

# POLITICAL SCIENCE 370

## INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Spring Semester 2004  
Office Hours:  
MWF 11-12 (Also by appointment)

Dr. H. Michael Erisman  
320 Holmstedt Hall  
Tel. Ext. 2429

---

Internet Information:

My e-mail address is: [psmeris@isugw.indstate.edu](mailto:psmeris@isugw.indstate.edu)

The Internet HomePage for the ISU Political Science Department provides information about a wide variety of topics, including grad school/job opportunities and links to assist in doing research. Its address is:  
<[web.indstate.edu/polisci](http://web.indstate.edu/polisci)>.

---

Throughout the twentieth century, technological innovations and other factors have functioned to draw the countries and the people of the world closer together, the result sometimes being greater cooperation while in other instances the outcome has been increased tensions and even violent conflict. Despite these developments which affect all of our lives in often very important ways, most Americans are extremely provincial--they possess no or at best very little knowledge about and understanding of foreign affairs. This course is designed to begin to remedy that situation by acting as a broad introduction to the study of international relations and contemporary global problems, acquainting you in the process with some of the basic concepts and analytical tools used in the discipline. In particular, we will be paying special attention to the most serious problem plaguing the world community--the phenomenon of conflict and warfare among nations. We will be especially interested in probing such questions as: What are the primary causes of violent international conflict?; and How can war be mitigated or perhaps even eliminated in the future?

If you master the material presented here, you will have made considerable progress in moving from provincialism to cosmopolitanism as well as gaining the background necessary to handle almost any course in International Relations, World Politics, or Foreign Policy.

**Required Texts:** John T. Rourke, INTERNATIONAL POLITICS ON THE WORLD STAGE (Ninth Edition, paperback)

### Supplementary Readings:

In order to help you to keep abreast of current developments in international affairs, you should read one of the major national newspapers and/or national news magazines. With regard to newspapers, it is suggested that you read the Sunday editions of either the **New York Times** or **The Washington Post** (I personally think that the WASHINGTON POST is the better of the two). Both newspapers have special sections in their Sunday editions that deal with current events in general, including international affairs. You should check these special sections carefully because the articles in them will include an explanation/analysis of events as well as mere description of them. With regard to weekly news magazines, the most popular are **Newsweek**, **Time** and **U.S. News and World Reports** (take your choice; I prefer U.S. NEWS).

Most of the above news sources and many others are available on the Internet--see the ISU Political Science Department homepage for links to these news pages.

Since I will try to use current events to illustrate some of the main points covered in the course and since we may at times move away from the "academic" course material in order to discuss current events, it is **crucial** that you do such reading to familiarize yourself with what is occurring in the world today. Moreover, I may very well include some **current events questions** on the **reading quizzes** that you will be taking. Thus self-interest demands that you do such reading. Simply watching television newscasts will not suffice; the information which they supply is quite sketchy and does not give you a sufficient background to begin to understand fully why the events are occurring and the complexity involved (one important missing component often being the historical background).

### Exams/Grades:

Your overall grade for the course will be based on several exams utilizing one of the two following options as well as your class attendance record. A summary of the breakdown of these grade considerations is as follows:

#### A. Option A

There will be several multiple choice quizzes (probably 4-5) based primarily on the assigned readings in the course textbook.

Your average grade for all these quizzes will account for 90 percent of your overall course grade.

#### B. Option B

There will be several (probably 2-3) multiple choice

quizzes based primarily on the assigned readings in the course textbook. Your average grade for all the quizzes will account for 40 percent of your overall course grade.

There will also be several (probably 2) major analytical take-home essay exams, with your average grade for all the essay exams accounting for 50 percent of your overall class grade.

- C. Class attendance account for 10 percent of your overall course grade in both of the above options.

If you miss **no more than FOUR** of the scheduled classes without a valid (i.e., approved by the instructor) excuse, you will receive the full 10 percent credit for attendance. If you have a **valid excuse** for missing a class (i.e., you received prior approval from the instructor to miss the class or you can **document** a valid reason for missing a class), the excused absence **will not** be considered a missed class.

Each unexcused absence above the **Four-Miss Limit** will result in a deduction of 2 percent from the credit that you would otherwise receive for good class attendance.

Grading in this course will operate on a 100-point scale, with the grade breakdown being as follows:

90-100	A
85- 89	B+
80- 84	B
75- 79	C+
70- 74	C
65- 69	D+
60- 64	D
0- 59	F

In the case of a borderline average when all your grades for the course are computed, various non-graded considerations may be utilized to help determine whether you will receive a higher or a lower grade for the course. The three primary considerations here are: (1) attendance--if you miss more than 10-15 percent of the scheduled classes without a valid (i.e., approved by the instructor) excuse, it is **extremely unlikely** that a borderline grade will be raised to the next level; (2) participation in class discussions--quality participation will increase the likelihood that a borderline grade will be raised to the next level; and (3) a pattern of significant improvement or decline in your grades over the course of the semester.

Class attendance is a **crucial issue!!** Beyond the 10 percent of the course grade allocated to attendance, past patterns clearly

indicate that you simply will not be able to do well in this course if you do not attend class regularly.

## COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

-----  
BOOK KEY: RT = Rourke basic textbook  
-----

### I. Introduction

- A. Studying International Politics: Some Preliminary Observations

Read: RT, Chapter 1

- B. Historical Evolution Of The Contemporary World Stage

Read: RT, Chapters 2 and 3

### II. Nationalism And Other Belief Systems: The Psychological Dimension of International Politics

Read: RT, Chapter 5

- A. Nationalism

Read: RT, Chapter 6

- B. Nationalism Challenged: Transnational Phenomena and Related Belief Systems:

Read: RT, Chapter 7

### III. The National Security Dimension Of International Relations: The High Stakes Drama of Conflict Among Nations

Read: RT, Chapter 4

- A. The Realist Perspective: National Interest and Power

Read: RT, Chapters 8 and 10

- B. Pursuing National Security: The Military/Paramilitary Option

Read: RT, Chapter 12

- IV. The Economic Dimension of International Relations: Where The Action Is At In The Post-Cold War World
  - A. An Overview Of The World Economic Situation And An Introduction To International Economic Relations
    - Read: RT Chapter 14
  - B. The Competitive Aspects Of International Economic Relations
    - Read: RT Chapter 15
  - C. The Cooperative Aspects Of International Economic Relations
    - Read: RT, Chapters 16 and 18
- V. Promoting Increased International Cooperation
  - A. International Law As A Vehicle For Cooperation
    - Read: RT Chapter 11
  - B. International Organizations As Vehicles For Cooperation
    - Read: RT Chapter 9
    - 1. International Organizations: Arms Control And Peacekeeping Operations
      - Read: RT, Chapter 13
    - 2. International Organizations: Protecting Human Rights
      - Read: RT, Chapter 17
- VI. Summary and Conclusions