

# PS 3210-001: International Relations

Middle Tennessee State University  
Spring 2016  
MW 12:40 - 2:05 PM, PH 205

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*Office Hours:* Mondays 9:30 - 11:30 AM, Tuesdays 1:00 - 4:00 PM, Wednesdays 9:30 - 11:30 AM; or by appointment.

To make an appointment, visit: <https://vlefler.youcanbook.me>.

## Course Overview

The goal of this course is to introduce you to the central processes and perspectives in international relations. Particular attention will be paid to the analytic tools that are fundamental understanding the forces that move contemporary global politics.

We will achieve these goals by attempting to answer such questions as: What are the dominant theoretical points of view on international relations? What factors influence foreign policy decision-making? What makes democracies seem to be less belligerent than authoritarian regimes? Why do states go to war? What functions do international organizations serve in global politics? Why do states (and other actors) engage in foreign investment and sovereign borrowing? Are there any negative effects of economic liberalization?

Along the way, we will also introduce and incorporate the fundamentals of international relations, including theories and paradigms, methods of analysis, and sources of evidence and inference.

By the end of the semester, students in this course should have a clearer comprehension of international relations and analytic approaches to studying political problems.

## Course Resources

### Required Readings

We have one required text for this course:

- Kinsella, David, Bruce Russett, and Harvey Starr. 2012. *World Politics: The Menu for Choice*. 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. ISBN: 978-1-111-77201-7.

There will also be, from time to time, some assigned readings from outside our textbook. These will typically be either .pdfs or websites and will be linked in D2L.

### Recommended Readings

Though there is just one required text for this course, I also recommend that you obtain a copy of a world atlas (I usually use Google Maps) so that you can look up the location of different countries that we will make reference to throughout the term.

If you want to have some practice at learning world geography on your mobile device (e.g., smart phone, tablet), I recommend the EnjoyLearning World Map Puzzle by Digital Gene. It is free and available for Android and Apple devices.

Recommended readings may also appear in the syllabus. These are *optional* for you to read, though the instructor will refer to them throughout the term.

### Current Events: News and Blogroll

Additionally, you should read the news for current events in international relations. Sources you might consult include:

Daily News	Periodic News
<i>The New York Times</i>	<i>The Economist</i>
<i>BBC News: World</i>	<i>Foreign Policy</i>
<i>The Financial Times</i>	<i>Foreign Affairs</i>
<i>The Wall Street Journal</i>	

If you find yourself asking, “How does this academic stuff apply to actual, real-world events?” a few, excellent media outlets that apply political science research to current events are:

Academic Blogs	Practitioner Blogs
Political Violence @ a Glance	Council on Foreign Relations
Duck of Minerva	USIP: The Olive Branch
The Monkey Cage	Voices @ FP

On the academic side, the writers are generally scholars of international relations; on the practitioner side, most of the contributors are people who work or have worked in the field. Most government and international organization websites also sponsor blogs or regularly post briefs that can give you more insight into the world politics applications.

## **Software & Hardware**

In order to complete many of the assignments throughout the semester, I recommend you obtain the following software programs:

- *Spreadsheet* software: Typically, this means Excel (Microsoft), but there are other, free versions as well, such as LibreOffice, that work just as well.

I advise against relying solely on Google Drive's spreadsheet program because it cannot perform all of the functions that will be required.

- *PowerPoint* presentation software: I make an effort to post the lecture notes on D2L before each class meeting. I use PowerPoint, which is freely available to you from the University.
- *Prezi* presentation software: I will also be delivering some material through on-line lectures, recorded using Prezi. Therefore, you will need to have a reliable internet connection to access these materials.

## **Course Expectations**

### **Notifications**

All course information will be shared on the course website, D2L. It is expected that you check this page regularly to keep track of assignments, discussion topics, and updates. Occasionally, information will also be sent through e-mail. You should, therefore, also be in the habit of checking your MTSU e-mail.

### **Coursework**

Your grade will be based on 3 international relations labs, 2 exams, and several optional, short exercises.

There is no research paper project for this course, but you should still expect to write quite intensively – and frequently – for this course.

All assignments (unit lab analysis papers and short exercises) will be turned in electronically to D2L. Deadlines will be announced in class and on D2L.

Below, the course summary briefly describes the format and point values for each assignment.

