

Linn Benton Community College
PS-205 Syllabus, Winter 2017
Introduction to International Relations
CRN 33225

Instructor: Michele Colborn Harris

Office: SSH 206

Class Hours: 11:00 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. Tuesday/Thursday in NSH-209

Office Hour: 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Thursday (or by appointment)

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Course Description

Introduces analyses of current world events; the nature of the international political and economic systems; and alternative perspectives, strategies, and approaches to contemporary world problems. Topics include global diversity; poverty and economic development; environmental and resource issues; and war and peace.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- articulate an understanding of origins, development and character of contemporary international relations.
- identify culturally and historically defined meanings of difference in the identity politics of the worlds' nations.
- analyze and explain the base issues that dominate international relations.
- examine and interpret current world events.
- synthesize diverse perspectives on and approaches to the basic issues of international relations.

Text and Resources

International Relations, 11th Edition by J.C.W. Pevehouse and J.S. Goldstein (REQUIRED)

Additional readings and resources will be listed under the Readings and Assignments link on Moodle.

Discussion of current events occurs at each class meeting. Daily news gathering is key to success in this course. I will not recommend a particular news sources but major print news outlets such as the New York Times, the Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times are reputable places to start.

Attendance in class is essential.

Methods of Instruction and Evaluation

There is no expectation that students have prior knowledge of the subject. However, there is an expectation that students enrolled in the course are interested in pursuing the content to further their own understanding of the unique features of international politics and economy.

In addition to lectures, much of our class time will be spent engaging in discussion and viewing and analyzing video and web-based content. This course will be demanding and absences are costly in terms of the loss of opportunity to master the content. Participation earns a grade, and absent students cannot participate. Please plan to complete all readings as assigned and attend all class meetings. I do not reteach the material during office hour, students need to be in class **every day**.

All quizzes are unscheduled, and taken at the beginning of class.

The research components of this course require students to explore the political, economic, social and cultural reality of an assigned non-Western nation. The goal is to build a knowledge base about the challenges facing less developed nations within the global community and examine the roles of various state and non-state actors in contributing to, or hindering, the sovereignty of developing nations.

Grades

All grading is on a straight scale: 90-100% = A, 80-89%=B, 70-79%=C, 60-69%=D, 0-59%=F. The grade book will be available to students on Moodle. Total points possible: 300

Assignments:

Quizzes (8 x 10 points each) = 80 points

Nation Data Report = 20 points

Improving the State of the Nation Report = 20 points

Research Paper = 100 points

Conference Presentation = 20 points

Participation = 50 points

Reflection = 10 points

Late assignments: Late work is not accepted; however, papers may be turned in early. No quiz may be made up.

Written Assignment Requirements

ALL written assignments must be word-processed/typed, double-spaced format with no larger than 12-point font, printed on white paper. No presentation or folder covers, just stapled in upper left hand corner. Written work must conform to college writing standards (such as: grammar, punctuation, spelling and organization).

Writing Resources

If you need help, please go to the Learning Center. Do not wait until the last minute.

Academic Issues

Plagiarism – This is defined as attempting to gain an unfair advantage, by presenting the work of others as your own. Consequences for cheating or plagiarism include receiving a zero on the assignment and a referral to the Dean of Social Sciences.

Support – Students who may need accommodations due to documented disabilities, or who have medical information which the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in an emergency, should speak with the instructor during the first week of class. If you believe you may need accommodations, but are not yet registered with Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR), please go to <http://linnbenton.edu/cfar> for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1 (Jan 10/12)

- Introduction to International Relations
- By Jan 12, read Chapter 1 of *International Relations*

Week 2 (Jan 17/19)

- Realist Theories
- By Jan 17, read Chapter 2 of *International Relations*
- Nation assignments are made

Week 3 (Jan 24/26)

- Liberal & Social Theories
- By Jan 24, read Chapter 3 of *International Relations*

Week 4 (Jan 31/Feb 2)

