

**FEATHER RIVER COLLEGE**  
**POL 130: INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the political science subfield of international relations (IR). Students will examine world politics through international relations theories. These theories are used to understand relations between states (countries) and actors in the global context of politics and economics. In this class, students will look at these interactions historically in order to understand that is going on today. Students will also examine the behavior and roles of non-state actors, transnational institutions, and individuals in international relations. The textbook used in the course will provide a topical framework and present the various theories of international relations: realism, liberalism, radical perspectives and alternative approaches. We will use these to think about contemporary events and issues. In order to do this, students are expected to stay up-to-date on world news and events.

This course:

- ✓ Partially satisfies FRC graduation requirements (Area D)
- ✓ Partially satisfies requirements for Political Science AA-T and AA degrees
- ✓ Transfers - CSU (Area D8)
- ✓ Transfers - UC (IGETC) Area 4G
- ✓ Transfers - most private and out of state colleges (consult transfer college catalog)

**Course Goals and Student Learning Outcomes**

In addition to promoting the mission of [Feather River College](#), the educational goals for this class are for you to build your written communication and critical thinking skills. I hope this class increases your understanding of international relations and interest in global issues.

In order to reach these goals, upon the completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Explain international relations theory.
2. Assess the roles of national and international institutions, transnational, and non-state/sub-national actors.
3. Analyze key topics and events in international relations by applying relevant theoretical lenses and concepts.

**Course Material**

You are required to purchase the textbook for this course available at the FRC bookstore and from online book sellers.

Mingst, Karen and Arreguín-Toft, Ivan. 2017. *Essentials of International Relations*, seventh edition. New York: WW Norton and Company, Inc.

ISBN-13: 978-0393283402

Additional readings appear in the course schedule. **You are required to read real news from a reliable source daily** and come to class prepared to discuss world events.

### **Course Format and Assignments**

There are 1000 points possible in the class.

1. **Book Review (300 points):** Each student in the class will select a contemporary, non-fiction book that covers an issue or actor in global affairs. Once read, the student will summarize the book in class discussion and write a reflection on the book. My hope is that we can talk about what we're reading throughout the weeks, so start on this sooner than later.
2. **Module Quizzes (5 X 100):** These quizzes may consist of concept identification, maps, and/or short essay/reflection questions.
3. **Class Participation (200 points):** This is a small class so assessing your participation will be based on your preparation (obviously having read the assigned chapters), and effective contributions to class discussions.

**POL Writing Criteria: General standards used to assess written work**

	<u>EXCELLENT</u>	<u>GOOD</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>	<u>UNACCEPTABLE</u>
<b>Answers the question(s)</b> ~20% of grade	The answer clearly and thoroughly addresses the question asked and stays on track. It effectively relates to the purpose/topic(s) of the assigned material.	The answer is understandable and adequately addresses the question. It relates to the topic of the assigned material.	The answer is partially evident but not very clear or complete. It doesn't relate adequately to the topic conveyed in the question or simply does not respond to the question asked.	The answer is not apparent or too off-topic.
<b>Shows an understanding of the topic/ issues</b> ~30% of grade	An outstanding grasp of a topic is evident in the work. Specific and relevant examples are used. The main ideas around an issue are clear. The debates are pointed out. Concepts and terms from the readings are used accurately. Relevant current events are referenced.	The work shows a general grasp of a topic. There is some use of examples that convey this understanding but specifics and detail are lacking.	There is vague evidence of the student's understanding of a topic. Important points and examples are missing in the work or are not relevant to the topic.	The work shows little or no grasp of the assigned material.
<b>Analyzes a topic/issue</b> ~30% of grade	The work highlights different perspectives of an issue showing an understanding of its complexity. In other words, the work shows that there are more than one, two or three perspectives on an issue. The work shows a consideration of the different opinions and concludes with an argument or position based on this analysis.	The work addresses different perspectives of an issue and looks at its importance for society. There is some thoughtful consideration of more than one position.	The work only remotely addresses the significance of an issue for society. The discussion of different perspectives is not accurately presented.	The work is descriptive rather than analytical. There is no mention of the issue's significance or debates surrounding the issue.
<b>Organization &amp; Writing</b> ~20% of grade	The writing is well-developed, appropriate in length, and clearly organized. When appropriate, this may include a clear introduction, thesis, answer or argument, supporting examples, and a conclusion. The writing is original with fewer than three significant grammatical or spelling errors. Citations are used when necessary or required and are stylistically accurate.	The writing is organized using an introduction, examples, and conclusion. It is original, and writing errors do not detract significantly from the answer. Citations/references are apparent though not accurately or thoroughly presented when necessary or required.	There are organizational and grammatical problems that detract from the clarity of the writing. When necessary or required, references are missing or incorrect.	The writing has significant grammatical errors making it incomprehensible.