

Introduction to International Politics
231 Political Science
Dr. Forrest Qingshan Tan
Office: RT 1749
MC 405
Email: q.tan@csuohio.edu

Office Hours:
Mon. and Wed. 3-4 pm
or by appointment

Course Objectives:

This is an introductory course designed to introduce to you the concepts, theories, and issues of international politics. Students will acquire the basic knowledge of international relations theories, the evolution of the world political and economic systems and the current state of the world affairs. The course will take up such topics as war and peace, economic prosperity and development, North-South relations, international trade and businesses, regional integration and development and environmental issues. This course will relate concepts and terms of international politics, theory and history to contemporary events and situations whenever possible, and discuss their utilities in explaining world events. In addition, this course will familiarize students with the nature of our international system and will prepare our students with better understanding and grips of major world events that are confronting us today.

Required text:

Joshua Goldstein, International Relations, Pearson Longman, 8th addition, 2007.

Students must keep abreast of world events for this class. Students may achieve this by reading the New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, or the Washington Post. You should also watch national television news programs, the recommended ones being CNN's Prime Time News or the PBS News Hour.

One objective of this course is to encourage you to have a good grasp of the course readings and regularly attend the lectures. To achieve this end, short surprise quizzes will be given on the readings. They will make up 20% of your final grade. There will be a mid-term worth 30%, and a final, 50%.

Course topics, schedules and readings:

Week One: Understanding International Relations

1. Globalization of International Relations: Actors and Levels of Analysis (Goldstein, chapter one: The study of IR)
2. Development of international system (chapter one: History)

Week Two: Power Politics: Realism and international security

1. The rise of modern states and state actors (chapter one: Actors and influence)

Discussion: Vanishing state sovereignty?

2. Concept of power and bargaining (chapter two: power and bargaining)

Discussion: Is China a global power:

Week Three: War and Balance of Power

1. Balance of power and Alliance (chapter two: the international system and alliances)
2. Theories of war (chapter five:)

Discussion: U.S. Post-Cold War alliance: World Politics,. Cht. 20, 26, 28

Week Four: Military strength

1. Concept of conventional and nuclear capabilities (chapter six).

This section might need two classes.

Discussion: New Nuclear Era: A threat to peace?

Week Five: Foreign policy

1. Theories of foreign policy making (chapter four: Decision making)
2. Substate actors and public opinion (chapter four: Substate actors and U.S. foreign policy)

Discussion: Should public opinion influence foreign Policy:

Week Six: International Law and organizations

1. International organization (chapter seven: The United Nations 2. Non-UN organizations (chapter seven: international organization)

2. International law (chapter seven: international law and law and sovereignty)

Discussion: United Nations:

Week Seven: Alternatives to power politics

1. Revival of idealism and peace studies (chapter three: Idealism and Peace studies)
2. Feminism (chapter seven: feminism and postmodernism)

Discussion: Peace instead of war:

Mid-term exam.

Week Eight: International Economic System

1. Liberalism and mercantilism (chapter eight).
2. The Bretton Woods system

Discussion: New IPE:

Week Nine: International Business

1. Trade (chapter eight: chapter 8); GATT (chapter eight: Cooperation and Trade Regime)
2. International Currency (chapter nine: About Money and the Currency System)

State Financial Strength and MNCs (chapter nine: State Financial Positions and Multinational Business).

Discussion: the role of MNCs,

Week Ten: Integration (chapter ten)

This section might take two classes.

Discussion, European Union and the US relations:

Week Eleven: North-South relations

1. Theories of accumulation (chapter twelve: Poverty and Theories of Accumulation).
2. Imperialism (chapter twelve: Imperialism)
3. The state of south (chapter twelve: The State of the South).

Discussion: Would aid solve developing problems?

Week Twelve: International Development

1. Tigers' model (chapter Thirteen: Experiences)
2. Authoritarian and democratic development (chapter thirteen: Lessons)
3. Foreign assistance and human rights (chapter thirteen: Foreign Assistance)

Discussion: Is an Asian development Model?: World Politics, 8, 30.

Week Thirteen: Global environment

1. Natural resources and population (chapter eleven: Natural Resources and Population)
2. Managing the environment (chapter eleven: Interdependence and the Environment and Managing the Environment)

Discussion: Overpopulation and environment:

Week Fourteen: Conclusion

1. Summary (chapter fourteen: Postscript)

Discussion: Globalization: Towards a new world order?

Week Fifteen: review and final exam.