

POSC 1020: Introduction to International Relations

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Course Description

This introductory-level course will survey several core topics in the study of international relations and its discussion in policy circles. Our approach to these topics will be targeted even though our survey of the field will be broad. We will focus our inquiries to the interests that actors have, the means by which they interact, and the institutions in which they operate that constrain or facilitate their behavior. We will take this approach, along with a broad understanding of the history of international politics, and start first with a study of the causes of conflict and war. This is our biggest question in the entirety of international relations, making it an ideal place to start. We will continue with a review of international trade, finance, and monetary policy. These topics are obtuse to lay observers but we will make sense of these topics within our approach of actors' interests, interactions, and institutions. We will close the semester with newer topics in international relations, like human rights and environmental concerns, that will shape our discussion of world politics in the years to come. By the end of the semester, students should have a deeper knowledge of international relations and, importantly, better understand current events and policy discussions.

Course Objectives

1. Gain a cursory knowledge of important topics in international relations, preparing students for upper-division courses with more focused applications in the field.
2. Understand conflict as bargaining process and explain why bargaining "breaks down" (i.e. war onset).
3. Learn that, despite popular commentary and outward appearances, terrorism is rational behavior and part of a bargaining process.
4. Appreciate the benefits of globalization and free trade, notwithstanding the externalities these policies can create.
5. Discuss current issues at the fore of international politics (e.g. human rights, global warming) and the problems we have trying to address these issues.

Required Readings

Frieden, Jeffry A, David A. Lake, and Kenneth A. Schultz (2016). *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. 3rd. New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company.

Course Policy

This section of the syllabus details multiple policies that will be implemented in this class through the semester. Continued enrollment in this class constitutes acceptance of the terms outlined in this document.

Grading Policy

- 10% of your grade will be determined by your attendance and participation in class.
- 10% of your grade will be determined by a map quiz on **Thursday, Jan. 30** during normal class hours. This map quiz will cover regions of Latin America, Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, and Asia. The prompt will be simple; I will name a country and you will tell me which numbered country on the map to which it corresponds. There will be **NO** make-ups.
- 20% of your grade will be determined by a first midterm to be administered on **Thursday, Feb. 20** during normal class hours. There will be **NO** make-ups.
- 25% of your grade will be determined by a second midterm to be administered on **Thursday, April 2** during normal class hours. There will be **NO** make-ups.
- 35% of your grade will be determined by a final exam. Clemson University has scheduled this final exam on **Thursday, April 30, 7-9:30 p.m.** There will be **NO** make-ups. Listen; I'm not happy about that time either.

Attendance Policy

Showing up is 80 percent of life – Woody Allen, [via Marshall Brickman](#)

Students should be wary of skipping class. I deduct *all* participation points for a class after five unexcused absences and this can have important implications for a student's overall grade in the class. There is already a strong positive correlation between the percentage of classes a student has attended in the course and the student's final grade for the semester ($r = 0.704$) for all 847 students I have taught since Fall 2014.

A simple linear regression of a student's final grade on percentage of classes attended for the semester for all classes I have taught since Fall 2014 suggests an increase of one percent in attendance for the semester leads to an estimated increase of 0.785 in the student's final grade. Whereas one missed classes constitutes about a five-percent decrease in percentage attendance for the semester, one missed class means an estimated decrease of 3.925 in the overall grade. The effect of attendance on the final grade for the class is precise ($t = 27.642$) and the likelihood that there is no actual relationship between attendance and final grade for the semester is almost zero.

