World Politics
(post-COVID-19 edition … let’s be optimistic)

“There are decades when nothing happens, and then there are weeks when decades happen”
Attributed to Vladimir Lenin

“Biosecurity and global pandemics cut across all national boundaries. Pathogens, viruses and diseases are equal opportunity killers. When the crisis comes, we will wish we had more funding and more global cooperation. But then, it will be too late.”
Fareed Zakaria

Course Logistics

This course is being taught as an “in-person” hybrid offering, which means it will have components of direct classroom contact among students and instructor (for as long as they can be safely sustained) and components of work that will be posted and completed remotely. In-person sessions will convene in Maybank 316 or outside when conditions necessitate or permit. When in-person meetings are not possible, the course will be run online asynchronously.

Note: The course will begin online from January 11-22 and will run asynchronously. If conditions are sufficiently safe, in-person sessions will begin on Monday, January 25.

If any enrolled student wishes to have the entire course delivered online, you MUST make me aware of that immediately upon entering the course. While I have constructed a course that can be delivered entirely online, it will only be conducted that way for a student who explicitly requests it at the start. Any other shifts in mode of delivery for a student (due to health or safety issues) during the semester MUST be discussed directly with me as soon as the need arises.

The course itself is concept-driven: each week (after the introduction) you will be introduced to a new concept of world politics, along with substantive reading material from different parts of the globe that correspond to the concept. Thus, each week will constitute a new “chapter” of material to master and form the basis of out-of-class assignments, including Economist Memos and Journal Entries (see below and the Method of Evaluation for more details).

Each class period within each week is organized around a specific question and reading related to that question. These questions will provide the focus for class discussion (in-person or remotely) throughout the semester.

You will be assigned to a group (A, B or C) of approximately 10 class members in the introductory segment of class. You will attend in-person class and discuss questions with this group during the semester. The groups may be reshuffled once or twice during the term so that you will connect with different people during the semester, unless that prospect creates too much confusion.

On days when you are in the classroom (when your group is scheduled to attend an in-person session as indicated in the syllabus), you will discuss the day’s question with me and classmates. You will then go on the OAKS discussion board after class and post, taking care to contribute some of what you learned in class as part of your narrative so that others get some sense of what went on that day.

On days when you are not scheduled to be in the classroom (or if you are compelled to miss a discussion due to illness), you will be exchanging views on the day’s question remotely through the OAKS discussion board with classmates.
Thus, there will always be two discussions happening on each class session around the question of the day (assuming in-person sessions are happening) – one in the classroom with the designated group and one on the OAKS discussion board – and ideas from the in-person discussion will be merged with the online exchange when those who attended class post. Each group will attend an in-person discussion once every week (days per week will vary so groups are discussing sometimes at the start of a “chapter” or the middle or the end).

If we lose the capacity to hold in-person class sessions, all discussions will revert to the OAKS platform – the day’s designated group will be expected to take the lead and be the most active participants for the day’s question, but everyone is always welcome to discuss the day’s question on the OAKS thread with me and classmates.

You will not be expected to be active in every discussion all semester long. However, your weekly meaningful presence in these exchanges is expected – at the very least when you are in-person – and the more active you are, the more your grade for participation and engagement will reflect that activity. **Participation and engagement will constitute 20% of your course grade.**

In addition, you will be completing **three other assignments** over the fifteen-week semester for course credit. First, you will be reading the *Economist* magazine from January 23-29 through April 10-16 and **writing eight Economist memos** on the basis of that reading. These memos are 2-3 double-spaced page assignments (three paragraphs) where you apply course concepts to issues beyond what we are explicitly discussing in class. **Economist memos will constitute 40% of your course grade.** More information about them can be found in the Method of Evaluation section of the syllabus and in course handouts.

Second, given these unprecedented times in world politics, I am especially interested in your views as the semester progresses. Each of you be in dialogue with me through **individual journal narratives** you will compose ten times over the course of the term. These will be narratives of at least one double spaced typed page (250 words or more) that can be used to react to class ideas, pose questions, explore your own thoughts and concerns … there is no content expectation beyond that narratives have a substantive basis and demonstrate engagement with the class material. **These journals will constitute 25% of your course grade.** More information about them can be found in the Method of Evaluation section of the syllabus.

Lastly, you will complete a **final cumulative essay** on Bill McKibben’s *Falter* as a final exam. In this assignment, you will apply multiple course concepts of your choosing to the issues McKibben raises in his book, issues which will not be covered explicitly in class. **This final essay will constitute 15% of your course grade.** More information about this assignment can be found in the Method of Evaluation section of the syllabus and in course handouts.

One final logistical caveat to begin with – upon entering my classroom (and enrolling at the College more broadly), you have agreed to abide by the COVID-19 provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. For your safety and the safety of everyone else enrolled in the course, I expect you to strictly follow those rules. If you are feeling unwell or at any time believe you have potentially been exposed to the virus (whether symptomatic or not), **I do not want you attending class until you have been certified healthy and are no longer potentially contagious.** I will expect everyone in the classroom to **wear masks and maintain social distance** with one another (inside and outside the classroom), as well as follow all safety and sanitizing procedures for the classroom. I will not allow ANYONE to jeopardize the health of others – and I will take any measures necessary to assure everyone’s safety. Bottom line, I expect you to be responsible and vigilant in protecting yourself to assure that others remain safe – if you have questions about what that entails, feel free to ask before you act. **I also reserve the prerogative to halt in-person sessions if I deem that the risk level in the class is unacceptably high; I will not do this willingly or easily, but if I judge that you and I are more vulnerable than we should be (regardless of the College’s assessment), I will not hesitate to act in order to keep all of us safe and healthy.**

**There will be no exams in this course – and thus, no need for online proctoring arrangements**

**OAKS**

OAKS, including Gradebook, will be used for this course throughout the semester to provide the syllabus and class materials and grades for each assignment, which will be regularly posted.
Continuity of Learning

Due to social distancing requirements, this class will include a variety of online and technology enhanced components to reinforce continuity of learning for all enrolled students. Before the drop/add deadline, students should decide whether the course plan on the syllabus matches their own circumstances and needs.

Course Objectives

The world began to dramatically change sometime in the latter half of 2019 – without anyone being aware of it. At some point, a coronavirus harbored by bats found its way from animal to human host and further mutated to where it could be spread among humans. The likely epicenter of this unseen activity was first thought to have been a “wet market” somewhere in the interior provinces of China, though now it is possible the virus originated outside of China altogether (Laos, Vietnam, Myanmar?). No longer in doubt is the danger this new virus poses to humanity – throughout the globe. As the power of the contagion became evident and the epidemiologic challenges emerged in the first three months of 2020, warnings spread, productive portions of economies were shut down, borders were closed, travel was halted, huge populations of people began to isolate themselves from one another and the numbers of deaths attributable to the virus exploded. “Normality” disappeared for many people around the world (including students at the College of Charleston).

