

PSC 232-001:

Introduction to International Relations

Fall 2023 | TR 9:15 am – 10:45 am
Classroom: Brewer Hall 228

Professor: Dr. Benjamin Gross

Office: Brewer Hall 205D

Office Hours:

Physical – M/W: 1:00 – 2:45 pm
 T/R: 2:15 – 3:00 pm

Virtual – M/W: 10:00 am – 12:30 pm

Appointment – contact for mutually agreed upon date and time

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“The art of war is of vital importance to the State. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.”

- Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (5th Century BC)

“The universal and lasting establishment of peace constitutes not merely a part, but the whole final purpose and end of the science of right as viewed within the limits of reason.”

- Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace* (1795)

“We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us.”

- Winston Churchill, Speech to House of Commons (October 28, 1943)

Course Description & Rationale:

Many important political events happen in the international arena. In recent years, political phenomena such as the Russian [invasion](#) of Ukraine, [European \(dis\)integration](#), [trade tension](#) between the United States and China, military action by [North Korea](#), [peacekeeping](#) missions in Africa, attempts to preserve rainforests in [Brazil](#), and [COVID-19](#) show the extensiveness of global politics. To better recognize our place in the world, it serves us to understand how and why these phenomena arise, continue, and (when it occurs) conclude.

To comprehend these events, it is helpful to see them in terms of political interactions among actors in the international system. As the quote from [Churchill](#) suggests, humans have the ability to create. Our creations, however, can shape how we behave. Thus, the design of this course is to introduce you to concepts, frameworks, and issues in global politics. This will help you to understand how we shape the world, and how the world shapes us; it invites us to question what opinions are ours, what opinions have we [inherited](#), and what are facts of nature.

The organization of this course is in two parts. The first relies heavily on developing a theoretical understanding of global actors and processes. Upon completing the first part of the course, you will be familiar with the role of social science in informing us about potential relationships among political actors (e.g., [states](#), [international organizations](#), and [nongovernmental actors](#)). You will be able to identify and discuss the dominant approaches and theories of international relations.

The second part of the course will apply our newfound theoretical knowledge to some current issues in world politics. As demonstrated by the quotes from [Sun Tzu](#) and [Kant](#), war and peace are central subjects in the study of global politics. We will also examine the basics of international organizations and law, trade, terrorism, and human rights. Thus, this second part of the course prepares you for future global studies courses at JSU (e.g., PSC 338 – International Human Rights), as you have the theoretical knowledge and practice of applying it when studying international politics.

If nothing else, by the end of this course, you will be able to filter international events through the analytic lenses explored in the first part of the course. Ultimately, you will emerge from this course capable of carrying on coherent and thoughtful [“cocktail conversations”](#) relating to international relations and world politics.

Course Goals:

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Explain actors, levels of analysis, and frameworks used by scholars studying international relations.
- Describe assumptions utilized in realism, liberalism, feminism, constructivism, Marxism, and rational choice theory.
- Clarify the definitions of conflict, crisis, and war (as used by political science), six types of war international relations scholars examine, and some explanations for war.
- Comprehend consequences of war and methods to limit the likelihood of war.
- Understand the place of international organizations and law within different frameworks.
- Breakdown how international relations helps to explain behaviors within international trade, terrorism, and human rights protection/abuse.
- Recognize the location of 75 of the 193 states throughout the world.
- Experience how case studies shed light on principles of international relations.
- Acquire a greater sense of your place in the international world.

Required Texts:

* Stiles, Kendall. 2013. *Case Histories in International Politics*. 7th Edition. Boston: Pearson. ISBN: [978-0205854639](#)

* Pevehouse, Jon C. W. and Joshua S. Goldstein. 2017. *International Relations*. 11th Edition. Boston: Pearson. ISBN: [978-0134404769](#)

Assignments & Grading:

Professionalism	10%
Tocqueville Lectures	10%
Map Quizzes	10%
Lens Paper	10%
Case Study Calibration	1%
Case Study Analysis	14%
Three Section Exams	15% per exam

Grading Scale:

A = 90-100%
B = 80-89%
C = 70-79%
D = 60-69%
F = <60%

Assignment Details:

Readings:

Students should read their textbooks. It is impossible to cover all the points of international relations in a semester. By reading your textbook, you come to our class prepared to engage with the topics, ideas, and concepts of the course.

