

Raritan Valley Community College Course Outline

POLI 231: International Relations

I. Basic Course Information

A. Course number and Title: POLI -231 – International Relations

B. New or Modified Course: Modified

C. Date of Proposal: Semester: Spring Year: 2015

D. Effective Term: Spring 2016

E. Sponsoring Department: Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

F. Semester Credit Hours: 3

G. Weekly Contact Hours: 3 Lecuture: 3
 Laboratory: 0

H. Prerequisites: Placement into ENGL 111 English Composition I with ENGL 070 English Composition I Workshop, or higher

I. Laboratory Fees: None

J. Name and telephone number or email address of department chair at time of approval: Stephen Kaufman; steve.kaufman@raritanval.edu

II. Catalog Description

Placement into ENGL 111 English Composition I with ENGL 070 English Composition I Workshop, or higher

Examines the field of International Relations from both the general and particular levels of analysis. Subject areas to be considered include the historical and philosophical development of international relations, the various methodological and theoretical perspectives most commonly used in the field presently, as well as foreign policy, national interest, causes of conflict, international law, arms control and international organization.

III. Statement of Course Need

- A. This course serves as a basic component in undergraduate liberal arts education and is a key element of the college's offerings in the area of political science.
- B. This course transfers as a General Education course to most four year institutions.

IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum

- A. Free Elective
- B. This course serves as a General Education course in Social Science.
- C. To see course transferability: A) for New Jersey schools, go to the NJ Transfer website, www.njtransfer.org; b) for all other colleges and universities, go to the individual websites.

V. Outline of Course Content

- A. General introduction to study of the International Relations as one of the principal fields in Political Science
- B. Examination of current issues and controversies in comparative and historical perspective.
- C. Consideration of the theories of major thinkers such as Machiavelli, Grotius, Kant, Clausewitz, Marx and various contemporary leaders in the field, including Kaplan, Morgenthau, Walz and others.
- D. Discussion of contemporary issues in light of the course's historical and analytical categories, based on comparative readings drawn from the relevant journals, such as *Foreign Affairs*, *International Security*, *Foreign Policy*, *National Interest* and others.
- E. Major historical developments of the 20th century, especially the First and Second world wars and the Cold War, as background to current issues and events
- F. Examine the concept of "national interest" and its relation to foreign policy among nation-states
- G. Domestic Political Institutions, Political Culture and foreign policy
- H. Conflict and its causes, theories of prevention
- I. Diplomacy, trade, coercion and other instruments of foreign policy
- J. International Law and Organization, including the League of Nations, the United Nations, and other types of international groupings, such as NATO
- K. Arms control and disarmament
- L. The future of the nation-state and international relations, in light of the growth of multi-national corporations, regional entities such as the European Union, the diffusion of nuclear devices after the end of Cold War, and the rise of terrorist organizations

VI. General Education and Course Learning Outcomes

A. General Educational Learning Outcomes:

At the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Employ comparative methods for the introductory study of international relations and politics (G.E. 4)
2. Compare and analyze contrasting or contrasting theories in political philosophy (G. E.1)
3. Write clearly and precisely in assigned essays and research projects during the entire semester (G.E.2)

B. Course Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and evaluate the basic vocabulary, philosophical questions and methods of analysis relevant to the study of International Relations
2. Examine contemporary issues and conflicts in light of larger, long-term historical trends and developments
3. Identify the various schools of thought among contemporary teachers and writers in international relations
4. Apply a general knowledge of the basic components and topical areas of the field, including foreign policy, international law, arms control, war, etc.
5. Analyze principal sources of information about contemporary international events and controversies

C. Assessment Instruments

- A. Lecture/discussion
- B. Supplementary reading and writing assignments, beyond the course textbooks, including regular discussion sessions based on specific current issues analyzed from opposing or contrasting viewpoints
- C. Semester project, subject to the instructor's approval, examining and analyzing in depth some aspect or facet of contemporary international relations

VII. Grade Determinants

- A. Three regular hour exams during the semester
- B. Two-hour final exam
- C. Written project
- D. Performance on supplementary written work
- E. Average of exam grades

- F. Semester project
- G. Consideration of supplementary written work
- H. Attendance and class participation

VIII. Texts and Materials

- A. Textbook – *Global Politics*, 8th ed., by Ray and Kaarbo
- B. *Classic Readings of International Relations*, 3rd ed. by Williams, Goldstein and Shafritz, editors.

(Please Note: The course outline is intended only as a guide to course content and resources. Do not purchase textbooks based on this outline. The RVCC Bookstore is the sole resource for the most up-to-date information about textbooks.)

IX. Resources

- A. Students will need to regularly visit the RVCC library or others nearby in order to complete regular assignments in the foreign policy and opinion journals noted above. In most instances, the instructor will also place relevant periodicals on reserve at the College's library.