University of California Irvine
Department of Political Science

PSC 41A Introduction to International Relations/Global Politics
(also counts as IS 12 or 14)
Fall 2009

Professor Deborah Avant    Class Meets: T/Th. 12:30-1:50
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Office Hours: T, Th. 2-3
SST 569

Teaching Assistants:
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What causes war and peace? Why are some parts of the world poor and others rich? Do religion and culture bring people together or tear them apart? Will environmental degradation continue or be abated? How do human rights practices vary throughout the world? This class introduces you to the tools political scientists use to answer questions like these. We cover such topics as: the history of the nation-state, the role of international organizations and non-state actors; the changing character of security issues; the patterns and causes of economic development; and international contention over efforts to address issues such as human rights, climate change, poverty, terrorism, and disease. The goal is to help you establish a foundation for further study; increase your understanding of contemporary events; and enhance your research, communication, and literacy skills.

PSC 41A consists of two lectures per week taught by Prof. Avant, and one discussion section per week taught by one of the teaching assistants. Both the lectures and discussion sections are required!

Course Requirements
Grades will be based on:

Essay (20%) Question handed out Week 7, 3 page essay due Week 8
Map Quizzes (5%) Five map quizzes during discussion sections over the course of the quarter. The quizzes will be very simple: you will receive a map showing the borders of countries but not their names. Twelve of the countries will be numbered. You will supply the names of those twelve countries.
Midterm (25%) In-class midterm in Week 6 consisting of identification and essay questions
Final (30%) Final at the scheduled time (Friday, Dec 11- 10:30-12:30) consisting of identification and essay questions
Section (20%) Based on attendance, news clippings and participation. For news clippings, you must bring to each section a newspaper clipping that discusses an incident or event in foreign policy or international relations (clipped from a newspaper or printed from an online newspaper). The newspaper must be a major daily like the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, Christian Science Monitor, or Los Angeles Times. Be prepared to summarize the main points of the story explain why the story is interesting or significant.

All of your writing assignments will be graded on the basis of how persuasive your argument is, how well you use evidence, whether you consider alternative viewpoints, how much you demonstrate knowledge of lectures and readings, and your attention to detail. Common mistakes include: telling the reader what you feel or believe rather than what can be demonstrated empirically or logically, failing to anticipate obvious counter arguments, lacking a thesis and/or clear logical progression of the argument, and sloppy writing and grammar. (These also give you hints as to how you can evaluate the readings and arguments you are exposed to in the class.)

Policy on cheating and plagiarism
THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED and will result in a failing grade as well as a referral to campus administration for further disciplinary action. Your quizzes, exams, and essays must be your own work. If for any reason you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating (or not doing your own work), please consult the UCI Academic Senate Policy on Academic Honesty (http://www.reg.uci.edu/, click on “Academic Honesty”).

Policy on appealing grades
TAs will do all grading in coordination with one another and Professor Avant. If you believe your grade should be different you should write a brief appeal citing the reason(s) why you think that (f.yi: “because I worked hard is not a good reason”) and give it to your TA along with your original exam or essay. Your TA will respond in writing. If you are still dissatisfied you may submit another appeal (with your original appeal, your work, and your TA’s response) to Professor Avant.

Required Readings
The course readings will either be posted on the class website (under “course files” on the EEE website for this course) or in the following textbook:

Joshua Goldstein and Jon Pevehouse, International Relations, eighth or ninth edition

In addition to the required readings you are encouraged to read a major newspaper each day as well as to follow international/global issues on websites or blogs such as Politico.com, Foreignpolicy.com (this list of blogs run across the page from the date) or a number of others.
Outline of the Course:


Week 1 Contemporary World Politics in Historical Perspective

9/29 – What is the contemporary system of global politics?
G and P, Ch 1
David Bowie, Changes

10/1 – How did we get to the contemporary system?
G and P Imperialism pp. 444-457
   The Beatles, The Long and Winding Road

Week 2 Theories of World Politics

10/6 - Theories of World Politics – Power Politics
G and P, Ch 2
Jack Snyder, “One World, Rival Theories,” Foreign Policy
   The Exploited, I still believe in anarchy

10/8 – Theories of World Politics – Alternatives to Power Politics
G and P (8th), Ch. 3
G and P (9th), Ch. 3, pp. 83-93; Ch. 4
   John Lennon, Imagine
Map Quiz in section – North, Central and South America

Week 3 War and Peace

10/13 – What is war, peace?
G and P Ch 5.
   Bruce Springsteen, War
   Recommended movies: Henry V, Gallipoli, Patton, Apocalypse Now, Black Hawk Down

10/15 What causes it?
Samuel Huntington, “Clash of Civilizations”
   Sinead O’Connor, Drink Before the War

Week 4 – Security and Development

10/20 - Security: How best to deal with terrorism and WMD
G and P, Ch 6
Philip Gordon, “Can the War on Terror be Won?” Foreign Affairs, (November/December 2007)
Mint, Ma Petite Terroriste

10/22 – International Development
G and P rest of Ch 12 and Ch 13
Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, “How development leads to democracy” Foreign Affairs (March/April 2009)
Aswald, Set them free
Map Quiz in section – Middle East

Week 5 – The International Economy

10/27 – Trade
G and P, Ch 8
Pink Floyd, Money

10/29 – Money and Business
G and P, Ch 9
Film “Black Gold”
Bob Marley, Time will tell

Week 6 – Global Governance Tools (States and Foreign Policy)

11/3 – Midterm Exam
Wilco, Shake it off

11/5 – Foreign Policy and the US role in the world
G and P (8th) Ch 4
G and P (9th) Ch 3, pp. 93-119
Map Quiz in section - Africa
Three Dog Night, One is the Loneliest Number

Week 7 – Global Governance Tools (International organizations and networks)

11/10 – Alliances and Law
G and P Ch 2 (section on alliances); Ch 7.
Zbigniew Brzezinski, “An Agenda for NATO”
The Rolling Stones, You can’t always get what you want

11/12 – IOs and Networks
G and P, Ch. 10
Essay Passed out
Tears for Fears, Everybody Wants to Rule the World
Week 8 – Contemporary Issues

11/17 – Environment
G and P, Ch 11

   REM, It’s the end of the world as we know it
   Recommended Movie: An Inconvenient Truth

11/19 – Diaspora and Pandemic
BBC on past pandemics

   Iron and Wine, Die

Map Quiz in section – Asia
Essay Due

Week 9 – Contemporary Issues, cont’d

11/24 – Failed states, crime and terrorism
“The Failed State Index” Foreign Policy (July/August 2009), pp. 80-93.

   K’Naan, Wavin’ Flag
   Recommended movies: Midnight Express, Blood Diamond

Week 10 – Contemporary Issues, cont’d

12/1 – Global Recession
Film “Inside the Meltdown”
   Ryan Bingham, Hard Times

12/3 – The Global Future
Stephen E. Flynn, “America the Resilient,” Foreign Affairs (March/April 2008)
   John Mayer, Waiting for the World to Change
Map Quiz in section – Europe

Final Exam: Friday, December 11 – 10:30-12:30