But “normality” did not change for everyone. The disease’s spread has varied across the globe; while no state has been spared, one in four known cases and one in four attributable deaths (1.9 million to date worldwide) have occurred in the United States and five states (the US, Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa) account for more than one half of the first eighty-nine million people infected. While some populations have altered their behaviors significantly in response to the pandemic, others have tried to maintain or resume “normality” and this has often contributed to notable infection rate spikes (at one point in July 2020, South Carolina had the third fastest infection rate increase in the WORLD). Today in the US, the virus rages on at the highest levels of infection and death the country has seen, while many other states and regions of the world have flattened or nearly extinguished their virus curves (temporarily at least), returning to normality.

Moreover, politics as many people have known it for some time persisted under the new pressures created by the pandemic. In Hong Kong, protestors continued to resist efforts by the Chinese government to suppress their freedoms as the epidemic spread, while China and India confronted one another over territory in the Himalayas that they have disputed for years. Civil war raged on in Yemen and Syria, providing ideal conditions for virus transmission that only accelerated existing humanitarian crises. Ethiopia and Egypt faced off over control of the Nile River basin and its precious water resources. In the United States, George Floyd suffocated beneath the knee of a Minneapolis police officer and renewed calls for racial and social justice arose throughout the country and beyond. The virus did not erase or overwhelm the challenges already a part of world politics, though it exacerbated and complicated them mightily.

In record time, vaccines have now emerged and are beginning to be administered – and so the dark and restrictive COVID world many were living in for much of 2020 has given way to hope that sometime in 2021, a return to life as it was lived before the pandemic might be possible. But there are clear dangers ahead: scientists warn that this is not the only virus with pandemic potential out there (and as you will see, concerns about a coronavirus among minks has heightened the threat); many will not accept the vaccine and so the capacity of the virus to spread will remain, particularly because vaccines do not prevent infection, they prevent disease; science does not know how long antibodies (naturally generated after infection or spawned by the vaccines) will last, and the virus is mutating into forms that may render early vaccines less effective. Moreover, there will be much for the world to reckon with as the COVID-19 dangers hopefully recede: sectors of economies have been devastated, even as others have thrived; many states handled the pandemic poorly and must come to grips with their failures; and politics has again not remained stagnant as the virus advanced – authoritarian systems have clamped down on citizens while the politics in democratic systems has often grown more polarized and contentious.

This version of POLI 103 intends to explore how the virus is changing world politics for people throughout the globe. Note the emphasis on PEOPLE. While this course has been totally revamped to focus on the dynamics of a COVID-19 world, it continues to be informed by the assumption that people matter in world politics. They are the architects of successes and failures in world politics – whether it be in states or international organizations or corporations or civic associations, it remains people like you and me and the structures we create and dismantle that truly matter in the way global dynamics operate. This is often not how world politics is taught – but as the dynamics of the pandemic and responses to it underscore, it has never been more important or relevant than now to think about world politics as the study of how and why people matter.
At its core, this course seeks to introduce you to the foundations of world politics with an eye toward inviting you to assess and join a scholarly debate around these changing times. In the process, you will encounter several key international relations concepts and explicitly use them to examine a host of pressing issues afoot in today’s world. This course will be concept-driven and by its conclusion, you will be able to employ a menu of concepts under consideration to independently examine an evolving global challenge and explain the elements of continuity and change it illustrates in contemporary world politics. This course is designed specifically for both the prospective or newly-declared political science/international studies major who seeks grounding in international affairs and the non-major who simply wants to learn more about the world around them. **There are no pre-requisites for this course.**

**Course Content**

Instead of having you read a stiff, boring and expensive world politics text, you will find that this course merges concepts of international relations with directed reading to illustrate the applicability of these concepts to ongoing contemporary international challenges. Each week will feature a different concept and reading – for example, the first week will consider the concept of contagion and you will be reading about dynamics of infectious diseases, both historic and current. The next weeks that follow will incorporate the concepts of globalism/nationalism, security/war and sovereignty/borders with examinations of nuclear weapons, the rivalry between India and Pakistan and other substantive topics – and where the concept of contagion and the dynamics of disease will continue to be relevant.

By the end of the course, you will have studied twenty concepts in world politics. All of these concepts and themes will culminate at the end of the term in an assessment of a prevailing issue emerging in world politics. You will apply multiple concepts to this issue in your final essay and consider the relevance that ordinary people have to this global challenge. The full list of concepts and the adjoining reading can be found below in the course outline.

**General Education Social Science Student Learning Outcome**

Successfully completing POLI 103 earns Social Science General Education credit at The College of Charleston and the College has established a General Education learning outcome for students which specifies that upon completion of the course, **students can identify, describe and apply social science concepts, models or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions.** This outcome will be assessed for the purposes of General Education through the sixth Economist memo that you will write for Monday, March 29. This specific assignment is worth 5% of your total grade.

**Foreign Language Alternative**

This course has been approved to satisfy Category 2 of the Foreign Language Alternative program. Upon completion of this course, students will use models and theories to analyze a cross-cultural issue (program learning outcome 2).

**Additional Learning Outcomes and Skills this Course Will Seek to Improve**

In addition, the Political Science Department has developed a number of learning outcomes for POLI 103, including having all students learn basic facts about the world; acquire the ability to translate insights from one case to others; become familiar with current debates in world politics; be able to theorize and explain political outcomes; understand social- scientific inquiry norms and standards; and develop critical thinking and reasoning abilities.

At its core, this version of World Politics seeks to meet all those outcomes by introducing you to key concepts, theories and dynamics of world politics and familiarizing you with a number of pressing issues that dominate world politics today. By the end of the semester, you should have obtained a working understanding of many essential concepts of international politics and when the course concludes, you will be expected to demonstrate an ability to independently employ a subset of these concepts to describe, analyze and assess a critical issue in world politics. You will also acquire and refine a capacity to identify and employ these concepts to ongoing contemporary issues in world politics that you discover on your own.

In addition, this course aims to develop your skills of critical reading and critical writing. Critical reading and writing entails actively engaging with texts, pulling them apart and putting them back together again (sometimes in new
ways). As you develop and refine these abilities, you should be able to: 1.) propose an interpretation of the texts you read; 2.) identify central issues, concepts or conflicts that appear in the texts; 3.) evaluate an author’s “tactics” or ways of communicating knowledge; 4.) investigate and articulate the implications of the arguments you encounter; and 5.) relate your ideas to ideas presented by other students and the world(s) around you. You will come to readily appreciate the difference between espousing opinions and developing arguments as the course progresses.

