Overview of the course
From the wars in which the US is currently engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan to the shoes on our feet to the way we think about people who live in other parts of the world, international politics impacts and structures our lives. We will be examining international relations on three levels: empirically observable “facts”; “theories” that explain specific phenomena; and overall “paradigms”.

The international system is radically changing, within the span of our lives – and these changes are not over yet. The state is no longer solely imagined as sovereign, partly due to changing ideas of citizenship and national identity. With new computer-driven information and forms of expression, people define themselves in new ways. Responses to authority shift with these new identities, and authority itself changes in response. New issues arise – human rights, environmental concerns, and trade, among others – redefining politics outside the traditional political studies of governance or war. The better we are able to theoretically grasp these shifts, the better we will be able to work with them, rather than be controlled by them.

It is not simply that change is all around us: we can help make that change, if we understand it. We do exert influence, whether we think we are doing so or not. We (and others!) are better off being in charge of the impact we have, or at least being aware of it. The increasing importance of these issues carries a significant practical edge, as well – learning a language, understanding power dynamics, and thinking more critically about the world will not only be a personal achievement, but will be of great use in your future careers.

Goals of This Course
There are three goals of this course. The first is to train us to understand and to eventually participate in the major debates of the day. Reading and understanding the daily news is essential, and by the end of the semester, you will be able to analyze patterns in what you read, comment intelligently on the origins of these issues, and begin to critically think about both the pragmatic and moral solutions to current problems.

The second is to provide a basis for further scholarly exploration in international relations and the study of politics. We will look at and critique different social scientific approaches to pursuing knowledge, answering the question of how we can assess the quality of what we think we know. We will look at recurring themes in political science, and spend some time thinking about what is included and excluded by these patterns of thought.

The third goal is to improve critical reading, thinking, and writing. The cultural decentering possible in the study of international politics is particularly well-suited to helping us improve these skills. We will learn to question our assumptions, and look for evidence to query our opinions.
**Learning Outcome**

**Assessment**

- Students can effectively read, write, and speak
  - Paper tying together analysis from both classes
- Students can us appropriate critical thinking skills and problem solving techniques in a variety of contexts
  - Five analytical oral presentations on different lessons from POLI 103
- Students can apply social science concepts, models or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions
  - Students must use a disciplinary social science concept, model, or theory to explain a hypothetical or case study example of human behavior or social life.

**General Education Student Learning outcome:**

Students are able to apply social science concepts, models or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions. This outcome is assessed in the first assigned paper.

**Required Readings**

The required readings are primarily in Bova, Russell. 2010. How the World Works. New York: Longman. (HWW). This is the only textbook you buy. To save considerable money over bookstore prices, you will order this online. I’ve copied the first few chapters to post to OAKS, so you will have time to do so. But you must do this today.

Other Selections on OAKS are abbreviated as follows:
- GPPM – *Global Politics as if People Mattered*
- GWP – *Globalization and World Politics*
- GPCW – *Global Politics in a Changing World*

**An additional reading requirement** for the course is to read a major daily newspaper — *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, or *Wall Street Journal*, for example. The foreign correspondents for these papers provide coverage that offers a wealth of insights into the issues we will be discussing in class, as well as illustrations of the concepts we are developing and new questions to be answered and mysteries to be resolved. *The New York Times* is free for the first twenty articles every month online, one of the best bargains in the world, and is available in all the dorms and the library.

*The Washington Post* [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)
*The Wall Street Journal* [www.wsj.com](http://www.wsj.com)

*BBC World News* [http://news.bbc.co.uk/](http://news.bbc.co.uk/)
*The Financial Times* [www.ft.com](http://www.ft.com)
*The Guardian* [http://www.guardian.co.uk/](http://www.guardian.co.uk/)

*Al-Jazeera* [http://english.aljazeera.net/](http://english.aljazeera.net/)
*Der Spiegel* [http://www.spiegel.de/international/](http://www.spiegel.de/international/)
If you have a serious, ongoing interest in international politics, you may wish to begin to read regularly some of the more serious journals that provide current analysis of critical international issues. Though it is a bit expensive, *The Economist*, a weekly news magazine published in London, provides extraordinarily well-written and well-researched accounts of international affairs. Most US-based political thinkers read *Foreign Affairs* and *Foreign Policy*, as well. Then there is a tier of specialized journals which cater to specific political viewpoints or special political topics. If you develop such an interest, say in human rights or public policy or immigration, it would be smart to be familiar with those richer resources; I or your other professors can help you find them. Librarians are wonderful (and underused) sources of knowledge too.

**Grading**
Each segment of class will be discrete -- that is, it will have its own beginning, middle, and end.

**15% Individual Readiness Tests:** These will be short tests administered the second day of any section (Readiness Test Days), after a preliminary introductory session. They are meant to assure individual readiness to participate as an equal partner in your group. They will assure that you know the basic definitions and debates in the section’s topic.

Note: In order to be “ready” for the tests, you will have to have done the reading. This is best done in coordination with your group, so you make sure that you have not only identified the key concepts on which you will be tested, but can talk about them intelligently to others. Merely running your eyes over something does not mean you can use the concepts. You know the question ahead of time – make sure you do the assigned reading with an eye to being able to answer that question when the time comes.

**15% Joint Readiness Tests:** Immediately following individual readiness tests, groups will take exactly the same test together.

