

PSC 232-001:

Introduction to International Relations

Spring 2023 | 100% Online
Classroom: Canvas

Professor: Dr. Benjamin Gross

Office: Brewer Hall 205D

Office Hours:

Physical – T/R: 8-9 am & 2:30-4:00 pm

Virtual – W: 9:00 am – 2:00 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 arena.

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](#)

Assessments & Grading:

Map Quizzes	1% per quiz
Case Study Calibration	5%
Case Study Analysis	5% per case
Three Section Exams	15% per exam
Lens Paper	10%

Grading Scale:

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

Assessment Details:

Readings:

While not graded, students should read their textbooks. It is impossible to cover all the fine points of international relations in one semester. By reading your textbook, you will come to our virtual presentations prepared to engage with the topics, ideas, and concepts of the course.

Rationale for this assessment: By reading your textbook, you come to virtual presentations 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.

Map Quizzes:

There are five map quizzes in the course. Each quiz focuses on a different region of the world. When announced, students receive a list of 15 states. Students then need to learn how to identify these 15 states on a blank map of the region in question.

Of the 15 announced states, a subset of 10 states appears on the quiz. The quiz is open for a three-day window from 12:01 am Central Time Zone on its opening date until 11:59 pm Central Time Zone on its due date. Since students have a three-day window to complete a map quiz, **there are no make-up quizzes.**

Once you open the quiz, you have 3 minutes to complete it. This is because you should know the location of these states. The time limit is to prevent students from cheating by using a map to answer the quiz. **Any evidence of academic dishonesty on any map quiz will result in a zero in the course.** Please review the JSU [student handbook](#) on what is academic dishonesty. Combined, these quizzes are worth 5% of your course grade; hence, there is no reason to commit academic dishonesty, as it is better to do poorly on a map quiz than receive a zero in the course.

Region of the World	States Announced	Quiz Opening Date (at 12:01 am CT)	Quiz Due Date (at 11:59 pm CT)
Latin America	Friday, January 20	Friday, January 27	Sunday, January 29
Africa	Friday, February 10	Friday, February 17	Sunday, February 19
Middle East	Friday, February 24	Friday, March 3	Sunday, March 5
Europe	Friday, March 17	Friday, March 31	Sunday, April 2
Asia	Friday April 7	Friday, April 14	Sunday, April 16

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 at least understand where these states exist.

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.

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 Wednesday, January 11 at 12:01 am and is due by Tuesday, January 17 at 11:59 pm. Students must complete this calibration before they can begin their 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 50% for that evaluation. If the student grades the response incorrectly and is not adjacent to the correct answer, she earns 0% for that evaluation. More information concerning this calibration is provided 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 experience how real-world events connect to theoretical ideas through case studies. We have seven case study analyses. Each analysis is worth 5% of your course grade and is composed of three graded areas (i.e.,

reading quiz, group analysis, and participation). The case study analyses compose 35% of your course grade. The table below shares the schedule for these assessments.

Case Study	Topic	Date Open (at 12:01 am CT)	Reading Quiz Date Due (at 11:59 pm CT)	Group Analysis & Participation Due Date (at 11:59 pm CT)
Stiles Ch. 3	Realism	Wednesday, January 18	Tuesday, January 24	Friday, January 27
Stiles Ch. 1 & Ch. 9	Alternative Frames	Wednesday, February 1	Tuesday, February 7	Friday, February 10
Stiles Ch. 5	Why States Fight	Wednesday February 22	Tuesday, February 28	Friday, March 3
Stiles Ch. 4	Preventing War	Wednesday, March 1	Tuesday, March 7	Friday, March 10
Stiles Ch. 19	International Law	Wednesday, March 15	Tuesday, March 28	Friday, March 31
Stiles Ch. 13 & Ch. 14	Trade & Globalism	Wednesday, March 29	Tuesday, April 4	Friday, April 7
Stiles Ch. 7	Terrorism	Wednesday, April 5	Tuesday, April 11	Friday, April 14

Each case study analysis has three graded areas. These areas are a reading quiz, group analysis, and participation. Each case study analysis occurs within a discussion board for a group of four-to-five students. To access this discussion board a student must first complete a reading quiz. After completing the reading quiz, students will deliberate and craft responses to short answer questions in their discussion board. After students submit their final responses to these short answer questions, they will complete a survey providing peer assessment for the participation of each of their group members in the discussion board, which produced the final responses to the short answers. Student must complete all three requirements by the corresponding due dates above. **IF A STUDENT DOES NOT COMPLETE ALL THREE COMPONENTS, THEY RECEIVE A ZERO FOR THE ENTIRE CASE STUDY.**

Each analysis is worth 5% of your course grade. This is divided between the three graded areas. Reading quizzes are worth 20% (i.e., 1% of your course grade), short answer response is worth 40% (i.e., 2% of your course grade), and peer assessment of participation is worth 40% (i.e., 2% of your course grade). Thus, of the 35% of your course grade, 7% comes from the reading quizzes, 14% comes from your short answer responses, and 14% comes from participation.