<b>Summary of Coursework</b>		
<i>Obligation</i>	<i>Format</i>	<i>Contribution to Final Grade</i>
Unit Exams	Multiple choice, short-answer, and essay	60 points each
IR Unit Labs	In-class exercises along with 700-1200 word page analysis paper.	30 points each
Short Exercises	In-class and take-home exercises. Varying formats, typically short answer.	10 pts each

### **Exams (2 – 60 points each)**

There will be two (2), non-cumulative exams. Each exam will consist of 15 multiple choice questions, worth 2 points each, three short-answer questions worth 5 points each, and one essay question worth 15 points.

The exams will cover material assigned in readings and discussed in class. One week before each exam, the instructor will announce two essay questions. On the day of the exam, one of these essay questions will be randomly selected for you to answer.

### **International Relations Unit Labs (3 – 30 points each)**

Throughout the term, we will delve deeper into the field of International Relations in what is called International Relations Lab. One goal of this class is to encourage you to engage the material we study analytically – that is, by gathering evidence about different phenomena and making inferences about their roles and effects in global politics. It is through these labs that we will approach International Relations in a more hands on way.

Each of the three (3) labs will be structured somewhat differently, however, they share some general features. Each will be introduced during class time, either in groups or in a computer lab. You may be instructed on a new method of inquiry and then asked to replicate various analyses, or you may be given a research task.

After the lab is completed, you will be assigned to write an analysis paper that applies your investigation to the relevant unit topic. These analysis papers will be 700-1200 words in length, double-spaced, using 1-inch margins and a standard 12-point, serif font (e.g., Times New Roman, Helvetica). Lab papers will be turned in through D2L and must be submitted in **.pdf** format.

*Papers not submitted in .pdf format will penalized 10%.*

Lab dates will be announced at least one week in advance. Students will only be allowed to make up unit labs if they are absent due to illness, family emergency, or University service (with advance

notice).

### Short Exercises

Several short exercises covering various aspects of the material will be assigned throughout the semester. Some will be assigned as take home exercises and others will be conducted in class.

Completing these exercises is *optional*; only those short exercise scores that would *improve* your grade will be counted toward it.

For example, if a student's scores at the end of the semester are:

IR Labs			Exams		Short Exercises		
Lab #1	Lab #2	Lab #3	Exam #1	Exam #2	SE #1	SE #2	SE #3
22/30	26/30	27/30	55/60	53/60	9/10	10/10	7/10

- The student's lab and exam average are calculated first:
  - $(22 + 26 + 27 + 55 + 53)/(30 + 30 + 30 + 60 + 60) = 183/210 = 87.1\%$ .
- Second, those Short Exercise scores that are at least as high as the lab and exam average are added to the grade:
  - $(183 + 9 + 10)/(210 + 10 + 10) = 202/230 = 87.8\%$

In other words, the short exercises are intended to boost your grade, and never to hinder it. However, make-up opportunities, whether the short exercise is conducted in-class or delivered on-line, will not be granted.

### Attendance

I am required to report students with attendance issues to the University. You are expected to attend every class meeting, having read all of the assigned readings, given thought to the discussion topics for the day, and prepared to contribute to the class dialogue. If, for whatever reason, you are unable to attend class, you must inform me *in advance* in order to be excused. Ultimately, it is your choice to come to class, but be aware that attendance and participation provide the basis for any decision to “bump up” grades on the margins (e.g., from a B+ to an A).

### Late/Make-Up Policies

Readings are expected to be completed at the beginning of each class period. Deadlines for written assignments (labs and exercises) will be announced in class and on D2L. Grades for assignments turned in late will be reduced according to the following rules:

<b>Late Penalties</b>	
<i>Obligation</i>	<i>Deduction</i>
Missing Unit Lab without acceptable excuse	20 points
Missing Exam without acceptable excuse	30% of points
Turning in Unit Lab Analysis Paper after due date	30% of points
Turning in Unit Lab Analysis Paper more than <i>one week</i> after deadline	All points

**Free Pass:** You are allowed one “free pass” to turn in a unit lab analysis paper late. If, for whatever reason, you are unable to turn in an analysis paper on time, you have *up to one week* to turn in that assignment *without penalty*; no questions asked. This free pass may only be applied to analysis papers – it may not be used for missed lab dates or exams. Similarly, because they are optional, you may not use a free pass on a short exercise.

