

AGU Department of Political Science and International Relations

POLS 212 Introduction to International Relations

INSTRUCTOR RECORD

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COURSE RECORD

Code	POLS 212
Name	Introduction to International Relations
Hour per week	3 (3+0)
Credit	3
ECTS	5
Level/Year	Undergraduate
Semester	Spring 2026
Type	Compulsory
Classroom	Wednesday 14:00 – 15:45 @ F0D01 Friday 16:00 – 16:45 @ F0D01
Prerequisites	None
Special Conditions	You should have access to CANVAS and MSTEams
Webpage	For this course, I will be using the CANVAS Course Website. You will access the course syllabus, materials, links to related websites, assignments, and articles through CANVAS. You are responsible for checking Canvas regularly. Information about exams and assignment grades will also be available at this site.
Content	This course introduces students to international studies and central concepts and themes in International Relations (IR), such as power, globalization, nationalism, and ethnic conflict. Its goal is to acquaint students with the analytical, historical, and foundational knowledge needed to study recurrent patterns and current global political issues and controversies. The knowledge acquired in this course will allow students to understand, explain, and analyze IR issues in more advanced courses in our curriculum.
Objectives	Beyond contributing to the general development of students' intellectual maturity and abilities, the more specific objectives of the course include: 1. Developing substantive knowledge of central aspects of world politics; 2. Improving the ability to understand and evaluate diverse perspectives and views regarding international phenomena; 3. Enhancing the ability to comprehend main concepts and employ essential methods of social inquiry; 4. Advancing ability to apply the appropriate level of analysis to past and present world events.
Learning Outcomes	Following the completion of the course, the student will be able to: LO 1: Critically examine the debates about international relations; LO 2: Understand the depth of interactions in international relations; LO 3: Establish a foundation for future courses within the field of International Relations; LO 4: Discuss a range of ideas, concepts, and text in the International Relations theory and the historical context in which they arose; LO 5: Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of different ways of thinking about contemporary world politics; LO 6: Think theoretically.
Teaching Methodology	The course is based on lectures, in-class discussion, a simulation, and reflection papers. During the face-to-face meetings, the lecturer will introduce the topic

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	and explain the core concepts of the matter. Students are encouraged to ask questions at any time during the lecture. Students are also expected to participate in a simulation, which will continue throughout the semester. Periodically, instructor will ask students to reflect on their simulation experience and the course material.
Requirements	Attendance is mandatory. See below for further information. To get the most out of the course, students are expected to do the required reading before class. The assessment will be based on simulation performance, four reflection papers, the mid-term exam, and the final exam, covering <u>all the topics since the beginning of the semester</u> .
Reading List	Chernotsky, Harry I. and Hobbs, Heidi H. 2018. <i>Crossing Borders: International Studies for the 21st Century</i> . 3 rd edition, London & Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press. Orvis, Stephen and Drogus, Craol Ann. 2021 <i>Introducing Comparative Politics: Concepts and Cases in Context</i> , 5 th edition, London & Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press

ASSESSMENT

Evaluation Criteria	Weight (%)	Dates
Final Exam	35%	TBD
Midterm	30%	April 8
Simulation Participation	15%	Weekly
Reflection Papers	20%	March 13, April 17, May 08, June 05
Total		100%

For a detailed description of the grading policy and scale, please refer to the website at <https://goo.gl/HbPM2y>, section 28.

ASSESSMENT EXPLANATION

Simulation Participation (International Relations in Action Simulation)	We will run the International Relations in Action Simulation throughout the semester. The simulation aims to help students experience International Relations and the course topics and improve learning. Each week, as the decision makers of their states, students will face challenges and try to reach their state's goals. Groups could be either assigned, or students might form their groups. Each member of the group will have a different role in the cabinet. The number of students will determine roles. Each group will be randomly assigned to different states at the beginning of the semester. The groups will be presented with different scenarios and state objectives every week. Not all objectives are equal, but getting lower points in one or two weeks does not mean the group will lose the simulation. Groups will continue to earn points until the end of the semester. Each turn will continue throughout the week. Each turn starts with the announcement of the issue on Canvas, typically at the end of the Friday lecture. Each turn ends at 16:45 on Friday. The war declaration can be done until 16:20. The war will be resolved by 16:40. Budget allocations should be completed by 16:10 and submitted. The simulation will run during the lecture hours. Students may choose to negotiate between the lectures. However, harassing other
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students, texting late at night or engaging in unwanted behavior will result in failure of that week's topic. If a group or a member of the group continues to misbehave (three strike rule), the group will be eliminated from the simulation and got zero points from the simulation and related assignments.

