# POLS 1600 – Introduction to International Politics

Fall 2021
MWF 10:00-10:50 am, Spring Hall 141
Professor Matthew Nanes – matthew.nanes@slu.edu
Office Hours: Mondays 11-12 and by appointment

***Course Description and Goals:***

This class introduces students to the systematic study of international politics. Our overarching question is how actors – countries, NGOs, multi-national corporations, international organizations, etc. – interact with one another in the modern world. We will focus on the way that anarchy in the international system, or the absence of a "world government," shapes these interactions. We will explore the foreign policies of several world powers and apply both classic and innovative theories to contemporary events.

The class is aimed towards students with minimal background in political science coursework but a healthy interest in international politics. There are no prerequisites, and I encourage students of all majors to enroll.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify key actors in the international system
- Differentiate between domestic politics and international politics, and especially the way that anarchy in the international system causes actors to behave differently
- Apply existing theories of politics to contemporary events in order to (a) explain what has already happened, and (b) predict what might happen next
- Effectively communicate complex ideas about politics verbally and in writing

***Attendance Policy:***
Attendance and active participation are expected at every class session. Throughout the semester, you will participate in activities, simulations, discussions, and short written assignments. If you are absent for a reason that is both unforeseeable and unavoidable, you will be allowed to make up the assignment if possible, otherwise you will be exempt from the grade. Missed assignments due to unexcused absences will receive a 0.

If you miss a class, please be in touch as soon as it is feasible so we can make the necessary arrangements. My goal is to be reasonable and accommodating.

***Grading and Assignments:***
The assignments evaluate you based on the course goals listed above, with an emphasis on a) your understanding of concepts related to international politics, b) your ability to explain, analyze, and solve current events in international politics, and c) your communication of these items clearly and effectively.

1. READING QUESTIONS – 15%. These take-home assignments are designed to ensure that you have completed the assigned reading and are prepared for class. They are open-book, but you must work alone. Your responses are due before the start of class in which we discuss the relevant reading, and they cannot be turned in late. If you miss an assignment due to an *excused* absence, you will be exempt from the grade.
2. CLASS PARTICIPATION – 15%. All students are expected to contribute to in-class discussions in a thoughtful manner. Your performance on the two debates as well as all in-class activities is included in this category.

3. HOMEWORK – 20%. Assigned throughout the semester. Some are listed on the syllabus; others will be announced in class. The write-up of your debate argument is included in this category.
4. MIDTERM EXAM – 25%. In class, Monday October 18th.
5. FINAL EXAM – 25%. Date TBA.

I will convert your numeric grades to a letter course grade using this scale:

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | 93-100 | B+ | 87-89 | C+ | 77-79 | D | 60-70 |
| A- | 90-92 | B | 83-86 | C | 73-76 | F | below 60 |
| | | B- | 80-82 | C- | 70-72 | | |

***Readings and Resources:***
Textbook: Frieden, Lake, and Schultz, *World Politics: Interests, Interactions, Institutions.* 4th Edition. W.W. Norton, 2018.

Feel free to purchase a used copy of the book; we will NOT be using the CD or online content which require separate activation. Do not buy an older edition of the book.

Additional readings are either linked directly from this syllabus or will be available on Canvas.

Finally, you should keep up with the news in world politics throughout the semester (and hopefully beyond) by regularly reading one or more of the following newspapers:

- New York Times
- Wall Street Journal
- Washington Post
- The Economist
- Foreign Affairs
- BBC.com

***Academic Integrity:***
I take academic integrity very seriously. I intend to make the guidelines for each assignment clear. If you are not sure what is allowed on an assignment, you should contact me for clarification. Unless I specify otherwise, assignments should be completed on your own with no input from anyone else. Any violation of academic integrity will result in an automatic F in the class.

You should familiarize yourself with the university's general guidelines on academic integrity found here: http://www.slu.edu/arts-and-sciences/student-resources/academic-honesty.php

***Students with Disabilities***
Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Please visit the Office of Disability Services website (http://www.slu.edu/life-at-slu/student-success-center/disability-services) for details. Please also contact me as soon as possible if you wish to discuss any of these options.

