

Bush School of Government and Public Service

Political Science



POLS 231 Syllabus

Section 500 (49462)
Introduction to World Politics
Spring 2026 - College Station

Course Information

Meeting Times: Meeting Type: LEC

Meeting Days: TR

Start Time: 3:55PM

End Time: 5:10PM

Start Date: 01/12/2026

End Date: 05/05/2026

Meeting Location: ILCB 205

Credit Hours: 3

Instructor Details



Rotem Dvir

Email: rdvir@tamu.edu

Office Location: Allen Building 3027

Phone: 979-4588031

Office Hours

Wednesday 2:00pm - 3:30pm, and by appointment

Catalog Description

Introduction to World Politics. (3-0). Credit 3. Analysis of contemporary world from point of view of nation-state; political problems, factors involved in foreign policies and relations of nations; also taught at Galveston campus.

Additional Course Details

This is a course on international politics that will provide you with an overview of the main theories that help explain and predict a wide variety of events on the global stage. We will address a host of interesting questions like "What are the causes of war?" "Why do international organizations fail in promoting peaceful resolutions of conflicts?" "What model offers good predictions of trade volume within a region?" "How come the Soviet Union collapsed?" "What are the implications of the US intervention in Venezuela?" and more.

The course covers the tools to identify patterns, meaning, and even some predictability in past and present global events. The overall goal of the course is to help you build a firm foundation of understanding the who, when, how, and why behind real-world international dramas. You will obtain knowledge in the history of world politics, what are common conceptual frameworks that explain these events and how can we make predictions about the likely outcomes of future events.

In this course, we will also discuss the foundations of conducting research on global politics. A critical aspect is to make you better informed, a better consumer of information and have the capability to apply the knowledge on the foundations of world politics to past, present and future events.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the learner will be able to:

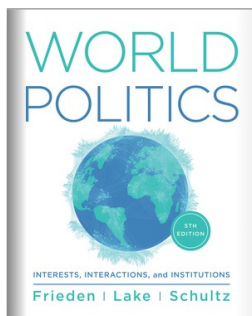
- Identify key actors and institutions in world politics and explain their incentives and roles in shaping outcomes.

- Understand the varying interests of different state, transnational, and non-state actors.
- Discuss the major causes and effects of international conflict and cooperation.
- Think analytically and critically about international interactions with respect to trade, financial and monetary relations, global development, international law and norms, human rights, and the environment.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to current world problems and continue to learn about issues that should matter to individuals in the realm of world politics

Special Course Designation

KICD - University Required International & Cultural Diversity

Textbook and/or Resource Materials



This material is: Required

World Politics (5th edition)

Subtitle: Interests, Interactions, and Institutions

ISBN: 978-0-393-87222-4

Authors: Frieden, Lake and Schultz

Publisher: W.W. Norton and Company

Publication Date: 2022

Edition: 5th

URL for Resource:

<https://wwnorton.com/books/9780393872231>

Notes:

1. You may use an electronic edition. This is probably the lowest cost option available. The publisher has a special

deal that includes the textbook and their online study tool for \$60, see link above.

2. You may rent an electronic edition from the TAMU MSC bookstore for \$69.

3. You may purchase a hardcopy of the book from the TAMU MSC bookstore for \$135.

4. If you elect to use an older edition of the textbook, you will be responsible for differences in content between it and the required edition.

Grading Policy

Your grade for this course consists of the following:

Attendance (10%): as detailed in the "Course Specific Attendance Policy" section below.

Home assignments (30%): These activities will be assigned each week and will consist of two sections: (1) Review of textbook readings and class material; (2) Reading additional web pages, and/or short articles. Then, you will complete an "open-source" quiz. The additional articles are designed to help you establish the connections between the concepts and theories we discuss in the course and real-world events and processes.

- You are to work alone on these assignments as these are graded activities.
- You will have **up to two attempts** on each HW session. **If you use both attempts, your assigned score will be the most recent score of the two attempts.**

Exams (60%): There will be **four (4)** exams during the semester, each covering the material assigned since the previous exam. The fourth exam will occur during the final exam period, but will NOT be comprehensive.

