

PSCI 3143

Current Affairs in International Relations

Spring 2019

Time: Tuesday & Thursday, 11:00am-12:15 PM

Location: HUMN 135

Instructor: Anna Gray

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Office: Ketchum 114G

Office Hours: Tues. 12:15-1:15pm, Thurs. 9:45-10:45am, or by appointment

Course Description

This course is designed to help students broaden their knowledge of current international affairs while applying international relations theories to contemporary problems. By mixing traditional political science readings with news publications, political blogs, NGO reports, documentaries, and podcasts, students are challenged to connect academic theory to media output. Beyond simply learning about current affairs in the world, students are asked to hone their research skills by investigating their own cases, to improve their critical thought processes by critiquing the material they read, and to creatively problem solve by forming policy proposals. Substantively, the course focuses on the major themes in international relations as they are being manifested in the world: power negotiations, conflict, migration and trade, regime transitions, collective action, and international organizations. This is an advanced level course that assumes pre-existing knowledge of international relations and political science. Suggested prerequisites are PSCI 2223.

Required Materials

This course requires access to Foreign Affairs, a non-partisan US-based publication that focuses on international affairs and U.S. Foreign Policy. A student membership can be bought for \$25.95. You should subscribe to the Print & Digital subscription, so as to be able to access archived articles online.

Additional reading material will be available either online, or posted on the Canvas classroom site. You may choose to pay for a limited subscription to other news sites for your own research purposes, but this will be according to your discretion.

Assignments and Grading

Your grades will be based on the following assignments:

Quizzes.....	30%
Written Critiques (Feb. 26, April 16).....	20%
Case analysis (March 21st).....	20%
Policy Proposal (April 25).....	15%
Participation.....	5%
Attendance.....	10%

Grade percentages correspond to letter grades as follows:

A 94-100, A- 90-93, 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 <60

Quizzes

You will be given 7 quizzes over the course of the semester. Your lowest two quiz grades will be dropped, and your final quiz grade will be calculated using your highest 5 scores (missed quizzes will count as zeros). Make-up quizzes will be allowed only in the case of properly documented absences, and must be made-up within one week of the missed class. Make-up quizzes will not be the same as the quizzes given during the class period.

Writing Assignments

Descriptions of the expectations for the written assignments are posted on Canvas, along with their rubrics. Written assignments account for a large portion of your grade and should be given careful attention.

For all written assignments, late documents will be given a 5% penalty if turned in late but on the due date. After the due date, a 10% penalty will be given for each day (including weekend days), and a paper will not be accepted once it is more than 1 week late.

All written assignments must be turned in online on Canvas. Only Word documents and PDF files will be accepted. Alternative files such as .pages will not be counted as on-time submissions.

Participation

Your classroom is a community. As such, to be successful in participation you must appropriately engage with your classmates and instructor. As we discuss complex and sometimes volatile issues, your ability to disagree and engage with one another respectfully is a key part of your participation. This course is not designed in such a way that you must actively earn participation points, but you

may lose points as a result of disruptive or disrespectful behavior, using technology for entertainment, sleeping through lecture, etc. One final participation grade will be given at the end of the semester. If you are concerned that you may be losing participation credit, please feel free to come speak with me about your grade as soon as you become concerned.

Attendance

You are allowed 3 unexcused absences this semester. After your 3 unexcused absences have been used up, each additional absence will result in a 10% drop in your attendance grade. Excused absences are reserved for health issues, university athlete sport events, of which I must be notified at the beginning of the semester, and religious absences, of which I must also be notified at least 2 weeks in advance. Any other absence beyond your 3 “freebies” will be counted against you, even if it was not premeditated and was beyond your control. Documentation for absences that you believe may be qualified as “excused” should be presented to me within a week of the absence.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class by passing out a sign-in sheet. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, please feel free to attend, but you will be marked as absent. Signing anyone other than yourself in on the attendance sheet will be considered a violation of the academic integrity policy. If caught doing this, you will receive a zero for your attendance grade for the semester, and your case may be submitted to the Honors Code Council.

Extra Credit

I will sporadically make extra credit available in the form of short online discussions about class material. To take advantage of these, you will need to participate in them within a certain timeframe, and they will be graded like regular assignments. Extra credit opportunities will not total more than 3% of your final grade, so please do not plan on these as a means of fully making up for a missed or poorly executed assignment.

Class Communication

This is a paper-free class, with the exception of the quizzes you will take in class. You are welcome to print off reading materials and bring them to class, but that is not my expectation. As such, technology is welcome in the classroom, but should be used for learning purposes only.

