

# PSC 232-001:

## Introduction to International Relations

Summer 2020 | 100% Online  
Classroom: Canvas

**Professor:** Dr. Benjamin Gross  
**Office:** Digital  
**Office Hours:** Virtual meetings via Skype or Microsoft Teams  
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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* (5<sup>th</sup> 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 and interesting political events happen in the international arena. As we start the semester, the media is reporting on the continuing turmoil in [Syria](#), [European \(dis\)integration](#), [trade tension](#) between the United States and China, military action by [North Korea](#), [peacekeeping](#) missions in Africa, and attempts to preserve rainforests in [Brazil](#). To understand our place in the world better, it serves us to have an understanding of how and why these phenomena arise, continue, and (when it occurs) conclude.

To understand 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 world 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 and what opinions have we [inherited](#).

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 to investigate for 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*. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Boston: Pearson. ISBN: [978-0205854639](#)
- \* Pevehouse, Jon C. W. and Joshua S. Goldstein. 2017. *International Relations*. 11<sup>th</sup> Edition. Boston: Pearson. ISBN: [978-0134404769](#)

## Assignments & Grading:

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

## Grading Scale:

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

## Assignment 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.

### Map Quizzes:

There are five map quizzes throughout the course. Each quiz focuses on a different region of the world. When announced, students will learn the location of 15 states. Of those, a subset of 10 states will appear on the quiz. There are no make-up quizzes.

You can complete the quiz from 12:01 am until 11:59 pm on the date it is due. **Once you open the quiz, you have 5 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 final grade; hence, there is no reason to commit academic dishonesty.

I am grading students on their knowledge of geography because this is a necessary foundation to understand important topics and actions within international relations.

<u>Region</u>	<u>States Announced</u>	<u>Quiz Date</u>
Latin America	Monday, June 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Thursday, June 25 <sup>th</sup>
Africa	Monday, June 29 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday, July 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Middle East	Monday, July 6 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday, July 9 <sup>th</sup>
Europe	Monday, July 13 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday, July 16 <sup>th</sup>
Asia	Monday July 20 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday, July 23 <sup>rd</sup>

### **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 get to choose the framework and current topic of their lens paper. The assignment is due on Sunday, July 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 pm.

The lens paper must be 750- to 1,000-words. 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. A handout with more details about the lens paper will be provided on Thursday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

This assignment is worth 15% of a student's final grade. I am grading students on their writing ability, as the ability to communicate complicated ideas clearly and coherently is a vital skill set to develop. Furthermore, this assignment requires students to apply theoretical knowledge to explain an event within the international arena, which is part of the rationale for this course.

### **Exams:**

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

Students will take their section exams via Canvas on July 1<sup>st</sup>, July 13<sup>th</sup>, and July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Exams are available from 12:01 am to 11:59 pm on these dates.

Each student has 45 minutes to complete an exam once she/he opens it. To use the full time, a student must begin the exam prior to 11:14 pm. The professor is available from 8 am to 5 pm during exam days. 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 the 8 am to 5 pm timeframe, the student is responsible for his/her grade on the exam (i.e. the professor will not change the grade).

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 an "F" in the course. *Such a violation will also cause all future exams to be essay exams for the entire course.* Stated simply, **DO NOT CHEAT.**

I will release a study guide for each exam four days into a section. 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. This is why I do not provide study guides on the first day of a section.

I am grading students on their ability to retain important information from the course, as this demonstrates their mastery of the course material.

### Case Study Analysis:

Throughout the semester, we will experience how the real-world events connect to theoretical ideas from our course through case studies. We have seven case study analyses. Each analysis is worth 5% of your final grade. Thus, the case study analyses compose 35% of your final course grade.

Each case study analysis is composed of 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. In order 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, students 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 due date below. **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 final course grade. This 5% is divided between the three graded areas so the reading quiz is worth 20% (i.e. 1% of your final course grade), short answer response is worth 40% (i.e. 2% of your final course grade), and peer assessment of participation is worth 40% (i.e. 2% of your final course grade). Thus, of the 35% of your final course grade, 7% comes from the reading quizzes, 14% comes from your short answer responses, and 14% comes from participation.

I am grading students on their ability to be prepared, participate, and produce worthwhile analysis, as these are skills required for success in a global workforce.

