in electronic databases from the college or from home. To use computers at the college, you must set up a computer account. You will need your student ID number, also known as your Banner number. Ask a staff person the library or the computer lab about how to do this. When using a

computer from outside the college, you will gain access to the databases through a Proxy Server. You can contact the college's reference librarians for assistance in learning how to access its resources from outside the college.

You will find many excellent and useful databases listed there. Two databases which may be most useful are MasterFile Premier and Advanced Academic ASAP. Each database includes online help.

## VII. Main Course Study Requirements

1. Each week you must **often check "Announcements,"** in the course's web site for your assigned, required study activities, related readings, and due dates. This is a must; so regularly check the "Announcements" as it will contain updates and reminders regarding weekly activities.

2. IMPORTANT: I provide further elaboration/feedback on course concepts and discussion topics in an "Instructor's Add-ons" file, which you must read regularly.

3. Be aware that some of the ideas/info from postings and especially the Instructor's Add-ons will later reappear in some variation in the exam questions. Taking notes from other student comments of our shared discussion postings can be useful information for more fully formed answers in the exams.

4. On-line study is an active work-in-progress. There will be occasional modifications due to emerging newsworthy items and issues that are relevant to our study. Rest assured that notice of modifications will be given in advance and will not deviate significantly from the general learning activities

5. Also, I want to alert you in advance that sometimes a particular article may be difficult to read due to formatting or other screen presentations features of your computer. You may have to enlarge the print on some articles for better readability and attempt other adjustments to the transmitted material.

Required viewing of internet links may necessitate that you copy and paste the cited link as sometime just clicking on it with your cursor doesn't do the job. But persist to make it work out for your learning.

I suggest that you call the Distance Learning at 860-343-5756 for assistance in these technical difficulties. But by hanging in there and getting assistance, you'll improve in dealing with these factors.

## **X. Instructor Communication and Contact**

Most weekly course communication should be through the "Announcements" file on the Home page and course email system. I will endeavor to respond to your general messages within 24-48 hours. There will be an opportunity prior to the exams for on-campus, voluntary, review with classmates which I post in Announcements as to when and where.

Graded assessment on assignments, and particularly exams, will be posted in your Grade book. Your discussion postings scores are indicated with the posting.

## **XI. Course units with reading and internet links**

I. Introduction and looking at global challenges/issues



A. Why enrolled in the course? Interests? Courses taken? Issues that you are aware of at the global level? What concerns you in those issues?

B. Instructor's background, interests, and advocacy of constructive politics within international relations

## II. Unit 1—20th century history info for studying International Relations

“Those who do not learn **history** are doomed to repeat it.”—Santayana

Reading—Chapter 2, course text

View Internet links:

a. F. Zakaria on less unipolarity: <https://youtu.be/vG8Fmi1Ys3I>,

b. W. Wohlforth on unipolarity: [https://youtu.be/V7ULmu\\_G-Uk](https://youtu.be/V7ULmu_G-Uk)

c. multipolarities, [https://youtu.be/IjGD\\_qFgPhE](https://youtu.be/IjGD_qFgPhE)

Learning objectives:

- A. Identify key historical developments in the foundations/precedents for the present “international system”.
- B. Compare the differences and limitations to collective, security arrangements for a “balance of power” for patterns of “order.”
- C. Specify factors contributing to security arrangements and undermining them.
- D. Apply concepts such unipolarity/hegemonic stability, "populistic nationalism," "eurocentricism," “Cold War,” international sheriff/"robocop," "illusionary optimism," "superpower retrenchment/retreat," and others in answering unit's Discussion questions.

## III. Unit 2—Thinking about world politics

Reading—Chapter 1, course text; view, optional links:

a. Structural realism (J. Mearsheimer): <https://youtu.be/RXlIDh6rD18>

b. constructivism summary. <https://youtu.be/uOkSmfcNnsc>

c. “neo-Marxism” example: <https://youtu.be/dB7hrQUgIcw>

Learning objectives: Part 1:

A. Apply IR's models: "offensive and defensive realism, liberal institutionalism, constructivism, Neo-marxism, feminism" to present day global tensions/issues.

B. Critique/evaluate the IR premise of "unitary, rational state actor"

IV, Unit 3---Part 2:

C. Demonstrate the differences "grand theory and middle-level theories" in a positivist science" explaining of an historical or a present global tension.

D. Identify the forms of politics such as "hard, soft, and smart power."

E. Explain why the "Kantian Triangle" formula has a "eurocentric" bias in terms of prescribing "peace" and its limitation.

F. Demonstrate understanding of models by applying to Discussion questions

V. Unit 4—Sources of US foreign policies and practices

Reading—Chapter 3, course text

Optional, viewing videos:

a. PBS summary on President Trump's foreign policy (year 1)--<http://www.pbs.org/video/trump-abroad-1514504364/>

b. E. Cohen: <https://youtu.be/VHWImF6wXQU>

c. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/28/us/politics/trump-world-diplomacy.html>

Part 1

1. Executive human agency
2. Presidential personality/character and President Trump
3. "Fake news" in international politics to trump facts and justice:" the case of Mexico

Learning Objectives:

1. Gain information on the major foreign policies of President Trump.
2. Assess President Trump's similarities and divergences in his foreign policies and practices from recent preceding presidents.
3. Identify personality/character traits which correspond with President Trump's foreign policies and practices.