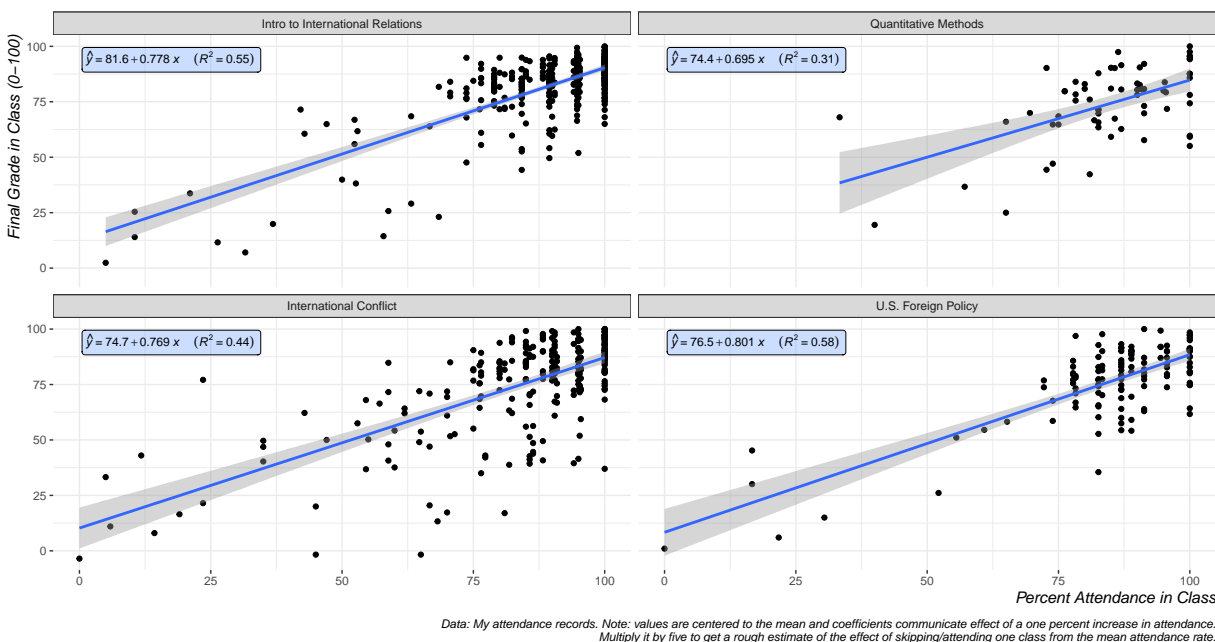


Figure 1: The Relationship between Class Attendance and Final Grade, by Class Type

This simple linear model with just one predictor (attendance) provides a good fit as well ($R^2 = 0.495$). See Figure 1 in this document.

A student might object that attendance is partly endogenous to a grade since past classes deducted all participation points after five unexcused absences. This is true, but the findings hold even when I subset the data to cases where attendance is greater than 75% (i.e. roughly the threshold below which I deduct all participation points). Students who just meet the threshold for full participation points nevertheless get an estimated decrease of 2.78 in their overall grade for each missed class. This effect is also precise ($t = 9.452$). Put another way, we would have observed this effect in my data if there were no *true* effect of attendance on grades about 1 times in 10,000,000,000,000,000 “trials” (i.e. $p = 0$), on average. That probability is effectively zero. *Attend class.*

Participation Policy

I want to reward each student in the class with all the participation and attendance points. This, however, is contingent on students demonstrating in class that they have read the material and understand its basic ideas. Students routinely fail to demonstrate this en masse to the professor.

I have two tactics to coerce students to do the reading. One, I will cold-call students from a list to answer a particular question. Failure to answer a question posed by me when cold-called (or failure to be in class that day) will result in a one-point deduction of the overall grade for the semester.

I may also assign a pop quiz for the lecture and cancel the remainder of my presentation for the class period. Failure to be in class for a pop quiz will result in a zero for that quiz. I will grade each quiz and weight the percentage of correct responses against the participation grade for the

semester. This means a failure to be in class for what might be the only pop quiz of the semester would result in a *zero* for the participation grade for the semester. Skip class at your own peril.

Cell Phones, Pagers, Laptops, PDAs

Unless Student Disabilities Services informs me that such a device is a necessary accommodation for a student with disabilities, all laptops, tablets, cell phones, and PDAs are to be put away during class (both in lecture and during exams). There are two reasons for this. One, you are on Facebook or Instagram anyway when you are using them during class. Both can wait. Two, laptops are—and I must emphasize this—*terrible learning devices*. Likewise, keep your phone or pager (do people still use those?) in your bag or pocket during class. The professor reserves the right to embarrass the student for not having a phone on “vibrate” during class. If not, the ringtone better be something good.

Late Arrival of the Professor Policy

If, for some reason, I am more than fifteen minutes late to class, a volunteer student should check in 232 Brackett Hall with Ms. Angela Guido. If class is cancelled, I will send an email in advance of class.

E-mail Policy (or: Why I May Not Respond to Your E-mail)

I am usually quick to respond to student e-mails. However, student e-mails tend to do several things that try my patience. I have a new policy, effective Fall 2016, that outlines why I will not respond to certain e-mails students send. Multiple rationales follow.