If a state does not fully reach its defined goal in a policy area, it may still earn half the points for that issue—i.e., **0.5 point** for an insignificant issue or **5 points** for a significant issue—provided that it achieves a *compromise solution*. A compromise solution is understood as an outcome that, while not fully meeting the original goal, incorporates elements of negotiation, alternative proposals, or consensus-building that address the underlying objectives of the policy area.

Procedure for Evaluating a Compromise Solution:

1. Proposal:

If a state fails to fully meet its goal, it may propose a compromise solution. The precise nature of the compromise is intentionally left open-ended. States are expected to outline their own criteria and rationale for what constitutes an acceptable compromise.

2. Discussion:

Following the proposal, all states will engage in a discussion to evaluate the proposed compromise solution. This discussion should aim to clarify how the proposal addresses the policy issue and whether it sufficiently acknowledges the objectives of the original goal.

3. Voting:

After the discussion, each state casts one vote on the acceptability of the proposed compromise solution.

- A simple majority vote is required for the compromise to be accepted.
- In the event of a tie, the instructor will review the proposal and adjudicate the outcome.

Note: The instructor reserves the right to review and, if necessary, adjust any proposed compromise solutions to ensure fairness and consistency across the simulation.

If you plan to declare war, the deadline is every Friday 16:20. The declaration of war must be made public at the classroom and proper documentation should be submitted. Failure to submit the proper documentation will result in failed war declaration. The war will be resolved at the end of the turn.

Groups will not know other groups' objectives. But this does not mean that groups could not find out the objectives of others through various means, including intelligence gathering or simply by asking. Groups could engage each other throughout the week through various mediums. But, as the rulebook states, any agreement is void unless the action form is submitted.

All the documents and forms should be uploaded to MSTeams the end of the above mentioned deadlines. Each member of the group is responsible for uploading/updating specific forms. Failure to do so will result in Fail in that week's simulation participation point, even if you are present in the classroom.

Students should use the simulation forms. Failure to use the forms will result in 10% penalty on participation point.

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The rules of the International Relations in Action are available on Canvas. Every student is expected to read the rules. Please understand the rules to ensure clarity and reach the simulation's goals.

The members of the groups will collect bonus points for the midterm and final exams based on their state's standing as well as reaching individual goals.

Here is the bonus point system (Rank (Bonus Point)): 1st (10), 2nd (9), 3rd (8), 4th (7), 5th (6), 6th (5), 7th (4), 8th (3)

The bonus points for the midterm will be calculated as a percentage gained from possible points. The final bonus will be based on the overall points achieved.

Throughout the simulation, please be polite to and respectful of the other students. Harassment and rude behavior will not be tolerated.

The evaluation is based on active participation, taking responsibility, attending Friday sessions, and good bookkeeping.

Midterm and Final Examinations

The mid-term and final exam questions aim to test students' comprehension of concepts and issues discussed during the lectures and textbook. While providing an answer, therefore, students are expected to refer to/provide the core arguments and concepts. The questions would require an explanation of the core reasoning behind a position/concept (why or how). Consequently, a whole point will be given to the answers that directly engage what we have discussed in the class and what is written in the required readings. The final **exam will cover all the topics since the beginning of the semester**.

The exam will consist of six short answers and two essay-type questions. The final examination will include all the topics covered throughout the semester.

Reflection Papers

There will be four reflection papers throughout the semester. The reflection papers encourage students to draw parallels between their simulation experience and the course material. The instructor will provide a set of questions for each reflection paper. Students are expected to provide clear and informed answers that use the course material and connect it to the experiences. The questions for the reflection paper will be made available at least one week before the reflection paper deadline.

Reflection papers should be submitted to Canvas. There is no specific word limit, but reflection papers should be at least 500 words overall.

Late submissions will be accepted within the THREE days after the deadline with a 10% penalty. After three days, submissions will not be accepted.

ETHICAL RULES AND COURSE POLICY

Course Policies

- English should be used at all times to communicate with one another during instruction hours.
 - I do not advise the use of electronic devices during the lecture. Even if you are skimming through the relevant sources, looking at your phone will negatively affect your concentration, and you will not be absorbing what I am saying. If you think you can multitask, scientific evidence discredits the practices of juggling intellectual engagement with related activities or
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attempting to perform two intellectual functions simultaneously; studies have discovered measurable degradation of perception and performance when multitasking.

