

**Course Proposal for Revised General Education Course  
Political Science 2253G Introduction to  
International Relations**

**1. Catalogue Description**

- a. PLS 2253G
- b. Introduction to International Relations
- c. 3-0-3
- d. F, S
- e. Intr Relations
- f. An introduction to the primary theories and political issues in international relations, including examination of the causes of war, international organizations, foreign policy making, the politics of the world economy, and other political issues of transnational character, e.g., terrorism, AIDS and the environment.
- g. There are no prerequisites for this course.
- h. This course is writing-active

**2. Student learning objectives**

General Education and University-Wide Assessment Goals

- i. Through this course, students will complete exams or writing assignments requiring them to identify, analyze, and evaluate:
  - (1) The major theories in international relations
  - (2) The principal international, economic and regional organizations in the world
  - (3) The importance of the United Nations in addressing military and development issues
  - (4) The various causes of war
  - (5) Allison's models of foreign policy making and its critics
  - (6) The role of weapons of mass destruction
  - (7) The values and causes of the Cold War
  - (8) The different methodological approaches used in international relations
  - (9) How NGOs impact world politics
  - (10) The factors that cause the less developed world to struggle in their development
  - (11) The impact of international law on countries' diplomatic relations
  - (12) How AIDS and population impact world politics and the solutions that have been offered
  - (13) The role of environmental pollution in shaping state behavior
- ii. Through writing short reaction papers, students will learn how to collect, analyze and communicate information about international relations in written form.
- iii. Students will be asked to critically assess their role as citizens of the world with

respect to developments in international relations through class discussion and through written assignments.

### **3. Course Outline**

This course will be organized into 15 weeks of 45 fifty minute class periods.

Week 1: Levels of Analysis and Approaches to International Relations

- a) The study of leaders, states and international systems
- b) Methodological differences in international relations

Week 2: International Relations Theory: Realism vs. Idealism

- a) The origins of modern realism: Thucydides, Machiavelli and Hobbes
- b) The Origins of modern idealism: Kant, Wilson

Week 3: Foreign Policy Making

- a) Allison's three models of foreign policy making
- b) Critical assessments of realist foreign policy making

Week 4: Politics of the Cold War

- a) A study of the ideological differences of the United States and the Soviet Union
- b) U.S. strategies of containment and their relevance today

Week 5: International Organizations: The United Nations

- a) Formal Institutions of the United Nations
- b) 1<sup>st</sup> Generation Peacekeeping vs. 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation Peacekeeping

Week 6: Nongovernmental actors in International Relations

- a) Multinational Corporations
- b) Terrorist actors
- c) Other interest groups in foreign policy making

Week 7: The Causes of War

- a) Levels of analysis and the causes of war
- b) Ethnic Conflict

Week 8: The Military and Power in International Relations

- a) The role of the military in international relations
- b) Trends in arms trading

Week 9: Weapons of Mass Destruction: nuclear, chemical and biological

- a) The development of weapons of mass destruction
- b) Non-proliferation regimes for weapons and missiles

Week 10: International Political Economy: International Economic Institutions

- a) World Financial Institutions: the World Bank, IMF and GATT/WTO
- b) Monetary Issues in International Relations

Week 11: European Union

- a) Institutional Framework of the EU
- b) Problems and prospects for further integration

Week 12: Analysis of the less developed world: economic and political issues

- a) The poverty of the less developed world
  - b) Explanations for the predicaments of the global south
- Week 13: International Law and Diplomacy
- a) The development of international law
  - b) The presence of international law in modern day diplomacy
- Week 14: World Demographic Trends and Threats: AIDS and population growth
- a) The transnational problem of AIDS
  - b) The political impact of population growth
- Week 15: Environment and Natural Resources
- a) Environmental problems in international relations
  - b) Global and national efforts to address pollution

#### **4. Evaluation of Student Learning**

- a. Grades will be based on three in-class written exams consisting of essay and short answer questions, and two reaction papers (approximately 3 pages each) on topics in international relations that are approved by the instructor. Each exam will count for 30 percent of the course grade. Using materials available on campus, including academic journals, government documents and other electronic resources, the papers will examine relevant issues and topics in international relations. Each paper will count for 5 percent of the grade.
- b. The reaction papers require students to write and critique a current event in world politics. This requirement will result in an improved understanding of issues in international relations, and will strengthen the students' writing skills.

#### **5. Rationale**

- a. This course falls within Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement in General Education. As a social science course, it assists students in their ability to analyze social and political events in world politics. Students also will develop skills that allow them to assess developments in international relations through different methodological approaches. This course fulfills the cultural diversity component of the General Education program.
- b. This course should be a 2000 level course because of the introductory nature of the material. There are no required prerequisites.
- c. This course is a revision of PLS 2253C and should maintain the same curriculum identification as PLS 2253C
- d. Requirement: This course is one of five courses that may be taken to meet the

International Relations requirement in the political science major. The Department plans to propose it as a required course in the Political Science major, effective Fall 2001. It also is an elective in the Political Science minor. The course is required for our International Studies Option.

**6. Implementation**

- a. This course initially will be assigned to Dr. Ryan Hendrickson.
- b. The text to be used is Charles W. Kegley, Jr. and Eugene R. Wittkopf, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation 7<sup>th</sup> Edition* (New York: St. Martins: 1999).
- c. There are no additional costs.
- d. Spring 2001

**7. Community College Transfer:** An introductory course in international relations at a community college will be judged equivalent to this course.

- 8. Date approved by Department:** 3/22/00
- 9. Date approved by COSCC:** 4/7/00
- 10. Date approved by CAA:** 10/19/00

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**Political Science 2293G**  
**Introduction to International Relations, Honors**

**1. Catalogue Description**

- a. PLS 2293G
- b. Introduction to International Relations, Honors
- c. 3-0-3
- d. F, S
- e. Intr Relations Hhrs
- f. An introduction to the primary theories and political issues in international relations, including examination of the causes of war, international organizations, foreign policy making, the politics of the world economy, and other political issues of transnational character, e.g., terrorism, AIDS and the environment.
- g. Admission to the University Honors Program
- h. This course is writing-active