

Please print this so you can refer to it throughout the semester.

## **PLS 262: Introduction to International Relations Syllabus**

### **Note Before You Get Started: The Bird's Eye View**

You will be using Jetnet for all your online work this semester. While this software is quite comprehensive and offers much, you will be using the announcements page, discussion forum and quizzes link in this class. The software is designed to show you activities (in this case announcements, quizzes and discussion forums) by week and so, as you scroll down the page, the course will progress from beginning to end. Please note that while the quizzes are turned on for the duration of the semester, all announcements and discussion forums (where you will submit your essays) will appear each week as we move through the class. In short, when you first open the class up, all you will see are the assignments for the first week of the class and quizzes for subsequent weeks. For details on how things work from here, please refer to the below syllabus. Thank you!

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“Your job is to work to make the world a place you want to be in. It is your job to ponder possible solutions, to reach informed opinions, and to act on your convictions. Think? Yes, of course, but also DO!! That is what is really important.

Be governed by your knowledge and proceed” (John Rourke)

Semester	Spring 2013 (5/20 – 7/7): 8 week class
Instructor	Shirin Kambin Timms
Office	BW 242
Email	<a href="mailto:stimms@jccmi.edu">stimms@jccmi.edu</a>
Office Hours	Please log onto the office hours forum any time and ask your questions. Any student who can successfully answer a question of his/her peer will receive 2 extra credit points.

### **Objectives:**

- 1) To create an on line experience for students that takes advantage of all the internet has to offer in the way of web sites and opportunities to explore the world.
- 2) To understand that the world is in the process of transforming and that while some of the traditional approaches to international relations may still be effective, there are a host of other approaches and perspectives that warrant study and consideration
- 3) To recognize and act upon the above quotation

### **ADOs:**

In conjunction with the above objectives, successful students will also work on the following areas:

- Identifying the impact of human emotion on thought (ADO 7: Critical Thinking, Developing)
- Distinguishing between fact, opinion and inference as well as learning to question “expert” evidence. Student will also be able to identify the nature of bias (ADO 7: Critical Thinking, Developing)
- Can articulate and evaluate the contributions of individuals from groups with which one identifies (Idealist v. Realist) (ADO 10: Diversity, Proficient)
- Articulates and evaluates the contributions of individuals from groups other than one’s own. Can recognize and evaluate stereotypes (ADO 10: Diversity, Proficient)
- Identifies examples of ethnocentrism, oppression and dominant group privilege. Challenges barriers to understanding and appreciates diversity. Articulates benefits of interacting with individuals from groups other than one’s own (ADO 10: Diversity, Proficient)

### **Teaching Philosophy:**

I believe the classroom is a collaborative learning environment and that we each bring a set of ideas, beliefs and experiences to the table. I see myself as guiding the learning process but not driving it. I will work to create a safe environment for learning but I ask that in return you offer your insight on the topics presented and even volunteer to initiate discussions that further our study of political science.

Next, I believe deeply in the importance of being an informed citizen. With or without us the world will continue to unfold and I believe that our choices determine whether we are a stakeholder in our future or merely an observer. As U.S. citizens as well as citizens of the world, *we are responsible for our future and we are part of a community larger than the United States*. This is an exciting time to be studying international relations- - I ask that on the first day of class you take me at my word, and on the last day of class, you come to your own understanding as to why this true.

Finally, I am at this college because I care about getting to know my students. If there are times you feel frustrated or concerned about your progress I ask that you talk with me so we can find a way to work through whatever problem you are experiencing. I am interested in your success and so long as you are willing to work, I am willing to do my part to help you learn and achieve.

Please contact me with any concerns/questions as the course progresses and please let me know of any significant gaps in your participation. Thank you

### **Requirements:**

#### **Essay Questions / On line Discussions:**

This discussion board forum is meant to encourage research and subsequent dialogue. Throughout the semester you will be offered a variety of essay questions to research and study on your own. You will then write up a response (about ½ - 1 page single spaced) addressing the major questions asked of you and, in some cases, take a stand on an issue. In that vein, remember that when you make a point regarding a subject matter, make every attempt to substantiate your point and offer support. As I mention so often in class, everyone has an opinion but far fewer have an actual *position*. If you have an opinion and are searching for a position then you need evidence, research and reasoned arguments (personal anecdotes, stories and experiences are not enough - they can be used to illustrate a point but

not MAKE the point). Maybe you don't have a position yet but you have questions - - - that is good too. In short, this forum is set up to encourage thoughtful and insightful conversation - - academic conversation. As the semester progresses I will offer input on how it is all progressing and give you pointers if needed. For starters, however, please visit the document titled "Tips for Discussion Essay Assignments" This should give you a sense of what on-line participation is all about. Also, please be sure to check your email regularly as after each assignment and sometimes in between I will be emailing you in Jetnet (if you are not receiving these emails please check your Span Folder as many legitimate messages get rerouted!)