- Lecture notes and slides will be kept private. I want to encourage students to be active listeners, meaning students should take notes and ask questions if there is anything that they do not understand. Sharing lecture notes and slides disincentivizes active listening. Some students are inclined to trust too much on the lecture slides, which outline what we are discussing during the lecture. This would result in poor performance. To be a proficient note-taker, I strongly advise reading the relevant chapter before attending the lecture.
- Online and hybrid lectures will be recorded and shared through CANVAS.
- Please read the required chapter and be prepared for the discussions and the lecture.
- You must take the final exam with a proper excuse (i.e., medical condition), or your letter grade will be determined by the points you accumulate until the end.
- You are responsible for all the topics covered, even if you are absent from the lectures.
- There won't be extra homework or assignments to improve the final grade.
- It is your responsibility to **check emails** regularly. When course announcements are sent via email, I assume that you read them.
- You must bring a pen(s) to all exams (if conducted face-to-face).
- For the AGU Make-up policy, please refer to the website <https://goo.gl/HbPM2y> section 26.

Attendance Policy

- If you are late to the class less than or equal to 15 mins, please do not hesitate to enter. However, please be polite and try not to disturb the ones in the class.
- If you are late more than 15 mins, please wait until the break.
- Please, respect the allotted times provided for breaks.
- Class attendance is mandatory. At least 70% attendance is required. **Failing to have at least 70% attendance will result in NA**
- Regular class time will include formal assessment activities for which points will be assigned. Participation in these activities will help you prepare for exams and homework and also provide me with feedback on your progress.

For a detailed description of AGU attendance policy, please refer to the website at <https://goo.gl/HbPM2y> section 25.

Email Policy

When contacting the instructor, please use AGU email. Please do not use other means, such as Canvas, to reach me. I regularly check my emails but not the others. When emailing, please include in the subject line the class and section number. If this information is not included, your email may not be answered. Any announcements or warnings will be sent to your AGU e-mail. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every student to read his/her AGU e-mails regularly.

AGU webmail can be accessed through <https://mail.agu.edu.tr>

If you have any problems or questions concerning the course, please do not hesitate to contact the lecturer.

The inquiries will be answered within three business days. If not answered, please assume that your email has been marked as spam. In this case, please inform the lecturer after the class. Depending on the urgency, the response time could be shorter.

If you send any emails after 10:00 PM, please do not expect a quick answer. I will probably see your email in the next morning.

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Cheating &
Plagiarism

You are responsible for knowing the University policies on cheating and plagiarism. Not giving credit to a person for their intellectual work and passing it off as your own is stealing.

Specifically:

- Copying or allowing someone to copy your work on an exam, homework, or in class assignment is cheating.
- Cutting and pasting material from the web or any other electronic source is plagiarism.
- Copying and turning in the same assignment as someone else, from this class or from another class, is cheating. Unless explicitly told otherwise, you can discuss and problem- solve on homework together but the final product has to be your own – not just your own handwriting but your own way of explaining and organizing your ideas.
- Making superficial changes (minor additions, deletions, word changes, tense changes, etc) to material obtained from another person, the web, a book, magazine, song, etc. and not citing the work, is plagiarism. The idea is the intellectual property, not the specific format in which it appears (e.g., you wouldn't reword Einstein's theory of relativity and imply that relativity was your own idea, would you?)
- If you find material and it is exactly what you are trying to say, or you want to discuss someone's idea, give the person credit and cite it appropriately. Don't overuse citations and quotes: instructors want to know how you think and reason, not how someone else does.
- If you have any questions or concerns about whether your behavior could be interpreted as plagiarism, please ask the assistants or me before you submit the work.

For a detailed description of AGU policies, please refer to the website at <https://goo.gl/FjLhzH>

AI Policy

AI use is encouraged with certain tasks but not permitted for certain activities.

AI tools may be used in this course for certain tasks. You are invited to use AI platforms to help *prepare* for assignments and projects, e.g., to help with brainstorming. I also welcome you to utilize AI tools to help *revise and edit* your work, e.g., to help spot confusing or underdeveloped paragraphs or to fix citations.