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 virtual setting is [persisting](#) within the workforce (i.e., [virtual teams](#)). Learning how to successfully be a member of a virtual team is a 21st-century skill. This assessment also assists in the development of time management. While there are deadlines to complete the three portions of the assessment, groups can develop their own norms to complete portions or all of the assessment prior to the deadlines.

Exams:

Students complete three section exams (i.e., non-cumulative) in the course. Each exam is worth 15% of your course grade. Exams consist of 40 multiple-choice

questions covering material from virtual presentations, the textbook, and case studies. Each exam is worth 100 points (i.e., each question is worth 2.5 points).

The professor releases a study guide for each exam two weeks prior to the exam. I give students a study guide as a tool to help focus their studies. Students, however, should be developing the skills to determine what information is important. Therefore, I do not provide study guides on the first day of a section. This provides students the opportunity to independently develop their ability to extract important information while also providing them time to use the study guide to ensure they completed this undertaking well.

Like map quizzes, students have a three-day window to complete each section exam. Each section exam opens on a Friday and is due on a Sunday. Since students have a three-day window to complete a section exam, **there are no make-up exams**. The table below shares the exam schedule for this course.

Section Exam	Exam Opening Date (at 12:01 am CT)	Exam Due Date (at 11:59 pm CT)
Section Exam 1	Friday, February 10	Sunday, February 12
Section Exam 2	Friday, March 10	Sunday, March 12
Section Exam 3	Friday, April 21	Sunday, April 23

Students take their section exams via Canvas. These exams are linear. That means a student must submit an answer to proceed to the next question. In addition, a student cannot return to a previous question upon providing an answer to that question (i.e., there is no backtracking).

Each student has 45 minutes to complete an exam once she opens it. Students can use their textbooks, notes, and the internet during the exam. With only 45 minutes to complete 40 questions, however, students need to prepare for this exam as if it was closed book, no notes, and technology free to be successful.

Students **CANNOT** share preparation materials. If the professor finds students shared information before, during, or after the exam, through any medium, those engaging in the behavior will receive a **zero in the course**. *Such a violation will also cause all future exams to be essay exams for the entire course.* Stated simply, **DO NOT COMMIT DISHONESTY**.

To use the full standard exam time, a student must begin the exam prior to 11:14 pm Central Time Zone on its due date. The professor is available from 8 am to 5 pm Central Time Zone on the Friday of an exam period. If a student encounters a technology issue, please e-mail the professor immediately. He will find a resolution to your error. If an error occurs outside this time window, then the student is responsible for her grade on the exam (i.e., the professor will not change the grade).

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.

Lens Paper:

Students will compose a research paper that applies one of the course's theoretical frameworks to a current topic within our world. Students get to choose the framework and current topic of their lens paper. The assignment is due on Monday, April 3 at 11:59 pm Central Time Zone.

The lens paper must be 1,000- to 1,250-words. The paper requires a minimum of four sources. One of our required texts can count as a source. Another source can be

a credible newspaper or news source. The two remaining sources must be a peer-reviewed academic sources (book or articles). Students can use more than four sources (in fact, it is likely you will need to use more than four sources). I will provide a handout with more details about the lens paper on Monday, March 6.

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., explain 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.

Virtual Classroom Behavior:

Courtesy and regard for one another guides virtual classroom behavior. Since this course concerns politics, discussion can be passionate at times. Within our class, we will treat everyone with respect, especially during exchanges. This means fully reading and thinking through a classmates work before responding, debating ideas (not people), speaking to each other in a civil tone, and refusing to engage in personal attacks. During our exchanges, I ask you all to respect the ideas of your fellow students. We, however, should challenge ideas; respect does not mean acceptance.

Multiple [studies](#) suggest the key to success in online courses is treating it like a physical course. I have designed the pace and assessment schedule as if we were in a face-to-face traditional course. Please treat this course as if we are meeting in-person on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for one-hour per day. I have done my best to break up the activities for each day into segments, however, to provide flexibility.

In addition, time management is a critical part of success (especially within an online course). Other common [findings](#) for success in online courses includes establishing a good workspace, seeking help when needed, and eliminating distractions. Please, the moment you are feeling lost, reach out to me. I am happy to help those that communicate.

Finally, I suggest all students take physical notes as they read and engage with virtual presentations. Research [shows](#) that taking physical notes helps us to learn.

Other Policies:

Late Work:

The only assignment I accept after its due date is the lens paper. Every business day it is late, the lens paper losses three-percentage points (e.g., 89% to 86%). One week after its due date, the professor will no longer accept the lens paper. Any student who does not submit this assignment on time or within one week after its due date will receive a zero on the lens paper.

Make-up Map Quizzes, Case Studies, and Exams:

Make-up map quizzes, case studies, or section exams are generally not provided.

In the most extreme emergencies (e.g., hospitalization, natural disaster, prolonged required university activities, or so forth), the professor may use distraction to offer a make-up assessment.

