POL 220, International Relations
Section 001; 03 credit hours
Fall 2010, Building LLC, Room 230
M&W, 9:30-10:50

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Office Phone #: (828) 286-3636 x. 350

Office Hours: M&W, 12:15-1:15
T&TH, 12:15-1:15
Email: Bparker@isothermal.edu

Prerequisites: None
Co-requisites: None

Course Description: This course provides a study of the effects of ideologies, trade, armaments, and alliances on relations among nation-states. Emphasis is placed on regional and global cooperation and conflict, economic development, trade, non-governmental organizations, and international institutions such as the World Court and UN. Upon completion, students should be able to identify and discuss major international relationships, institutions, and problems. This course has been approved to satisfy the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement general education core requirement in social/behavioral sciences.

More specifically, this course concerns the relations and interactions between the major actors in the world today. It addresses such questions as:
1. Who are the major players in international politics?
2. What do these players seek from international politics?
3. What is the structure of today’s global political system?
4. What are the major factors that govern relationships in international politics?
5. What is ethnicity and what are the causes of ethnic conflict?
6. How has international politics changed over time?
7. What causes conflict and cooperation among nations and international players?
8. How is wealth distributed in the world?
9. What are the problems and challenges facing the world concerning the global environment?
10. How is globalization changing international relations?
11. What is the future of international relations?

Learning Objectives: By the end of the course, students are expected to understand the structure, principles, and changing nature of international relations. Students will be able to explain the main characteristics of global politics, define crucial political ideas, and detail the aim and purpose of the main players in international relations. Students will also be able to offer meaningful evaluation of particular ideas, events, or institutions.
**General Education Competencies:** Your achievement of competency in general education skills is incorporated into all the courses you take at Isothermal. This course will focus on the skills listed below each of the following assignment headings. For information on how they will be evaluated, review the criteria that have been established by the college. These are available on the college website and in the student handbook under Academic Information.

Students are expected to achieve the following **general competencies:**
1. communicate effectively through writing, reading, speaking, listening, and through demonstration of information literacy.
2. retrieve and use information to analyze problems and make logical conclusions
3. demonstrate positive interpersonal skills through cooperative learning and group interaction
4. demonstrate an understanding historical and diverse cultural perspectives
5. demonstrate quantitative competencies
6. demonstrate basic computer skills
7. perform technical skills in their chosen occupations.


**Supplemental Texts (to be provided):**
2. Neal G. Jesse & Kristen P. Williams, “Theories of Ethnicity/Nationalism.”

**Exams:** There are two exams this semester, a midterm and a final. Each exam counts 20% of your final grade and both exams are similar in format; there will be 30 multiple choice questions and one essay. Tentative dates of the exams are listed in the class schedule on the syllabus. An exam review sheet will be given at least 1 week before the exam.

(Competencies addressed: Reading, writing, critical thinking, & diverse historical & cultural understandings)

**Book Review:** In addition to the exams, you will write a critical book review of Niall Ferguson’s *Colossus: The Rise & Fall of the American Empire*. The book addresses the role of America in world affairs, especially its hegemony in economic and military power,
and argues that Americans have struggled to come to terms with America’s status as an “empire.” The goal of your review is twofold. First, you must summarize the chapters as succinctly as possible and second, your review must critically analyze the author’s argument and point. In this second task, ask yourself what is the author saying about American imperialism; what biases does the author have; and what is the larger point he is trying to make about American’s role in the world. The review is to be typed, double spaced, 3-4 pages with 12 point font. The review is due November 1. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED! The review counts 20% of your final grade.

(Competency addressed: reading, writing, critical thinking, & computer skills)

Research Paper: One of the key components of this course and any social science course is the research paper. Such papers allow the student to develop a particular topic in depth by culling sources (primary and secondary), processing the findings, and writing something meaningful about the subject. For this class, you are to choose a current or historical ethnic conflict and discuss the groups involved, the various causes of the conflict, and the effect it has had on international relations. To encourage early development of the paper, a one page prospectus is due September 8. Papers should be 10-12 pages, double spaced, with 12 point font. The paper is due December 6 and counts 20%. NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED! It should include footnotes and bibliography according to the Chicago Manual Style, 15th edition. Examples are as follows (see also ICC Library homepage).