Rationale for this assessment: By reading your textbook, you come to class prepared to engage with the topics, ideas, and concepts of the course. Reading will also assist you to be successful in your graded assessments and engaging in meaningful assistance from the professor when you have questions.

Professionalism:

All students begin the semester with 10% of their course grade completed. To keep this 10% students must engage in professional behavior within class and class-related engagements. Students will lose points from their professionalism grade when they engage in unprofessional behaviors and activities. These behaviors and activities, as well as how many points are lost for engaging in them, can be found in the professionalism addendum in on the home page of our Canvas shell.

Rationale for this assessment: Students are graded on professional behavior to prepare them their future career. I have spoken with individuals in numerous sectors (e.g., accounting, mental health, logistics, construction, healthcare, and more). Consistently, these individuals inform me that recent college graduates either did not get a job offer or were fired quickly upon being hired due to unprofessional behaviors. The time to develop professionalism is now, not upon graduation.

Tocqueville Lectures:

Jacksonville State University is proud to host the Tocqueville Lectures Series. This series brings lectures to present on topics that foster the academic environment of the campus. These lectures relate to topics that are important with ideas in our course.

As a student in a course for minors and majors, these lectures are excellent an opportunity for exposure to new ideas, practicing engagement within the discipline, and developing a professional connection. All students are required to attend two Tocqueville Lectures. By attending a lecture, you earn 5% of your course grade.

These lectures are presented via a hybrid format. More information about the lecture modalities, dates, and registration process is shared during the course.

Rationale for this assessment: Students are graded on active participation in Tocqueville Lectures as this engagement demonstrates the ability to participate with the materials of this course in a professional setting. This will help to prepare students for how to engage with presentations in academic, business, and governmental settings.

Map Quizzes:

There are five map quizzes administered throughout the course. Each quiz focuses on a different region of the world. The map quizzes are announced in class and are listed in the table below. When announced, students will have to learn the location of 15 states. Of those, a subset of 10 states will appear on the quiz. Combined, these quizzes are worth 10% of your course grade.

<u>Region</u>	<u>Quiz Announced Date</u>	<u>Quiz Date</u>
Latin America	Thursday, August 24	Thursday, September 7
Africa	Thursday, September 14	Thursday, September 28
Middle East	Thursday, October 5	Thursday, October 12
Europe	Thursday, October 19	Thursday, October 26
Asia	Thursday, October 2	Thursday, November 9

Since these quizzes are announced in advance and contain a subset of potential states, there are no make-up quizzes. Being absent the day of a quiz results in zero, unless there is a documented emergency causing your absence (e.g., admitted into the hospital). A make-up quiz will only be provided when documentation of the emergency is provided **and** the student receives the professor's approval for this make-up quiz.

Rationale for this assessment: Geography is an important part of global politics. In fact, [textbooks](#) and courses exist on the subject of international political geography. To understand how states interact with each other, we need to know geography.

Students complete these quizzes to demonstrate this foundational level of understanding. These quizzes are low-stake assessments to encourage students to focus on learning the content rather than devising ways to engage in academic dishonesty. By learning the location of states in the world, students will better understand international relations and current events.

Lens Paper:

Students will compose a research paper that applies the theoretical concepts examined in this course to a current topic within our world. Students will get to choose the framework and current topic they want to compose about. The lens paper is due on Tuesday, November 14.

