COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course Objectives
Global issues are challenges whose sources, impacts and solutions extend beyond the borders of any one country. The overall purpose of this three credit hour course is to introduce you to the study of contemporary global issues and provide a foundation for more advanced study within the realm of political science and international relations. The course has two primary objectives:

The first objective is to provide you the conceptual tools necessary to better understand how the various parts of the international system function and interact with one another in the contemporary environment. To this end, we will explore the fundamental concepts, theories and major themes of international relations.

The second objective is to introduce you to some of the most pressing and important global issues facing our world and help you start to build the analytic and critical thinking skills necessary to gain a better understanding of them. This will be achieved primarily by providing you the opportunity to critically dissect, and then formulate and express, both verbally and in writing, your informed opinions in regards to these issues.

As a side-benefit of providing a forum for analyzing and discussing current global issues, this course will promote your understanding of your own role in the world, as well as your understanding and appreciation of other peoples, cultures, and societies.
Student Learning Objectives
At the end of this course, you will be able to:
- Define, compare and contrast the important themes, concepts, and theories of international relations.
- Describe the types of major actors on the contemporary global stage.
- Describe the fundamental processes in the international system such as competition, conflict, the use of force, and cooperation.
- Describe and critically evaluate the causes and potential consequences of contemporary global issues.
- Describe the viewpoints of the main actors involved in contemporary global issues from their respective positions.
- Evaluate the actions of the various actors involved with contemporary global issues.
- Analyze political, cultural, or socioeconomic interactions among people or organizations (i.e., the main actors) of the world.
- Identify the geographic location of the world's main state actors.

Course Overview & Content
The course consists of three separate blocks of instruction; each one builds upon the previous.

In Block One, “Introduction and Theory” we will discuss the major theoretical ideas that form the basis for the study of international relations. We will begin with defining the terms and concepts used by political scientists, and then look at the major types and categories of actors that are the actual participants in international relations. Next, we will briefly explore the major theories, or paradigms, used by scholars and observers of international relations to try both to describe how the world works as well as how it most likely will work in the future. Block One concludes with a look into conflict and cooperation— their causes and explanations.

Block Two is dedicated to “Global Interaction.” We begin with an in-depth look at one of the primary tools used in some form during nearly all interactions— power. We will explore the major elements that constitute power and where they come from, and then turn our attention to two forms of global interaction. Starting with interactions employing violence, we will look at the functions of force, and the use of terror and weapons of mass destruction. We will then delve into interactions based on cooperation, primarily in the form of international organizations and alliances.

The final block brings us closer to the course’s title. In Block Three, “Contemporary Global Issues” we will draw upon the theories and concepts from Blocks One and Two to illuminate and investigate several of the major issue areas facing the international community today. These issues are those which you will most likely have to deal with yourselves as future policy makers and actors on the global stage; they include human rights, trade, finance, the environment and religion.

REQUIRED COURSEWORK & GRADES
Note: This course is based on a fairly intensive reading and writing program.

Reading Assignments
The assigned readings provide both initial and supplementary information on the topics being covered in the course. Reading and understanding them is the basis for learning in this course. I structure the
classroom sessions as a forum to expand on and provide context and depth to the textbook and the supplemental readings. You will gain much more if you come to the class sessions having completed the respective assigned readings.

Reading assignments are drawn from:


- Current articles and other supplemental reading materials I will provide and post on D2L (either .pdf or link). Some of the supplemental readings are not posted yet because the world around us is in flux. I will have them posted at least a week prior to the applicable module.

- Regular reading of a major daily newspaper such as the Wall Street Journal (http://online.wsj.com/public/us); the International Herald Tribune (www.iht.com); the Washington Post (http://www.washingtonpost.com); and the New York Times (http://www.nytimes.com). Additional sources are posted on D2L in the folder “News & Information Sources”.

A word of caution. Note that the reading assignments for many of the Modules are rather extensive. In other words, you will need to dedicate time to them – plan on spending at least 3-5 hours on the course outside of the classroom for each Learning Module. I placed a short handout titled “Guide to Effective Reading” in D2L that contains several tips you may find useful.

