Instructor = Robert Tynes
Email = rt873361@albany.edu
Meeting Time = Tuesday & Thursday, 8:45-10:05 am
Meeting Place = LC 21
Office Hours = After class and by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course is an introduction to the theories and practices of comparative and international politics. It provides a broad survey of the theoretical concepts essential to a sound understanding of global politics. These concepts include power, the state, sovereignty, nationalism, democratization, international cooperation and conflict, globalization, and international economics. We will explore questions such as: What is a state? What is a nation? How does democracy vary from country to country? What role does economics play in politics? What causes terrorism? How does anarchy in the international system affect the behavior of states? There are three broad objectives for this course. The first is to prepare students to make better sense of contemporary events in global politics. The second is to prepare students for upper-level courses in global politics. The third objective is to fulfill the University General Education requirement for methods in social science. We will explore various methodologies, ranging from historical analysis, to concept formation, to data collection, and on towards hypothesis testing. By the end of the course you should acquire a better understanding of many of the essential issues and problems that political scientists wrangle with as well as a rudimentary knowledge of the methods used in the discipline.

Required Texts


Readings posted on Blackboard (Online).

Assignments

- Attend all sessions
- Reading the required texts before the class meets
- Participation & Quizzes
- Analytical Paper
- Midterm exam
- Hypothesis Paper
- Final exam
Participation includes being present for class, reading the assigned chapters/articles, taking quizzes and engaging in discussion.

The Analytical Paper is an argumentative essay that explores a research question, lays out a thesis and supporting points, provides evidence to back up claims, and presents and refutes counter claims. Research questions might include: What approach best explains political behavior in Zimbabwe—rational actor, culture, or structure? Is democracy possible in Iraq? How should the international community handle the potential for nuclear proliferation in Iran?

The Hypothesis Paper is a chance for you to formulate an hypothesis and then test it utilizing a large-N, quantitative approach.

(For both papers, you must hand in one hard copy and send an e-copy to Blackboard)

The Midterm and the Final will include material from the lectures and the readings. Both have multiple-choice questions, several short answer questions and essay questions.

Class Schedule

WEEK 1: Introduction & Anarchy
Jan. 21, Thursday = Introduction.

WEEK 2: Political Science & Analysis of IR
Jan. 26, Tuesday = Read Mingst Chapters 1 & 2.
Jan. 28, Thursday = Read Frankfort and Nachimas, 1 & 2 (Blackboard); Geography Quiz—Americas.

WEEK 3: IR Theories and the International System
Feb. 2, Tuesday = Read Mingst Chapter 3.
Feb. 4, Thursday = Read Mingst Chapter 4; Geography Quiz—Europe.

WEEK 4: Foreign Policy and Decision-making
Feb. 9, Tuesday = Read Mingst Chapter 5.
Feb. 11, Thursday = Read Mingst Chapter 6; Geography Quiz—Asia.

WEEK 5: IGOs, NGOs and International Law
Feb. 16, Tuesday = NO CLASS.
Feb. 18, Thursday = Read Mingst Chapter 7; Geography Quiz—Africa.
***ANALYTICAL PAPER DUE***

WEEK 6: Nuclear Proliferation
Feb. 23, Tuesday = Read Mingst Chapter 8.
Feb. 25, Thursday = Read Waltz and McNamara (Blackboard); Read Broad and Sanger (Blackboard).

WEEK 7: International Political Economy
Mar. 2, Tuesday= Read Mingst Chapter 9.
Mar. 4, Thursday = Read Stiles (Blackboard).
WEEK 8: Synthesis
Mar. 9, Tuesday = Review for Midterm.
Mar. 11, Thursday = MIDTERM.

WEEK 9: What is Comparative Politics? Strategies and Methods
Mar. 16, Tuesday = Read Lim, pp. 3-30.
Mar. 18, Thursday = Read Lim, pp. 31-96.

WEEK 10: The State/the Nation
Mar. 23, Tuesday = Read Weber (Blackboard).
Mar. 25, Thursday = Read Gellner (Blackboard).

WEEK 11: Spring Break
Mar. 30, Tuesday = NO CLASS.
April 1, Thursday = NO CLASS.

WEEK 12: Democracy & Democratization
April 6, Tuesday = Read Lim, pp. 157-163; read Huntington (Blackboard).
April 8, Thursday = Read Lim, 164-201.

WEEK 13: Communism and after
April 13, Tuesday = Read Marx & Engels (Blackboard).
April 15, Thursday = Read Lenin (Blackboard).

WEEK 14: Terrorism
April 20, Tuesday = Lim pp. 203-232. ***HYPOTHESIS PAPER DUE***
April 22, Thursday = Read Crenshaw (Blackboard): Read Pape (Blackboard).

WEEK 15: Globalization & Gender
April 27, Tuesday = Read Lim pp. 265-290.
April 29, Thursday = Read Caprioli (Blackboard).

WEEK 16: Synopsis
May 4, Tuesday = REVIEW FOR FINAL.

FINAL—to be announced; check exam schedules on-line for dates and time.
Grading

All assignments must be handed in order to receive credit for the class.

Attendance and Participation (includes quizzes)........20%
Analytical Paper..............................................20%
Hypothesis Paper.............................................20%
Midterm.........................................................20%
Final............................................................20%

Policies

- **Attendance** is required. If you must be absent (or tardy/leave early), please let me know.

- **Academic dishonesty** will NOT be tolerated. Students who violate the University’s policies on academic dishonesty may be subject to suspension. Pay special attention to the use of other sources to avoid accusations of plagiarism. Please acknowledge others’ works when writing your paper (ideas or direct quotes) by using either footnotes or in-sentence citations. Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their college work. Cheating, forgery and plagiarism are serious offenses, and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action.

- Students with documented physical, learning, psychological and other disabilities are entitled to receive reasonable accommodations. If you need classroom or testing accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (Campus Center 137; (518) 442-5490). The DRC will provide forms verifying the need for accommodation. As soon as the instructor receives the form, you will be provided with the appropriate accommodations. Students are encouraged to request accommodations as close to the beginning of the semester as possible.