The lens paper is 1,000- to 1,250-words in length. The paper requires a minimum of three sources. One source can be one of our required texts. Another source can be a credible newspaper or news source. The third source must come from an academic journal or book publisher. Students can use more than three sources. The professor will show how to find sources and cite them properly during class. More details about the lens paper will be provided on Tuesday, October 17.

Rationale for this assessment: The ability to communicate complicated ideas clearly and coherently is a [vital skill](#) set to develop. It is a skill set that [employers](#) are seeking. Furthermore, connecting theory to practice deepens your understanding of topics while also demonstrating your ability to apply the concepts of the course.

This assessment supports multiple course goals (e.g., explaining actors, levels of analysis, and frameworks used by scholars studying international relations) while also giving you the liberty to gain knowledge in a specific topic of your interest. This assessment, therefore, invites students to begin examining an area they want to investigate further in future coursework.

Case Study Calibration:

Prior to completing the first case study, each student will independently complete a case study calibration. The case study calibration opens on Thursday, August 17 at 5:00 pm and is due by Monday, August 28 at 11:59 pm. Students must complete this calibration before they can participate the course's case study analyses.

Students will read Chapter 11 of Stiles (2013), "Nationalism: The Conflict in the Caucasus." Using a provided rubric, students will review four examples of short answer responses. Students are then asked to "grade" each example of short answer responses.

If a student grades the response correctly, she earns 100% for that evaluation. If the student grades the response incorrectly but is adjacent to the correct answer, she earns 75% for that evaluation. If the student is two-degrees away from the correct answer, she receives 33% for that evaluation. If the student grades the response incorrectly and is more than two-degrees away from the correct answer, she earns 0% for that evaluation. More information concerning this assessment exists on Canvas.

Rationale for this assessment: The short answers to your case study analyses is the major substantive area of this assessment. The intent of this calibration is to prepare you for how to complete this portion of the assessment. By reviewing examples of work, using the rubric to grade these examples, and then reflecting on your ability to use the rubric, you will be better prepared to complete the case study analyses.

Case Study Analysis:

Throughout the semester, we will examine case studies to experience how real-world political events are connected to ideas from our course. Near the beginning of a case study analysis day, students will complete a short in-class reading quiz. Students will then work with small groups to answer questions provided by the professor. These questions will guide students in understanding the importance of the case study.

The professor will use a student's individual in-class reading quiz, her participation within her small group, and the small group's answers to the professor's questions to

determine the student's case study analysis grade for that case study. Together, these actions account for 15% of a student's course grade. The professor will provide an update on this grade during the semester.

Rationale for this assessment: Case studies allow us to examine the connection between theory and practice. Thus, these assessments assist in developing your analytical and critical thinking skills. Furthermore, the use of group work within the workforce is persistent. Learning how to successfully be a member of a team is a 21st-century skill. This assessment also assists in the development of time management.

Exams:

Three section exams (i.e., non-cumulative) account for 45% of your course grade. Each exam, therefore, is worth 15% of your grade. Exams consist of 40 multiple-choice questions covering material from class work, the textbook, and case studies. Each exam is worth 100 points (each question, therefore, is worth 2.5 points).

These exams will occur within class. As such, they are closed book, without notes, and technology-free exams. **In addition, once the first exam is submitted to the professor, no student will be allowed to begin an exam.** Additional rules about the exam will be included on the exams themselves.

The first two section exams are administered during class sessions on Thursday, September 14 and Thursday, October 19. The third section exam is given during our final exam period (Tuesday, December 5 at 8:00 am).

A study guide for each exam will be released two weeks prior to the exam. Students are given a study guide as a tool to help focus their studies. Students, however, should be developing the skills to determine what information from their readings and course work is important. This is why study guides are not provided the first day of a section.

Rationale for this assessment: Students are evaluated on their ability to prepare, recall, and retrieve important information from this course, as this demonstrates competency concerning the knowledge areas of this subject.