**Writing Assignments**

One of the sub-goals of this course is to help you build and sharpen your skill in communicating using the written word. Being able to express yourself is an indispensable skill you will need throughout your professional lives, so I will help you work on it now. The writing portion of the course will be conducted online using a combination of written assignments along with “discussions” posted on D2L discussion boards.

**Grades**

Your final grade is a direct reflection of the effort you put in. There is no curve. All excellent work will receive an A. All good and competent work will receive a B. Work with some flaws will receive a C. Work with very significant flaws will receive a D, along with recommendations or requirements to speak with me or any special counseling and advising services as appropriate. Significantly sub-standard work will receive an F.

The following components contribute to your final grade:

- **Chapter Quizzes.** Officially, whether you read or not is your choice – you are adults. That said, you will quickly discover that our overall learning is a direct function of the time you spend reading and digesting the material. To help you get into the reading habit, I have set up a total of eight quizzes; these are identified in the Learning Modules and on the course calendar. They cover the assigned reading for the respective subject area. The quizzes are available in D2L and can be completed any time prior to 9:30 AM on the day of the class to which the readings pertain. There will be 15 questions on each quiz worth 1 point each. You will have two independent attempts for
each quiz; I will count the higher score. You will have 30 minutes per attempt once you start and must complete it in one sitting. Although the quiz is open book, I strongly suggest you do your reading before beginning the quiz. The quizzes together are worth 12% of the final grade. Remember, you MUST complete (and submit) the quiz prior to the start of the class session identified in the Learning Module.

- **Exams.** There will be three “Block” exams, each worth 135 points and a “Final” exam worth 155 points. Each of the end-of-block exams will consist of objective questions (multiple choice; true/false & fill-in-the-blank); they will include some questions on basic world geography also, as one cannot understand international relations without having at least a working knowledge of where the world’s countries are in relation to each other. The questions will be based on the information presented in class and all required readings. The first two exams will be administered in class; the third will be take-home. The Final will be a comprehensive exam covering information presented during the entire course. The exams together provide 56% of the final grade.

- **Essays.** During two of the three blocks of instruction I will provide a discussion or research question related to that Block’s subjects; you in turn will provide me a 2-3 page (minimum) paper with your thoughts. Papers will be submitted via Turnitin.com (class ID: 9173677; password: morton) prior to the designated due date.

  I use a 60-point grading scale for each of the papers; half for content and half for communication. Content includes your demonstration of understanding and critical thinking; communication includes structure and grammar. Although this is not an English class, I consider this second part as important as the first – even the best analysis is for naught if you can’t communicate your ideas to others in a coherent and comprehensible way. Each essay is worth 6% of the final grade.

  Remember, to some degree the essays have no right or wrong answer, only different answers. I placed several handouts in D2L containing guidance and tips for writing essays.

- **Semester Paper.** All students will choose one of several articles, analyze the article and answer a set of questions designed to help frame your discussion. I will post the articles and the discussion questions in D2L by late February and provide additional guidance at that time.

  In completing the paper you should draw from all aspects of the course lectures, discussions, and readings to analyze the selected article and form your response. The paper is due NO LATER THAN 9:30 AM on Thursday, April 2nd via Turnitin.com (class ID: 9173677; password: morton).

  Your grade for the paper will be based on 80 points for content and 60 points for communication + 10 points for overall impression. The paper constitutes 15% of your final grade.

  Note: This assignment is common to all UNG students taking POLS 2401. It addresses the University System of Georgia Learning Outcome II, Global Perspective: *Students will analyze political, cultural, or socioeconomic interactions among people and cultures of the world.*

More detailed information regarding the grading of written work (including the scoring rubric for the essays and the semester paper) is in D2L along with the respective assignment information. All grading of essays will be done within Turnitin.com using the “grademark” element of the application. You will be able to see the comments to your papers posted in Turnitin.com.
Group Project. The subject for Essay #2 is “Major Religions of the World.” Closely related to that essay is an activity requiring you to work collaboratively with several of your classmates sharing the same assigned religion. The end result of your group’s efforts will be a “presentation” providing an overview of your group’s assigned religion to the entire class. This group project is worth 50 pts and comprises 5% of your final grade.