In this vein, the course will seek to challenge and improve a number of skills that are considered vital for students of the Liberal Arts and Sciences to master. These include:

**reading speed and critical comprehension – (through required reading and preparation for the final essay);**

**oral communication, listening and presentation abilities (through class discussions; in-class and out-of-class discussions and activities);**

**effective writing and development of arguments (through Economist memos; journal narratives; and final essay);**

**posing effective questions and strategizing pathways to answer questions (in-class and out-of-class discussions; journal narratives)**

**critical thinking and analytical capacities (through in-class and out-of-class discussions, exercises; Economist memos; and final essay);**

**identifying, describing and applying social science concepts and theories to explain human behavior, social interactions and social institutions (through in-class and out-of-class discussions; Economist memos; and final essay);**

**comprehension of other’s views and capacity to formulate, defend one’s own position (through reading, class discussions and exercises, class writing assignments);**

**cooperative work and active learning (through in-class and out-of-class discussions, activities);**

**time management and personal responsibility (through entire course set-up, specific class assignments).**

**Intended Long-Term Impact of the Course**

Beyond helping you learn about world politics, this course seeks to make a more lasting impact on your professional development in anticipation of your transition to the workplace. As one employer of college graduates recently observed, young employees “are very good at finding information but not as good at putting it into context … they are really good at technology, but not at how to take those skills and resolve specific problems” (emphasis added). Skills and abilities that employers repeatedly say they most value in their young employees include: written and oral communication skills, adaptability and flexibility, the ability to deal with ambiguity and complexity, managing multiple priorities, collaboration and interpersonal skills, the capacity to make decisions and the ability to creatively solve complex problems. Firms want graduates with “soft skills” – those who can work well in teams, write and speak clearly, engage in critical thinking, adapt quickly to changing conditions, solve problems on the fly, handle pressure effectively, interact with colleagues from different countries and cultures. As another employer said “soft skills tend to differentiate good college graduates from exceptional college graduates”.

This course seeks to work on many of those “soft skills” both directly and indirectly and it offers you space to improve in many of these areas. Additionally, you should consider accessing the many resources available through the College of Charleston’s Career Center as you begin to think about and plan for life after college. For more information, consult the Career Center’s website at [http://careercenter.cofc.edu](http://careercenter.cofc.edu), visit the office in the Lightsey Center, Room 216 or call (843) 953-5692.

**Method of Presentation**

Given the necessities posed by COVID-19, the methods of presentation for the course have been altered...
accordingly. Most of the substantive material you will encounter and utilize in the course will be presented to you online. Each week, you will receive a concept summary on OAKS, which will detail the characteristics and dimensions of the concept you will employ for the week. Assigned reading posted on OAKS or derived from Zakaria that accompanies each week’s discussion questions has been selected to relate directly to the concept and provide real world examples of the concept “in action”. In specific instances, supplemental guidance or context may be offered from me on OAKS to elaborate on the concept and/or the cases under examination.

Class sessions are reserved for discussing and expanding upon the material you are encountering online. These sessions (whether in class or online if in-person instruction is suspended) will be student driven in response to the organizing question of the day; they are opportunities for you to pose questions, explore different interpretations of material – all with an eye toward critically evaluating and assessing the arguments being made by various authors. I will be playing a more facilitative role during these discussions, reacting to rather than directing your inquiry.

The totality of the course structure is designed to allow students with different learning styles to flourish – and while the circumstances surrounding the semester limit how much improvisation we can muster, I am open to doing whatever possible to enhance your learning. Always know that you can email me or schedule time with me in-person or remotely to get questions resolved or accomplish what we cannot always finish or achieve in class sessions.

Honor Code and Academic Integrity

“Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when suspected, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to misunderstanding and confusion will be handled by the instructor. The instructor designs an intervention or assigns a grade reduction to help prevent the student from repeating the error. The response is recorded on a form and signed both by the instructor and the student. It is forwarded to the Office of the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XXF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This status indicator will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the XX to be expunged. The F is permanent.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php.”

Special Circumstances -- Disability/Access

This College abides by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have a documented disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see an administrator at the Center of Disability Services/SNAP office (843.953.1431) so that such accommodation may be arranged.

If you have any kind of special circumstances that I should know about, please make me aware right away. For example, if you have a diagnosed (or undiagnosed) learning challenge, if you have a physical impairment of any kind, or if you have challenges that make attending in-person or video-based class sessions difficult under the current circumstances, I need to know at the start of the semester in order to make certain that your needs can be met. It may be infinitely more difficult to accommodate you sufficiently if you delay in disclosing your needs. In addition, if you are a student who has problems writing, taking exams, or taking class notes, etc., there are many resources and programs you can take advantage of to improve your class performance. All you have to do is ask.

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. I will not guarantee granting your requests if I have not been given sufficient notice.
Mental & Physical Wellbeing

At the college, we take every student’s mental and physical wellbeing seriously. If you find yourself experiencing physical illnesses, please reach out to student health services (843.953.5520). And if you find yourself experiencing any mental health challenges (for example, anxiety, depression, stressful life events, sleep deprivation, and/or loneliness/homesickness) please consider contacting either the Counseling Center (professional counselors at http://counseling.cofc.edu or 843.953.5640 3rd Robert Scott Small Building) or the Students 4 Support (certified volunteers through texting "4support" to 839863, visit http://counseling.cofc.edu/ct/index.php, or meet with them in person 3rd Floor Stern Center). These services are there for you to help you cope with difficulties you may be experiencing and to maintain optimal physical and mental health.

Food & Housing Resources

Many CofC students report experiencing food and housing insecurity. If you are facing challenges in securing food (such as not being able to afford groceries or get sufficient food to eat every day) and housing (such as lacking a safe and stable place to live), please contact the Dean of Students for support (http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/about/salt.php). Also, you can go to http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/student-food-housing-insecurity/index.php and learn about food and housing assistance that is available to you. In addition, there are several resources on and off campus to help. You can visit the Cougar Pantry in the Stern Center (2nd floor), a student-run food pantry that provides dry-goods and hygiene products at no charge to any student in need. Please also consider reaching out to me if you are comfortable in doing so and believe that I can be of help finding you help.

Office Hours

I have designated office hours scheduled that are for you to use. Do not be afraid to schedule an appointment with me at these times, especially if you have questions that are left unanswered from class or if you are experiencing any difficulties or uncertainties in the course. We can meet in-person (preferably outside) on campus during these hours or schedule time to discuss issues remotely. If these hours conflict with your schedule (or if I am unavailable remotely because I am on campus outside my office), we can work out a mutually convenient time to connect. As a general rule of thumb, I will be available to students Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and also some time over weekends. If you email me, you can typically expect a response within 24 hours.

Course Ground Rules and Expectations

Attendance: Given the circumstances we will face during the semester, I will not have a formal attendance policy for class. I expect that if you are forced to miss class for health or emergency or technology or personal/leisure-related issues that you will keep me informed of situations – and wherever possible, I will do my best to accommodate circumstances, assuming you have responsibly kept me apprised. What I will insist upon is that you are regularly engaged with class dynamics and that you participate regularly (at least weekly) in class discussions, no matter where they are occurring (in-person or online). If I notice that your engagement is lacking, I will give you ample warning of my concerns – but really, if there are issues, you should be taking responsibility and letting me know before I express any worries.

Late Work: Late work is severely discouraged and will be penalized after a short grace period of 24 hours past a due date. Work that is turned in after the due date and grace period have expired will lose five points off the total automatically (i.e. a paper with a numerical grade of 75 becomes a 70) and an additional five points will be deleted for every subsequent extra day. Work is considered late (and the clock begins ticking) if it is not handed in within 24 hours of the due date listed in the syllabus.