Classroom Behavior:

Courtesy and regard for one another will guide classroom behavior. Since this course concerns politics, discussion can be passionate at times. During class, we will treat everyone with respect, especially during dialogues. This means listening and letting a classmate finish their thought before responding, debating ideas (not people), speaking to each other in a civil tone, and refusing to engage in personal attacks. During our dialogues, I ask you all to respect the viewpoints of your fellow students. Viewpoints, however, should be challenged; respect does not mean acceptance.

Students are expected to be attentive during all aspects of class. Students who sleep, read the newspaper, persistently talk with other students, text, use their cell phones, surf the internet, use computers for any other use than note taking (although due to [findings](#), I strongly suggest against this), or are otherwise inattentive/disruptive in class will be asked to leave the class, lose professionalism points, and will be subject to being dismissed from the course at the professor's request.

Other Policies:

Late Work:

The only assignment that will be accepted after its due date is the Lens Paper. Every day the Lens Paper is late, the assignment loses three percentage points (e.g., 89 to 86). One week after its due date, the professor will no longer accept a late Lens

Paper. Any student, who does not submit their Lens Paper on time, or within one week after its due date, will receive a zero for that assignment.

Make-up Assessments & Exams:

There are no make-up options for professionalism. In addition, since students only have to attend two of the three Tocqueville Lectures, and these lectures are offered through a hybrid medium, there are no make-up forms of this assessment. While the Lens Paper can be submitted late, there are no make-up assessments for this assessment.

As explained in the Assignment Details section of this syllabus, there are no make-up quizzes except under the circumstances described in that section. In addition, there are no make-up case study analyses except under these same conditions.

If you cannot attend one of the exams, you need to notify me by email as soon as possible. Make-up exams will only be given to students who have been unable to sit for the examination because of illness requiring medical care, required university activities, or a personal emergency of a serious nature. To be excused without penalty, documentation or prior permission is required. Make-up exams will be scheduled as soon as possible, at a time to be mutually agreed upon by the student(s) and myself.

Attendance:

You are allowed two excused absences that do not require documentation. To use these, you need to email the professor at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the class session you will miss. This email must also inform him why you are unable to attend class (e.g., sick, transportation issue, childcare was unavailable, and so forth).

You can also obtain excused absences with documentation. Not all forms of absences can be excusable. Unexpected events (e.g., illness) or required activities (e.g., NCAA athletic participation) are excusable. Vacations, musical festivals, and other such optional activities are not excusable.

Please use the policy of excused absences with documentation and excused absences without documentation wisely. There are no exceptions to this policy. Please also remember that while you may be excused from a class session, this does not excuse you from the material. Furthermore, depending on the nature of the absence, you may not be excused from an assessment (e.g., map quiz, case study, or exam).

Religious Observances:

If assigned work conflicts with your religious holidays, please tell me in advance so we can make alternative plans. Informing me of religious obligations after the fact, however, will not count as an excuse.

Counseling Resources:

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with academic performance and/or negatively impact daily life. If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health challenges, please contact Counseling Services at 256.782.5475 or visit <https://www.jsu.edu/ccservices/index.html> for more information or to request an appointment. Students may also stop by the Counseling Center at 147 Trustee Circle (located between Sparkman and Mason Halls) to request services. Additionally, the office offers self-help resources to explore ways students can independently support their mental health.

In the event of a crisis after hours, please contact the University Police Department at 256.782.5050 to be connected with the on-call counselor. The National Suicide

Prevention hotline (988) is another resource and is available 24 hours a day. You may also reach out to Crisis Text by texting 741 741 where you will be connected to a trained responder.

Academic Integrity:

In a university community, true knowledge can be gained only through honest means. A Scholar's Code can be found in both the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs and the Student Handbook. Students who violate the Scholar's Code will be subject to disciplinary actions which could range from a zero on an assignment to failure of the course; repeated offenses can result in dismissal from the university. Records of academic dishonesty are kept in the Office of Community Standards and Student Ethics.

