

Lakehead University
Department of Political Science

Political Science 2611 FA:
World Politics
Fall 2010

Time: Tues & Thurs: 10 – 11:30am
Place: UC 0050

Instructor: Zubairu Wai
Office: RB 2041
Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 12:00 – 1:00pm
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Course Description:

The aim of this course is to provide students with a broad and critical introduction to World/global politics by providing them with a historical and theoretical overview of the field in the era of globalisation. It approaches world/global politics from a broader socio-historical perspective focusing on five important questions: (a) what is the contemporary global system and how did it come into being? (b) How do we think about or understand this system and what are the major theoretical approaches available for understanding, interpreting or explaining the politics surrounding it? (c) Who are the main actors in world politics and what interests and ideas drive their actions and the political choices they make? (d) What is at stake in these actions and choices and what are their implications in the short, medium and long term? (e) What are some of the major issues and processes in global politics and how do the theoretical approaches help us in understanding them?

What these questions point to is the need to think about not only what goes on around the world today, but also how we got to this point, and where we are likely to go next. It also means thinking in terms of politics both *within* countries as well as *between* countries: at both the communal, regional, national and global levels, while at the same time considering the significant role that non-state (transnational) actors play in the politics of the world today. This course is thus intended to help students develop critical skills that enable them to understand the world in which we live, place both local and global events and processes in larger historical, analytical and conceptual frameworks and determine whether contemporary globalisation marks a fundamental transformation in the way our world is organised and operates. Finally, it seeks to open up spaces for asking questions about global processes that demand more integrative approaches to thinking as well as practices.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Students are required to regularly attend classes, do the assigned readings before coming to class, take part in class discussions, complete a five-page (double-spaced) critical reflection paper on a theoretical approach of their choosing, submit a final essay on an

issue of world politics of their choosing, and sit to a final examination. All written work must be submitted on time.

The final grade will be weighted in the following manner:

Attendance & Participation: 10%
Critical Reflection paper: 20%
Essay: 30%
Final Exam: 40%

Note: The final essay will be due in class on Thursday, December 2. It should be 8 – 10 double-spaced typewritten pages (not including the title page or bibliography of works cited) in length. The format should be Times New Roman; 12 points fonts, 1 inch margin.

Required texts:

John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens (eds.) *The Globalisation of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations* [Fourth Edition] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)

Jenny Edkins and Maja Zehfuss (eds.) *Global Politics: A New Introduction* (London & New York: Routledge, 2008)

[The required books are available in the bookstore or online at Amazon.com. I have also placed copies on reserve in the library. You can also find journal articles both in the library and online through the library system]

Lakehead Policy on Academic Dishonesty

Students are expected to uphold the academic honour code at all times and are advised to familiarise themselves with the university policy on Academic dishonesty, especially in relationship, but not limited to plagiarism, cheating, impersonation etc. Violation of this policy can lead to serious consequences.

Course Schedule and Required Readings

Section I: The Global System and World Politics

Week 1 (Sept. 14 & 16): Introduction to the course: How do we begin to think and about the world and World Politics?

Readings:

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Introduction & Chapter 1
Edkins and Zehfuss, Chapters 1 & 2

Week 2 (Sept. 21 & 23): The Evolution of the Global System I: From the expansion of Europe to the Cold War

Readings:

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Chapters 2 & 3

[Note: September 24 is the Final Date of Registration]

Weeks 3 (Sept. 28 & 30): The Evolution of the Global System II: From the Cold War to the War on Terror

Readings:

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Chapters 4, 31 & 32

Section II: Understanding World Politics

Week 4 (Oct. 5 & 7): Realism and Neorealism; Liberalism and Neoliberalism

Required Readings:

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Chapters 5, 6 & 7

Week 5 (Oct. 12 & 14): Marxist Approaches, Critical Theory and Constructivism

Required Readings:

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Chapters 8 & 9

Week 6 (Oct. 19 & 21): Post-modernism/ Post-structuralism, Feminism and Post-colonial Approaches

Required Readings:

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Chapters 10 & 15

Edkins and Zehfuss, Chapter 11

Section III: Themes and Issues in World Politics

Week 7 (Oct. 26 & 28): The Nation-State, National Interest and Sovereignty

Reading:

Edkins and Zehfuss, Chapters 6, 9 & 10

[Note: Critical Reflection paper due in class]

Week 8 (Nov. 2 & 4): Thinking Identity – Who do we think we are?: Gender, Race, Class, Religion and the Media in World Politics

Reading:

Edkins and Zehfuss, Chapters 4, 5 & 7

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Chapter 15

[November 5 is the final date for withdrawal (without academic penalty)]

Week 9 (Nov. 9 & 11): Global Political Economy and the Environment

Readings:

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Chapters 14, 20 & 26

Edkins and Zehfuss, Chapters 12 & 3

Week 10 (Nov. 16 & 18): Violence and Militarisation in the Age of Globalisation: War, Security and Terrorism

Readings:

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Chapters 12, 13 & 21

Edkins and Zehfuss, Chapter 16, 17

Week 11 (Nov. 23 & 25): Global Inequality and the Politics of North-South Relations: Poverty, Development and transnational migration

Readings:

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Chapter 27

Edkins and Zehfuss, Chapters 8, 11, 13, 14

Week 12 (Nov. 30; Dec. 2): Liberal Peace and Global Governance: Conflicts and peacebuilding; Human Rights, Human Security and the politics of Humanitarian Intervention

Readings:

Baylis, Smith and Owens: Chapter 28, 29 & 30

Edkins and Zehfuss, Chapter 15, 18, 19

[Note: Final paper due at the end of class]

(December 8 – 18: Examination Period. Check with the Registrar’s office for the exact date for this course)