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

-Eddie Vedder

Course Syllabus

Course Description
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 provides an introduction to the concepts and debates surrounding the study of World Politics. We will engage these through two main subfields in Political Science: Comparative Politics, which analyzes the differences among and within countries and determines why these differences matter, and International Relations, which focuses on relations between countries. 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.

The course proceeds in four parts. Part I will provide a basic introduction to World Politics, Political Science, and Globalization as an anchor for the course. Part II will look at Comparative Politics. Part III will look at International Relations. Part IV will tie together the two subfields.
Course Objectives and Methodology

General education social science requirement student learning outcome:

Students can apply social science concepts, models or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions (through readings and writing assignments)

In addition, students come away from the course with the following:

** reading and critical comprehension (through required reading and writing assignments)
** oral communication, listening, presentation abilities (through class discussion)
** effective writing and development of arguments (through writing assignments)
** comprehension of other’s views and capacity to formulate, defend one’s own position (through reading, class discussions, quizzes, and writing assignments)
** time management and personal responsibility (through set-up of entire course)
** critical analysis and thinking (through reading, discussion, and lectures)

The course is taught through readings, lectures, class discussions, and following current events:

- **Readings.** Readings Students are expected to have completed the readings before the 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.

  Students will engage three types of readings this semester. The first are scholarly articles found in academic journals, intended to expose students to what social science research does. The second are samples of news journalism that cover contemporary issues related to key concepts and theories developed by social science. Finally, students will read two books over the semester, each of which correspond to the main thematic components of the class. Other readings may be assigned throughout the semester.

- **Lectures.** Class sessions serve as the “textbook” for this course. Each week will feature a specific topic and a corresponding lecture that will anchor the readings and class discussions with key terms, concepts, cases, and historical context.

- **Discussions.** Class discussions will be fundamental to this class and students are expected to participate.

- **Current Events.** Students are expected to independently follow current events and trends in World Politics by reading The Economist magazine.
Course Requirements
These include two take home tests, submission of 10 weekly memos, submission of weekly discussion questions, a final take-home writing assignment, and participation in class lectures.

- **Take Home Exams** (20 + 20 = 40%). There will be two substantive exams during the semester each covering the Comparative Politics and International Relations components of the class. These will be take home exams.

- **Weekly Memos** (20%). One of the objectives of this class is to motivate students to habitually engage with foreign political events. Students will submit a 1 to 2-page memo about any *Economist* article from the previous week. Students will submit a total of 10 memos throughout the semester. A separate guideline will be provided for these memos. Memos will receive grades of check (✔) or minus (-). **Hard copies only. No late submissions.** They are due on the following dates at the beginning of class:

  Memo 1: September 13  
  Memo 2: September 20  
  Memo 3: September 27  
  Memo 4: October 4  
  Memo 5: October 11  
  Memo 6: October 18  
  Memo 7: October 25  
  Memo 8: November 1  
  Memo 9: November 8  
  Memo 10: November 15

- **Final Assignment** (20%). Students will be given an academic article to critically analyze. This will be due in class December 2

- **Discussion Questions** (10%). For weeks 4-13, students will be required to submit one discussion question about the main readings on OAKS. These discussion questions are due **no later than noon** on the following dates:

  Tuesday, September 10  
  Tuesday, September 17  
  Tuesday, September 24  
  Tuesday, October 1  
  Tuesday, October 8  
  Tuesday, October 15  
  Tuesday, October 22  
  Tuesday, October 29  
  Tuesday, October 5  
  Tuesday, November 12

- **Class participation** (10%). The quality of this class depends on the quality of discussion, therefore students are expected to participate in class.
Course Policies
Here are the rules of the road:

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

Attendance Policy. Attendance is REQUIRED.

Submission of Work. Late work will not be accepted. Work submitted electronically will not be accepted.

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.

Learning Disabled. If you have a learning disability, please let me know as soon as possible so special arrangements can be made for certain class requirements.

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. I encourage you to utilize the Center for Student Learning’s (CSL) academic support services for 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.

Required Readings

Michela Wrong, In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz: Living on the Brink of Disaster in Mobutu’s Congo (Harper Perennial 2002)

Daniel W. Drezner, Theories of International Politics and Zombies (Princeton University Press 2011)

All other readings are posted on OAKS or are available online.

Students will take out student six-month digital subscription to The Economist magazine ($50) available at https://subscriptions.economist.com/ODR/index.php

“Like” the Department of Political Science on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/CofCPoliticalScienceClub
Course Outline and Readings

Part I: Setting the Scene

1. August 21-23: What is World Politics?
   No readings

2. August 26-30: World Politics and Political Science
   ***No Class Friday, August 30 for APSA Conference***

3. September 1-6: World Politics and Globalization
   • Benjamin Barber, “Jihad vs. McWorld,” *The Atlantic* (March 1992)

Part II: Fundamentals of Comparative Politics

***Begin reading *In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz******

4. September 9-13: States in Comparative Perspective
5. September 16-20: States, Society, and Institutions

***No class Friday, September 20 for “Fates of Rebels” Book Workshop***


- Human Rights Watch, Laws of Attrition: Crackdown on Russia’s Civil Society after Putin’s Return to the Presidency (April 2013)
  http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/russia0413_ForUpload_0.pdf

6. September 23-27: Regimes and Political Systems


- Peter Hessler, “Big Brothers,” The New Yorker, January 14, 2013

7. September 30-October 4: Political Interests


8. October 7-11: Political Violence


- International Crisis Group, Peña Nieto’s Challenge: Criminal Cartels and Rule of Law in Mexico, Latin America Report N°48, 19 March 2013

***Must be finished reading In the Footsteps of Mr. Kurtz***

***TAKE HOME EXAM DUE IN CLASS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11***
Part III: Fundamentals of International Relations

***Begin reading Theories of International Politics and Zombies***

9. October 16-18: States in International Relations

*** No class Monday, October 14 Fall Break ***


John Mearsheimer, “Anarchy and the Struggle for Power,” in Art and Jervis, pp. 50-60

- Gideon Rachman, “Think Again: American Decline,” Foreign Policy (January/February 2011), pp. 59-63


Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics (Cornell University Press 1998), pp. 1-37

- The Anti Homosexuality Act, 2009, Parliament of Uganda
  http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/04/world/africa/04uganda.html?_r=0
  http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jun/20/uganda-bans-organisations-promoting-homosexuality

11. October 28-November 1: Paradigms in International Relations

Jack Snyder, “One World and Many Theories,” Foreign Policy (November/December 2004), pp. 52-62

12. November 4-8: International Political Economy


***Must be finished reading Theories of International Politics and Zombies***

***TAKE HOME EXAM DUE IN CLASS FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15***

Part IV: Putting it all Together

14. November 18-22: The Intersection of CP and IR


15. November 25: Final Assignment Given

16. December 2: Final Assignment Due

NOTE: Additional readings may be assigned and the course outline may be adjusted to serve the needs of the class.