***Title IX***
SLU requires me to report certain types of information you discuss with me to the university's Title IX coordinator. You can find details about SLU's policy here: https://www.slu.edu/provost/faculty-affairs/teaching-resources-for-faculty/course-syllabus-information/syllabus-statements/syllabus-stmt_title-ix.docx

***Student Success Center***
"In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. The Student Success Center assists students with academic-related services and is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite, 331). Students can visit the Student Success Center to learn more about tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, and academic coaching."

***University Writing Services***
"Students are encouraged to take advantage of University Writing Services in the Student Success Center; getting feedback benefits writers at all skill levels. Trained writing consultants can help with writing projects, multimedia projects, and oral presentations. University Writing Services offers one-on-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, visit the Student Success Center or call the Student Success Center at 314-977-3484."

***Basic Needs Security***
"Students in personal or academic distress and/or who may be specifically experiencing challenges such as securing food or difficulty navigating campus resources, and who believe this may affect their performance in the course, are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office (deanofstudents@slu.edu or 314-977-9378) for support. Furthermore, please notify the instructor if you are comfortable in doing so, as this will enable them to assist you with finding the resources you may need."

## Module 1: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions (and Introduction)

By the end of this unit, students will:

- Identify whether any phenomenon in international relations is an interest, interaction, or institution.
- Explain the significance of major turning points in the history of international politics since 1500.
- Accurately describe anarchy as the central defining feature of international politics.

Wednesday 8/25: Course Intro

Friday 8/27: World History, 1500-1948

- Reading: FLS Introduction and Chapter 1: What Shaped Our World? *p. 2-23*

Monday 8/30: World History, 1948-2019ish

- Reading: FLS Introduction and Chapter 1: What Shaped Our World? *p. 23-39*

Wednesday 9/1: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions

- Reading: FLS Chapter 2 *p. 42-67*

Friday 9/3: Cooperation and Coordination Games

- Reading: FLS Chapter 2 *p. 82-87*
- Watch "The Prisoner's Dilemma"
- Watch "Collective Action Problems"

Monday 9/6 – NO CLASS (Labor Day)

Wednesday 9/8: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions

- Reading: FLS Chapter 2 *p. 68-79*

- Reading Qs for Chapter 2 due before class

Friday 9/10: Current Events
- Homework: The Three I's in Your Life (due via Canvas before the start of class)

## Module 2: Causes of War

By the end of this unit, students will:
- Describe war as a bargaining failure, and why the occurrence of war is somewhat surprising.
- Identify and explain the possible reasons why "rational" states go to war.
- Explain the role of anarchy in war
- Apply rationalist theories of war to the Iraq Wars, Falklands War, and Six Day War

Monday 9/13: The Bargaining Model of War
- FLS Chapter 3: Why are there Wars? *p. 88-103*

Wednesday 9/15: Credibility and Communication
- FLS Chapter 3: Why are there Wars? *p. 103-117*

Friday 9/17: Commitment Problems
- FLS Chapter 3: Why are there Wars? *p. 118-135*
- Reading Qs for Chapter 3 due before class

Monday 9/20: Case Studies on the Causes of War

Wednesday 9/22: Domestic Interests and International War
- FLS Chapter 4: Domestic Politics and War *pages 138-168*
- Reading Qs for Chapter 4 due before the start of class

Friday 9/24: Civil War
- FLS Chapter 6: Violence by Non-State Actors: Civil War and Terrorism *p. 236-268*
- Homework: War as a Prisoner's Dilemma

Monday 9/27: Terrorism
- FLS Chapter 6: Violence by Non-State Actors: Civil War and Terrorism *p. 268-291*
- Reading Qs for Chapter 6 due before the start of class

## Module 3: Preventing War

By the end of this unit, students will:
- Provide possible solutions to prevent both interstate and civil war
- Analyze the role of international institutions in preventing war
- Explain the relationship between democracy and interstate war

Wednesday 9/29: The Democratic Peace
- FLS Chapter 4: Domestic Politics and War *p. 168-183*

Friday 10/1: NO CLASS (APSA)

