

Spaceflight History

TITLE: International Relations as a Function of Spaceflight

DEPARTMENT: Political Science

Instructor:

Harry Knolmár Stoltz | hstol001@ucr.edu | Office hours: **On Appointment**

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Students will explore the fascinating world of spaceflight through a political lens. In the 1950's spaceflight emerged as a central component of the Cold War and has remained an important component of international relations. Students will examine and discuss how spaceflight has evolved from a bitterly competitive conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union, to a more collaborative endeavor, and what the future holds in spaceflight relations. Even through tense times like the recent war in Ukraine, Astronauts from all over the world have remained on board the International Space Station.

KEY LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the end of the term, students will be able to:

1. Analyze the historical and political dynamics of spaceflight and apply that knowledge in real life scenarios.
2. Communicate and argue their own positions on international relations, using course materials.
3. Create a presentation about their favorite era in spaceflight and how it impacts international relations in the present-day.

ASSESSMENT:

Attendance and Participation is especially important for a discussion-based class like this one. Your participation will be graded based on how frequently you show up to class, and the quality of your in-class discussions. Don't be afraid to ask questions in class or provide your own insight. Let me know ahead of time if you can't make it to class, and we can potentially arrange a live zoom call or office hours. Attendance and Participation will account for 20% of your total grade.

Students will complete **weekly journal entries** in response to each of the readings. Students will be required to write a short paragraph response to the weekly readings to show that they can engage with the material. These journal entries will account for 30% of your total grade.

Students will complete a **midterm project** due by the end of week 5. They will argue whether the United States or the USSR won the space race. This project can be presented in any format that the student is comfortable with. Students are required to examine the space race with a critical perspective, and back up their position with course materials and at least one secondary source. This assignment is worth 20% of your grade.

The last component of your grade will be the **final project**. You will teach an outsider about your favorite era in spaceflight. You can pick this time for any reason, as long as you explain why. Students

must demonstrate proficient knowledge in their topic and cite at least three sources (at least one source must be originally found). This project can be completed in any format of choice. For example, posterboard presentation, video, podcast, slides, and even interpretive dances are acceptable. This project is meant to be as stress-free as possible, so have fun with this one! You have time to work on your project in class during week 10, and you must turn in your project via Canvas by Sunday of that week. The final project will be 30% of your grade.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Activity	Percentage possible
Attendance and Participation	20%
Weekly Reading Assignments	30%
Midterm Project	20%
Final Project	30%

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

This course will rely heavily on in-course discussion. Students will have the chance to talk with one another about the weekly readings and topics. This is one of the main reasons why completing the readings each week is so important. We will also try to have a special guest speaker join in the class in week 8.

READINGS AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

There is no textbook for this course. All required readings and videos are accessible through the links in the schedule below and should be available to UCR students on campus or with VPN. Please contact me if you have trouble accessing any of these readings.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

Date	Workshop Topics	Required Readings and Resources	Assignments Due
Week 1	Introduction to spaceflight as a political arena	Russia says it will quit the International Space Station after 2024 (NPR 2022)	N/A
Week 2	Sputnik, Yuri Gagarin and the USSR's early advantage in space	With Fear and Wonder in Its Wake, Sputnik Lifted Us Into the Future (Wilford 2007)	Reading summary, Sunday 11:59 PM
Week 3	America shifts the Space Race to the Moon	First Moon landing was nearly a US-Soviet mission (Launius 2019)	Reading summary, Sunday 11:59 PM
Week 4	How Apollo shifted the balance of power	Moon Landing Video (NASA Archives)	Reading summary, Sunday 11:59 PM Midterm project,

			Sunday 11:59 PM
Week 5	Apollo-Soyuz, and the end of the space race	The Handshake in Space	Reading summary, Sunday 11:59 PM
Week 6	The Space Shuttle Program	https://www.space.com/12085-nasa-space-shuttle-history-born.html	Reading summary, Sunday 11:59 PM
Week 7	The International Space Station	https://www.inverse.com/science/nasa-kill-iss	Reading summary, Sunday 11:59 PM
Week 8	Rise of China and return to bipolarity	https://www.space.com/tiangong-space-station	Reading summary, Sunday 11:59 PM
Week 9	Russia, Ukraine, and why space matters	https://www.space.com/russia-war-ukraine-damage-international-spaceflight-cooperation	Reading summary, Sunday 11:59 PM
Week 10	The future of spaceflight	https://www.nasa.gov/specials/60counting/future.html	Project, Sunday 11:59 PM

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Students are encouraged to take an active role as their own advocates. They are not required to identify themselves as having a disability; however, students are not eligible for accommodations unless they self-identify. Students are responsible for visiting the SDRC office (Student Disability Resource Center, 125 Costo Hall (951) 827-4538, <http://sdruc.ucr.edu/>, and obtaining and delivering letters detailing appropriate accommodations to each of their instructors in a timely manner every quarter.

Instructors are responsible for assisting in providing accommodations; students are required to make requests in an appropriate and timely manner. Ordinarily, required accommodations are described in a letter, which is given to the instructor by the student. Classroom accommodations may involve providing space for a sign language interpreter or real-time captionist, asking students to clear a path for wheelchair users, announcing need for note takers, for example. Some accommodations, such as materials in Braille, large print, or electronic format, readers, and special equipment for testing or composing papers, are provided outside of the classroom by SDRC.

ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

“All students, faculty, and staff are responsible for understanding and complying with the University’s stated academic requirements. Students should feel free to express their thoughts and opinions in an academic forum. Assignments must be completed by the student for whom the work is assigned and without unauthorized aid of any kind.”

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

At UCR we are committed to upholding and promoting the values of the Tartan Soul: Integrity, Accountability, Excellence, and Respect. As a student in this class, it is your responsibility to act in accordance with these values by completing all assignments in the manner described, and by informing the instructor of suspected acts of academic misconduct by your peers. By so doing, you will not only affirm your own integrity, but also the integrity of the intellectual work of this University, and the degree which it represents. Should you choose to commit academic misconduct in this class, you will be held accountable according to the policies set forth by the University, and will incur appropriate

consequences both in this class and from Student Conduct and Academic Integrity Programs. For more information regarding University policy and its enforcement, please visit: conduct.ucr.edu. Thank you for participating in the class!

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Please try to limit use of personal devices for non-class related activities. Remember, we only have one class per week, so try to make the most of it!