- All exams will be taken online using **Respondus Lockdown Browser**: This is a tool that works with Canvas to prevent access during the exam to any unauthorized applications or information on the desktop/laptop, including other browsers and communications channels.

- Exams will be taken in the classroom. The only exceptions will be students taking a makeup exam or those with an exam-related accommodation from Disability Resources. Students with disability accommodations associated with exams must schedule their exams directly with the Disability Resources Testing Center to occur on the same day the exam is given in the classroom.
- Exams will be available only during a normal class period, with exams usually available up to 5 minutes before the usual lecture start time. Students will be permitted 65 minutes to complete the exam but must submit their exams before the end of the class period even if they have not used all 65 minutes.
- All questions will be multiple-choice or true/false.
- Exams will be taken without using any notes, course material, internet searches, or unauthorized assistance or information of any kind.
- **Signing Out:** Every student testing in the classroom MUST present their picture ID and sign the exam roster after completing the exam but before leaving the classroom (approved IDs include a TAMU ID, Driver's License, Green Card, passport, or other federal or state-issued ID that includes a picture).
- Students without an ID should sign out with me after finishing the exam - they will be unable to receive credit for the exam until I have seen and verified their ID. Students who take the exam but do not sign the roster will NOT receive a score for the exam until they have met with me to help me establish whether this was an oversight or a possible Honor Code violation.

Grading Scale

Letter grades will be assigned as follows: all grades will be final and will not be changed unless the instructor has made a miscalculation.

Course Grades Scale

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numeric Grade</u>
A	≥ 89.5

B	$\geq 79.5 - < 89.5$
C	$\geq 69.5 - < 79.5$
D	$\geq 59.5 - < 69.5$
F	< 59.5

Scores & Grades on Canvas: All activity scores will be posted on Canvas. It is important to recognize that the Total Grade in Canvas is only an approximation and is not your official grade. I will manually calculate your official midterm and final course grades based on the scores posted in Canvas. You must be careful when using the Total Grade in Canvas to judge your situation in this course.

Late Work Policy

Work submitted by a student as makeup work for an excused absence is not considered late work and is exempt from the late work policy ([Student Rule 7](#)).

Course Specific Late Work Policy

All deadlines in this course will be **by 5pm (not midnight!)** on the designated days, unless otherwise announced in class and via Canvas.

- I will consider all assignments submitted after the posted deadlines to be late and they will be assigned a score of zero.
- The only clocks that count for assignment deadlines are the internal clocks within Canvas. Furthermore, "submitted" means that the assignment has been processed and accepted by Canvas. The time shown by the associated platform for the submission will be the official submission time.
- Submissions made on the actual due dates of assignments will be done so at your own risk in the event that technical issues arise.
- This means that any late-breaking technical problems on your end (e.g., computer), the distant end (e.g., Canvas), or in between (e.g., WiFi, internet provider) that occur on the due date and prevent your successful submission of an assignment will NOT

be acceptable reasons for you to request additional attempts or deadline extensions from me.

In order to avoid from any issues, I recommend:

- Submit assignments early whenever possible, do not wait to the last minute!!!
- Build-in time to deal with tech/submission issues.
- Work submitted by a student as makeup work for an excused absence is not considered late work and is exempted from the late work policy.

Course Schedule

Course Schedule

<u>Week</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Submission Deadlines</u>
1	T	01/13	Course Intro & Intro Chapter Part I	
	TR	01/15	Intro Chapter Part II & Ch. 1 (World History) Part I	
2	T	01/20	Ch. 1 (World History) Part II	
	TR	01/22	Ch.2 (Interests, Interactions) Part I	
3	T	01/27	Ch.2 (Interests, Interactions) Part II & Game Theory	
	TR	01/29	EXAM #1: Intro; Chapters 1-2 & Game Theory	HW 1-3: FRI 01/30 5PM
4	T	02/03	Ch.3 (Why Wars?) Part I	
	TR	02/05	Ch.3 (Why Wars?) Part II	
5	T	02/10	Ch.4 (Domestic Politics & War) Part I	
	TR	02/12	Ch.4 Part II & Ch. 5 part I	
6	T	02/17	Ch.5 (International Institutions & War) Part II	
	TR	02/19	Ch.6 (Non-state Actors) Part I	
7	T	02/24	Ch.6 (Non-state Actors) Part II	