Electronic Submissions: ALL work will be submitted to me electronically for credit via email as Word document attachments. Do not use the OAKS drop box or other mechanisms – send assignments directly to me via email and you will get an acknowledgment from me that your assignment has been received. All assignments should come to me as Word documents that can be easily edited on my end.
Inclement Weather, Pandemic or Substantial Interruption of Instruction: If in-person classes are suspended, faculty will announce to their students a detailed plan for a change in modality to ensure the continuity of learning. All students must have access to a computer equipped with a web camera, microphone, and Internet access. Resources are available to provide students with these essential tools.

Academic Dishonesty: When you enrolled in the College of Charleston, you were bound by an Honor Code. I expect you to abide by that code. If you are found to have cheated on a quiz or plagiarized any of your written work, you will fail this course and be turned over to the Honor Board for further disciplinary action. If you have any doubts about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, ask before you act.

Courtesy and Tolerance: As this course progresses, you will doubtlessly find that your ideas about world politics do not always match the views of your fellow students, the authors you read, or your instructor. This is the stuff of world politics. However, if this course is to prove rewarding for everyone (as it should), it is absolutely essential for each participant to express your own ideas respectfully and demonstrate openness to the ideas and interpretations of others in the class. It is equally important for everyone to discuss issues on the basis of information and analysis rather than emotion and volume. The point of this course is neither to “win” arguments nor to “passively” receive information. By adopting these guidelines, you will hopefully find the class to be a challenging and enlightening experience where you will have many opportunities to rethink what you know or believe to be true about world politics.

Time Spent Outside of Class: I have high expectations for you in this course and have crafted it with that thought in mind. I envisage that to successfully complete the work in this course, you will need to consistently spend two to three hours working independently for every hour you spend engaged with the “classroom”, be it in-person or online. There may be occasional periods where more time is required. Students who are not committed to spending that kind of time studying and preparing for class should expect to struggle. It is important to note, as well, that time alone does not automatically ensure success — the kind of time you devote to studying and how you approach the endeavor may be just as critical. You can devote time to preparing and studying that is effective and ineffective. If you ever wish to discuss these kinds of issues with me, feel free. We will be working in some of these skills (reading, writing) over course of the semester.

One underutilized student resource is the Center for Student Learning (CSL), which offers academic support services for assistance in study strategies, including tutoring, supplemental instruction, study skills consultations and workshops. All of their services are available to students remotely. For example, the Writing Lab is staffed with trained consultants offering one-on-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information on what help is available to you for free as students, visit the CSL website at http://csl.cofc.edu, call (843) 953-5635 or email the office, which is located on the library’s ground floor.

Method of Evaluation

Final course evaluations will be based upon the following components:

Class Participation and Engagement (20%): Class participation and demonstration of engagement with material are vital components of this course and your active involvement in class sessions (whether in-person or online; face-to-face or remotely) is required. Participation in class discussions is expected and will be considered in final course evaluations. Participation is not simply about being present or sharing your opinion with others, although you will be expected to offer your ideas regularly in class discussions wherever they are occurring. Quality participation involves demonstrating that you have read and engaged with the texts under consideration, that you have thoughtful questions to ask about material, and that you have considered how a text relates to contemporary issues in world politics. A stellar contribution is one that develops your opinion into an argument rooted in evidence from the course texts or other verifiable sources. Quality participation also involves listening carefully, considerately and critically to the views expressed by classmates and helping one another build insights and understanding. Your participation will suffer if you are not actively and consistently involved in discussions or if you are not engaged with material and classmates during class sessions.
You will be given regular feedback on your class participation and you will also have opportunities to assess your own participation efforts in written comments to me.

Considering how we all learn, it can be challenging for some of us to engage in face-to-face or online discussions because we are easily intimidated by others or shy about sharing views visibly in public. These are obstacles to learning that become important to overcome. If you are someone who feels intimidated or can experience shyness, please talk to me about strategies you can use to become more comfortable sharing with others.

**Economist Memos (40%)**: Two particular objectives for this course are to motivate you to become knowledgeable about foreign political events and learn how to connect theoretical concepts to empirical reality. Eight times you will be required to submit a 2-3 page memo about an *Economist* article from a previous week’s issue. A successful memo should not be a summary of the article; rather, it should show how contemporary political events illustrate the concepts and theories of world politics covered in previous readings and presentations. In other words, a simple rule of thumb for structuring these memos is:

1. Introduce the concept – such as power or security – and clearly explain why this concept matters to the study of world politics;
2. Briefly summarize the main point(s) of the *Economist* article you are using;
3. Explain how this article illustrates or relates to the concept you have introduced.

Only electronic submissions of these memos will be accepted – emailed directly to me as Word document attachments. Memos will receive grades of excellent, good, fair or poor (translated as A, B, C, or D grades). You will have opportunities to re-write memos the first two graded memos for higher grades. These eight memos in total will make up 40% of your grade (5% each). You will receive an illustration of an *Economist* memo before you complete one in class and you will write a trial memo which will not be formally graded (you will receive feedback indicating what kind of grade it would earn) before you begin writing memos for credit.

**Journal Narratives (25%)**: Ten times over the course of the semester you will hand in journal narratives (due dates listed in the course outlines). These will be narratives of at least one double spaced typed page (250 words or more) that can be used to react to class ideas, pose questions, explore your own thoughts and concerns … there is no content expectation beyond that narratives have a substantive basis and demonstrate engagement with the class material. What journals are fundamentally is an opportunity for you to have a direct dialogue with me about the substance of the course, what sense you are making of issues, what ideas the course is prompting you to think about or question. You should use these narratives as opportunities for exploration and engaging me with your thoughts and ideas.

**Final Essay (15%)**: You will complete a take-home final essay (due by 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, April 29) applying concepts to the issues of world politics raised by Bill McKibben’s book Falter. Specific guidelines and all supplemental materials will be made available at least a week prior to the essay due date.

A numerical and literal translation of grades assigned is as follows:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>Superior (100-92)</td>
<td>A minus</td>
<td>Excellent (91-89)</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>Good (85-82)</td>
<td>B minus</td>
<td>Promising (81-79)</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Average (75-72)</td>
<td>C minus</td>
<td>Acceptable (71-69)</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>Marginally Passing (65-62)</td>
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<td>Barely Passing (61-59)</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>Very Good (88-86)</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>Fair (78-76)</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory (58-0)</td>
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**Reading and Texts**

There are two books assigned for this version of the course. Each is listed below and available at the College of Charleston Bookstore.


You will also be reading issues of *The Economist* each week (more details below)

All specific reading assignments are listed in the course outline. Reading beyond the texts is indicated with a (*) in the course outline and will be available through the course content page on OAKS, the College’s online learning system. Students are responsible for completing the assigned reading prior to the class period date for which it is assigned so that you are able to discuss it on that day. Issues of the *Economist* should arrive by mail early each week (they are published online on Thursdays) and you should finish reading an issue by the end of that week so that you are ready to read the next issue when it arrives. You will be given guidance on how to read the *Economist* in the early weeks of class.