VI. Unit 5 Part 2

4. Interest groups, lobbyists, public opinion, media, Congress
5. Bureaucrat politics' "bedfellows" in foreign affairs

Video: "the Israel lobby," <https://youtu.be/rzXS3tmZrcU>

Learning objectives:

1. Learn about how lobbies shape foreign policy.
2. Identify any correspondence of foreign affairs lobbies and interest groups with a president's specific foreign policy and practice.
3. Assess the related conditions in which various foreign affairs lobbies have less impacts on a foreign policy issue.

VII. **FIRST EXAM**—March 9-11—(One 4 hour session)

VIII. Unit 6—Military interventionisms: "contained" wars, proxy wars, clandestine insurgency, rebellions, and counter-terrorism

Readings—Chapter 4, Chapter 6, pp.195-200

View internet links on Secretary of Defense (former General) J. Mattis on Middle East conflicts and on asymmetric, hybrid wars:

Hal on "grand strategy"

- A. Iraq, Afghanistan, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Chile, Iran, and else where
- B. Proxy war, clandestine interventionism—reading: pps-195-200
- C. Justifications for militancy—philosophical, legal, "darwinian," "mediated" propaganda, "bureaucratic/institutional," and economic.

Learning Objectives:

1. Assess claims of "democratic peace theory" and identify how it applies to unstable regions of the world.
2. Apply concepts such as "hard, soft, and smart power" forms/variations to 21st century hybrid warmaking.
3. Differentiate the claims and limitations of international politics pursuing a "grand strategy," and "middle range strategy."
4. Identify military alliances when enemies become partners in waging war.

IX. Unit 7—Economic globalization's politics

Reading—Chapter 7, course text

Learning objectives:

1. Assess how economics can be a productive tool for American f.p. with examples and explain how/why.
2. Assess how economics has been a counter-productive tool in American f.p. with examples and explain how/why.

1. The political uses of globalization's tools
2. Controversies, issues, and backlash

#### X. Unit 8. B. Part 2

Sanctions Reading: pgs. 193-195

View videos: a. <https://youtu.be/kJNECxeeSLk>

b, Iran de-nuke agreement: <https://youtu.be/7odHEo2cqQU>

1. Sanctions—types: generalized and targeted “smart” sanctions
2. Russia, Myanmar, Venezuela, elsewhere—issues and effects

#### XI. Course paper—

A. Guidelines—Instructor sign off/ok, first draft, and final submission

**Written approval no later than April 15**

B. Topics

#### XII. Unit 9--- Global “Rule of Law”

Readings—Chapter 5, Chapter 6, pp. 190-192;

“From Pariah to Partner: The US Integrated Reform Mission in Burma

Case Study: Defense, Development and Diplomatic (“3D”) Learning from Complex Crisis,” United States Institute of Peace, 9.14.2017

View internet links;

IQsquared debate---<https://youtu.be/EW9UY0ajkkk>

- A. The United Nations—global politics’ pawn, victim, or steward
- B. IGOs, NGOs, global philanthropies, etc.
- C. Institutional liberalism re-considered—The International Criminal Court

D. Confrontation with Russia: <https://youtu.be/-pUj3Vqptx8>

#### Objectives

1. Understand the role of International Court of Justice in a superpower’s global politics.
2. Identify how NGO’s, such as NED (National Endowment for Democracy) function as alternative instruments of non-state foreign policy.
3. Recognize how IGOs have/can ameliorate intra-state conflicts as in Nicaragua’s civil war and in peace-keeping missions.

4. Understand how international agreements with “positive sum” politics bridge issues/conflicts between nations.
5. Identify complicit/contributing presidential politics which enables foreign countries' meddling and disinformation in domestic politics.
6. Analyze the politics of enforcing human rights norms.

### XIII. Unit 10. Transnational politics

Reading—Chapter 6, pp. 190-192.

Chapter 8, pp.274-283, Chapter 9, pp299-301

1. The Internet web and social media as political tool---"weaponizing civil dialogue"
2. Public opinion politics towards Cuba---"cascading scapegoating"
3. Climate change politics

Read internet link—

a.<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/17/technology/instagram-russian-trolls.html>

b. Chechnya, Instagram, and sanctions:

[http://wapo.st/2ld9nOo?tid=ss\\_mail&utm\\_term=.c429a8dec377](http://wapo.st/2ld9nOo?tid=ss_mail&utm_term=.c429a8dec377)

### Learning objectives

1. Identify how global NGOs such as Human Rights Watch, etc., and UN monitoring facilitate norms oriented regimes and resultant strains for a country's sovereignty claims.
2. Identify where and why the United States pursued a “responsibility to protect” (R2P) foreign policy.
3. Assess the US's effects from its politics toward transnational climate change efforts.

XIV, **FINAL EXAM**—May 11-13—(One-4 hour session)