The due dates for these essay responses are outlined in the below calendar. In general, however, you will spend the first week of a topic section researching your posting which should resemble a mini-essay (i.e. at least several paragraphs using facts, data, and analysis and web sites you used for research - - note: you can simply copy the web site into the discussion board - no need to use formal styling like MLA etc). When it comes to the first week of a discussion assignment, you do not need to make a posting to all the topics in each of the forums. Rather, pick one and research it well. From there, make a substantial posting to the forum which will then be read and replied to the following week (i.e. second week of the assignment).

#### *Week Two and Three of Discussion:*

During the second and third weeks of the discussion assignment you will be reading and replying to the postings of your peers from the first week. In other words, each topic section will cover 3 weeks - - during the first week you will be researching a topic of your choice and writing a posting. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> week you will be reading your peer's postings and replying to them. It is here, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> week, where you will be doing the real communicating with one another. Please note that these replies are to be in depth conversations where you will use your reflective and analytical skills to engage your peers. The assignment is meant to cover 2 week's worth of research and writing so long, well written and reasoned responses are what will be expected.

#### How to Use the Discussion Board

Once you log onto Jetnet and get into the course you will find a list of weeks corresponding to the course calendar. During the weeks Discussion Essays are assigned, you will find the forums in those blocks of weeks. The most important place to start each week is with your syllabus - it is your roadmap for the course. From there, please read the announcement for that week and check the announcements page once a day for any updates. From there you will know if you have a writing assignment as it will appear in that week's block. Note: Always compare what you see on line with the course syllabus as all deadlines are outlined in this document.

#### **Graded Quizzes:**

Each week you will read your assignment and, during certain weeks, take a corresponding quiz on that chapter. These quizzes consist of 20 questions, are untimed, and it is assumed you are using your book for assistance. All quizzes are located in this Jetnet site and you can access them by clicking on the "Quizzes" link the week they are assigned.

Because this is a condensed course, all quizzes for the term will be turned on during the first week of the course. You may take the quizzes at any time and you may retake them twice if you wish to score a higher grade. While I highly recommend you take the quizzes the weeks they are assigned, the absolute deadline is 7/5 at 6:30 AM. There will be no allowances for late work and this date has been chosen so that students can schedule appropriately throughout the course. Please note: if you were not able to take a particular quiz by this deadline, you will not be able to make it up under any circumstances.

Once again, I do not, under any circumstances, suggest that you wait until the end of the class to take these quizzes. They are extremely detailed in nature and should you wait, you are less likely to receive a favorable score. As mentioned, because the class is a condensed one, I think opening up the test dates makes sense this term.

A few quick notes about taking quizzes:

- 1) *Each quiz you will be able to take twice. Your highest score will be logged.*
- 2) *Once you have taken the quiz and clicked the "submit" button don't hit the "back" button on your browser - - in some cases this can cause you to undo your submission. Just to be safe, if you want to see your quiz grade click on your "grades" button and go to your grade-book. Clicking on the "back" button isn't detrimental to everyone but why take the chance- - who wants to take a quiz again just because it unsubmitted!!! (note: some students hit the "back" button to see what questions they missed. In fact, the system is not set to show you the questions you answered incorrectly - - if you want more information regarding this please log onto the "office hour forum" and I can fill in the details.*

**Communicating with the Instructor:**

Through your internet course you are able to communicate with me via email. Please note that incoming messages to me do not automatically contain your name and what course you are enrolled in. That said, when you contact me PLEASE include your name and the title of the course (PLS 141, PLS 262, HIS 235 etc) in the subject line. This will help me help you much faster. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

**Point Allocation:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Point Value</b>
Essay Questions and Discussion:	30 points
Chapter Quizzes	20 points per week, 60 total points for the semester (3 quizzes @ 20 questions)
Total available points this semester	<b>90 Points</b> Available this semester .

**Calculating Your Grade:**

I will enter all your grades in your grade book. At any point during the semester you can log onto the site and calculate your grades by dividing the number of points you have received by the total points possible thus far. After you do this division, multiply the number by 100 to see your grade in terms of a percentage. If you want to know what the percentage means in terms of a point grade, see the below scale.

**Example :**

Say you got 17 points out of 20 on one of your quizzes. In this case you would do the following:

$$17/20 = .85$$

$$.85 (100) = 85\%$$

$$85\% = 3.0$$

Please note: I am making the assumption that, because all grades are in the system, students are aware of their marks throughout the term. If you have any questions regarding your grade, please feel free to contact me.

