



**PSC 1710: Current International Problems**  
**Fall 2018**  
**Tuesday and Thursday, 14:30 - 15:50**  
**SM 2040**

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*“To maintain and transmit a value system, human beings are punched, bullied, sent to jail, thrown into concentration camps, cajoled, bribed, made into heroes, encouraged to read newspapers, stood up against a wall and shot, and sometimes even taught [social sciences].”*

—Barrington Moore, Jr

**Professor:**

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**Office Hours:**

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 - 12:30, or by appointment.

**Course Description:**

A course designed to give the student a perspective on world affairs through an examination of some contemporary international problems. This course is worth three (3) credit hours.

**Course Overview:**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the evolving interdisciplinary program of global studies. This course will provide students a multidimensional foundation to analyze key global issues. By the end of the course, students will have gained theoretical tools from geography, history, anthropology, science and technology studies, as well as political science and law in order to analyze issues surrounding global security, the global economy and development, sustainability, global governance, and human rights, just to name a few examples. It is my hope that this course will help students gain a better understanding of the interconnectedness of the world and also work as a springboard for students to find the interests that will drive their future studies and travels. If you read this syllabus and email me before September 4th, you will receive extra credit on your first midterm.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Students will gain a practical and theoretical understanding of global problems.
- Students will be able to synthesize readings and apply concepts to multiple contexts, including day to day examples.

- Students will increase competence and confidence in both oral and written communication through practice.

**Prerequisites:**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**Textbooks:**

There are no assigned textbooks. Read the news daily. Please refer to the blackboard for a list of reputable sources and blogs.

**University Policies**

The University is an equal opportunity educational institution. Please read *The University's Policy Statement on Nondiscrimination on the Basis of the Americans with Disability Act Compliance*.

**Academic Accommodations**

The University of Toledo is committed to providing equal access to education for all students. If you have a documented disability or you believe you have a disability and would like information regarding academic accommodations/adjustments in this course please contact the *Student Disability Services Office*.

**Grade Policy:**

Unexcused, late assignments will be assessed a penalty of 1/3 a letter grade per 24 hours late.

**Grading Scale:**

Numerical Grade	Letter Grade	Performance
93 - 100	A	Achievement of Exceptional or Outstanding quality.
90 - 92	A-	Achievement of slightly less than outstanding quality.
87 - 89	B+	Achievement of slightly more than high quality.
83 - 86	B	Achievement of high quality.
80 - 82	B-	Achievement of slightly less than high quality.
77 - 79	C+	Work of slightly more than acceptable quality.
73 - 76	C	Work of acceptable quality.
70 - 72	C-	Work of slightly less than acceptable quality.
67 - 69	D+	Work slightly below the quality expected.
63 - 66	D	Below the quality expected.
60 - 62	D-	Barely above failing.
59 or less	F	Failure

**Grading:**

- Test I .....25%
  - This in-class exam will consist of short answer questions and multiple choice questions.
- Test II .....25%
  - This in-class exam will consist of short answer questions.
- Test III .....25%
  - This in-class exam will consist of short answer questions.
- Debate .....15%
  - Students will be paired into teams of five and will engage another team in a debate on a topic covered in the course. Debaters will be judged based on evidence, argumentation, and presentation. Each debate will last approximately 20 minutes.
- Attendance .....10%
  - Students are required to attend class. For more information, please see the attendance policy.

**Academic Honesty:**

“The free exchange of ideas depends on the participants’ trust that others’ work is their own and that it was done and is being reported honestly. Intellectual progress in all the disciplines demands the truthfulness of all participants. Plagiarism and cheating are attacks on the very foundation of academic life, and cannot be tolerated within universities.”

If you cheat, you will receive a zero on the assignment.

**Extra Help and Office Hours:**

Please feel free to come by my office hours if you need help understanding assignments or readings. It is best to come see me as soon as possible if you need any additional help.

**Attendance Policy:**

Students are expected to attend class. Attendance is a vital component to learning. Significant studies have shown that students learn better and retain more by attending and participating. However, unforeseen issues do arise. Therefore, students are given three free absences. However, after these three absences, a third of a letter grade is assessed to your attendance grade for each additional absence that is not excused.