Reading Discussions: Because this course has an emphasis on ethnic conflict and modernization, we will discuss the five readings listed above. This will give us a deeper understanding of the issues and causes of ethnic conflict in the world and certainly aid in the development of your research paper. I will provide you with a short reading at least a week before we discuss it in class. Each student should be prepared to contribute to the analysis. The discussions count 15% of your final grade.

Portfolio: Many of the requirements for this course lend themselves to inclusion in student portfolios. In particular, your book reviews and exams should be saved as artifacts in a separate notebook. The crucial component of the portfolio is a reflection analysis of each of these works in which you describe strengths and weaknesses of your writing and suggest areas in which you might improve. Portfolio reflections must be typed. The project counts 05% of your final grade and is due at the end of the semester.

(Competencies addressed: Reading, writing, critical thinking, & computer skills)
Grading Summary: 2 Exams 20% each
      Book Review  20%
      Research Paper  20%
      Reading Discussions  15%
      Portfolio  05%

Grading Scale:   A=90-100  W=withdraw
                B=80-89   I=incomplete
                C=70-79
                D=60-69
                F=59 and below

Make-Up Exams: Make-up exams will be given at the discretion and convenience of the instructor. Students should be ready to take the exam immediately upon their return to class.

Academic Integrity Statement: You are expected to rely only on your own knowledge when taking tests and completing independent assignments. Cheating in any form, including plagiarism (the use of an author’s words or ideas without providing proper documentation), will not be tolerated and may result in loss of academic credit for the course and/or a failing grade on the assignment. See the Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Judicial Procedures Manual, Section IX.

Attendance Policy: Since there is a direct correlation between attending class and doing well every student is expected to attend every class. It is also presumed that everyone is an adult and knows it is their responsibility to attend class. Therefore, attendance does not factor into your grade. I will take attendance, however, to keep track of who is still in the class.

Code of Conduct & Class Rules: So as to provide a proper learning environment, there will be no disruptive talking during class. Students are also to turn off cell phones before class begins. Both of these provide a distraction to both students and the instructor. The instructor has the right to ask a student to leave class if he or she is being disruptive, and if the problem persists the matter will be reported to the Dean of Students. It is also expected that every student will be on time to class. Obviously, there will be occasions where you will be a few minutes late. But incessant tardiness will not be tolerated and appropriate action will be taken to address the problem.
## Institutional expectations and policies

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Students Can Expect of Isothermal</th>
<th>What Isothermal Expects of Students</th>
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<tr>
<td>In their commitment to learning and to the achievement of a true learning-centered community, Isothermal personnel will:</td>
<td>In their commitment to learning, students will:</td>
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<td>Meet student needs by demonstrating professional, friendly, and courteous service in all aspects of student life</td>
<td>Accept responsibility for learning</td>
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<td>Maintain high professional and academic standards</td>
<td>Attend and participate in all classes</td>
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<td>Serve as role models in the development of leadership skills</td>
<td>Complete required exercises and assignments as directed</td>
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<td>Respect diversity and treat all students fairly</td>
<td>Develop a time management plan that includes adequate time for study</td>
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<td>Be available to students and helpful with student problems</td>
<td>Maintain an open-minded attitude toward learning</td>
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<td>Communicate clear learning objectives and expected outcomes</td>
<td>Strive to become independent critical thinkers</td>
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<td>Provide timely feedback in the assessment of learning outcomes</td>
<td>Seek help as needed from appropriate sources</td>
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<td>Stay current in subject matter</td>
<td>Be respectful and considerate of others</td>
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<td>Practice effective teaching/learning strategies that promote critical thinking</td>
<td>Assume responsibility for knowing and adhering to all college policies</td>
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<td>Note: From Isothermal Distinction – Community of Learners; Statement of Expectations. Isothermal Community College, (Revised 2004).</td>
<td>Acknowledge that learning how to learn is the ultimate objective of education</td>
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<td>Recognize that struggle and discomfort often precede the rewards that accompany goal completion and success</td>
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Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1  Introduction
Week 2  Theories of International Politics
Week 3  History of International Relations (Reading #1)
Week 4  The Modern World
Week 5  Modern World Continued (Reading #2)
Week 6  The Power of Nation States & Transnational Actors
Week 7  Foreign Policy
Week 8  International Conflict (Midterm Exam)
Week 9  Ethnic Conflict (Reading #3)
Week 10 Global Terrorism (Colossus Paper Due)
Week 11 Efforts to Avoid Conflict
Week 12 Global Security (Reading #4)
Week 13 Global Political Economy
Week 14 The Global Environment (Research Paper Due)
Week 15 Future of IR (Reading #5 & Portfolio Due)
Week 16 Final Exam