Extra credit. I am a firm believer that there is more to your learning experience than simply reading a textbook or sitting in class and listening to a lecture. You can earn extra credit (maximum of 40 pts) for attending outside lectures/presentations/etc. (up to 15 points per event/3 events max). I will let you know of upcoming events I consider acceptable. You will need to write at least a 2-3 page summary of the event along with your personal observations, critique, etc. If you have additional ideas for events, please let me know in advance and I will evaluate them and include them if appropriate.

There will also be opportunities to earn extra points via current events quizzes; I may randomly start or finish a session with such a quiz depending on what is transpiring in the world around us.

Note: You will not receive any extra credit points if you do not complete ALL regular assignments on time (this includes quizzes, weekly module assignments, essays, the semester paper and exams). Any extra credit points that may have been earned prior to a late or missing submission will be removed.

There are 1000 total points available during the course. Your final grade follows UNG policy:

- A = 900-1000 points (90-100%) — excellent work
- B = 800-899 points (80-89%) — good work
- C = 700-799 points (70-79%) — average work
- D = 600-699 points (60-69%) — below average
- F = 599 points (59%) and below — failing
Lesson Plan
This is just a bare-bones version of what you and I will be doing this semester. For details on each individual session, including Learning Objectives and Required Readings, click on the designated “Learning Modules” tab in D2L.

FOR SPECIFIC DATE INFORMATION REGARDING THE MODULES and DEADLINES FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS PLEASE REFER TO D2L CALENDAR.
ANY CHANGES TO THE SCHEDULE WILL BE RECORDED IN THE D2L CALENDAR.

I. Block One: Introduction and Theory
   6 Jan
   Welcome & Introductions -- Why are we here? Course overview.
   LM 1
   9 Jan – 15 Jan
   What is International Relations (IR)? IR Terms & Concepts: Actors; Levels of Analysis.
   LM 2
   20 Jan – 22 Jan
   Theories of IR
   LM 3
   27 Jan – 29 Jan
   Competition & Conflict
   LM 4
   3 Feb – 5 Feb
   Dealing with Competition and Conflict
   End-of-Block Exam (Exam #1)
   10 Feb

II. Block Two: Global Interaction
   LM 5
   12 Feb
   What is “Power”?
   LM 6
   17 Feb – 24 Feb
   Applying Power/Instruments of Power
   LM 7
   26 Feb – 5 Mar
   Functions of Force; Holy War; Terror as a tactic; WMD
   LM 8
   10 Mar – 12 Mar
   International Organizations; Collective Security & Alliances
   No class - Spring Break
   16 Mar – 20 Mar
   LM 9
   24 Mar
   Strategies of the United States
   End-of-Block Exam (Exam #2)
   26 Mar
III. Block Three: Contemporary Global Issues

**LM 10**
31 Mar
   International Law; Human Rights

**LM 11**
2 Apr
   Environment; Population
   ➢ *Semester Paper Due*

**LM 12**
7 Apr
   North-South Gap; International Development & Aid

**LM 13**
9 Apr – 16 Apr
   Comparative Religions

**LM 14**
21 Apr
   Trade & Finance & Business
   ➢ *End-of-Block Exam (Exam #3) open 16 Apr; close 23 Apr*

**LM 15**
23 Apr
   Coming Challenges / Course Wrap-up & Review

*FINAL Exam*
30 Apr *(10:20AM-12:20PM)*

6 May -- Final GradesPosted
MY PHILOSOPHY

Rule number 1 -- your education is your responsibility; I am just a facilitator. The coursework is meant to be challenging and I try to increase the difficulty level gradually as the course progresses. More importantly, the assignments reflect my belief about learning. I ascribe to Albert Einstein’s philosophy: “I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.” No one can really make you learn; you have to be willing to work hard and struggle. My role is to expose you to the fundamental building blocks; you can learn by applying them to challenging problems. In other words, I cannot learn for you, but I will do all I can to help you learn.

You are adults and I will treat you as such; I expect you to act as such in return. I ask you to show respect for your classmates and for me. If you arrive late please enter the classroom quietly; if you have to leave class early please talk to me prior to class start. Be cognizant of the fact you will be disturbing the class so take every care to make the disruption as minimal as possible. Please turn off your cell phone’s ringer and do not check your e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, etc. during class – though it may be hard to believe, the world will survive and continue rotating without you for the 75 minutes we are in session.