**Important Dates:**

- Test I .....9 October 2018
- Test II .....13 November 2018
- Test III .....11 December 2018, 14:45 - 16:45

**Course Schedule:**

*Readings are either on Blackboard or hyper-linked. Do not print out syllabus.*

**28 August:** Introduction to the syllabus and expectations

**30 August** No Class - Dr. Voss is at a conference.

**4 September:** Theoretical approaches 1

1. Development Theory, Encyclopedia Britannica
2. Globalization: A Secret Weapon for Feminists
3. Maysam Behraves, Constructivism: An Introduction, E-IR
4. Saul McLeod, Social Identity Theory, Simply Psychology

**6 September:** Theoretical approaches II: Rational Choice

1. Marc Cartan Humphreys, Political Games, pp. 1-16 (Blackboard)
2. Jo Jakobsen, Neorealism In International Relations, Popular Science

**11 September:** What is Globalization?

1. Simon Jeffrey, What is Globalisation? The Guardian
2. Globalization: A Brief Overview, International Monetary Fund
3. Globalization, National Geographic

**13 September:** Globalization, Culture, and violence.

1. Joshua Rothman, The Meaning of 'Culture,' The New Yorker
2. Samuel P Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations, Foreign Affairs

**18 September:** Interstate Conflicts

1. Jeffrey Frieden, David Lake, and Kenneth Schultz, Why War, pp. 84-92 (Blackboard)
2. Bruno Tertrais, The Demise of Ares: The End of War as We Know it? (Blackboard)
3. Joshua Goldstein and Steven Pinker, War is Really Going out of Style, The New York Times

**20 September:** Intra-state Conflicts

1. Al McKay, The Study of Modern Intra-state War, E-IR
2. Syria: The Story of the Conflict, BBC News
3. Philip Gourevitch, Remembering in Rwanda, The New Yorker
4. Robin Wright, Is America Headed for a New Kind of Civil War? The New Yorker

**25 September:** Democracy and its discontents

1. Diamond, "It Could Happen Here," The Atlantic
2. "Democracy in Decline," Foreign Affairs
3. "Undermining Democracy," Freedom House
4. "Duterte, Democracy, and Defense," Brookings
5. "Erdogan Hasn't Killed Turkey's Democracy Yet," NY Times

**27 September:** Globalization and Economic Policy

1. Andrew Walker, Is Free Trade Good or Bad? BBC News

2. Liz Schroyer, The Politics of Foreign Aid, Brookings
3. Emma Sarraan Webster, The Trans-Pacific Partnership, Explained, Teen Vogue

**2 October:** Global Governance

1. James O'Hare, As the US Threatens to Cut UN Funding, Here's What the UN Actually Does, Global Citizen
2. Kemal Dervis, What Role for Global Governance? Brookings
3. The UN Security Council, Council on Foreign Relations

**4 October:** Debate I

1. Groups 1 and 12
2. Groups 2 and 11

**9 October:** [Test I](#)

**11 October:** No Class - Fall Break

**16 October:** Human Rights I: Concepts and Arguments

1. Michelle Xu with John Gershman, Human Rights and Duterte's War on Drugs, Council on Foreign Relations
2. Marc Limon, The World is Marching Towards - Not Away From - Universal Human Rights, OpenGlobalRights
3. Joe Braun, Tailoring the Message: How the Political Left and Right Think Differently About Human Rights, OpenGlobalRights
4. Sarah Synder, Is the Trump Administration Abandoning Human Rights? The Washington Post

**18 October:** Human Rights II: Minority Rights

1. Darla Cameron and Bonnie Berkowitz, The State of Gay Rights Around the World, The Washington Post
2. Graeme Reid, Equality to Brutality: Global Trends in LGBT Rights, Human Rights Watch
3. Jessica Ravitz, Women in the World: Where the U.S. Falts in the Quest for Equality, CNN
4. Abigail Jones, The Fight to End Period Shaming is Going Mainstream, Newsweek

**23 October:** Social Movements

1. Emily Kalah Gade, Why the Women's March May be the Start of a Serious Social Movement, The Washington Post
2. Brian Resnick, Psychologists Surveyed Hundreds of Alt-Right Supporters. The Results are Unsettling

3. Erica Chenoweth, How Can We Know When Popular Movements Are Winning? Look to These Four Trends, Political Violence at a Glance
4. Paul Mason, From Arab Spring to Global Revolution, The Guardian

