"I was the fool because I thought
I thought the world
Turns out the world thought me."

-Eddie Vedder

Course Syllabus

World Politics matters. As global citizens, it is almost impossible to avoid being drawn together by virtue of the ever-changing volume and the speed of money, goods, information, technology, people, ideas, and images that flow within and between countries. We study World Politics to help understand these dynamics, but also to decide how to engage with them, if at all. This means looking at the broad range of actors, structures, and issues on the international scene. It means looking at how states interact, and how states serve as administrative containers for societies, identities, ideologies, economies, political systems, and individuals, and how these things cooperate and collide.

The course has two goals. The first is to provide an introduction to the concepts and debates surrounding the study of World Politics. The second goal is to give students a general idea of how political scientists think and engage with the wider world. This does not simply entail gaining knowledge of politics and history of different countries. It also means learning about theories that explain patterns of World Politics and how political scientists study the topic. We ask questions such as: Why are some countries democratic while others are authoritarian? Why are there wars? Why are some countries rich while others are poor? Students will learn how to connect academic theory to the real world.

Course Objectives

This course counts towards CofC’s General Education Social Science Requirement and its student learning outcome is:

Students can apply social science concepts, models or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions (Essays)
Political Science student learning outcomes:

- Demonstrate understanding basic facts about the world
- Demonstrate capacity to theorize or explain political outcomes
- Demonstrate familiarity with current political debates
- Demonstrate skills in critical thinking
- Demonstrate knowledge of social scientific inquiry norms and standards

Technological Requirements

1. A computer with Internet access, sound card, microphone, and speakers. You must have a reliable Internet connection. Having to rely on the public library or Starbucks, for example, will likely make it challenging to have a consistent presence inside OAKS. If you are concerned, please contact me within the first week so we can determine if this course will be manageable for you.

2. OAKS and Zoom proficiency. This course is administered through OAKS, so students must have a thorough working knowledge of the platform. Please spend some time educating yourself about its organization and use. Tutorials are available here: http://blogs.cofc.edu/oaks/students/tutorials/

Course Methodology

- **Readings.** Students are expected to have completed the readings *before* the online class sessions. Keeping up with these readings will be vital to your overall course performance, and it will be difficult to catch up if you fall behind. The knowledge acquired in the readings will be cumulative. That is, each week you will be introduced to new ideas that will become part of the "tool-box" you will use to analyze readings and lectures in subsequent weeks.

- **Lectures.** Asynchronous Zoom lectures serve as the anchor for this course. Each week will feature a specific topic and a corresponding lecture that will tie together the readings and class discussions with key terms, concepts, cases, and historical context.

- **Current Events.** Students are expected to independently follow current events and trends in world politics. The best way to do so is get a 12-week subscription to *The Economist*, which you can find here: https://subscription.economist.com/DA/PPC/BASE12_P/Google_Extension-Sitelink-Digital?gclsrc=aw.ds&gclid=CjwKCAjw4MP5BRBtEiwASfwAL5nxsPXy4tiujuDImj9F1Eqlh vqlh30geF1S5LxyTRHGEEvPL0UhS4BoCFyYQAyD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds

- **Films.** Each week students will be asked to view films outside of class and be prepared to discuss them online.
Course Requirements

Weekly Quizzes (50%). There will be an online quiz every week that covers that week’s textbook chapter. Students must complete 10 of these quizzes throughout the semester, and they may choose these 10 out of a total of 12.

Weekly Discussion Threads (20%). Each week students will contribute to discussion threads about either films or current events of the week in world politics. Students must contribute to 10 of these discussion threads, and they may choose these 10 out of 13.

Short Essays (30%). Students will write 1,000-word essays that each engage with two of the major modules of the course, which each has a corresponding book and companion reading and a film. A separate guideline and prompt will be provided for each of these essays. Due dates are here:

- 10/6: The Age of Jihad
- 11/3: Crashed
- 11/24: This Changes Everything

Course Policies

Communication. This is an asynchronous course. At the beginning of each week I will provide a detailed prompt for the week’s activities.

Students are strongly encouraged to direct any substantive comments and questions about the course content to the discussion board in order to encourage the development of an online community.

All inquiries to me should be made via email, and I will make every effort to respond to emails promptly. Students can expect replies within 24 hours for messages received between 9am and 5pm on Monday through Friday. I generally do not respond to emails on weekends. Students are also encouraged to arrange a Zoom appointment with me anytime they would like during the week to discuss anything they would like.

Community Standards. While this class is online, you are sharing the experience of working through important issues with other people – not just usernames on a discussion board. Please bear this in mind when engaging with each other and be thoughtful in your contributions and generous in your interpretations.