1. The student could answer his/her own inquiry by reading the syllabus.
2. The student missed class for which there was no exam. I do not need to know the exact reason for a missed class. Students with excusable absences are responsible for giving me a note *in hard copy* that documents the reason for the missed class. An e-mail is unnecessary unless the impromptu absence involved missing a midterm or final.
3. The student wants to know what topics s/he missed during a class s/he skipped. The answer is always “you missed what was on the syllabus.”
4. The student is protesting a grade without reference to specific points of objection. See the policy on protesting a grade in the syllabus. These e-mails tend to be expressive utility on the part of the student and do not require a response from me. Students interested in improving their knowledge of material should see me during office hours.
5. The students wants to know how many classes s/he missed at some point during the semester. I assume the student has a better answer to that question than me until the end of the semester.
6. The student is requesting an extension on an assignment for which the syllabus already established the deadline. The answer is always “no.”
7. The student is proposing an excuse for why an assignment that is late on *Turnitin* is “not actually late” by some flimsy pretense. I will ignore these e-mails.
8. The student is “*grade grubbing*” or asking to round up a grade. The answer is always “no.” *I round grades down, not up.*

9. The student is asking for an extra credit opportunity, a request that amounts to more grading for the professor. The answer is “no.”

Make-Up Exam Policy

There are **NO** make-ups for missed exams. Professors are forever intolerant of weak excuses. Do not bring them to me. Missed exams in cases of illness or personal emergency can be accommodated only with proper documentation. This *does not* mean a student can punt an exam to the near future because of a headache or the sniffles, for which a medical excuse is sought several hours after missing the exam in question. I will not accept these notes. Exams missed due to a university-sponsored event or religious holiday may also be accommodated, provided that the student informs me of the conflict *at least two weeks in advance*. Students who have valid excuses, with documentation, for missing exam dates have *one week at the most* from the original date of the exam to complete a missed exam.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

I take academic integrity seriously and will show no tolerance for any instances of academic dishonesty. The logic behind cheating or plagiarism may be self-interest, but this is too myopic. Penalties for being caught are severe and the consequences of being found culpable will extend well beyond the student’s time as a college student at Clemson. In the interest of clarification, I provide the definitions of several types of academic dishonesty below, [as understood by Clemson University](#). Avoid intentionally or inadvertently committing any of these acts:

- **Cheating:** Giving, receiving, or using unauthorized aid, including the inappropriate use of electronic devices, in any work submitted to fulfill academic requirements. In examination situations all electronic devices must be off and stowed unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- **Plagiarism:** The intentional or unintentional copying of language, structure, or ideas of another and attributing the work to one’s own efforts.
- **Unlawful Access to Private Material:** Attempts to copy, edit, or delete computer files that belong to another person or use of computer accounts that belong to another person without the permission of the file owner or account owner.

Clemson University’s Academic Integrity Statement broadly defines breaches of academic integrity as “lying, cheating, or stealing in any form.” This broad definition of academic integrity that will be enforced in my classroom.

Disabilities Policy

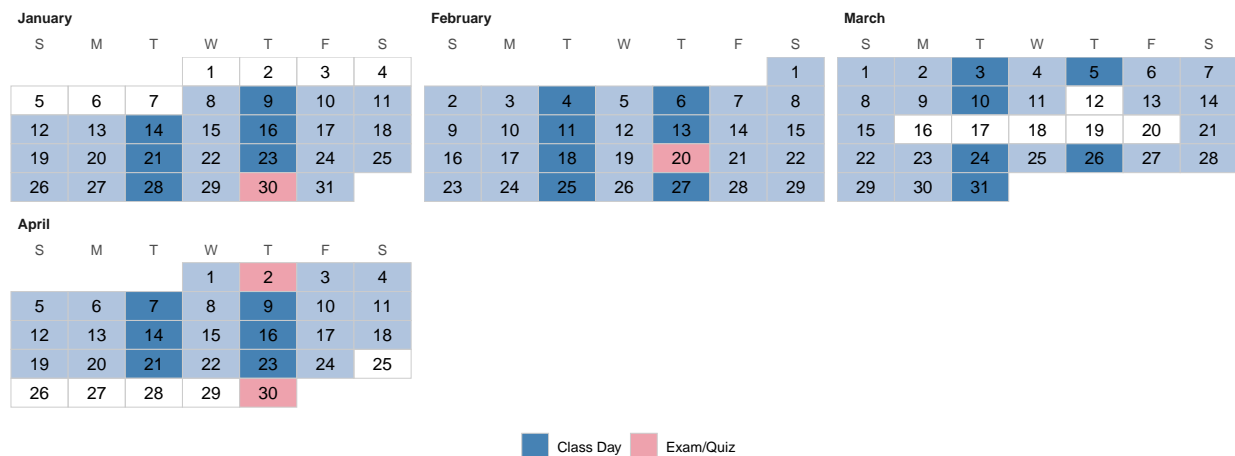
Federal laws mandate the provision of services at the university level to qualified students with disabilities. If a student requires special provisions, I encourage that student to let me know *privately* as soon as possible (preferably within the first two weeks of the semester). Afterward, I am required to refer the student to the [Student Disabilities Services](#) (SDS), which will determine the necessary provisions that I must make. SDS will give its recommendations to the student, who