It is also important for you to keep up with current events and developments in the world as you take this course. The Charleston *Post and Courier* will be of limited help in that regard. You will be **REQUIRED to subscribe to The Economist for the semester (12 issues beginning with January 23-29 and continuing through April 10-16) -- student discount subscriptions (for a considerable savings over the cover price) are available by purchasing them on the magazine's website ([www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com)). If you do not wish to subscribe for 12 weeks, you can gain access to the magazine through the College of Charleston library or the City Library on Calhoun Street. The *Economist* is also available through the Library’s database collection. In addition, if you are interested you should try to read *The New York Times* or the *Washington Post* or the *Wall Street Journal* as often as possible. The College Library has student access programs available for all three publications.

The additional resources listed below are also helpful in keeping up with the pressing issues and debates in world politics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspapers and Opinion Journals</th>
<th>TV/Radio</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-- The New York Times</td>
<td>-- National News (ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, CNBC, FOX, WGN)</td>
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<tr>
<td>-- The Christian Science Monitor</td>
<td>-- Nightline (ABC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>-- The Washington Post</td>
<td>-- The PBS Newshour (PBS)</td>
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<td>-- The Financial Times</td>
<td>-- This Week (ABC)</td>
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<td>-- Wall Street Journal</td>
<td>-- Meet the Press (NBC)</td>
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<td>-- Dissent</td>
<td>-- Face the Nation (CBS)</td>
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<td>-- Commentary</td>
<td>-- 60 Minutes (CBS)</td>
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<td>-- National Review</td>
<td>-- Fox News Sunday (FOX)</td>
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<tr>
<td>-- New Republic</td>
<td>-- Frontline (PBS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>-- The Nation</td>
<td>-- Washington Week in Review (PBS)</td>
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<td>-- The American Prospect</td>
<td>-- Morning Edition (NPR)</td>
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<td>-- All Things Considered (NPR)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-- Weekend Edition (NPR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy Journals</td>
<td>Websites (with scholarly material)</td>
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<tr>
<td>-- Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Council on Foreign Relations <a href="http://www.cfr.org">www.cfr.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>-- Foreign Policy</td>
<td>Carnegie Endowment <a href="http://www.carnegieendowment.org">www.carnegieendowment.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>-- World Policy</td>
<td>Center for Strategic and International Studies <a href="http://www.csis.org">www.csis.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>-- The National Interest</td>
<td>U.S. Institute for Peace <a href="http://www.usip.org">www.usip.org</a></td>
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<td>-- The American Interest</td>
<td>International Crisis Group <a href="http://www.crisisgroup.org">www.crisisgroup.org</a></td>
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<td>-- Orbis</td>
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<td>-- Journal of International Affairs</td>
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<td>-- International Security</td>
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<td>-- International Organization</td>
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<td>-- World Affairs Journal</td>
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<td>-- Washington Quarterly</td>
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<td>-- International Affairs</td>
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<td>-- SAIS Review</td>
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<td>-- Current History</td>
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<td>-- World Politics</td>
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Hints for Reading, Writing and Navigating the Course – Tips to Excel in World Politics

When seeking to understand and explain world politics, it is important to wrestle with its complexities and appreciate the many key events and facets of its make-up. We will be reading several works through the semester that will help us in this endeavor. At times, the reading may prove to be difficult for some of you; thus, I have some suggestions to help you in your reading.

First, complete the assigned reading before we are slated to discuss the topic. My purpose here is not to torment you. Rather, if you have even a vague familiarity with the subject matter upon entering a discussion, you will find that our exchanges will mean more to you. You will be able to more readily recognize important points and add context to what you have read. Our class discussions of reading are also the perfect time to ask questions about readings and get clarification on issues or points you do not fully understand or feel comfortable with. If you wait and read later, you are unaware of what problems you might have and the opportunities to work them out sufficiently have often vanished.

Second, after you read work for the first time (not while you are reading), consider going back and taking some notes. Much of what we read we do not retain for very long. However, committing information to paper in our own words can help stretch our retention capabilities. Attempting to summarize what someone is saying in your own words can also be a useful way of discovering what you understand and do not understand. In addition, notes are a helpful study tool when you are reviewing for exams or considering ideas for papers. The notes you take on readings should not be extensive or recount every detail. You might simply seek to identify what the major themes and key points of an article or book chapter are, identify and try to define new terms used in the chapter, and think about why the material is important and how it relates to other topics we have already discussed in the course.

Lastly, once we have discussed a topic in class, you should consider reviewing the assigned readings and your notes to see that you have indeed identified the major points and that you feel you understand the material sufficiently. If the readings were very confusing when you read them before class or you did not feel you got much out of them, you might even reread the material after the class discussion to see if you understand it any better. There is an unstated (and faulty) assumption among many students that we should only read pieces once to gain a full appreciation of them; however, it often takes two or three readings to attain the full measure of what an author has to offer. We often see more if we give ourselves the opportunity of a second time around.

*** If you want more information on developing strategies for critical reading, please ask for the handout with examples which I am happy to provide you. We will be working on many of these components of reading, particularly in the early phases of the course.

To succeed in this class, it will also be important for you to hone your writing abilities. During the semester, you will complete a series of Economist memos and journal narratives designed to help you develop your skills in synthesizing other’s ideas and constructing your own. Just as reading effectively is a process with many often-overlooked stages, so too is writing. As you prepare written work for this class, consider the following steps:

Invention: When you prepare to write, allow yourself ample time to think about what it is you intend to say, how you wish to say it, and who will be your intended audience. The process of invention is one that can and probably should begin long before you actually start writing your assignment. This is the time when you should be finding out about what it is you intend to write about, which strategies for writing you intend to employ to reach your audience effectively, and what tentative main point or thesis you hope to express and substantiate in your paper. As you make decisions and come up with ideas, it is useful to commit them to paper.

Drafting: Once you think you have some direction for your written work, begin setting more concrete goals of what you want or need your paper to say, what kind of opening you will use, what kind of end message you want your reader to walk away with. Plan the organization of your paper by constructing an outline of the entire work and then after refining that plan, write a rough draft. Allow yourself plenty of time before the due date to complete a rough draft. No narrative ever emerges from one’s head to paper in perfect form and most do not emerge in anything close to what we are finally capable of producing. The more opportunities we allow ourselves to create, rethink and rewrite, the stronger our final effort will be.

Revising: With a rough draft of your ideas committed to paper, it is infinitely easier to begin the process of recrafting your thoughts and words into a successful final version. Hopefully, you've given yourself time to
allow your paper to sit idle (preferably for at least a day or two) before you go back to working on it. Getting a little distance and perspective on your ideas often helps you to see weaknesses, flaws and areas of new potential that otherwise go unnoticed. When you return to your paper, evaluate your work in terms of its **focus** (Am I saying exactly what I want to say?), **organization** (Is my paper structured appropriately to make my points?), **content** (Is my work complete and authoritative? Does it include all the necessary information but not too much?), and **readability** (If I were the reader and not the author, could I follow my points easily?). Revise your draft until you are satisfied that you have attained your goals.

**Proofreading:** Once you have finished making substantive changes in your draft, **always** proofread it for errors in spelling, usage and punctuation.