Additional activities where AI (e.g., chatGPT) is **permitted** may include:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas
- Fine-tuning your research questions
- Finding information on your topic
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is **not permitted** in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts assigned to you or content that you put into a Zoom chat.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned you unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI prompt. You are still responsible for fact-checking and verifying information. Your use of AI

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	tools must be appropriately documented and cited to stay within AGU's policies on academic honesty. Text generated using ChatGPT should include a citation that aligns with specific assignment guidelines regarding citation expectations. Please get in touch with your course instructor if you have questions about AI use or citation before submitting coursework. Submitting AI-generated work without identifying it as such will violate AGU's Academic Integrity Policy. A lack of compliance with course expectations regarding AI usage may negatively impact assignments or course grades.
Flexibility	Although much thought and planning were put into the course schedule included in the syllabus, the schedule is could change as necessary to adapt to the specific needs of the class. Occasional departures from the schedule, such as additional readings, assignments, and activities, may be announced in class and canvas during the semester. If possible, any change to the course schedule will be discussed with students to find most suitable solution for all parties. Therefore, it is each student's responsibility to be in class, on time, and paying attention in order to keep up-to-date with whatever changes are made in the schedule.
Feedback	Your comments and suggestions are very important and will be taken into consideration during the course. Please do not hesitate to provide feedback about the course. You can give your feedback during class, at office hours, or through e-mail.

COURSE LOAD

Activity	Duration	Quantity	Workload
Lecture Hours	2	12	24
Individual or Group Work	4	12	48
Preparation for the Midterm	23	1	23
Preparation for the Final	29	1	29
Preparation for the Quiz	4	3	12
Midterm	2	1	2
Final	2	1	2
Quiz	1	3	3
Discussion	1	12	12
Total:			155

ECTS: 5 (Workload/30 per ECTS)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

W	Date	Topic	Activities/Assignments/ Readings
1	Feb 18 – 20	Introduction	<i>IR in Action Simulation Introduction</i> <i>Environmental Challenges (IO)</i>
2	Feb 25 – 27	Planet Earth	Chernotsky & Hobbs Ch. 2 <i>Natural Resource Politics (IPE)</i>
3	Mar 4 – 6	The Role of Technology	Chernotsky & Hobbs Ch. 3 <i>Territorial Disputes (IS)</i>
4	Mar 11 - 13	The Modern State	Orvis & Drogus Ch. 2 <i>Alliance Politics (IS)</i>
5	Mar 18 - 20	Spring Break – Ramadan Holiday	
6	Mar 25 - 27	International Relations Theories	Chernotsky & Hobbs Ch. 4 <i>Nuclear Proliferation (IS)</i>
7	Apr 1 - 3	War, Peace, and Security	Chernotsky & Hobbs Ch. 5 <i>Free Trade vs Protectionism (IPE)</i>

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8	Apr 8 – 10	Midterm	No class on April 10
9	Apr 15 – 17	Seeking Prosperity	Chernotsky & Hobbs Ch. 6-7 <i>Currency Crises (IPE)</i>
10	Apr 22 – 24	Challenges to Prosperity	Orvis & Drogus Ch. 11 <i>Foreign Aid (IPE)</i>
11	Apr 29 – May 03	Protecting Identity	Chernotsky & Hobbs Ch. 8-9 <i>Global Security Organizations (IO)</i>
12	May 6 - 8	Challenges to Identity	Orvis & Drogus Ch. 7 <i>Ethnic Conflict (IS)</i>
13	May 13 – 15	Cooperation at the Global Level	Chernotsky & Hobbs Ch. 10 <i>International Criminal Courts (IO)</i>
14	May 20 – 22	Challenges to Cooperation	Chernotsky & Hobbs Ch. 11 <i>Collective Action Problems (IO)</i>
15	May 27 – 29	Sacrifice Feast Holiday	
16	Jun 3 – 5	Connecting to the World	Chernotsky & Hobbs Ch. 12 <i>Review Games</i>

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter Grade	Quality-point equivalents	Number Grade Range
A	4.00	90 - 100
A -	3.67	87 - 89
B +	3.33	83 - 86
B	3.00	80 - 82
B -	2.67	77 - 79
C +	2.33	73 - 76
C	2.00	70 - 72
C -	1.67	64 - 69
D +	1.33	56 - 63
D -	1.00	50 - 55
F	0.00	0 – 49
NA	0.00	