must relay their recommendations to me. I, as the instructor, am responsible for providing the necessary accommodations, but only at the behest of SDS. The student maintains privacy rights on the matter, which I wholeheartedly will respect. That said, *it is the student's responsibility to initiate the provision process*. This can only be done, privately and securely, through SDS.

Students who require quiet test rooms or extended time for exams must take the initiative to schedule a room at the [Test Proctoring Center](#) on campus. These rooms must be scheduled by the student for the day of the exam as listed in the syllabus. Failure by the student to schedule a room at the Test Proctoring Center for the day of the exam will lead to a zero on the assignment.

Disputing an Assignment Grade

I am willing to accommodate students who believe my grading of an assignment was too harsh or misunderstanding. Students who wish to dispute a grade on an assignment must submit a one-page, single-spaced argument for a grade change before I consider the request. From there, I will re-grade the entire assignment. The student should not assume a “ratchet effect” for disputing an assignment as the subsequent reevaluation may result in a lower grade.



Notable dates: Professor out of town (March 12), Spring Break (March 16–20)

Figure 2: A Calendar for POSC 1020 (Introduction to International Relations, Spring 2020)

Class Schedule

Students must read the following *before* Tuesday's class session each week. Important: class readings are subject to change, contingent on mitigating circumstances and the progress we make as a class. Students should attend lectures and follow the course website to keep track of any changes to the schedule. Weeks corresponding with midterms will have the exams on Thursday preceded by an in-class review on Tuesday.

Week 01, 01/06 - 01/10: Syllabus Day (FLS, Introduction)

Read *all* associated documents on course website.

- [Taking Good Notes](#)
- [Fun with Attendance and Grades \(i.e. Students Should Attend Class\)](#)
- [The Educational Power of Discomfort](#)
- [Put Your Laptops Away, Kids \(Vol. 2\)](#)

Week 02, 01/13 - 01/17: What Shapes Our World and Worldview? (FLS, Chps. 1-2)

Week 03, 01/20 - 01/24: Why Are There Wars? (FLS, Chp. 3)

Week 04, 01/27 - 01/31: Domestic Politics and War (FLS, Chp. 4)

Map Quiz is Thursday.

Week 05, 02/03 - 02/07: International Institutions and War (FLS, Chp. 5)

Week 06, 02/10 - 02/14: Civil War and Terrorism (FLS, Chp. 6)

Week 07, 02/17 - 02/21: MIDTERM 1

Week 08, 02/24 - 02/28: International Trade (FLS, Chp. 7)

Week 09, 03/02 - 03/06: International Finance/Monetary Relations (FLS, Chps. 8-9)

Week 10, 03/09 - 03/13: International Monetary Relations (FLS, Chp. 9)

No class Thursday.

Week 11, 03/16 - 03/20: SPRING BREAK

Week 12, 03/23 - 03/27: Wealth and Poverty (FLS, Chp. 10)

Week 13, 03/30 - 04/03: MIDTERM 2

Week 14, 04/06 - 04/10: Human Rights (FLS, Chp. 12)

Week 15, 04/13 - 04/17: Environmental Concerns (FLS, Chp. 13)

Week 16, 04/20 - 04/24: Looking Ahead, and a Review (FLS, Chp. 14)

Week 17, 04/27 - 05/01: FINAL EXAMS