In both the case of reading and writing, allowing yourself plenty of time to do the work required is vital -- last minute efforts are always less successful and often reflect badly on your abilities and performance.

*The Value of the Writing Center in the Center for Student Learning:* Increasingly, students have challenges writing effectively – there are all kinds of reasons for this – but if you can learn to be a good writer, there are so many doors that open for you beyond your educational experience. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Lab in the Center for Student Learning (Addlestone Library, first floor) even if you think you are an effective writer. Trained writing consultants can help with writing for all courses; they offer one-to-one consultations (online during the pandemic) that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. To work with a consultant, visit [http://csl.cofc.edu](http://csl.cofc.edu), sign up for help, and, then, go right to a drop-in session with Writing Lab consultants. When is the Writing Lab open? Monday-Thursday 10 a.m.—9 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. —12 noon, and Sunday 4 p.m.—9 p.m. For more information, please call 843.953.5635 or visit [http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/](http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/).

**Dates to Remember (details in the course outline)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, January 25</td>
<td>First Journal Entry due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, January 29</td>
<td>Trial Economist Memo due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, February 3</td>
<td>Second Journal Entry due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, February 10</td>
<td>First Economist Memo due</td>
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<td>Monday, February 15</td>
<td>Third Journal Entry due</td>
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<td>Friday, February 19</td>
<td>Second Economist Memo due</td>
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<td>Wednesday, February 24</td>
<td>Fourth Journal Entry due</td>
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<td>Monday, March 1</td>
<td>Third Economist Memo due</td>
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<td>Friday, March 5</td>
<td>Fifth Journal Entry due</td>
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<td>Wednesday, March 10</td>
<td>Fourth Economist Memo due</td>
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<td>Monday, March 15</td>
<td>Sixth Journal Entry due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, March 19</td>
<td>Fifth Economist Memo due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, March 24</td>
<td>Seventh Journal Entry due</td>
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<td>Monday, March 29</td>
<td>Sixth Economist Memo due</td>
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<td>Friday, April 2</td>
<td>Eighth Journal Entry due</td>
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<td>Wednesday, April 7</td>
<td>Seventh Economist Memo due</td>
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<td>Monday, April 12</td>
<td>Ninth Journal Entry due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, April 16</td>
<td>Eighth Economist Memo due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, April 21</td>
<td>Tenth Journal Entry due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, April 29</td>
<td>Final Essay due</td>
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</table>

All assignments will be emailed directly to me as Word document attachments. They are due by 11:59 p.m. on the date listed above. There is a 24-hour grace period for late work – then penalties for late work apply.
Course Outline and Required Reading, Assignments and Due Dates

Below you will find listed all of the required reading and assignments for the course, as well as due dates. You can also determine which group is scheduled to engage discussions in-person on a given day (in the classroom or online if in-class sessions are suspended).

Given the contemporary nature of the topics below, I reserve the prerogative to add an occasional reading should one emerge between now and the end of the semester that will add to the substance of the course.

(*) indicates reading that can be found on the Oaks Content page for the course

Note: Class Sessions for January 11-22 will be online and asynchronous

I. Class Introduction (January 11-13)

Reading: (*) Mary Ann Tetreault and Ronnie Lipschutz, “Global Politics Because People Matter” in Global Politics as If People Mattered 2nd edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009), pp. 1-16;

(*) Jeffrey Goldberg, “Mass Delusion in America” The Atlantic (January 6, 2021);

(*) Adam Gopnik, “What We get Wrong about America’s Crisis of Democracy” The New Yorker (January 4-11, 2021);

(*) Mary Ann Tetreault and Ronnie Lipschutz, “People, Households and the World” in Global Politics as If People Mattered 2nd edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009), pp. 17-34;

(*) Robin Wright, “The World Shook as America Raged” The New Yorker (January 8, 2021);


II. The Dynamics of Contagion in World Politics (January 15-22)

A. Why is the concept of contagion relevant to world politics? (Jan. 15) – Group A

Reading: Zakaria, Introduction: The Bat Effect;

(*) Benjamin Wallace-Wells, “Reconstructing a Pandemic” The New Yorker (December 17, 2020);

(*) Sarah Zhang, “The Coronavirus is Never Going Away” The Atlantic (August 4, 2020);

(*) Ed Yong, “The Pandemic Year Two” The Atlantic (December 29, 2020).

Monday, January 18, 2021 – Martin Luther King Day (no class)
B. How has disease factored into the last thirty years of world politics? (Jan. 20) – Group B

Reading: (*) Peter Curson, “The Geography of Pandemics” Geodate (May 2006), pp. 1-5;
(*) Laurie Garrett, “The Return of Infectious Disease” Foreign Affairs (January/February 1996), pp. 66-79;
(*) William Karesh and Robert Cook, “The Human Animal Link” Foreign Affairs (July/August 2005), pp. 38-50;

C. Why has disease been so consequential over time in world politics … and how might it be consequential again? (Jan. 22) – Group C

Reading: (*) Lawrence Wright, “Crossroads” The New Yorker (July 20, 2020), pp. 18-23;

III. The Challenges of Globalism/Nationalism in World Politics (January 25-29)

A. Why is globalism so controversial while nationalism is on the rise? (Jan. 25) – Group B

Reading: Zakaria, Lesson Ten: Sometimes the Greatest Realists are the Idealists;
(*) Yasmeen Serhan, “The Nationalists Who Weaponize Religion” The Atlantic (August 13, 2020);

Monday, January 25 – First Journal Entry due

B. Why did the global system seem to stumble in responding to COVID-19? (Jan. 27) – Group C

(*) Stewart Patrick, “When the System Fails” Foreign Affairs (July/August 2020), pp. 40-50;
(*) “What’s Wrong with the WHO” The Economist (September 12, 2020).

C. Why is nationalism a complicating factor in the search for and administration of a vaccine? (Jan. 29) – Group A

Reading: (*) Thomas Bollyky and Chad Bown, “The Tragedy of Vaccine Nationalism” Foreign Affairs (September/October 2020), pp. 96-108;

(*) Matt Appuzo and Selam Gebrekidan, “For COVID-19 Vaccines, Some are Too Rich and Too Poor” The New York Times (December 28, 2020);

(*) Peter Hotez, “Vaccine Diplomacy: Historical Perspectives and Future Directions” PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases (June 2014), pp. 1-7.