Case Study	Topic	Date Open (12:01 am)	Date Due (11:59 pm)
Stiles Ch. 3	Realism	Wednesday, June 24 <sup>th</sup>	Friday, June 26 <sup>th</sup>
Stiles Ch. 1 & 9	Alternative Frames	Monday, June 29 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday, July 1 <sup>st</sup>
Stiles Ch. 5	Why States Fight	Friday July 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Tuesday, July 7 <sup>th</sup>
Stiles Ch. 4	Preventing War	Thursday, July 9 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday, July 11 <sup>th</sup>
Stiles Ch. 7	Terrorism	Tuesday, July 14 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday, July 16 <sup>th</sup>
Stiles Ch. 13 & 14	Trade & Globalism	Friday, July 17 <sup>th</sup>	Sunday, July 19 <sup>th</sup>
Stiles Ch. 19	International Law	Monday, July 20 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday, July 22 <sup>nd</sup>

### Classroom Behavior:

Courtesy and regard for one another guides 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 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 course to follow the traditional timing of a summer course. As such, please reserve two-hours per day for our course. I have done my best to break up the activities for each day into segments, however, in case you cannot block out a full two hours.

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 that I accept after its due date is the Lens Paper. Every day it is late, the Lens Paper loses three-percentage points (e.g., 89 to 86). The professor will no longer accept a late Lens Paper after 11:59 pm on Tuesday, July 21<sup>st</sup>. Any student who does not submit their work by this time will receive a zero on this assignment.

### **Make-up Quizzes & Exams:**

As explained in the Assignment Details section of this syllabus, there are no make-up quizzes. There are also no make-up exams in this course.

### **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 pages 57 & 71-76).

### **Accommodations:**

I am more than happy to accommodate any student with a documented disability. If you have a disability that affects your work in this class, and for which you require adjustments or accommodations, please see a staff member in [Disability Support Services](#) (139 Daugette Hall // (256) 782.8380 // [dss@jsu.edu](mailto:dss@jsu.edu)) so your accommodations can be considered.

Please speak with Disability Support Services (DSS) and the professor, as early in the semester as possible. Students that receive accommodation letters or Individualized Post-Secondary Plans (IPP's) should meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential.

### **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 (256) 782-8838, [veterans@jsu.edu](mailto: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.

### **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 Skype or 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 final grade will only change if there is a mathematical error.

### **Withdraws:**

Please be advised, the last date to withdraw from the course without academic penalty is Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup>. There are other important dates regarding withdrawing from the course concerning refunding your tuition and if you receive an academic penalty, which can be found [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 do my best to respond to all e-mails within 24 hours. All questions that the syllabus can answer will receive the response: "Please refer to your syllabus."

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

In order to help response time, please include an appropriate subject line in your e-mail. Furthermore, please take time to compose an e-mail with proper etiquette and language. I will not respond to e-mails constructed in a manner like, "Yo, Dr B i will b 18 4 clas 2day" or using emojis to represent words/ideas.

### **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 Virtual Presentation Schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Textbook Reading</u>
6/22	Introduction	No Reading
<i>Theories &amp; Approaches to World Politics</i>		
6/22	Understanding International Relations	PG: Ch. 1 & pp. 431-434
6/23 & 24	Realism	PG: Ch. 2
6/25 & 26	Liberalism	PG: Ch. 3 (pp. 71-81)
6/29	Alternatives	PG: Ch. 3 (pp. 81-105)
<b>6/30</b>	<b>STUDY DAY</b>	<b>NO READING</b>
<b>7/1</b>	<b>SECTION EXAM 1</b>	<b>NO READING</b>
<i>Issues in World Politics: Conflict &amp; War</i>		
7/2	Film (Will be Given Access via YouTube)	<b>NO READING</b>
7/3	Intro to Conflict & War	P&G: Ch. 5
7/6	Why States Fight	P&G: Ch. 5
7/7 & 7/8	Outcomes & Consequences	P&G: Ch. 5
7/9	Preventing & Limiting War	P&G: Ch. 5
<b>7/10</b>	<b>STUDY DAY</b>	<b>NO READING</b>
<b>7/13</b>	<b>SECTION EXAM 2</b>	<b>NO READING</b>
<i>Issues in World Politics: International Organizations &amp; Law; International Political Economy; Terrorism; Human Rights</i>		
7/14	Intro to IOs, the UN, & International Law	P&G: Ch. 7 (pp. 197-225)
7/15	FILM (Will be Given Access via YouTube)	<b>NO READING</b>
7/16	Trade and Finance & Interdependence, Regionalism, and Globalization	P&G: Ch. 8
7/17	Terrorism & Weapons of Mass Destruction	P&G: Ch. 6
7/20	Intro to Human Rights & Why Repression?	P&G: Ch. 7 (pp. 225-239)
7/21	Preventing & Limiting Repression	Stiles: Ch. 20
<b>7/22</b>	<b>STUDY DAY</b>	<b>NO READING</b>
7/23	SECTION EXAM 3	NO READING