All written assignments should be turned in electronically via Canvas, and will receive electronic feedback. I will communicate with you via announcements on Canvas, and via e-mail. You will be held responsible for paying attention to and keeping track of both forms of communication.

If you believe you have received an unfair grade on an assignment, you must submit a written grade complaint to me within one week of receiving the contended grade. I encourage you to meet with me beforehand before doing so, to ensure that you fully understand the grade that you received.

Accommodation for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students) (www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) under the Students tab on the Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor. This should be done at the beginning of the semester in a timely fashion.

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, **please submit written notification of any religious holidays that will conflict with class within the first 3 weeks of the semester.** See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. CU's Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibits sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking or related retaliation. CU Boulder's Discrimination and Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment or related retaliation based on race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct under either policy should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127. Information about the OIEC, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation can be found at the [OIEC website](#).

Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the academic integrity policy](#). Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, resubmission, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).

Course Schedule

The material bulleted below the class date should be read or listened to before the class meeting that day.

Because most of the current events we are analyzing in this class will be developing over the course of the semester, I may occasionally change the assigned readings. In the case of a change, I will be sure to give you one week of advance notice via e-mail.

Many of the topics we will be covering in class this semester are controversial, and some of the material may be graphic and difficult to consume, particularly in regards to violence. While I encourage you to challenge yourself to face uncomfortable material, if you are concerned that some of it may be too much for you, or may be triggering in some way, please feel free to come speak with me about alternative materials you may be given.

Week 1: Getting our Bearings

- Jan. 15 – Syllabus review
- Jan 17 – The Theoretical Foundations of International Relations
 - Snyder, Jack. 2009. "One World, Rival Theories." *Foreign Policy*.

Week 2: Review – Information & Actors

- Jan 22 - Separating Fact From Fiction
 - Allcott, Hunt, and Matthew Gentzkow. "Social media and fake news in the 2016 election." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 31.2 (2017): 211-36.
 - "How to Counter Fake News." *Foreign Affairs*. Jan. 5, 2017.
- Jan 24 – Foreign Policy Decision-Making Processes
 - Allison, Graham T. "Conceptual models and the Cuban missile crisis." *American political science review* 63.3 (1969): 689-718.
 - Jervis, Robert. 2017. *Perception and misperception in international politics*. Princeton University Press. "Chapter One: Perception and the Level of Analysis Problem." P. 13-31.

Week 3: Major Actors in the Int'l System: Russia

- Jan 29 – Russia as an International Actor
 - Kotkin, Stephen. "Russia's Perpetual Geopolitics: Putin Returns to the Historical Pattern." *Foreign Affairs*. April 19, 2016.
 - **Quiz 1: Getting Our Bearings, Review, & Russia**
- Jan 31 – US-Russian Relations & Policy
 - McFaul, Michael. "Russia as It Is – A Grand Strategy for Confronting Putin." *Foreign Affairs*. July 1, 2018.

Week 4: Major Actors in the Int'l System: China

- Feb. 5 – International Power Transition & China

- Haenle, Paul. 2018. "Graham Allison on Avoiding the Thucydides Trap." *China in the World*. (34 min. podcast)
- Feb. 7 – China & US Relations
 - "The Heavyweight Rivals: America's new attitude towards China is changing the countries' relationship." *The Economist*. Oct. 18, 2018.
 - **Quiz 2: Russia and China**

Week 5: Introduction to conflict, nuclear warfare and North Korea

- Feb. 12 – Conflict: Types and Trends
 - Malley, Robert. 2019. "10 Conflicts to Watch in 2019." *Foreign Policy*. (I suggest reading it online)
- Feb. 14 – Nuclear Theory and North Korea
 - Sagan, Scott D. 1996. "Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons?: Three Models in Search of a Bomb." *International Security*. 21(3): 54-86.
 - TBD second article

Week 6: Iran

- Feb. 19 – Iran as a Regional Power
 - Mohseni, Payam, and Hussein Kalout. "Iran's Axis Resistance Rises." *Foreign Affairs*. Jan. 24th, 2017.
 - **Quiz 3: North Korea, Iran, and nuclear war**
- Feb. 21 – Iran and its Nuclear Deal
 - Barbaro, Michael. "Trump and the Iran Nuclear Deal." *The Daily*. Oct. 16, 2017. (18 min. podcast)
 - Pompeo, Michael R. 2018. "Confronting Iran." *Foreign Affairs*. Oct. 15, 2018.
 - Simon, Steven and Jonathan Stevenson. "Trump's Dangerous Obsession with Iran." *Foreign Affairs*. August 13, 2018.