If such an emergency prevents you from completing an assessment, you need to notify the professor by email **prior to the** deadline and as soon as possible. This immediate communication initiates, but does not guarantee, a make-up assessment.

Upon your return the course, you must submit documentation of the emergency. If granted an extension/make-up, upon review of this documentation, the professor and student will mutually agree on a time to complete the assessment in question.

Health/Wellness:

Since this is an online class, you do not need to notify the professor if you are unable to engage with materials due to illness on a specific day (as all assessments occur over multiple days).

If you are experiencing a mental health illness, I suggest you contact [Counseling Services](#) at the university. This service is free to all currently enrolled students. The office offers virtual options. In addition, this office offers [groups](#) that can support you.

Academic Integrity:

This course does not tolerate academic dishonesty. The professor adheres to and enforces JSU's policy on academic honesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and sabotage). I address violations of academic integrity in compliance with the procedures laid out in JSU's [student handbook](#) (see page 97). You can learn more about academic dishonesty [here](#). In addition, the use of Artificial Intelligence is considered academic dishonesty.

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 [here](#).

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, March 31. 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.

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.

Military-Connected Student Statement:

The Office of Veteran Services serves all active duty, guard, reserve, veteran, and dependent students at JSU. If you have any questions about Veteran Services, please contact them at (256) 782-8838, veterans@jsu.edu, or at the physical location in the basement of Doughty 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 me no later than the first week of class to discuss the class attendance policy. I may make accommodations for this absence or suggest that you take the course at another time.

Accommodations:

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.

Title IX:

JSU does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the educational programs or activities that it operates. JSU is required, by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Department of Education regulations to implement Title IX, not to discriminate in such a manner. This requirement to not discriminate in educational programs and activities extends to employment by the university and to admission thereto. This may 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. If an individual wishes to keep the information confidential, the individual 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 <http://www.jsu.edu/titleix>.

Student Notifications:

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

Questions About Your Grades:

I cannot discuss grades over [e-mail or phone](#) due to FERPA regulations. These protect your privacy; see [here](#) for more information.

I post grades on Canvas. **Please use the grade calculator to understand your grade.** If you need to discuss your grade, we can arrange a Microsoft Teams meeting. You will have to show your student ID prior to the discussion of your grade. At the end of the semester, your course grade will only change if there is a mathematical error.

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 that 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 the virtual presentations. By reading the textbook prior to class, you will be able to get the most out of the virtual presentations, clearly see the information that is both the textbook and your professor are highlighting, and understand what changes have occurred to American government since the publication of your textbook.

Furthermore, good note taking is vital. Take [physical notes](#). Learn to listen carefully. I find students who write down the questions 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, if you start to think or feel that you are getting lost please contact the professor. It is easier to help you get back on track when issues are starting than after they have grown.

Tentative Class Schedule:

Date	Topic	Textbook Reading
<i>Introduction</i>		
1/9	Introduction	NO READING
1/11	Case Study Calibration	Stiles: Ch. 11
<i>Theories & Approaches to World Politics</i>		
1/13	Understanding International Relations	PG: Ch. 1 & pp. 431-434
1/16	MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY	NO READING
1/18, 20, & 23	Realism	PG: Ch. 2
1/25 & 27	Liberalism	PG: Ch. 3 (pp. 71-81)
1/30, 2/1, 2/3, & 2/6	Alternatives (Feminism, Rational Choice Theory, Constructivism, & Marxism)	PG: Ch. 3 (pp. 81-105)
2/8	STUDY DAY	NO READING
2/10-2/12	SECTION EXAM 1	NO READING
<i>Issues in World Politics: Conflict & War</i>		
2/13 & 15	Film (access via Canvas)	NO READING
2/17 & 20	Intro to Conflict & War	P&G: Ch. 5
2/22	Why States Fight	P&G: Ch. 5
2/24 & 27	Outcomes & Consequences	P&G: Ch. 5
3/1 & 3	Preventing & Limiting War	P&G: Ch. 5
3/6	Guest Lecture	NO READING
3/8	STUDY DAY	NO READING
3/10-3/12	SECTION EXAM 2	NO READING
<i>Issues in World Politics: International Organizations & Law; International Political Economy; Terrorism; Human Rights</i>		
3/13 & 15	Intro to IOs, the UN, & International Law	P&G: Ch. 7 (pp. 197-225)
3/17 & 27	Film (access via Canvas)	NO READING
3/20, 22, & 24	SPRING BREAK	NO READING
3/29, 3/31, & 4/3	Trade and Finance & Interdependence, Regionalism, and Globalization	P&G: Ch. 8
4/5 & 7	Terrorism & Weapons of Mass Destruction	P&G: Ch. 6
4/10 & 12	Intro to Human Rights & Why Repression?	P&G: Ch. 7 (pp. 225-239)
4/14 & 17	Preventing & Limiting Repression	Stiles: Ch. 20
4/19	STUDY DAY	NO READING
4/21-4/23	SECTION EXAM 3	NO READING