If you must miss a lab date or exam, *contact the instructor* as soon as possible. Dates may be re-negotiated under compelling circumstances.

## Grading

**Students must complete all major requirements for this course (analysis papers and exams) in order to pass this class.**

Grades will be calculated according to the following scale, based on all required and optional work:

Grade	Points	Grade	Points	Grade	Points	Grade	Points
A	>90%	B+	86.5%	C+	76.5%	D+	66.5%
		B	83%	C	73%	D	63%
		B-	80%	C-	70%	D-	60%
						F	<60%

Each value represents the lowest percentage of points that you must earn in order to attain the corresponding grade.

## Policies and Conditions

### Grade Complaints

Complaints regarding graded assignments will only be taken **24 hours** after an assignment has been returned. Complaints should be submitted in writing and explain the particular discrepancy

and recommend an appropriate recourse. The instructor reserves the right to add or *subtract* points on work that is submitted for reconsideration.

## Academic Honesty

A copy of the University's policies on academic misconduct and complaint actions is available on-line. Read and become familiar with these policies and procedures.

From the Office of Academic Misconduct:

Middle Tennessee State University takes a strong stance against academic misconduct. Academic Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication.

...

**To be clear** going on-line and taking information without proper citations, copying parts of other student's work, creating information for the purposes of making your paper seem more official, or anything involving taking someone else's thoughts or ideas without proper attribution is academic misconduct. If you work together on an assignment when it is not allowed, it is academic misconduct. If you have a question about an assignment, please come see me to clarify. Any cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs for violating the academic honesty requirements in the student handbook. They will also result in failure for the course. Remember – ignorance is NOT a defense.

Students caught violating conditions of academic honesty will **fail** this course and be reported to university authorities. It is recommended that you retain all notes and drafts of your coursework until two weeks after final grades are received in order to protect your work.

## Classroom Conduct

1. Be respectful of the instructor and other students in the class.
  - (a) Students using insulting or aggressive language or actions will be asked to leave. Aggressive/insulting language includes ethnic slurs, name-calling, and sexist speech.
  - (b) Interruptions of any kind will not be acknowledged or tolerated. *Silence* and put away all personal electronic devices before class. Tablets and laptops are allowed, but they should not be used to disrupt from the purpose of the class.
2. This is a political science course, not a political *rhetoric* course. While political debates relevant to the subjects at hand will be entertained, unnecessary tangents will not. I encourage you to reach beyond political opinions and use the material presented in lecture and readings to form analytic perspectives on contemporary politics.

3. I understand the need to stay hydrated and alert throughout the day. Feel free to bring coffee, soda, bottled water, etc. to class. However, please avoid bringing food to class – especially on unit lab days. It is often disruptive to course objectives.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities should notify the instructor as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of any student with a disability who requests a reasonable accommodation to contact Disabled Student Services. Disabled Student Services will arrange with the student and instructor a plan to ensure the student has the opportunities for full participation in the class.

### **Inclement Weather and Class Cancellation**

Sign up for RAVE alerts from MTSU at <https://www.getrave.com/login/mtsu> to receive notifications related to campus schedule changes. You should also check your e-mail prior to class to confirm any schedule changes. Last, if the weather is inclement and you do not feel that you can make it to class, inform me *as soon as possible*. Do not take unnecessary risks to attend class.

### **Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship Statement**

Do you have a lottery scholarship? To retain the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship eligibility, you must earn a cumulative TELS GPA of 2.75 after 24 and 48 attempted hours and a cumulative TELS GPA of 3.0 thereafter. A grade of C, D, F, FA, or I in this class may negatively impact TELS eligibility.

If you drop this class, withdraw, or if you stop attending this class you may lose eligibility for your lottery scholarship, and you will not be able to regain eligibility at a later time.

For additional Lottery rules, please refer to your Lottery Statement of Understanding form or contact your MT One Stop Enrollment Counselor.

### **Get Connected to Your MTSU Political Science Department!**

Students who are the most successful – in their courses, graduating on time, finding jobs and developing careers in the field, getting into law school and graduate school, and just getting the most out of their college years – are those who stay informed about all of the opportunities and events they can take advantage of, and stay connected to the Department and other students.

