

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES

BLHV-240-01  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

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Center for Cont. and Prof. Education  
3101 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA  
Thursdays, 6:15-8:55 PM

### Overview

This course is designed to provide students with a basic framework for understanding the nature of contemporary international relations. The first part covers the intellectual traditions and classical theories used for examining the international system (realism, liberalism, idealism, behavioralism). The second part looks at the enduring problems of global security, the problem of war, globalization, and the emerging crises of environmental change and natural resource depletion. Throughout the course, we will take time to discuss the ethical dilemmas we confront when theory meets national policy. Upon completion, students should be able to identify key concepts, actors, and issues in the modern interstate system and be prepared for advanced coursework in the field of international relations.

### Class Requirements (% of total grade)

This class consists primarily of lecture with substantial time set-aside for in-class discussion of the readings. In addition to the assigned readings, students are expected to maintain awareness of major international developments by reading a domestic news source such as the *Washington Post* and a reputable foreign news source such as the BBC or Deutsche Welle on-line. Students are encouraged to invest in a decent world atlas in order to familiarize themselves with the location and geography of major global activities.

Students are required to attend all class meetings and complete class requirements within the stated time limits. Requests for absences or extensions will be considered for actual emergency situations only.

- **Examinations:** There will be a mid-term exam and a final exam. The exams consist primarily of short essay responses to questions designed for you to demonstrate your knowledge of the subject material. These exams will be take-home so that you have opportunity to compose your thoughts more coherently without the pressures of an in-class exam. (33% each).
- **Paper:** Each student will be required to write a 10-12 page paper that characterizes a major international event or current issue in light of the methodological frameworks covered in class. Additional details will be forthcoming in class (33%).
- **Class Participation:** Class participation is integral to the success of our learning experience. Participation will consist of contributing regularly to thoughtful classroom discussion and participating in on-line Blackboard assignments if/when assigned. Class participation will be used to either raise or lower a borderline grade. OPTION: Students may earn extra credit towards their final grade by choosing to present a short analytical critique of an assigned reading to the class.

Out of respect for your fellow students, please turn off personal communication devices (cell phone, Blackberry, etc.) while class is in session. Students are welcome to bring laptop computers to class for note taking and other class-related work.

## **Academic Honesty**

Violations of the University Honor System, to include plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty, will not be tolerated and will be brought to the immediate attention of the Dean of Continuing Studies. Consult the Georgetown University *Undergraduate Bulletin* for additional information and guidance.

## **Readings**

The required texts are available at the University bookstore and also at major on-line book retailers. Each session will also have reserve readings that will be available either at the Lauinger Library, via the Blackboard system, or direct via the instructor. Be sure you have the necessary network accounts to access and use the Blackboard system.

## **Required Texts**

- **Mingst, Karen A., *Essentials of International Relations*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.,**  
(New York: W.W.Norton & Co., 2008)
- **Mingst, Karen A., and Snyder, Jack L., *Essential Readings in World Politics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.,**  
(New York: W.W.Norton & Co., 2004)

## **Class Meetings**

### **1. Class Introduction**

Topics: Class Introduction  
A Methodological Approach to the Study  
Genesis of the Modern State System

### **2. Levels of Analysis**

Topics: The Levels of Analysis Problem  
Classical Writers and the Levels of Analysis

### **3. Realism and Neo-Realism**

Topics: Fundamentals of Classical Realism  
Neo-Realism  
The Balance of Power  
Polarity

### **4. Liberalism and Neo-liberalism**

Topics: Fundamentals of Liberalism  
Liberalism in Action  
Institutionalism

### **5. Idealist and Radicalist Approaches**

Topics: Classical and Modern Approaches to Radicalism  
Radicalism in Action - Bolshevik Revolution Case Study  
Radical Islam

## **6. Actors: The State**

Topics: The Changing Nature of the State  
Enduring Tensions Between Nation and State – Yugoslavia Case Study  
Measuring and Employing State Power

## **7. Behavioral Science and State Action**

Topics: Behavioral Science as a Window into State Behavior  
Rational Actor and Alternative Models  
Role of the Individual Decision Maker

## **8. The Problem of War – Part 1.**

Topics: The Legacy and Future of Great Power Conflict  
Prospects for Moral War

## **9. The Problem of War – Part 2.**

Topics: Terrorism and Asymmetric Warfare  
Just War Theory

## **10. Non-State Institutions**

Topics: The Function and Utility of International Organizations  
The United Nations.

## **11. Globalization I – Laying the Foundations**

Topics: Global Trade in Historical Perspective  
What is Globalization Today?

## **12. Globalization II: An Information Revolution**

Topics: Modern Telecommunications and the Nation-State  
Arab Media Case Study.

## **13. Globalization III: Issues for a Globalized World**

Topics: Environmental Concerns  
Climate Change  
Natural Resources

## **14. International Relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Topics: Theory revisited  
Can theory shape our view of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?