POL 220 – International Relations
Ethnic Conflict: “For What Do They Contend?” Discussion Questions

1. What are the types of ethnic conflict? Who are the targets? What are the purposes?

2. What are the three causes of ethnic conflict?

3. What are the key political issues for which ethnic groups fight? Give one example.

4. What are the key economic issues for which ethnic groups fight? Give one example.

5. What are the key cultural issues for which ethnic groups fight? Give one example.
POL 220 Outline & Resources
Ethnic Conflict
1. What is Ethnicity?
2. Explaining Ethnic Conflict: Modernization Theory & Social Identity Theory
3. Examples: Rwanda, Yugoslavia, Darfur
For more information, visit:

SOC 210 Outline & Resources
Chapter Nine – Race & Ethnicity
● Defining minority groups
● Discrimination versus prejudice
  ○ Discrimination: Individual versus institutional
● Origins of race & ethnic conflict
  ○ Modernity & the rise of conflict
  ○ What global patterns can we see in intergroup relations?
  ○ Examples?
● Who struggles?

Look through Table of Contents for a list of ethnic conflicts
http://www.greenwood.com/catalog/GR1381.aspx

Google News “Ethnic conflict”
http://news.google.com/news/search?aq=f&pz=1&cf=all&ned=us&hl=en&q=%22ethnic+conflict%22

SOC 220 Outline & Resources
Chapter Eight – Race & Ethnic Relations
● Prejudice v. discrimination: attitude v. action
● Minorities: group of people singled out for unequal treatment, not always based on numbers
● The trouble with prejudice & discrimination: inequality = uneven opportunities, unfair standards
● Symbolic Interactionism, Functionalism & Conflict Theory as perspective
● Race v. ethnicity
  ▪ Do stereotypes work? Beneficial or detrimental?
  ▪ Individual versus institutional discrimination: which is worse?
● Ethnic conflict around the world
  ▪ Historic examples of dominant and minority groups
  ▪ Causes? Policies? Possible solutions?

Look through Table of Contents for a list of ethnic conflicts
http://www.greenwood.com/catalog/GR1381.aspx
Google News “Ethnic conflict”

http://news.google.com/news/search?q=%22ethnic+conflict%22

**Book Information for building the classes**

- Esman, M.J. *An Introduction to Ethnic Conflict*
- Wolff, S. *Ethnic Conflict: A Global Perspective*
- Jesse, N.G. & Williams, K.P. *Ethnic Conflict: A Systematic Approach to Cases of Conflict*
- Cordell, K. & Wolff, S. *Ethnic Conflict: Causes, Consequences, and Responses*
- Horowitz, D.L. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*
- Judah, T. *Kosovo: What Everyone Needs to Know*
- Judah, T. *Kosovo: War & Revenge*
- Baert, P. & da Silva, F.C. *Social Theory in the Twentieth Century & Beyond, 2nd Ed.*
- Wood, T. *Chechnya: Case for Independence*
- Giddens, A. *Consequences of Modernity*