Please use these resources to both stay informed and stay connected – and succeed.

### **MTSU Political Science Facebook Page**

We use Facebook to notify our students of upcoming events and opportunities (including internships and study abroad) for PS and IR majors and minors.

Please “like” the page so you are always in the loop: MTSU Political Science

### **Department of Political Science Webpage**

This is a huge resource of information on majors, minors, program requirements, faculty contacts, the Student Handbook, Newsletters, and much more.

Please bookmark the site and check it often and whenever you have questions:

<http://www.mtsu.edu/politicalscience/>

### **PS/IR Student Services Page**

This site provides easy access to info on advising, law school, grad school, careers and job search, study abroad, internships, and much more to help you succeed.

Please bookmark the site and really use it to get the most out of your time in the Department.

[http://www.mtsu.edu/ps-ir-student services](http://www.mtsu.edu/ps-ir-student%20services)

### **Other Resource Tools**

Much of this information – program requirements, Student Handbook, Newsletters, upcoming events, and so on – are available on the racks and bulletin board outside the Departmental Office in Peck 209.

# Course Outline

## 1. Introduction

### a) Why Study International Relations?

- Review Syllabus (under Course Instructions)
- Read Sheehan and Brocklehurst (2006) Why International Relations is the Key to All Our Futures
- Read Siverson (2000) The Contributions of International Politics Research to Policy

## 2. Thinking About World Politics – Theory and Reality

### a) International Relations Theory and Approaches

- Read Nau (2015) How to Think About International Relations

### b) More International Relations Theory

- Read Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 2, pages 21-28

## 3. Thinking About World Politics – Theory and Reality

### a) International Relations Theory in Perspective

- Read Walt (1998) One World, Many Theories

### b) Applying International Relations Theory

- In-Class Exercise: International Relations Theory – Expertise and Application
- How are the International Relations theories like a marathon?

## **4. Foreign Policy Decision Making – Individual and Group Models**

### **a) foreign Policy Decision Making: Individual Models**

- Read Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 6
- Read Hermann, Margaret G. and Joe D. Hagan. 1998. “International Decision Making: Leadership Matters.” *Foreign Policy*, 110: 124-137.

### **b) Foreign Policy Decision Making: Group Models**

- Review Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 6

## **5. Domestic Politics and International Relations Theory**

### **a) Foreign Policy Decision Models and Policy Outcomes**

- In-Class Exercise: Domestic Political Institutions, Foreign Policy Decision Making, and Application
- Read Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 2, pages 28-36
- Read Ghose and LiveScience (2013) “Just a Theory”: 7 Misused Science Words

### **b) Domestic Political Institutions and Foreign Policy**

- Read Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 5

### **c) Foreign Policy Decision Making, Regime Type, and Leader Incentives**

- Watch Bueno de Mesquita (2012) The Five Rules of Power Politics.  
<https://youtu.be/DON-aM2tze4>
- Read Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, and Smith (1999) An Institutional Explanation of the Democratic Peace

## **6. Power in International Relations**

### **a) Power in International Relations: Capabilities**

- Read Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 4

### **b) Power in International Relations: Influence**

- Review Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 4

## **7. International Conflict**

### **a) Introduction to International Conflict: Terminology**

- Read Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 7

### **b) Power and International Conflict: Realist Explanations of War**

- Review Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 7
- In-Class Exercise: International Relations Lab #2 – Conflict and Concept of Power

## **8. International Conflict, continued**

### **a) International Conflict: Liberal and Radical Explanations**

- Review Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 7

### **b) Violence by Non-State Actors**

- Review Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 7
- Read Boot (2014) More Small Wars

## **9. International Cooperation**

### **a) International Cooperation: Institutions and Norms**

- Read Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 10

### **b) Do Intergovernmental Organizations Matter?**

- Read Tharoor (2003). Why America Still Needs the United Nations

## **10. International Political Economy – Globalization & Development**

### **a) Globalization and Development: Theories and Patterns of Dependency**

- Read Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 13

### **b) Approaches to Development**

- Review Kinsella, Russett, and Starr (2012) Chapter 13
- In-Class Exercise: International Relations Lab #3 – How Can We Assess Policies Believed to Improve Global Development?

### **c) Consequences of Globalization**

- Read Naim (2003) The Five Wars of Globalization