Monday 10/4: The Great Donut War

Wednesday 10/6: Alliances

- FLS Chapter 5: International Institutions and War *p. 186-204*
- Homework: The Great Donut War debrief (via Canvas)

Friday 10/8: Current Events

Monday 10/11: Russian invasion of Crimea; NATO in the World in 2019

Wednesday 10/13: Collective Security

- FLS Chapter 5: International Institutions and War *p. 205-233*
- Reading Qs for Chapter 5 due before the start of class

Friday 10/15: Midterm review (in class)

Monday 10/18 Midterm Exam (in class)

## Module 4: Money, Trade, and the Global Economy

By the end of this unit, students will:

- Identify and explain conditions and policies which lead some countries to be rich and others to be poor.
- Evaluate the role of specialization in international trade.
- Predict the likely impacts of a US-China trade war.
- Analyze the role of domestic interests in international trade and finance policies.
- Explain where currency values come from, and how changing exchange rates impact international politics.

Wednesday 10/20: The ups and downs of free trade

- FLS Chapter 7: International Trade *p. 294-317*

Friday 10/22: Strategic manipulation of trade policy

- FLS Chapter 7: International Trade *p. 318-337*
- Homework: Trade War Assignment (via Canvas)
- Reading Qs for Chapter 7 due before class

Monday 10/25: International Finance I

- FLS 8: International Financial Relations *p. 346-349, 358-371, 377-383*

Wednesday 10/27: International Finance II

- Watch "Loans and FDI"
- Watch "IOs and MNCs"
- Watch "Economic Migration"
- HW: Trade war game

Friday 10/29: NO CLASS (Fall Break)

Monday 11/1: Exchange Rates

- FLS 9: International Monetary Relations *p. 386-402*
- Currency exchange activity (in class)

Wednesday 11/3: The Politics of Money

- FLS 9: International Monetary Relations *p. 410-412, 415*
- Reading Qs for Chapter 9 due before class
- Watch "CNBC: Currency Manipulation"
- Eurozone case study (in class)

Friday 11/5: US-China Trade War Debate (in class)

- HW: Turn in writeup of debate prep

## Module 5: Laws, Norms, and Development

By the end of this unit, students will:

- Distinguish between laws, treaties, and norms.
- Explain why some minimal level of international law is necessary in a globalized world.
- Evaluate the argument that "global human rights" are little more than "Western values."
- Propose how human rights may be protected in the absence of international enforcement.

Monday 11/8: Development

- FLS 10: Development: Causes of the Wealth and Poverty of Nations *(skim)*

Wednesday 11/10: International Law

- FLS 11: International Law and Norms *p. 462-474*

Friday 11/12: Norms

- FLS 11: International Law and Norms *p. 475-495*

Monday 11/15: Human Rights I

- FLS 12: Human Rights *p. 498-519*

Wednesday 11/17: Human Rights II

- FLS 12: Human Rights *p. 520-538*
- Reading Qs for Chapter 12 due before class

Friday 11/19: Human Rights Debate (in class)

- HW: Turn in writeup of debate prep

## Module 6: The Environment and Beyond

By the end of this unit, students will:

- Analyze political opposition to environmental protection laws. What are the interests of those who seek to prevent environmental protection?
- Explain the concept of "externalities" and apply it to the problem of environmental pollution.
- Engage with both sides of the argument that environmental protection places a disproportionate burden on developing countries.
- Apply the concept of collective action problems to a variety of political challenges, including protecting the environment.

Monday 11/22: The Politics of Climate Change

- FLS 13: The Environment *p.* 540-570

Wednesday 11/24 –NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

Friday 11/26 – NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

Monday 11/29: Solutions to Climate Change

- FLS 13: The Environment *p.* 570-581
- Reading Qs for Chapter 13 due before class

Wednesday 12/1: Save the planet (group activity in class)

Friday 12/3: Nuclear Proliferation

- FLS 14: Challenges to the Global Order *p. 584-605*

Monday 12/6: Group presentations

- Turn in writeup of group project

Wednesday 12/8

- FLS 14: Challenges to the Global Order *p. 606-635 (skim)*
- Reading Qs for Chapter 14 due before class

Friday 12/10: Exam review and wrap-up