Friday, January 29 – Trial Economist Memo due

IV. The Emphasis on Security/War in World Politics (February 1-5)

Economist, January 23-29

A. Is a pandemic really a security issue? (Feb. 1) – Group C

Reading: (*) Sara Davies, “Securitizing Infectious Disease” International Affairs (March 2008), pp. 295-313;

(*) Mely Caballero-Anthony, “Combatting Infectious Diseases in East Asia: Securitization and Global Public Goods for Health and Human Security” Journal of International Affairs (Spring/Summer 2006), pp. 105-127;


B. Are we more secure with or without nuclear weapons? (Feb. 3) – Group A

Reading: (*) Jessica Mathews, “The New Nuclear Threat” The New York Review of Books (August 20, 2020);


(*) Jonathan Schell, “Reaching Zero” Nation (April 19, 2010);

Wednesday, February 3 – Second Journal Entry due

C. Why do today’s wars seem to last forever? (Feb. 5) – Group B


(*) Anand Gopal, “Clean Hands” The New Yorker (December 21, 2020);

(*) Carter Malkasian, “How the Good War Went Bad: America’s Slow-Motion Failure in Afghanistan” Foreign Affairs March/April 2020, pp. 77-91;

(*) Tanisha Fazal and Sarah Kreps, “The United States’ Perpetual War in Afghanistan” Foreign Affairs (August 20, 2018);

(*) Christine Fair, “Selling Out the Afghans” Current History (April 2020), pp. 152-155;


V. The Expectation of Sovereignty/Borders in World Politics (February 8-12)

Economist, January 30-February 5

A. Why is sovereignty such an issue in world politics? (Feb. 8) – Group A

Reading: Zakaria, Lesson Two: What Matters is Not the Quantity of Government, But the Quality


(*) Tanisha Fazal, “Go Your Own Way” Foreign Affairs (July/August 2018), pp. 113-123.

B. Why are India, Pakistan and China at odds with one another … and how does sovereignty figure into their differences? (Feb. 10) – Group B


(*) Jeff Smith, “Fistfighting in the Himalayas: India and China Go Another Round” Diplomat (June 2020), pp. C111-C116;
Wednesday, February 10 – First Economist Memo due

C. Why has the Arab Spring not transformed sovereignty in the Middle East ... or has it? (Feb. 12) – Group C

Reading: (*) “No Cause for Celebration” The Economist (December 19, 2020);

(*) “Heat in the Desert” The Economist (December 19, 2020);

(*) Steven Heydemann, “Rethinking Social Contracts in the MENA Region” World Development (November 2020), pp. 1-10;


VI. The Centrality of Politics in World Politics (February 15-19)

Economist, February 6-12

A. What are the politics around immigration in the Northern Hemisphere ... and how are they changing? (Feb. 15) – Group B

Reading: (*) Peter Curson, “A World in Motion” Geodate (March 2016), pp. 9-13;

(*) Jake Halpern, “A New Underground Railroad” The New Yorker (March 13, 2017);


Monday, February 15 – Third Journal Entry due

B. Why is immigration so politically charged in the Americas? (Feb. 17) – Group C

Reading: (*) Jonathan Blitzer, “Trapped” The New Yorker (January 1, 2018);

(*) Franklin Foer, “How ICE Went Rogue” The Atlantic (September 2018);

(*) Charles Bethea, “After ICE Comes to Morton, Mississippi” The New Yorker (October 31, 2019);

C. Why has a pandemic exacerbated these differences? (Feb. 19) – Group A

Reading: (*) Maeve Higgins, “The Essential Workers America Treats as Disposable” New York Review of Books Daily (April 27, 2020);


Friday, February 19 – Second Economist Memo due

VII. The Promise of Progress (and the Element of Risk) in World Politics (February 22-26)

Economist, February 13-19

A. Why do people mistrust experts and doubt science? (Feb. 22) – Group C

Reading: Zakaria, Lesson One: Buckle Up;

(*) Tom Nichols, “How America Lost Faith in Expertise” Foreign Affairs (March/April 2017), pp. 60-73;

(*) Atul Gawande, “The Mistrust of Science” The New Yorker (June 16, 2016);


B. Why is technology such an important part in progress … and the spread of misinformation? (Feb. 24) – Group A

Reading: (*) Robert Chesney and Danielle Citron, “Deepfakes and the New Disinformation War,” Foreign Affairs (January/February 2019), pp. 147-155;

(*) Renee DiResta, “The Supply of Disinformation Will Soon Be Infinite” The Atlantic (September 20, 2020);

(*) Alina Polyakova, “The Kremlin’s Plot Against Democracy” Foreign Affairs (September/October 2020), pp. 140-149;


Wednesday, February 24 – Fourth Journal Entry due
C. What might have been different about America’s COVID-19 response had experts been believed and their advice followed? (Feb. 26) – Group B


(*) James Fallows, “Three Weeks that Changed Everything” The Atlantic (June 29, 2020);

(*) Adam Tooze, “The Sociologist Who Could Save Us from Coronavirus” Foreign Policy (August 1, 2020);

(*) Ed Yong, “The COVID-19 Manhattan Project” The Atlantic (January/February 2021);

(*) Fareed Zakaria, “The Pandemic Upended the Present … but It Has Given Us a Chance to Remake the Future” The Washington Post (October 6, 2020).

VIII. The Celebration of Neoliberalism (and the Prospects of Scarcity) in World Politics (March 1-5)

Economist, February 20-26

A. Why did the world economy almost collapse in 2008? (March 1) – Group A

Reading: Zakaria, Lesson Three: Markets Are Not Enough


Monday, March 1 – Third Economist Memo due

B. What has changed about the appeal of neoliberalism and the prospects for scarcity? (March 3) – Group B

Reading: (*) Jeff Colgan and Robert Keohane, “The Liberal Order is Rigged” Foreign Affairs (May/June 2017), pp. 36-44;


C. Why do people fear for the global economy again? (March 5) – Group C

Reading: Zakaria, Lesson Eight: Globalization is Not Dead

(*) Sebastian Mallaby, “The Age of Magic Money” Foreign Affairs (July/August 2020), pp. 65-77;
(* Carmen Reinhart and Vincent Reinhart, “The Pandemic Depression” Foreign Affairs (September/October 2020), pp. 84-95;

(* David Graeber, “Against Economics” The New York Review of Books (December 9, 2019);

(* Chad Bown, “COVID-19 Could Bring Down the Trading System” Foreign Affairs (April 28, 2020);


Friday, March 5 – Fifth Journal Entry due

IX. The Scourge of Dependency/Inequality in World Politics (March 8-12)

Economist, February 27-March 5

A. Why has economic inequality become so prevalent in today’s neoliberal world? (March 8) – Group B

Reading: Zakaria, Lesson Seven: Inequality Will Get Worse


(* Henry Farrell and Abraham Newman, “Will Coronavirus End Globalization as We Know It?” Foreign Affairs (March 16, 2020);

(* Christopher Clark, “Congo’s Fishermen Can’t Catch a Break” Hakai Magazine (December 2020);

(* “Twilight of an Era: The End of the Arab World’s Oil Age is Nigh” The Economist (July 18, 2020).

B. Is China’s Belt and Road Initiative an exercise in courting dependency? (March 10) – Group C

Reading: (*) Jonathan Broder, “China’s Belt and Road Initiative” CQ Researcher (January 25, 2019);

(*) Pankaj Mishra, “Great Walls” The New York Times Magazine (February 11, 2018);

(*) “Gateway to the Globe” The Economist (July 28, 2018);
Wednesday, March 10 – Fourth Economist Memo due

C. Why is economic inequality so important to understanding Latin America’s struggles with COVID-19? (March 12) – Group A

Reading: (*) Brian Winter, “Messiah Complex” Foreign Affairs (September/October 2020), pp. 119-131;

(*) Jon Lee Anderson, “Populists Inflame Coronavirus Outbreak Across Latin America” The New Yorker (July 2, 2020);

(*) Anakwa Dwamena, “How Jair Bolsonaro and the Coronavirus Put Brazil’s Systemic Racism on Display” The New Yorker (July 9, 2020);

(*) Luis Alberto Moreno, “Latin America’s Lost Decades” Foreign Affairs (January/February 2021), pp. 138-149.