Netiquette. Please bear in mind that online communication precludes many of the non-verbal cues that normally facilitate face-to-face communication. This being the case, it is important to err on the side of generous interpretation and civility. What was written as a simple statement can easily come across as aggressive or argumentative. Vignette: “Texting Confusion” from Key & Peele (Content warning: some spicy language): https://vimeo.com/121923151
Grading Scale

A  93-100   A-  90-92   B+  88-89   B   83-87   B-  80-82
C+ 78-79   C   73-77   C-  70-72   D+  68-69   D   63-67
D-  60-62   F: Below 60

Submission of Work. Students are expected to submit their work on the day it is due in the appropriate OAKS Dropbox. In the event that students cannot submit work on time because of Life Circumstances, they must inform the professor at least 24 hours beforehand, and provide a concrete date for submission. After this date, work will not be accepted. Also, please note that “My computer crashed” = “My dog ate my homework”.

Honor Code. All students are expected be familiar with the College of Charleston Honor Code, and to abide by it. Violations will not be tolerated and will be dealt with appropriately. More is found here: http://deanofstudents.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php

Accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a documented learning disability, please let me know as soon as possible so special arrangements can be made.

Other Special Circumstances. I normally will do business with anyone who lets me know in advance of any special circumstances. But please note that the expression “it is better to ask for forgiveness than permission” was not invented by a College Professor.

Center for Student Learning. The Center for Student Learning’s (CSL) academic support services give assistance in study strategies and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and they are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at http://csl.cofc.edu or call (843) 953-5635.

Extra Credit. Periodic extra credit opportunities may be available during the semester. Please note that these opportunities are EXTRA credit, not SUBSTITUTION credit for missed assignments. Also, keep in mind extra credit also does not mean extra work for your professor.

Required Readings

Frieden, Lake & Schultz, World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions (Fourth Edition) W. W. Norton 2019


Additional readings may be assigned and the course outline may be adjusted as needed.
Course Outline and Readings

Part One: Foundations


Readings:

- *World Politics* Introduction

Film: *Behind the Curve* (Netflix)

Assignments:

- 8/27 Discussion Thread – *Behind the Curve*

2. September 1-3: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions

Readings: *World Politics* Chapters 1-2

Assignments:

- 9/1 Discussion Thread on Current Events
- 9/3 Quiz #1

Part Two: War and Peace

3. September 8-10: Why Are There Wars?

Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 3

Film: *Battle of Algiers* (Kanopy)

Assignments:

- 9/8 Discussion Thread – *Battle of Algiers*
- 9/10 Quiz #2

4. September 15-17: Domestic Politics & War

Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 4
Assignments:

- 9/15 Discussion Thread on Current Events
- 9/17 Quiz #3

5. September 22-24: International Institutions & War

Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 5

Assignments:

- 9/22 Discussion Thread on Current Events
- 9/24 Quiz #4

6. September 29-October 1: Violence by Nonstate Actors: Civil War and Terrorism

Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 6

Assignments:

- 9/29 Discussion Thread on Current Events
- 10/1 Quiz #5

Part Three: International Political Economy

7. October 6-8: International Trade

Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 7

Films: *The Big Short* and/or *Margin Call*

Assignments:

- 10/6 Essay #1 Due in Dropbox
- 10/6 Discussion Thread – *The Big Short* and/or *Margin Call*
- 10/8 Quiz #6


Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 8

Assignments:

- 10/13 Discussion Thread on Current Events
- 10/15 Quiz #7
9. October 20-22: International Monetary Relations

Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 9

Assignments:

- 10/20 Discussion Thread on Current Events
- 10/22 Quiz #8

10. October 27-29: Wealth & Poverty

Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 10

Assignments:

- 10/27 Discussion Thread on Current Events
- 10/29 Quiz #9

**Part Four: Transnational Politics**

11. November 3-5: International Law

**No class November 3**

Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 11

Assignments:

- 11/3 Essay #2 Due in Dropbox
- 11/5 Quiz #10


Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 12

Film: *Children of Men*

Assignments:

- 11/10 Discussion Thread – *Children of Men*
- 11/12 Quiz #11


Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 13
Assignments:

- 11/17 Discussion Thread on Current Events
- 11/19 Quiz #12

**Part Five: Looking Ahead**

14. November 24: Challenges to the Global Order

Readings: *World Politics* Chapter 14

Film: *Pandemic* (Netflix)

Assignments:

- 11/24: Essay #3 Due in Dropbox
- 11/24 Discussion Thread – *Pandemic*

“Like” the Department of Political Science on Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/CofCPoliticalScienceClub?ref=hl](https://www.facebook.com/CofCPoliticalScienceClub?ref=hl)

“Like” the African Studies Program on Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/CollegeOfCharlestonAfricanStudiesProgram](https://www.facebook.com/CollegeOfCharlestonAfricanStudiesProgram)