- Foreign Policy
- By Jan 31, read Chapter 4 of *International Relations*
- Nation Data Report due Feb 2

Week 5 (Feb 7/9)

- International Conflict
- By Feb 7, read Chapter 5 of *International Relations*

Week 6 (Feb 14/16)

- Military Force & Terrorism
- By Feb 14, read Chapter 6 of *International Relations*
- Improving the State of the Nation Report due Feb 16

Week 7 (Feb 21/23)

- International Organization, Law and Human Rights
- By Feb 21, read Chapter 7 of *International Relations*

Week 8 (Feb 28/Mar 2)

- International Trade
- By Feb 28, read Chapter 8 of *International Relations*

Week 9 (Mar 7/9)

- The North-South Gap
- By Mar 7, read Chapter 12 of *International Relations*

Week 10 (Mar 14/16)

- Conference Presentations
- Forum for Issues and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Research Paper Due Mar 14

Week 11 (Mar 21/23) – FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, 12:30 – 2:20 p.m.

- Attendance is Mandatory
- Discussion & Reflection
- Reflection Paper Due

Assignments

Nation Data Report – 2 pages

Using websites listed on Moodle (United Nations), research your assigned nation. The focus of this report is an overview of the nation, including their type of government, geographic location and type of economy. What is the quality of life for citizens of your nation? These are measured by data as to the literacy rate, infant mortality rate, access to medical care and by economic measures such as GDP per capita (the total value of the nation's production of goods and services divided by the nation's population). Who are their enemies and allies? Are there any current events related to your nation that would assist you in your search?

Write two typewritten page, (double-spaced), identifying the nation's issues and bringing together the various information obtained to provide an introductory overview of your nation. DO NOT CUT AND PASTE FROM YOUR SOURCES.

Improving the State of the Nation Report – 2-3 pages

Using your Nation Data Report as a starting point, identify at least one serious issue (political, economic, social, environment, cultural) requiring immediate action. Explain the nature of the issue, the contributing factors, and the challenges to finding a reasonable or acceptable resolution. Identify possible solutions and resources that might contribute to a successful resolution. Cite your sources.

Research Paper – 8–10 pages

Prepare an in-depth nation-state report, 8-10 pages in length, written in APA style. Please see the Writing Center for resources if unfamiliar with APA style. This paper will provide the foundation for the culminating exercise, involving presentation of each student's research to the class in the form of an international conference simulation. Papers must provide the following information on the assigned nation:

- Governmental structure and brief political history
- Socio-economic characteristics
- Geo-political considerations
- Identification of a current issue of critical importance to this nation (famine, war, deforestation, etc.). This issue may differ from the one the student identified previously in the Improving the State of the Nation Report.
- Present a realistic, workable solution to alleviate (if not solve) the issue.

The research paper must cite a **minimum** of one academically-appropriate reference per page. A ten-page paper must have at least ten references. A complete bibliography is required. Papers should be stapled in the upper-left corner, no folders. References must be scholarly/academic: examples include political science journals such as *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy* or *Political Science Review*; statistics compiled by reputable sources such as the United Nations. Check with the instructor if unsure, preferably during office hours.

Conference Presentation

Each student assumes the role of “political advisor” for their assigned nation. As an “expert” on the needs of your nation, your presentation (limited to five minutes) will be to present a persuasive argument to your fellow advisors for assistance to your nation. The assistance you seek might be economic, military, technological or any other type. Your task is to convince your colleagues that assisting your nation serves the collective good. Do not read a statement, be prepared to speak using minimal notes.

Participation

Students earn participation points in several ways: coming to class prepared to ask questions or participate in discussion. Answering questions posed in class. Assisting each other in mastering the content. The goal is for students to be active participants in learning.

Reflection Paper – 1 page

In a single page, examine your experience as a student in this course. What did you learn? What was most important/useful to you? What might you have done differently if you repeated the course? Did this course broaden your knowledge base as to the challenges other nations face?