

POL 271, WORLD POLITICS
Spring 2009
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-3:50 pm
304 Harrison Hall

The online version of this syllabus contains active links.
<http://www.users.muohio.edu/neacklj/271spring2009.pdf>

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Office hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays 11:00-12:00, Fridays TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to world politics. Students in this course will explore the factors and processes producing harmony and conflict in world affairs using the conceptual approaches used by scholars in the study of world politics. Additionally, students will explore the ways in which historical, geographical, social, economic and cultural traditions and circumstances combine to create vastly different voices, abilities and desires in the global arena.

COURSE GOALS

In this course, students will develop an understanding of the major theoretical traditions in the study of world politics, and learn how to apply the analytical tools used by scholars. Students will learn to identify world views and how historical, geographical, social, economic and cultural traditions and circumstances affect one's understanding of what is important in world politics. Further, students will learn to recognize and identify major issues in the study of world politics and how to fit the major political issues of the day into the general study of world politics. This course is designed both to prepare students for further study in international relations and to make them more informed global citizens.

REQUIRED BOOKS AND OTHER READINGS

Karen Mingst, *Essentials of International Relations, Fourth Edition* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008).

Karen Mingst and Jack Snyder, eds., *Essential Readings in World Politics, Third Edition* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008).

Ishmael Beah, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).

Additional readings can be found on the course blackboard site or at links indicated on the course outline below.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to come to class ready to participate in class discussions. To do so, students must complete all reading assignments by the dates listed on the syllabus.

Beyond the assigned readings, students who perform best in this course are those who keep current on international events by reading a national/international news source on a daily basis (such as *The New York Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *BBC*), and by viewing or listening to broadcast news programs. This is not a current events course, but we will discuss current events to demonstrate ideas, theories and issues being discussed in the course. Don't be intimidated by classmates who seem to have a better background in world affairs or world history. You can remedy this situation by reading, thinking and actively discussing the current events examples raised in class.

Final grades will be determined on the following basis:

- Two in-class exams, 30% each
- Two paper assignments, 20% each
- Pop quizzes, 5% each*

In-class Exams

The exams in this class will consist of a mix of multiple choice, true/false and short answer essay questions.

Pop Quizzes

*Pop quizzes will be used as necessary to ensure that students are completing reading assignments on schedule. The grades on pop quizzes will count toward the exam grade for the relevant section of the course. Each quiz will constitute 5% of the exam grade.

Paper Assignments

One of the required books for this course is *Essential Readings in World Politics* (listed on the course outline as Mingst & Snyder). We will be reading a number of articles from this book. **Each** article assigned will be included in the exams. In addition, students must select **four** of the assigned articles – each from a different chapter of the book – and write the assignment described below. Students must write one of these assignments for each half of the course.

Purpose of assignment. This assignment is designed to help students begin to develop some building-block skills necessary for writing longer research papers. When writing research papers, students must be able to summarize the primary arguments of their source materials and be able to extract quotations that illustrate these key arguments. Students also must examine the source material critically in order to understand underlying assumptions and implications. Each part of this assignment replicates these initial building blocks of a longer research project.

Format. Each paper must be written exactly as follows:

1. Top of first page -- your name and then **full bibliographic information** on the article.
2. **One paragraph summary** of the article. This summary must be **in your own words** and **exactly 3 sentences** in length.
3. **Three key quotes** from the article with proper page citations for each. These quotes **must be no longer than two sentences** each.
4. **Two questions** for the author of the article. The **first question** must inquire into the **assumptions** underlying the article. The **second question** must ask about an **implication** of the arguments made. These questions must be no longer than **two sentences** each.

Mechanics. Each paper must be typed, double-spaced, and conform exactly to the specifications above. No credit will be given for any assignment that does not follow the directions.

Due dates. The first paper is due on March 3 at the start of class. The second paper is due April 21 at the start of class.

