

INR 3081 Contemporary International Problems
(a Global Learning course)
Spring 2014

Time & Place

Instructor: xxx
Email: xxx **Tel:** 305-348-xxx
Office: SIPA xxx **Office Hours:** xxx

Course Description: Over the past few decades the forces of globalization have dramatically influenced the domestic politics of states around the world. This course will examine some of the major discussions and issues in the global arena, with a particular emphasis on international security. It starts by discussing the nature of security and use of force in international relations. It then surveys some of the major theoretical approaches that are utilized to understand security (in various ways). It continues with examining some key concepts such as war, terrorism, ethnic conflict, human security, and alliances. It concludes by discussing related contemporary issues such as nuclear proliferation, regional institutions, environmental issues and energy security. This is a discipline-specific global learning course that counts toward your GL graduation requirement.

Course Learning Objectives: Upon completing this course, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of basic discussions in international relations
- Demonstrate an understanding of major theoretical approaches on major issues in IR
- Understand & analyze a variety of contemporary issues and concepts discussed in IR

Global Learning Goals and Outcomes: (see: <https://goglobal.fiu.edu/>)

- **Global Awareness:** Students will become aware of facts and concepts to explain the interrelated nature of contemporary international issues. Two quizzes will ascertain your knowledge of the interrelatedness of global policy issues.
- **Global Perspectives:** Students will be able to present different theoretical perspectives to explain local, international and global problems and be able to evaluate the utility of these perspectives in solving global problems. Your essay serves this purpose.
- **Global Engagement:** students will utilize their knowledge and skills to make team-based solution-oriented arguments and prescriptions for contemporary international problems. The final group work serves this purpose: In the last class, you'll be asked to work as a group to develop a state department policy briefing, including policy solutions.

Active Learning Strategies:

As part of this course, you will participate in: Class discussions, debates, group (powerpoint) presentations.

Required Texts:

Contemporary Security Studies by Alan Collins
Oxford University Press, USA; Second Edition (March 5, 2010)
• ISBN-10: 0199548854

Make sure you can access Blackboard, www.online.fiu.edu (login w/ your FIU-mail logon info). A few additional readings are available there and are listed in the schedule below.

Policies

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

All written work submitted for this course must be original – it is the student’s own writing prepared only for this section of this course using the proper citation of sources. Specific instructions for the essays will be distributed in class.

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss appropriate accommodations necessary to ensure full participation.

Grading and Requirements:

In-class quiz(zes)	20 %/pts
Midterm exam	25 %/pts
Perspectives-Essay	10%/pts
Final exam	30 %
Class/Group participation	15 % = 100 % / points

Grading/Evaluation System:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69

D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	0-59

Course Policies:

Readings and Class Participation:

You are expected to come to class with the readings completed. You should be prepared to participate in class discussions about the topics covered. Also, you are expected to read the New York Times or consult other quality news outlets to be up-to-date on current political issues.

Attendance:

Students are strongly encouraged to attend class regularly and class participation is an important component of this course. If you cannot attend class because of emergencies or special circumstances, let the instructor know about it in advance. You are expected to come to class and actively participate in the discussions.

Quizzes & Exams (Global Awareness):

The quiz(ze)s will contain multiple choice as well as short answer questions testing your knowledge on international issues and your awareness of the interrelatedness of those across sectors and governance levels. The midterm and the final exam will do the same in extended form, and need to be taken on the scheduled days. A makeup exam will only be scheduled if the student provides documentation of an official scheduling conflict, serious illness or family emergency.

Perspectives-Essay (Global Perspectives):

Students will write a 3-5 page essay that discusses one of the themes covered in the course through the use of different theoretical IR perspectives after approval from the instructor (including but not limited to issues such as terrorism, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, nuclear proliferation, human security, environmental issues, transnational organized crime, energy security, ethnic conflicts with international repercussions etc.). These essays are due by the final exam week.

How do the different theoretical perspectives contribute to a broader view of the political issue treated? Which perspective do you find most convincing, and why?

You need to cite properly whether you quote directly from the text or you paraphrase the author. Turnitin.com will be used.

Team Exercises (Global Engagement):

Throughout the course, you will be asked to participate in one group presentation on the reading of the week. You should see the instructor one week in advance to approve the main contents, and then prepare a 15 min group presentation (including powerpoint) on it.

In the last class, you'll be asked to join together in teams to develop a (US State Department, UN, or other international/foreign policy institution) policy briefing, including a detailed analysis of the issue and realistic policy prescriptions. This briefing should be presented as a

group, and will be graded on: realistic portrayal of the issue, applicability of the prescribed solution, and engagement with the actors involved.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1

Making Sense of the IR history

Fukuyama, Francis (1989). "The End of History?" National Interest, vol. 16 (Summer), pp. 3-18.

WEEK 2

Debating Globalization: pro/anti/different/indifferent

Kupchan, Charles (2012). "Democratic Malaise: Globalization and the Threat to the West" Foreign Affairs, pp. 62-67

Moises, Naim (Jan.-Feb. 2003). "The Five Wars of Globalization" Foreign Policy, pp. 28-37

WEEK 3

How to approach international security? – Traditional approaches: Realism and Liberalism

Alan Collins, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, pp. 13-54

Debate: Realists vs Liberals

WEEK 4

How to approach international security? – Nontraditional approaches: Social Constructivism and Peace Studies

Alan Collins, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, pp. 55-103

Debate: Traditional vs Non-traditional approaches to security

WEEK 5

Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism + **Quiz No 1**

Alan Collins, Chapter 20, pp. 273-289

Group presentation

WEEK 6

Energy Security, pp. 306-320

Alan Collins, Chapter 22

Group presentation

WEEK 7

Weapons of Mass Destruction

Alan Collins, Chapter 19, pp. 147-167

Group presentation

WEEK 8

Transnational Crime

Alan Collins, Chapter 25, pp. 146-363

Group presentation

WEEK 9

Economic Security

Alan Collins, Chapter 15, pp. 208-239

Group presentation

WEEK 10

Humanitarian Intervention + **Midterm Examination**

Alan Collins, Chapter 21, pp. 287-306

Group presentation

WEEK 11

Military Security

Alan Collins, Chapter 11, pp. 147-176
Group presentation

WEEK 12

Environmental Security

Alan Collins, Chapter 13, pp. 190-209
Group presentation

WEEK 13

Cyber Security

Alan Collins, Chapter 26, pp. 362-380 + Quiz No. 2
Group presentation

WEEK 14

Societal Security

Alan Collins, Chapter 13, pp. 176-190
Group presentation

WEEK 15

**Group exercise: Team-based policy briefing/proposal
Perspectives- Essay due!**

WEEK 16

FINAL EXAM WEEK, NO CLASSES