### **Grade Point Scale**

4.0	92 - 100
3.5	86 - 91
3.0	80 - 85
2.5	76 - 79
2.0	70 - 75
1.5	66 - 69
1.0	60 - 65
.5	56 - 59
0.0	0 - 54

### **Required Book:**

Rourke, John, Mark Boyer. International Politics on the World Stage, BRIEF (8<sup>th</sup> edition). New York, McGraw-Hill, 2006

ISBN: 978-0-07-337899-2

***note: this is the brief version of the text***

### **Extra Credit:**

Extra credit is offered at the discretion of the instructor and will only be considered when a student has completed all other course work to date and this course work, for specified reasons, does not represent the effort and work the student is putting into the course. In short, extra credit is not intended to replace other work in the class, but rather, it is intended for RARE situations that have been discussed with the instructor. So, please feel free to contact me about extra credit towards the end of the semester and only if you have completed 100% of the assignments to date.

On another note, I also recommend making use of the all the resources JCC has to offer. The *Center for Student Success* (located in Walker hall) not only offers peer tutoring in political science, but also provides assistance with internet research, writing and study skills.

**Plagiarism Policy:**

Under NO circumstances are students permitted to plagiarize (**THIS INCLUDES COPYING AND PASTING INFORMATION FROM WEB SITES INTO THE DISCUSSION BOARD**). If you take more than four words from a textbook or other published material (including web sites) you must use quotation marks and cite the source appropriately (using footnotes/endnotes/parenthetical noting etc. AND a bibliography or works cited page).

Plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty and students whose work is plagiarized will receive a zero for their assignment/paper.

**Incomplete Policy:**

According to the JCC Student Handbook, "The incomplete is designed for passing students with extenuating circumstances to allow them to complete the course requirements after the semester or session has ended. You may receive an "I" if, in the opinion of the instructor, your work is sufficient in quality but is lacking in quantity to meet the course objectives specified in the course syllabus. The course objectives must be satisfactorily completed during the next full-length semester or within a shorter period of time as designated by the instructor. If you have not finished the course within the designated time period, the "I" will remain permanently on your transcript. You will then have to register and repeat the course to receive a grade and credit for degree purposes.

The grade of "I" is not awarded to students who did not attend or seldom attended, or to those who simply are not pleased with their final grades. An "I" grade may be changed only upon the written request of the instructor who awarded the Incomplete."

The above is copied from: <http://www.jackson.cc.mi.us/Catalog/CATALOG.HTM#Drop>

In short, incompletes will be given at the discretion of the instructor. In the very least, to be eligible for an incomplete a student must have completed 2/3 of the required work for the semester and be in "good standing" in the course (2.0 or better).

**Course Calendar:****Week 1: Monday 5/20**

- Print the syllabus, learn to navigate the course and post something on the discussion board introducing yourself.
- Chapter 1: Thinking & Caring about World Politics. Skim but pay special attention to explanations of Realism, liberalism, Constructivist theories. pp. 14-28.
- Chapter 2: Read the following sections:
  - Evolving World System: 20<sup>th</sup> Century: pp. 37
  - 21<sup>st</sup> Century: pp. 40-43
- Practice Quiz Chapter 1: ungraded!

**Week 2: Monday 5/27**

- Chapter 3: Levels of Analysis: read summary pp. 78-79, skim chapter for sections of interest to you!
- Chapters 4: Nationalism, The Traditional Orientation
- Chapter 5: Globalization: The Alternative Orientation

- Quiz Chapter 4: Nationalism\*\*

### **Week 3: Monday 6/3**

- Chapter 6: Power, Statecraft & the National State: Traditional Structure
- Chapter 7: Intergovernmental Organizations: Alternative Governance
- Discussion Board Essay Assignment (initial posting due 6/10 and responses due 6/24 at 6:30 AM)

### **Week 4: Monday 6/10**

- Chapter 8: International Law & Human Rights
- Chapter 9: Pursuing Security
- Quiz Ch 8\*\*
- Discussion Board continued from last week, due 6/25 at 6:30 AM (*remember, this is 1 week's worth of reading and research!*).

### **Week 5: Monday 6/17**

- Chapter 10: National Economic Competition: the Traditional Road
- Chapters 11: International Economics: The Alternative Road
- Discussion Board Continued from last week: responses due 6/25 at 6:30 AM (*remember, this is 1 additional week's worth of reading and research!*).

### **Week 6: Monday 6/24**

- Chapters 12: Preserving and Enhancing the Biosphere
- Quiz Ch 12\*\*
- All quizzes due 7/5 at 6:30 AM

### **Week 7: Monday 7/1**

- All quizzes due 7/5 at 6:30 AM

**\*\* Students are expected to take quizzes the week they are assigned. The final deadline for the course is 7/5/ at 6:30 AM and no quizzes will be accepted after this date (this means that if you leave all your quizzes until the end of the course and something happens to prevent you from completing them, you will not be permitted to make them up.**