

**PSC 204**  
**Introduction to International Relations**  
**FALL 2014**

**Instructor:** Dr. Mark Nieman

**Time and Location:** MWF 10:00-10:50am, ten Hoor Hall 22

**Contact:** mdnieman@ua.edu

**Office Hours:** M 2:00-5:00pm, ten Hoor Hall 312

**Teaching Assistant:** Allen Rotter

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**Office Hours:** TBA

## Overview and Objectives

This course provides students with the background and conceptual tools they need to understand contemporary international relations. We begin by creating a common theoretical framework that permeates the topics of war and peace, international political economy, and transnational politics. More specifically, we focus on understanding group interests at the state and sub-state level, how states strategically interact with one another, and how institutions mediate state behavior. We apply this framework to why states go to war, engage in civil wars, and face terrorism; how they engage in trade and finance, and how monetary policy and levels of development affects the global economics; and international law, human rights, and the global environment. Together, we link these core concepts to particular current interests, such as the rise of China, nation-building in Africa, the ongoing conflict(s) in the Middle East and Ukraine, and the recent global economic crisis. By the end of the semester, students in this course should have a strong comprehension of international relations and analytical approaches to studying political problems.

## Learning Objectives

- Students will describe analytical approaches to studying political problems.
- Students will explain how interests, interactions, and institutions shape and mediate state behavior.
- Students will summarize basic theories of inter- and intra-national conflict, international political economy, and transnational issues.
- Students will apply basic theories to contemporary cases and events.

## Requirements

### Four Exams: 85%

There are four examinations for this class: the first exam is worth 10%, while the remaining three exams are worth 25% each. Exams are based on the readings, lectures, and discussions. Students who wish to do well on these tests should read the assigned material and attend the lectures.

### Attendance: 15%

Your attendance and discussion grade is based on participation and pop quizzes. 14 short quizzes are randomly given throughout the semester. Of these, I count your top 10 scores; absences receive a score of 0. Because quizzes are given randomly, there may be two quizzes given one week and zero the next week. When quizzes are given simply depends on the luck of the draw. **Since you effectively have an allowance of 4 absences without a grade penalty, there is no distinction made between excused and unexcused absences.** This means that you do not need to contact me in regards to missing a class unless a major life-altering event, such as major illness, necessitates you to miss more than three quizzes.

### Grading Scale:

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	≤ 59

## Required Texts

Jeffrey A. Frieden, David A. Lake, and Kenneth A. Schultz (2009). *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions*. Norton. (Hereafter referred to as FLS.)

Supplemental readings are scholarly articles and are available on [www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com). In contrast to the main text—which provides an excellent overview of the literature—the supplemental readings offer you an opportunity to see what scholarly research in international relations looks like in practice. This is especially helpful if you intend to take future classes in international relations or are considering graduate school. To find the articles, search using the author's name and article title from any computer on campus. If you are off-campus, sign into Google Scholar through the library's website and then search using the author's name and article title.

I also encourage you to keep up-to-date on current events by reading articles relating to foreign policy and international relations in a major news media source. Two good sources are the New York Times and the Washington Post. They have substantial coverage of

international events, and you can subscribe to either at a very reasonable student rate. A major weekly news magazine, such as the Economist, also provides strong coverage of international events. You can also find that many news organizations provide news online, free of charge (i.e., [www.news.google.com](http://www.news.google.com)).

## Administrative Issues

*Missing an Exam:* I expect at least two weeks advance notification that you will miss an exam (i.e. participating in university sponsored activity). You must arrange with me to make up the work in a timely manner. If you are physically unable to contact me in advance (e.g., if you wake up extremely ill), you must contact me (via email or phone) as soon as possible and then bring some form of verification from a physician. Failure to complete an exam without appropriately notifying me results in zero credit for that exam.

*Grade Complaints:* If for some reason a student is unhappy with their grade on an exam, they may submit their complaint in writing, explain the particular discrepancy, and recommend an appropriate recourse. The instructor will read the memo, re-read the disputed answer, and then assign a new grade. The instructor reserves the right to assign a lower grade after re-reading the answer a second time.

*Academic Integrity:* All students in attendance at the University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically related matter and any knowing or intentional help or attempt to help, or conspiracy to help, another student. The Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Policy will be followed in the event of academic misconduct.

Examples of academic dishonesty include-but are not limited to-the following:

- Plagiarism—that is, using another’s ideas or writings without proper attribution, including sources from the internet;
- copying from another person during an examination;
- assisting another person to cheat by providing information.

*Disability Statement:* If you are registered with the Office of Disability Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary. If you have a disability, but have not contacted the Office of Disability Services, please call 348-4285 or visit 133-B Martha Parham Hall East to register for services. *It is your responsibility to do this in a timely manner.*

*Severe Weather Protocol:* In the case of a tornado warning (tornado has been sighted or detected by radar, sirens activated), all university activities are automatically suspended, including all classes and laboratories. If you are in a building, please move immediately to the lowest level and toward the center of the building away from windows (interior classrooms, offices, or corridors) and remain there until the tornado warning has expired. Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning has expired at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning has expired provided at least half of the class period remains.

UA is a residential campus with many students living on or near campus. In general classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety warnings for the city of Tuscaloosa. Clearly, some students and faculty commute from adjacent counties. These counties may experience weather related problems not encountered in Tuscaloosa. Individuals should follow the advice of the National Weather Service for that area taking the necessary precautions to ensure personal safety. Whenever the National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Agency issue a warning, people in the path of the storm (tornado or severe thunderstorm) should take immediate life saving actions.