**20% Team Assessments** (peer evaluations): Teams will assess individual members based on criteria established at the beginning of the semester. This will be complicated, but we will jointly produce a rubric, and teams will fill them out regarding each member. That member will be excluded from discussions regarding his or her performance, to allow other team members to be frank and honest. This is not an opportunity to gang up on a person, or give credit for more than a team member deserves. This is an opportunity to decide ahead of time what constitutes stronger and less strong student performance, and to learn to assess that with as much objectivity as possible. I reserve the right to override grades in this category if my observations do not match the assessments of the team, or if I find the justifications for a given grade to be insufficient. If I am forced to do so, it does not bode well for the grades of the other group members! Be clear, be concise, and be fair to the performance of the person in question.

Note: The reading you did in order to pass the readiness tests is IN NO WAY adequate to answer the section question. You will have to go considerably beyond the assigned reading, seeking out your own reliable sources of information which will help you make your decision. If I hear simple repetition of what you have already been told, you will not do well.
20% Outcomes: At the end of each section (Outcome Days), each group will produce a concept map and be prepared to explain their reasoning and outcome to the class as a whole. We will jointly create a rubric by which the end product of each section will be judged; therefore we will all be in agreement on what constitutes quality work. Concept map software options (not necessary, but if you like to play!):

http://sourceforge.net/projects/freemind/
http://cmap.ihmc.us/

One important note – the last few Outcomes will be debates, instead of single-group presentations. You will be asked to argue against another group, and neither side will know which position they represent until the day of class.

10% End of Semester Exam: A short exam to see what you have absorbed from the various segments.

20% Individual Papers: In consultation with me, each student will find a news item that they found interesting from the time, developing a 1500 word research paper on that topic. Unlike the rest of class, this is solely individual work.

Please Note: If you are a SNAP student eligible for accommodations, you must provide me with a copy of the notification letter you have been given by the SNAP office well before the need for any accommodation arises. If you are a student athlete who will miss class time due to away events, you must follow the procedures set out by the College in order to expect due consideration. In both cases, I will not guarantee granting your requests if I have not been given sufficient notice.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment of Class</th>
<th>Week of Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading and Agenda for the Day</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2a</td>
<td>Jan 14</td>
<td><em>How the World Works</em> Ch. 2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2b</td>
<td>Jan 16</td>
<td><em>How the World Works</em> Ch. 3.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td><strong>Readiness Test</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>How the World Works</em> Ch. 4, 5.&lt;br&gt;“Are Cultural and Ethnic Wars the Defining Dimensions of Twentieth Century Conflict?”&lt;br&gt;<strong>Question:</strong> Is Huntington or Sen right?&lt;br&gt;Engage with liberalism and realism.</td>
<td>Readiness Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3b</td>
<td>Jan 23</td>
<td>Realism exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4a</td>
<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Liberalism exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4b</td>
<td>Jan 30</td>
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<td>Day</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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| 2   | 5a  Feb 4      | Readiness Test  
Intro: Marxism and Feminism  
*How the World Works* Ch 7.  
“Hear Her Roar”  
“The Declining Status of Black Women 1980-2002” (read this carefully!)  
**Question:** Will women reach economic and employment parity in the world? Engage with Marxism and feminism. |
| 3   | 5b  Feb 6      | Readiness Test  
Intro: Constructivism  
“The Constructivist Turn...”  
“Jyllens-Posten Cartoon Controversy”  
**Question:** Should free speech or freedom of religion decide this controversy? |
| 3   | 6a  Feb 11     | Marxism exercise |
| 3   | 6b  Feb 13     | Feminism exercise |
| 3   | 7a  Feb 18     | Outcome Day |
| 3   | 7b  Feb 20     | Readiness Test  
Intro: Constructivism  
“The Constructivist Turn...”  
“Jyllens-Posten Cartoon Controversy”  
**Question:** Should free speech or freedom of religion decide this controversy? |
| 4   | 8a  Feb 25     | Readiness Test  
Intro: Constructivism  
“The Constructivist Turn...”  
“Jyllens-Posten Cartoon Controversy”  
**Question:** Should free speech or freedom of religion decide this controversy? |
| 4   | 8b  Feb 27     | Constructivism exercise  
**Spring Break!** |
| 4   | 9a  Mar 12     | Film Viewing: Manufactured Landscapes |
| 4   | 9b  Mar 14     | Outcome Day |
| 5   | 10a Mar 18     | Readiness Test  
“Weapon of War”  
“The Liberal Peace is Neither...”  
**Question:** Will the UN become the world governor that critics fear and supporters hope for? |
<p>| 5   | 10b Mar 20     | UN exercise |
| 5   | 11a Mar 25     | Outcome Day |
| 5   | 11b Mar 27     | Outcome Day |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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| 6    | 12a  | Apr 1 | **Readiness Test**  
*How the World Works* Ch 8.  
“Malthus and his Critics”  
“Population Growth is Not Bad for Humanity”  
**Question:** Is Malthus right, or are his critics right? |
| 6    | 12b  | Apr 3 | Malthusian exercise |
| 6    | 13a  | Apr 8 | Ostrom exercise |
| 7    | 13b  | Apr 10 | **Outcome Day** |
| 7    | 14a  | Apr 15 | TBA or catch-up |
| 7    | 14b  | Apr 17 | TBA or catch-up |
| 8    | 15a  | Apr 22 | **Class assessment day** |

Final exam: May 1 12pm