X. The Quest for Justice in World Politics (March 15-19)

Economist, March 6-12

A. Why is justice so easy and so hard to identify in world politics? (March 15) – Group C

Reading: (*) Heikki Patomaki, “Global Justice: A Democratic Perspective” Globalizations (June 2006), pp. 99-120;


Monday, March 15 – Sixth Journal Entry due

B. What is justice in Venezuela? (March 17) – Group A

Reading: (*) Moises Naim, “Venezuela’s Suicide” Foreign Affairs (November/December 2018), pp. 126-138;

(*) Jon Lee Anderson, “Our Man in Caracas” The New Yorker (June 10-17, 2019);


C. How do people find justice denied to them by the state? (March 19) – Group B
Reading: (*) April Zhu, “Kenya Turns its COVID-19 Crisis into a Human Rights Emergency” The New York Review of Books Daily (July 22, 2020);

(*) Oris Aigbokhaevbolo, “Nigeria’s Protests Against Police Violence” New York Review of Books Daily (November 20, 2020);

(*) Keisha Blain, “Civil Rights International” Foreign Affairs (September/October 2020), pp. 176-181;


Friday, March 19 – Fifth Economist Memo due

XI. The (Declining?) Primacy of Power in World Politics (March 22-26)

Economist, March 13-19

A. Why do China and the United States look at the world differently? (March 22) – Group A

Reading: (*) Graham Allison, “China vs. America: Managing the Next Clash of Civilizations” Foreign Affairs (September/October 2017);

(*) Lee Hsien Loong, “The Endangered Asian Century” Foreign Affairs (July/August 2020), pp. 52-64.

B. Why do people worry about a coming power contest between the US and China? (March 24) – Group B

Reading: Zakaria, Lesson Nine: The World is Becoming Bipolar

(*) Evan Osnos, “The Future of America’s Contest with China” The New Yorker (January 13, 2020);

(*) Minxin Pei, “China’s Coming Upheaval” Foreign Affairs (May/June 2020), pp. 82-95;


Wednesday, March 24 – Seventh Journal Entry due

C. How has the pandemic potentially changed the calculus behind any global rivalry between the U.S. and China? (March 26) – Group C


(*) Wang Xiuying, “China after Covid” London Review of Books (October 22, 2020);


XII. The Growth of Alienation (and Erosion of Trust) in World Politics (March 29-April 2)

Economist, March 20-26

A. How are people alienated and why do they lose trust in government? (March 29) – Group B

Reading: Zakaria, Lesson Four: People Should Listen to Experts and Experts Should Listen to People

(*) Melinda Wenner Moyer, “Why We Believe Conspiracy Theories” Scientific American (March 2019);


Monday, March 29 – Sixth Economist Memo due

B. Why are the Rohingya being persecuted in Myanmar and why has Aung San Sui Kyi condoned the effort? (March 31) – Group C


(*) Mukul Kesavan, “Murderous Majorities” The New York Review of Books (January 18, 2018);

(*) Navine Murshid, “Bangladesh Copes with the Rohingya Crisis by Itself” Current History (April 2018);


C. Why are Iranians doubting the legitimacy of their government and how might the coronavirus contribute to their growing alienation? (April 2) – Group A
XIII. The Importance of Activism (and the Centrality of Memory) in World Politics (April 5-9)

Economist, March 27-April 2

A. Why are people rising up against China in Hong Kong and Xinjiang? (April 5) – Group C

Reading: Zakaria, Lesson Six: Aristotle Was Right; We Are Social Animals


(*) Jiayang Fan, “The Act of Protest” The New Yorker (December 16, 2019);


(*) “Orphaned by the State” The Economist (October 17, 2020);

(*) Joshua Freeman, “Uighur Poets on Repression and Exile” New York Review of Books (August 13, 2020);

(*) Rachel Harris, “Repression and Quiet Resistance in Xinjiang” Current History (October 2019), pp. 276-281.

B. Why are people protesting in Belarus … and what have they learned from Hong Kong? (April 7) – Group A

Reading: (*) Natalya Chernyshova, “Belarus Remembers” History Today (January 2021), pp. 90-93;

(*) Yasmeen Serhan, “When Women Lead Protest Movements” The Atlantic (September 12, 2020);
(*)&) Yasmeen Serhan, “What Belarus Learned from the Rest of the World” The Atlantic (August 26, 2020);

(*)&) Yasmeen Serhan, “Supporting Protestors without Undermining Them” The Atlantic (September 27, 2020);

(*)&) Yasmeen Serhan, “I Believe the USA Can Be A Crucial Player” The Atlantic (December 26, 2020).

Wednesday, April 7 – Seventh Economist Memo due

C. What kind of country do you want America to be in the world … and what will it take to accomplish the goal? (April 9) – Group B

Reading: (*)&) Richard Russo, “Will White People Forget About George Floyd” The Atlantic (July 28, 2020);

(*)&) John Lewis, “Together, You Can Redeem the Soul of Our Nation” The New York Times (July 30, 2020);

(*)&) Barry Svrluga, “The Black Baseball Prospect, the Police Shooting and the Club He Never Wanted to Join” The Washington Post (December 31, 2020);

(*)&) Zeynep Tufekci, “Do Protests Even Work?” The Atlantic (June 24, 2020);

(*)&) Robin Wright, “To the World, We Are Now America the Racist and Pitiful” The New Yorker (July 3, 2020);


XIV. Climate Change and the Human Game in World Politics (April 12-16)

Group A meets on Monday the 12th, Group B on Wednesday the 14th and Group C on Friday the 16th

Economist, April 3-9

Reading: Zakaria, Lesson Five: Life is Digital

Bill McKibben, Falter: Has the Human Game Begun to Play Itself Out? (New York: Henry Holt, 2019) – read all for final essay between now and December 4;

(*)&) Elizabeth Kolbert, “Going Negative” The New Yorker (November 20, 2017);


Monday, April 12 – Ninth Journal Entry due
Friday, April 16 – Eighth Economist Memo due

**XV. The Next Pandemic and Its Impacts on World Politics (April 19)**

_No in-person session for the final day_

_Economist, April 10-16_

Reading: (*) Michael Osterholm and Mark Olshaker, “Chronicle of a Pandemic Foretold” _Foreign Affairs_ (July/August 2020), pp. 10-24;

(*) Zoe Schlanger, “The Mink Pandemic is No Joke” _The Atlantic_ (December 23, 2020);


**Wednesday, April 21 – Tenth Journal Entry due**

**Thursday, April 29 – Final Essay on McKibben due (by 11:59 p.m.)**