Global Issues are sometimes complicated, but also fun. While no prior knowledge of politics or of the international system is necessary to excel in this course, what is necessary is a desire to learn. My intent is to use our class sessions to expand on and provide context and depth to the textbook and the accompanying readings. I will try to challenge your thinking and your ability to dissect and comprehend what you see and hear about the world around us. While I will spend some time discussing the highlights from the readings, the classroom sessions cannot substitute for you reading the assignments yourselves.

I prefer not to simply stand in front of you and talk, and I’m sure you would prefer I don’t also. Hearing other students’ opinions allows all of us to look at issues in a way we might not have thought of before. While I will guide class discussions and provide lecture and background information, a good portion of your learning requires your participation and opinion. To the degree possible and appropriate, class sessions will include debate and discussion.

In order to accomplish this, there will be a couple ground rules -- first, one person has the floor at a time, and second, when that person has the floor, he or she deserves your respect (which means listen to what is being said and allow that person to finish speaking without interrupting). Since the course revolves around the discussion of politics, culture, and current events, we will sometimes delve into controversial topics. Please remember to respect the opinions of your classmates, even if you do not agree. If you must critique or respond to something, critique or respond to the words, NOT to the person. One of the main lessons I want you to internalize by the end of the semester is that opinions are not right or wrong -- just different!

I take very seriously my responsibility to assist you in both your educational and your life endeavors and am more than happy to provide advice or support to the degree I can. I will talk with you about subjects and issues inside of, as well as, outside the course -- student-related, life-related, future profession-related, etc. I am not, however, in a position to discuss school-related financial issues such as scholarships. If there is something going on in your life that is family-, health-, work-, whatever else-related that is impacting your coursework, get in touch with me as soon as you can. If you don’t communicate with me I can’t work with you or help you.

One last bit of information. Like you, I have a life beyond the immediate confines of the classroom and this course. I will be in my office in the DoB on Tuesday & Thursday mornings and plan on being “on-line” at least between 7 & 9 PM on Wednesdays. If you need to talk/meet with me at some other time,
please contact me and I will try to accommodate your schedule. In addition to these specific times I will generally check my e-mail twice a day and will try to answer your e-mails within 24 hours M-F; do not expect a reply on the weekends (though I may surprise you). In addition, I will do my best to have written assignment and exam scores posted within a week following the respective activity.
ADMINISTRIVIA

➢ UNG GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES.
This course addresses the following outcomes. The student will:
   1. Communicate effectively using multiple literacies and forms of expression;
   2. Demonstrate analytic, contextual, and holistic thinking;
   3. Engage in integrative learning;
   4. Reflect critically and take informed action individually as citizens;
   5. Analyze ethical interactions in local and global communities

➢ INFORMATION LITERACY STATEMENT.
The research, writing, and discussion activities at UNG are designed to create an information literate student, one who can effectively and efficiently read, access, weigh and apply information within the moral, social, cultural and economic context given.

So what exactly is Information Literacy (IL)? Information literacy, the topic of North Georgia’s Quality Enhancement Plan, is the ability to know when information is needed and to access, evaluate and use information effectively and ethically. Information literacy, with its focus on definable skills and critical thinking, supports and extends the institution's overall learning outcomes. Please read and think about the statements below as you complete your work for this course.

Information Literacy Learning Outcomes:
   1. The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed. (Know)
   2. The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently. (Access)
   3. The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system. (Evaluates)
   4. The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose. (Use)
   5. The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally. (Ethical/Legal)

*Learning Outcomes adapted from the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) standards.

➢ INSTRUCTOR-STUDENT COMMUNICATION
I use D2L for the majority of the communications regarding course content, assignments, deadlines, etc. However, I prefer to use the regular UNG email system (not D2L email) for normal communication. Please check email and announcements in both systems daily to make sure you are up to date on all new developments in the course and any changes to this syllabus or to the Learning Modules. I will try to answer your e-mails within 24 hours M-F; do not expect a reply on the weekends. In addition, I will do my best to have written assignment and exam scores posted within a week following the respective activity.