### **25 October:** Inequality

1. For Richer, For Poorer, The Economist
2. Thomas Pogge, Are We Violating the Rights of the World's Poor? (Blackboard)
3. Walter Scheidel, The Only Thing, Historically, That's Curbed Inequality: Catastrophe, The Atlantic
4. Nicholas Fitz, Economic Inequality: It's Far Worse Than You Think, Scientific American

### **30 October:** Populism

1. Adrian Chen, When a Populist Demagogue Takes Power, The New Yorker
2. Uri Friedman, How Populism Helped Wreck Venezuela, The Atlantic
3. Pippa Norris, It's Not Just Trump. Authoritarian Populism is Rising Across the West. Here's Why. The Washington Post

### **1 November:** Terrorism

1. Colbert King, The U.S. Has a Homegrown Terrorist Problem - And It's Coming from the Right, The Washington Post
2. Zachary Laub, The Islamic State, Council on Foreign Relations
3. Alice Foster, Terror Attacks Timeline: From Paris and Brussels to Most Recent Terror Attacks in Europe, Express

### **6 November:** Refugees and Migration

1. Brian Stauffer, Yes, Immigration Hurts American Workers, Politico
2. Migrant Crisis: Migration to Europe Explained in Seven Charts, BBC News
3. Pedro da Costa, Trump's Immigration Plans Could Cripple the US Economy and Hurt the Workers He's Pledging to Protect, Business Insider
4. Jesse Marks and Alexander Decina, Making Syria Safe for Refugees, Foreign Affairs
5. Eliza Mackintosh, Europe's Migrant Crisis Isn't Going Away, But It Is Changing, CNN

### **8 November:** Debate II

1. Groups 3 and 10
2. Groups 4 and 9

**13 November:** [Test II](#)

**15 November:** Global Health

1. Jon Cohen, Zika Has All But Disappeared in the Americas. Why? Science
2. Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Global Health Gets a Checkup, Foreign Affairs
3. Catherine Cheney, What Lessons Does Polio Eradication Offer for Global Health? Devex
4. Peter Hotez, Will an American-Led Anti-Vaccine Movement Subvert Global Health? Scientific American

**20 November:** Global Environment

1. Garrett Hardin, The Tragedy of the Commons, Science
2. Five of the World's Biggest Environmental Problems, Deutsche Welle
3. Eleanor Albert and Beina Xu, China's Environmental Crisis, Council on Foreign Relations
4. A Running List of How Trump is Changing the Environment, National Geographic

**22 November:** No Class - Thanksgiving

**27 November:** Europe

1. Michael Broning, The Rise of Populism in Europe: Can the Center Hold? Foreign Affairs
2. Martin Rhodes, Brexit, The Rise of Populist Nationalism, and the Future of Europe, Political Violence at a Glance
3. Poland: Draft Law Threatens Supreme Court, Human Rights Watch
4. What is the EU and How Does it Work? BBC News

**29 November:** Rival Powers

1. Eric Lipton, David Sanger, and Scott Shane, The Perfect Weapon: How Russian Cyberpower Invaded the US
2. Fiona Hill, Understanding and Deterring Russia: US Policies and Strategies, Brookings
3. Jeffrey Bader, David Dollar, and Ryan Hass, US-China Relations, 6 Months Into the Trump Presidency, Brookings
4. US Relations with China, 1945-2017, Council on Foreign Relations
5. US-Iran Relations: A Brief Guide, BBC News
6. Alexander Smith, US-North Korea Standoff: Miscommunication is Biggest Threat, NBC News

**4 December:** The Global South

1. J Weston Phippen, What to do with Venezuela, The Atlantic
2. Rachele Krygier and Anthony Faiola, Venezuela Intensifies Crackdown on Government Critics, The Washington Post
3. Nick Cumming-Bruce, Over One Million South Sudanese Flee From Violence to Uganda, The New York Times
4. South Sudan, Human Rights Watch
5. India: Don't Forcibly Return Rohingya Refugees, Human Rights Watch

**6 December:** Debate III and conclusions

1. Groups 5 and 8
2. Groups 6 and 7
1. Laurence Chandy and Brina Seidel, Donald Trump and the Future of Globalization, Brookings
2. An Economist's Bleak View of the Future of Globalisation, The Economist
3. China Has Gained Hugely From Globalisation: So Why Are Its Workers Unhappy? The Economist
4. The Globalisation Counter-Reaction, The Economist
5. Fred Hu and Michael Spence, Why Globalization Stalled: And How to Restart It, Foreign Affairs