Student Success Center:

The Student Success Center provides an integrated network of support and meets students where they are while empowering and supporting lifelong learning. The Student Success Center is located on the Ground (Basement) Floor, 1st Floor, and 2nd floor of the Houston Cole Library and serves as your one-stop shop for student supports and services. Services include tutoring, supplemental instruction, academic and career support, success coaching, reasonable accommodations, leadership development, and peer mentoring through our Academic Support and Success, Academic and Career Advising, Learning Services and Analytics, First and Second Year Experiences, Disability Resources, and Student Athlete Development offices. To learn more about these services and supports and how to access them, visit <https://www.jsu.edu/studentsuccess/index.html>.

Campus Resources for Writing:

The Writing Center offers several free in-person and online services including writing and digital writing consultations, virtual presentation audiences, ESL conversation partners, and special-topics workshops for all JSU faculty, staff, and students. A team of undergraduate and graduate consultants are trained to assist with academic, personal, and professional writing. Appointments can be scheduled through the Navigate app. For more information, visit <https://www.jsu.edu/english/jsuwrites/index.html>.

Disabilities Resources:

Jacksonville State University is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you are currently experiencing or anticipate that you will have any barriers to learning in this course, please feel welcome to discuss your concerns with me. It is my goal to create a learning experience that is as accessible as possible. If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, that may have some impact on your work in this course and for which you may require academic adjustments or accommodations, please work with a staff member in Disability Resources so that accommodations can be considered. Students that receive accommodation letters, or Individualized Post-Secondary Plans (IPPs) should meet with me to discuss the provisions of your accommodations as early in the semester as possible. You can find more information about the Office of Disability Resources on the web or by visiting the Student Success Center on the 2nd Floor of the Houston Cole Library. You may also call (256) 782-8380 or email at disabilityresources@jsu.edu. All discussions will remain confidential.

Military-Connected Student Statement:

The Office of Military & Post-Traditional Student Services serves all active duty, guard, reserve, veteran, and dependent students at JSU. If you have any questions, please contact (256) 782-8838, veterans@jsu.edu, or at the physical location in the basement of Daugette Hall. If you are a student currently serving in the military (Active Duty, Guard, or Reserves) with the potential of being called to military service or training during the course of the semester, you are encouraged to contact your course instructor no later than the first week of class to discuss the class attendance policy. The instructor may make accommodations for this absence or suggest that you take the course at another time.

Title IX:

Jacksonville State University does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any educational programs or activities and is required, by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Department of Education, to uphold Title IX standards. This requirement to not discriminate in educational programs and activities extends to employment by and admission to the university. Prohibited activities include sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and other conduct that is addressed in our "Sex-Based Harassment and Misconduct Policy." Anyone with knowledge of this type of conduct is asked to immediately report such incidents to the University Police Department at (256) 782-5050 or the Title IX Coordinator at 256.782.5769 or titleix@jsu.edu. If an individual wishes to keep the information confidential, they should speak with a counselor at the Counseling Services office at (256) 782-5475 or a medical provider at JSU's Health Center (256) 782-5310. For more information about Title IX or to report a concern, please visit the JSU Title IX webpage at <https://www.jsu.edu/titleix>.

Tutoring resources at JSU:

All JSU students can access online tutoring assistance through tutor.com. To access tutor.com, log into Canvas and click the tutor.com link in the navigation pane.

For more information about tutor.com contact Debra James at dmjames@jsu.edu.

Withdraws:

Please be advised, the last date to withdraw from the course without academic penalty is Friday, November 10. There are other important dates regarding withdrawing from the course concerning refunding your tuition and if you receive an academic penalty, which you can find [here](#). If you choose to stop attending the course, it is your responsibility to withdraw from the course. If you do not withdraw from the course, the professor will enter the grade you have earned as your final grade.

Student Notifications:

I post all notifications on Canvas via the Announcements section of our course. Be sure to check these for all notifications.

