UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA
Department of Political Science and International Affairs

POLS 2401_OLB: Global Issues
Spring 2015

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IMPORTANT

On-line course “contact” confirmation
Each student must send me an email from an active and valid email account within 5 days of course start
(i.e., on or before 9 Jan). Send the email to larry.morton@ung.edu. I will respond individually to each email
I receive to ensure we have basic electronic connectivity with each other. Within the email please include
your full name (and nickname if you prefer to use one) and a little background about why you are taking
this course and why “on-line”.

NOTE: Students who do not comply with this requirement will be dropped from the course. If you do
not get a response to your email within 48 hours, please advise Mr. Andrew D. Eade, Administrative
Assistant for the Department of Political Science & International Affairs @ 706-864-1628.

In addition, Module 00 contains an assignment for a posting to the D2L “Discussion Board” that must
also be completed on or before noon EDT on Friday 9 Jan. This post is a great way to introduce yourself
to your classmates and will confirm for me you have been able to get into D2L.
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 overarching 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 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.

Our 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, population, 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.

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.
- Powerpoint presentations (.pdf format) titled “Module Summary.” These presentations are designed to be an aid to you in understanding the material presented in the formal readings. I use these “slides” to expand on and provide context and depth to the textbook and the supplemental readings. I will spend some time discussing the readings, but will not be a substitute for you reading the assignments yourselves. Some information I’ll review, some I’ll highlight, some I’ll clarify, some I’ll expand on, and some information I’ll present new. Most information you have to pick up on your own. To the degree the world around us cooperates, I will interweave current events into the material.
- 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 fairly extensive. Do NOT put off reading until the tail end of the 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 six 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 11:59 pm on the Friday of the applicable Module. 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 9% of the final grade. Remember, you MUST complete (and submit) the quiz prior to 11:59 pm eastern time of the Friday identified in the Learning Module.

- **Topical Discussions.** During 10 of the 16 weeks of the course you will have the opportunity to share your insights, opinions and questions about topics integral to the week’s Learning Module via D2L discussion boards. These discussion boards provide you a forum and the opportunity to interact with your fellow students and with me in “almost” the same way we could in a physical classroom. For each of the 10 “discussions” you will have one or perhaps several different topics to select from, think about and comment on. Some of the topics may be more factually oriented and others may be more personal opinion oriented. Regardless, your participation in the discussions is an integral part of this course and your learning. We will see how the “discussions” progress as we move along the course. For now, the basic “ground rules” and detailed guidance regarding the submission of and grading of this aspect of the course is in “Discussion General Information” under Module 00 in the D2L Content Browser (as well as in the “Help” section). The discussions together contribute 28% toward your final grade.

- **Exams.** There will be three “Block” exams. The exams for Blocks 1 & 3 will be taken on-line and are worth 90 & 105 points respectively. The Block 2 exam will be a 115-point proctored exam
requiring your physical attendance on campus, plus a 20-point on-line portion. I have not yet
determined the exact date, time and place(s) for the exam, but it will be during Week 12 (the week
of 23 Mar, immediately following Spring Break). This proctored event is in keeping with the
guidelines found in Banner: "Students are expected to participate in at least one proctored activity
(e.g., exam). Proctored activities are held on campus by the instructor (free) or at an authorized
testing center (for a fee)." For those who cannot physically attend, I will set up a test opportunity
via Proctor U in accordance with UNG policy. As soon as I have the details I will pass them on to
you. [Note: If you anticipate taking Exam II via the Proctor U method, I highly recommend you
visit https://proctoru.com/portal/ung/ as soon as possible in order to learn about the procedures
for registering and taking the exam, including technology requirements. I have also placed some
information in the “Help” folder in D2L.]

Each of the three end-of-block exams will consist of objective questions (multiple choice;
true/false & fill-in-the-blank) plus a short essay section; 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 and discussed during the applicable Modules and all
required readings. The exams together provide 31.5% 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 paper with your
thoughts. Papers will be submitted via Turnitin.com (class ID: 9173682; 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 12:00 pm on Friday, 17 April 2015 via Turnitin.com (class ID: 9173682; 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. Your work will be posted on D2L as part of the assigned readings for Learning Module 12. More details regarding this assignment will be passed in a few weeks. This group project is worth 30 pts and comprises 3% 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.

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 the university’s grade distribution:

- 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 work
- F = 599 points (59%) and below – failed
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, Required Readings and Written Assignments, click on the appropriate “Learning Modules” tab in the D2L Content Browser.

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.

Week 1 (5 Jan)
   LM 00 -- Welcome & Introductions -- Why are we here? Course overview.

Block One: Introduction and Theory
Week 2 (12 Jan)
   LM 1 -- IR Terms & Concepts; Actors; Levels of Analysis.

Week 3 (19 Jan)
   LM 2 -- Theories of IR

Week 4 (26 Jan)
   LM 3 & 4 -- Competition & Conflict: What It Is; Dealing With It
Week 5 (2 Feb) End-of-Block Exam (Exam #1)
   Block Two: Global Interaction
   LM 5 -- What is “Power”?