Week 7: Terrorism

- Feb 26 – The Roots of Terrorism
 - Norman, Julie M. and Drew Mikhael. "Youth Radicalization is on the rise. Here's what we know about why." *Monkey Cage*. August 28, 2017.
 - Peace, Timothy. "Who becomes a terrorist, and why?" *Monkey Cage*. May 10, 2016.

- Tesfaye, Beza. "Education alone doesn't prevent terrorism. Here's what else you need." *Monkey Cage*. January 5, 2017.
- **Written Critique #1 Due via Canvas**
- Feb 28 – Strategies of Terrorism
 - Kydd, Andrew H., and Barbara F. Walter. 2006. "The strategies of terrorism." *International Security*. 31(1):49-80.
 - Mills, Andy and Rukmini Callimachi. "Chapter Seven: Mosul." Caliphate. May 31, 2018. (35 min. podcast. Warning: discussion of graphic war violence)

Week 8: Civil War

- March 5 – Understanding Civil War
 - Walter, Barbara F. 2009. "Bargaining failures and civil war." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 12: 243-261.
 - **Quiz 4: Terrorism & Civil War**
- March 7 – Yemeni Civil War
 - Barbaro, Michael. "Why U.S. Bombs Are Falling in Yemen." *The Daily*. Nov. 20, 2018. (27 min. podcast)
 - Salisbury, Peter. "What does the Stockholm Agreement mean for Yemen?" *The Monkey Cage*. Dec. 21, 2018.

Week 9: Global Refugee Patterns

- March 12 – Understanding the European Refugee & Migrant Crisis
 - "Human Flow" – a film by Ai Weiwei. (2.5 hr.), must complete watching before class on Thurs. Available for rent via YouTube for \$3.99, or on Amazon Prime.
- March 14- Understanding the Latin American Refugee & Migrant Crisis
 - Bahar, Dany. "Latin America is Facing a Refugee Crisis." *Foreign Affairs*. Oct, 23 2019
 - Barbaro, Michael. "An Illuminating Drive Across Venezuela." *The Daily*. May 1, 2017. (22 min. podcast)

Week 10: Migration & Trade

- March 19 – International Migration and Trade
 - Hainmueller, Jens, and Michael J. Hiscox. 2010. "Attitudes toward Highly Skilled and Low-skilled Immigration: Evidence

from a Survey Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 104(1): 61-84.

- **Quiz 5: Refugees, Migration & Trade**
- March 21 – US & Regional Trade Agreements
 - TBD
 - **Case Analysis due via Canvas**

Week 11: Spring Break!

- March 26 – No class
- March 28 – No class

Week 12: EU Institutions & Brexit

- April 2 – The State of the EU
 - TBD
- April 4 – Brexit
 - TBD

Week 13: Authoritarianism

- April 9 – Global Trend Towards Authoritarianism
 - McCoy, Jennifer, Tahmina Rahman, and Murat Somer. 2018. "Polarization and the global crisis of democracy: common patterns, dynamics, and pernicious consequences for democratic polities." *American behavioral scientist* 62(1): 16-42.
 - **Quiz 6: EU Institutions, Brexit & Authoritarianism**
- April 11 – Authoritarian Trends
 - Class choice (will vote in Feb.):
 - Turkey
 - Philippines
 - Authoritarian trends in Africa

Week 14- International Cooperation: The Role of Int'l Organizations

- April 16 – Do International Organizations Matter?

- Russett, Bruce, John R. Oneal, and David R. Davis. 1988. "The third leg of the Kantian tripod for peace: International organizations and militarized disputes, 1950–85." *International Organization*. 52(3): 441-467.
 - **Critique #2 due by 5pm (submit via Canvas)**
- April 18 – An International Institution in Action: UN Peacekeeping
 - Hegre, Håvard, Lisa Hultman, and Håvard Møkleiv Nygård. "U.N. peacekeeping really can be effective. Here's how we tabulated this." Monkey Cage. June 28, 2018.

Week 15 – International Cooperation: Climate Change

- April 23 – Climate Change on a Global Scale
 - "How to Understand the Geopolitics of Climate Change" Foreign Affairs. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/lists/how-to-understand-the-geopolitics-of-climate-change>
 - Choose 3 of the 6 articles to read
- April 25 – Climate Change on a National Scale: The U.S.
 - Reidmiller, David. "Chapter 1: Overview" Fourth National Climate Assessment. <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/1/>
 - Read the following sections
 - Current & Future Risks
 - Reducing Risks
 - New Since NCA3
 - **Policy Proposal Due via Canvas**

Week 16 – Looking Towards the Future

- April 30 – Global Political Trends
 - TBD
 - **Quiz 7: Authoritarian Trends & International Cooperation**
- May 2 – Shifting International Relations and Power Dynamics
 - No reading