E-mail Policy:

I will do my best to respond to all e-mails within 36 hours. **All e-mails that can be answered via the syllabus will receive the response: "Please refer to your syllabus." and a picture of Alf.**

To ensure you have read the syllabus prior to e-mailing me, the first e-mail you send me must include a picture of a **platypus**. If your first e-mail does not have a

picture of a platypus, I will respond to your e-mail with: "Please review the syllabus." This policy ensures you have helped yourself by using the tools I have provided you.

To help response time, please include an appropriate subject line in your e-mail. Furthermore, please take time to construct a formal e-mail with proper etiquette and language. **E-mails constructed in a manner like, "Yo, Mrs B i will b submitting the thing late 2day" or using emojis to represent words/ideas will receive the response, "Please refer to your syllabus." and a picture of Godzilla.**

How to be Successful in this Class:

The best way to be successful is to be prepared. Being prepared means reading all of the assignment carefully and, most likely, rereading the assignment prior to class. By reading the assignments prior to class, you will be able to fully participate and get the most out of our classroom experience.

Furthermore, good note taking is vital. Take [physical notes](#). Learn to listen carefully. I find students who write down the questions being asked, and then the responses to these questions, are the most successful. If you only write down the answer the note is meaningless, as it lacks the context of the question.

After class, review your notes to see if they make sense. By reviewing them sooner than later you will be able to remember things from class to sort out any points of confusion in your notes.

Finally, get together with other students to form study groups. If you get together periodically and go over notes, you are more likely to have a complete set of notes. You will not only be able to go over your notes together to fill in the gaps, but by discussing with each other the topics of the class you might come to new insights.

Tentative Class Schedule:

Date	Topic	Textbook Reading
8/17	Introduction	No Reading
<i>Theories & Approaches to World Politics</i>		
8/22	Understanding International Relations	PG: Ch. 1 & pp. 431-434
8/22 & 24	Realism	PG: Ch. 2
8/29	Realism Case Study	S. Ch 3
8/31 & 9/5	Liberalism	PG: Ch. 3 (pp. 71-81)
9/5 & 7	Alternatives	PG: Ch. 3 (pp. 81-105)
9/12	Alternatives Case Study	S: Ch. 1 & Ch. 9
9/14	SECTION EXAM 1	NO READING
<i>Issues in World Politics: Conflict & War</i>		
9/19 & 21	Film (<i>Wag the Dog</i>)	NO READING
9/21 & 26	Intro to Conflict & War	P&G: Ch. 5

9/28	Why do States Fight Case Study	S: Ch. 5
10/3 & 5	Outcomes & Consequences	P&G: Ch. 5
10/10	Preventing & Limiting War	P&G: Ch. 5
10/12	Preventing War Case Study	S: Ch. 4
10/17	Catch-up/Review Day	NO READING
10/19	SECTION EXAM 2	NO READING
<i>Issues in World Politics: International Organizations & Law; International Political Economy; Terrorism; Human Rights</i>		
10/24	Intro to IOs, the UN, & International Law	P&G: Ch. 7 (pp. 197-225)
10/26	Intro to International Law Case Study	S: Ch. 19
10/31 & 11/2	FILM (<i>The Whistleblower & Frontline</i>)	NO READING
11/7	Trade and Finance & Interdependence, Regionalism, and Globalization	P&G: Ch. 8
11/9	Trade and Globalization Case Study	S: Ch. 13 & Ch. 14
11/14	Terrorism & Weapons of Mass Destruction	P&G: Ch. 6
11/16	Terrorism Case Study	S: Ch. 7
11/21	THANKSGIVING BREAK	NO READING
11/23	THANKSGIVING	NO READING
11/28	Intro to Human Rights & Why Repression?	P&G: Ch. 7 (pp. 225-239)
11/30	Preventing & Limiting Repression	Posted on Canvas & S: Ch. 20
12/5	SECTION EXAM 3 (8:00 am)	NO READING