Week 6 (9 Feb)
   LM 6 -- Applying Power/Instruments of Power

Week 7 & 8 (16 Feb & 23 Feb)
   LM 7 -- Functions of Force; War; Terror as a Tactic; WMD

Week 9 (2 Mar)
   LM 8 -- International Organizations; Collective Security & Alliances

Week 10 (9 Mar)
   Block Three: Contemporary Global Issues
   LM 9 -- Strategies of the United States

Week 11 (16-20 Mar) Spring Break

Week 12 (23 Mar)
   End-of-Block Exam (Exam #2) – [Date & Time TBD]
   LM 10 -- Environment & Population

Week 13 (30 Mar)
   LM 11 & 12 -- International Law & Human Rights; World Religions

Week 14 (6 Apr)
   LM 13 -- North-South Gap; International Development & Aid

Week 15 (13 Apr)
   LM 14 -- Trade & Finance & Business
   [Semester Paper Due 17 Apr]

Week 16 (20 Apr)
   LM 15 -- Coming Challenges / Course Wrap-up & Review

Week 17 (27 Apr – 30 Apr)
   End-of-Block Exam (Exam #3)

4 May 2015 -- Final Grades Posted
MY PHILOSOPHY

Rule number 1 -- your education is your responsibility; I am just a facilitator. I ascribe to Albert Einstein’s philosophy: “I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.” In other words, I cannot learn for you, but I will do all I can to help you learn.

Rule number 2 -- 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.

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 my posted “lectures” to expand on and provide context and depth to the textbook and the accompanying readings. While I will spend some time discussing the highlights from the readings, those postings cannot substitute for you reading the assignments yourselves. Via directed questions and the various writing assignments I will try to challenge your thinking and your ability to dissect and comprehend what you see and hear about the world around us.

My first goal with respect to this course is to replicate the learning that occurs in the face-to-face version of the course. In other words, this course is not “easier” simply because it is on-line. I expect you to put in the same amount of effort and be just as prepared for the weekly discussions and assignments as those students who take the classroom-based version. This means you need to dedicate at least 12-15 hours on average per week to Global Issues.

Although the idea of “going to college in my pajamas whenever I want” has a major draw conceptually, it is one that very easily works against success. Be careful you do not fall into the trap that often meets students – that online learning gives you freedom to procrastinate an assignment (supposedly in favor of a more convenient time). Do your best to not miss a day or get behind in the material. Remember that you’re on your own as far as being systematic, reading, taking quizzes and posting discussions. You have to get into the habit of consistently checking in online or you will get behind and fail this course. I highly recommend you set up and adhere to a structured schedule (as you would a physical class) to the degree your life allows. You do not necessarily need to follow that schedule rigidly, but having a certain amount of structure to your day/week and your studies will allow you to be a better learner.

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. When you 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 assist you.

One last bit of information. Like you, I have a life beyond the immediate confines of the classroom and this course. I plan on being “on-line” at least between 7 & 9 pm on Wednesdays, and also during my
physical office hours in the DoB on Tuesday & Thursday mornings. If you need to meet with me at some other time, please contact me and I will try to accommodate your schedule (either physically or virtually). 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.

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.

➢ ATTENDANCE POLICY

It is very important for you to be “visible” and active throughout the semester, and interact with your classmates and with me in the online environment. Your presence and participation is vital for understanding and learning the material covered in this course. Since this is a web-based course, there is no regular attendance that is required for this class. You work on your own time and focus on getting the assignments in on time. That said, there is one mandatory session (Exam 2) currently scheduled for the week of 23 March 2015; exact date and time will be determined later. Attendance at this proctored event is a course requirement. Failure to attend will result in “failure” of the course.

➢ TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

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.
There are several aspects of technology you need to understand in order to effectively participate in this class. If you have issues or problems with any of these elements please contact me, the UNG Helpdesk (http://www.northgeorgia.edu/helpdesk) and/or the GA View 24/7 Help Center (https://d2lhelp.view.usg.edu/georgia_kb_search.do).

1. Ability to use email and attachments
2. Ability to use and submit materials via Microsoft word or in PDF format
3. Ability to sign into and navigate D2L
4. Ability to sign into and submit written work via Turnitin.com

One thing you do need to watch for when working with D2L is pop up blockers. Make sure when you are in D2L that your pop up blocker is turned off.

If you anticipate taking Exam II via Proctor U, there are some specific technology requirements you will need to meet; I highly recommend you visit https://proctoru.com/portal/ung/ as soon as possible to ensure you are prepared.

➢ INSTRUCTOR-STUDENT COMMUNICATION
I will 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.

➢ EXAM MAKE-UP POLICY
If you cannot attend the proctored Block II exam you will have an extremely limited opportunity to take a make up. 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 at all possible you must contact me prior to the test -- send me an email and notify Mr. Andrew D. Eade, Administrative Assistant for the Department of Political Science & International Affairs @ 706-864-1628. If you completely miss this exam you will 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, exams and the discussion posts cannot be submitted after the designated close-out time and date. It is your responsibility to make sure your submissions get to me. Last minute computer problems and technology failures are seldom, if ever, a valid excuse for missing a deadline.

I 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. Given the fact you do not have to be in a classroom at a particular time and can do your work at any time, the responsibility falls squarely on your own shoulders to make sure your work gets turned in. 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.”

*(Honor Code, Undergraduate Bulletin, pp. 81-84)*

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