When West Alabama is under a severe weather advisory, conditions can change rapidly. It is imperative to get to where you can receive information from the National Weather Service and to follow the instructions provided. Personal safety should dictate the actions that faculty, staff and students take. The Office of Public Relations will disseminate the latest information regarding conditions on campus in the following ways:

- Weather advisory posted on the UA homepage;
- Weather advisory sent out through Connect-ED—faculty, staff and students (sign up at myBama);
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA at 90.7 FM;
- Weather advisory broadcast over Alabama Public Radio (WUAL) at 91.5 FM;
- Weather advisories are broadcast via WUOA/WVUA-TV, which can be viewed across Central Alabama. Also, visit [wvuatv.com](http://wvuatv.com) for up-to-the-minute weather information. A mobile Web site is also available for your convenience.

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus to reflect the pace of the course.

## Course Outline

### Week 1 (Aug. 20): What is International Relations?

FLS - Introduction.

*Supplemental reading:* Rosenberg, “Reading Games: Strategies for Reading Scholarly Sources.” (available at: <http://wac.colostate.edu/books/writingspaces2/rosenbergreading-games.pdf>)

### Week 2 (Aug. 25): What Shaped Our World?

FLS - Ch. 1.

*Supplemental reading:* Biddle, Friedman, and Long. 2012. “Civil War Intervention and the Problem of Iraq.” *International Studies Quarterly* 56(1): 85–98.

### Week 3 (Sept. 1): Interests, Interactions, and Institutions

No class on Monday (Labor Day).

FLS - Ch. 2.

*Supplemental reading:* Colaresi. 2004. “When Doves Cry: International Rivalry, Unreciprocated Cooperation, and Leadership Turnover.” *American Journal of Political Science* 48(3): 555–570.

### Week 4 (Sept. 8): Bargaining and War, and Exam 1

**Exam 1 on Monday** (approx: 30 minutes)

FLS - Ch. 3.

*Supplemental reading:* Bapat. 2010. “A Game Theoretic Analysis of the Afghan Surge.” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 6(3): 217–236.

### Week 5 (Sept. 15): Domestic Politics and War

FLS - Ch. 4.

*Supplemental reading:* Putnam. 1988. “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games.” *International Organization* 42(3): 427–460.

### Week 6 (Sept. 22): International Institutions and War

FLS - Ch. 5.

*Supplemental reading:* Leeds. 2003. “Do Alliances Deter Aggression? The Influence of Military Alliances on the Initiation of Militarized Interstate Disputes.” *American Journal of Political Science* 47(3): 427–439.

**Week 7 (Sept. 29): Violence by Nonstate Actors (Civil War and Terrorism)**

FLS - Ch. 6.

*Supplemental reading:* Pape. 2003. "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *American Political Science Review* 97(3): 343–361.

**Week 8 (Oct. 6): Exam 2**

Review on Monday

**Exam 2 on Wednesday**

No class on Friday

**Week 9 (Oct. 13): International Trade**

FLS - Ch. 7.

*Supplemental reading:* Chase. 2008. "Moving Hollywood Abroad: Divided Labor Markets and the New Politics of Trade in Services." *International Organization* 62(4): 653–687.

**Week 10 (Oct. 20): International Finance**

FLS - Ch. 8.

*Supplemental reading:* Li. 2006. "Democracy, Autocracy, and Tax Incentives to Foreign Direct Investors: A Cross-National Analysis." *Journal of Politics* 68(1): 62–74.

**Week 11 (Oct. 27): International Monetary Relations**

FLS - Ch. 9.

*Supplemental reading:* Chwiero. 2008. "Normative Change from Within: The International Monetary Fund's Approach to Capital Account Liberalization." *International Studies Quarterly* 52(1): 129–158.

**Week 12 (Nov. 3): Development and Exam 3**

FLS - Ch. 10.

**Exam 3 on Friday**

*Supplemental reading:* Reuveny and Thompson. 2008. "Uneven Economic Growth and the World Economy's North–South Stratification." *International Studies Quarterly* 52(3): 579–605.

### **Week 13 (Nov. 10): International Law and Norms**

FLS - Ch. 11.

*Supplemental reading:* Keck and Sikkink. 2002. "Transnational Advocacy Networks in International and Regional Politics." *International Social Science Journal* 51(159) 89–101.

### **Week 14 (Nov. 17): International Human Rights**

FLS - Ch. 12.

*Supplemental reading:* Murdie and Bhasin. 2011. "Aiding and Abetting: Human Rights INGOs and Domestic Protest." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55(2): 163–191.

### **Week 15 (Nov. 24): The Global Environment**

FLS - Ch. 13.

No classes on Wednesday or Friday

*Supplemental reading:* Peterson. 1992. "Whalers, Cetologists, Environmentalists, and the International Management of Whaling." *International Organization* 46(1): 147–186.

### **Week 16 (Dec. 1): The Future of International Politics**

FLS - Ch. 14.

*Supplemental reading:* Nye. 2010. "The Future of American Power: Dominance and Decline in Perspective." *Foreign Affairs* 89(6): 2–12.

### **Week 17 (Dec. 8): Finals Week**

**Exam 4 on Wednesday**, December 10, at 11:30am-2:00pm.