Grade Scale

Plus/minus grades will be used in this course according to the following scale:

97-100 A+	93-96 A	90-92 A-
87-89 B+	83-86 B	80-82 B-
77-79 C+	73-76 C	70-72 C-
67-69 D+	63-66 D	60-62 D-
59 and below F		

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Miami University requires that students attend all regularly-scheduled class sessions. The university attendance policy can be found in full at the following link:

http://www.units.muohio.edu/secretary/policies_guidelines/student_handbook/academic_regulations/chapter9/index.html#toc194198528

The exception to Miami's full-attendance policy is as follows:

"There are no University-recognized excused absences except for religious observances that require absence from a class session and other required class activities. Students must give written notification to their instructor within the first two weeks of class of the religious event which prohibits class attendance, and the date that will be missed, if officially known. Instructors will, without prejudice, provide such students with reasonable accommodations for completing missed work. However, the students are ultimately responsible for material covered in class, regardless of whether the student is absent or present." Student Handbook 2008-2009, Part 1: Undergraduate Academic Regulations, Chapter 1.9.A. General Attendance Policies.

Beyond this, the following attendance policy will be used in this course:

- Students who are 10 minutes late for class will be marked absent for that class meeting.
- Students who leave before the end of class without prior permission of instructor will be marked absent for that class meeting.
- Upon the **third unexcused absence**, the student's **final grade will be reduced one full letter grade**.
- Upon the **fourth unexcused absence**, the student **will be dropped from the course with a grade of F**.

The instructor retains the sole right to determine what is or is not an excused absence. Early spring break departures and late spring break returns to campus will not qualify as excuseable absences.

Consult the [Miami University Student Handbook](#) for more information on university attendance policy and other student rights and responsibilities. In the Handbook, be sure to review the Code of Student Conduct

(http://www.units.muohio.edu/secretary/policies_guidelines/student_handbook/code_of_conduct/index.html)

especially on matters regarding academic honesty and respect for other members of the class and university community.

DISABILITY RESOURCES

You must be registered with the Office of Learning Assistance if you have a disability for which accommodations should be made. For more information, consult the online directory for services for students with disabilities,

http://www.units.muohio.edu/secretary/policies_guidelines/student_handbook/health_and_safety/chapter3/index.html#toc194198556

COURSE OUTLINE

Jan. 13 → Introduction

Jan. 15 → Why Study World Politics?
Mingst, Ch. 1

Jan. 20, 22 → Historical Development of World Politics
Mingst, Ch. 2
Mingst & Snyder, Ch. 2, ALL

Jan. 27, 29 → World Views & IR Theories
Mingst, Ch. 3
Mingst & Snyder, Ch. 3, ALL

Black, "Parallel Realities: Dialogue of Two Monologues,"
www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/oslo/parallel/1.html

Feb. 3, 5, 10 → The International System

Mingst, Ch. 4

CIA report, *Global Trends 2025*, Blackboard

Klare, "The New Geopolitics of Energy," Blackboard

Feb. 12, 17, 19 → States and Nations

Mingst, Ch. 5

Mingst & Snyder, Ch. 5, Huntington, Sadowski

Neack, "National Security," Blackboard

Feb. 24, 26, March 3 → Individual Decision Makers

Mingst, Ch. 6

Mingst & Snyder, Ch. 6, Jervis, Mueller

MARCH 3 → PAPER 1 DUE

MARCH 5 → EXAM 1

March 10, 12 → Spring Break

Mar. 17, 19, 24 → International Organizations, Nongovernmental Organizations, and International Law

Mingst, Ch. 7

Mingst & Snyder, Ch. 7, Keck & Sikkink, Power, Kissinger, Roth

Mar. 26, 31, April 2 → War and Other Violence

Mingst, Ch. 8

Mingst & Snyder, Ch. 8, Clausewitz, Schelling, Sagan, Valentino, Pape, Abrams

Apr. 7, 9, 14 → International Political Economy

Mingst, Ch. 9

Mingst & Snyder, Ch. 8, Ross

Mingst & Snyder, Ch. 9, Friedman

Klare, "The Geopolitics of War," Blackboard

Apr. 16, 21 → Global Issues

Mingst, Ch. 10

Mingst & Snyder, Ch. 10, Easterly, Garrett

APRIL 21 → PAPER 2 DUE

Apr. 23, 28, 30 → Human Security and World Politics

Beah, *A Long Way Gone*, entire

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 12:30-2:30 pm → EXAM 2