NOTE: You are responsible for making sure your D2L and UNG email is working without a problem. Technical glitches are not my fault and will not be considered a valid reason for missing information or for missing deadlines.
ATTENDANCE POLICY
You are adults and can make up your own mind whether or not you want to attend class. However, attending class will positively impact what you learn and therefore will probably affect your grade in that information I present within the scope of lecture and discussion may not be covered in the book. I have found there is a direct correlation between the number of times a student attends class and the amount of learning achieved (and hence, the grade earned). If you are going to miss class, please let me know if possible. If you miss a class session, talk to one of your classmates to get a copy of the session’s notes. If you must miss class for an extended period of time come talk with me and we will make arrangements to deal with your situation. It is YOUR responsibility to deal with any of the consequences of missing class.

Of special note:
- I will take roll on Jan 15th & 20th for university-required administrative purposes (a.k.a. role verification). If you do not attend class on at least one of those days, you will be dropped from the course unless you have made other arrangements with me.
- The class sessions for LM 13 “World Religions” consist of group work on 9 Apr and group presentations on 14 & 16 Apr. Attendance is mandatory on these three days.
- If you are a member of a varsity athletic team or other university organization that requires travel, please provide me a schedule of your organization's events during the first two weeks of the semester.

EXAM MAKE-UP POLICY
If you miss either the Block I or II exam you may have the opportunity to take a make up. Make up tests are given at my sole discretion. I reserve the right to change the exam format on any make up exam offered. You must have a valid reason why you missed the test and be able to offer proof to support your position. Employment conflicts or just not feeling up to it are not valid excuses. If you are sick go to the University Health Center or your personal doctor and get checked out. Make up tests, if given, must be completed within one week of the scheduled exam unless there are extenuating circumstances. You must contact me prior to the test to even be considered for a make-up -- send me an email. There is no make-up available for the final exam except under extreme circumstances. If you miss the final exam, you may fail the course.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY
NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED!!!!!!

The two essays and the semester paper must be uploaded to Turnitin.com no later than the specified time and date. I will not accept late papers. The on-line quizzes and Exam III cannot be submitted after the designated close-out time and date. It is your responsibility to make sure your submissions get to me.

I will try very hard to be fair and consistent. Almost everyone works hard and carries many burdens around here. Flexibility may be possible ahead of time; very little is possible after the fact. I urge you to try to complete assignments ahead of the deadline. Last minute computer problems and technology failures are seldom, if ever, a valid excuse for missing a deadline. Believe it or not, there is absolutely nothing wrong with completing and turning in an assignment ahead of time! Bottom Line -- Get used to meeting deadlines as most bosses in the real world will demand you do so, and rather than your course grade, your continued paycheck may be riding on it.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY
The UNG honor policy will be strictly enforced. The Integrity Code reads as follows:
“On my honor, I will not lie, cheat, steal, plagiarize, evade the truth or tolerate those who do.”
Suspected violations of the Academic Integrity policy should be referred by students to me. If I conclude a violation of the Academic Integrity policy has occurred, I will either (at my discretion) penalize you and file an incident report with the Academic Integrity Council or refer the matter directly to the Academic Integrity Council. If I intend to file an incident report, I will review the completed report with you and will request you sign the report as an indication you are aware of the contents of the report.

➢ PLAGIARISM

DO NOT CHEAT. YOUR WORK MUST BE YOUR OWN. Any instance of plagiarism or cheating will result in a zero grade for the assignment and/or a failing grade for the course (“F”) depending on the severity of the offense as determined by me.

➢ TUTORING

Tutor.com is an on-line tutoring service available to students seven days/week, 5:00 PM to 12:00 midnight. UNG students can access Tutor.com from any PC or Mac by:

- From UNG Homepage, click on Current Students and Cadets
- Scroll down and click on Academic Support Programs
- Find and click on Tutoring Services
- Click on the Tutor.com icon

If you prefer individual face-to-face tutoring, please contact Melissa Lach for a peer-tutor in any and all subjects. For more information contact Melissa Lach at mjlach@northgeorgia.edu or call 706-864-1433.

➢ Refer to the UNG SUPPLEMENTAL SYLLABUS for the following information:

- Academic Success Plan Program
- Students with Disabilities
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Disruptive Behavior Policy
- Class Evaluations
- Academic Exchange
- Inclement Weather
- Course Grades and Withdrawal Process