	TR	02/26	EXAM #2 (MID-TERM): Chapters 3-6	HW 4-7: FRI 02/27 5PM
8	T	03/03	Ch.7 (Trade) Part I	
	TR	03/05	Ch.7 (Trade) Part II	
9	T	03/17	Ch.8 (Global Finance) Part I	
	TR	03/19	Ch.8 (Global Finance) Part II	
10	T	03/24	Ch.9 (Monetary Relations) Part I	
	TR	03/26	Ch.9 (Monetary Relations) Part II	
11	T	03/31	Ch.10 (Wealth, Poverty) Part I	
	TR	04/02	Ch.10 (Wealth, Poverty) Part II	
12	T	04/07	EXAM #3: Chapters 7-10	
	TR	04/09	Ch.11 (International Laws & Norms) Part I	HW 8-11: FRI 04/10 5PM
13	T	04/14	Ch.11 (International Laws & Norms) Part II	
	TR	04/16	Ch.12 (Human Rights) Part I	
14	T	04/21	Ch.12 (Human Rights) Part II	
	TR	04/23	Ch.13 (Global Environment)	
15	T	04/28	Ch.14 (Global Order Challenges) & Course Wrap	
	F	05/01	HW 12-14 FRI 5PM	
	M	05/04	EXAM #4: Chapters 11-14	1:00 PM

Additional Course Information

Tech required

Important information about technology used in this class.

- **General Computer and Internet Access:** All assignments will only be available through Canvas, the university's digital learning system. You will need regular access to a computer and the internet throughout this course.

- **Portable Computing Device Required for Exams:** You will need to bring a portable computing device with you to take course exams. Exams will be given through Canvas, and will take place in the classroom or in the Disability Resources Testing center.
- **Permitted Device Types:** You may use a Windows or Apple laptop, a Chromebook, or an iPad. These are the only devices that are compatible with the exam security app we will use (see below). You may NOT use a mobile phone (Android or iOS) or an Android tablet to take exams.
- **Borrowing a Device:** If needed, you may borrow a suitable device from a friend or check out a laptop for temporary use (More info [click here](#)).
- **Tech issues:** see Technology Support section below.

Respondus LockDown Browser: To enhance the security of the examination process, your portable computing device must have the **TAMU version** of **Respondus LockDown Browser** installed. This software is free. Instructions on downloading the software, installing, and checking it before exams are available in the Student resource module on Canvas.

AI Statement

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been in use in science, industry, and business for some time. However AI-based large-language models such as ChatGPT or Gemini have recently taken the world by storm because of their capabilities and their accessibility to regular consumers. These models are amazing and useful in many different ways. In some college courses you may be permitted, even required, to use AI in specific ways. Away from school, AI can be a bonus when you are look for cheap accommodations for your trip to Austin or new campaign approaches for the next student body election. You will very likely use multiple forms of AI in your future profession in ways that can't yet even anticipate.

However, AI-generated ideas and text is not work created by you. Using AI generation in your assignments can violate the university and course rules whenever you are required to submit your own work. ***Cheating*** is defined by Student Rule 20 as the use

of any materials or resources on an assignment that have not been specifically authorized in advance by the instructor. Thus, any use of *AI should be considered prohibited* in a course unless the instructor has authorized it, and then only in the ways specified by the instructor. Your work and grade in this course are based on your own knowledge and skill, not those adopted from an AI bot.

AI USE IN THIS COURSE

Below are clear guidelines for how you may and may not use AI in this course.

1. **HW Assignments:** The answers come directly from the assigned readings and/or videos. I expect you to determine the correct answers by carefully reading the text or watching the video. Your answers must be your own work, but I am always willing to help you when you're stuck.
 1. **YOU MAY NOT** use **AI tools** WHILE ACCOMPLISHING any part of these assignments.
 2. YOU MAY use **AI tools** to learn more about a topic AFTER SUBMITTING your assignment but remember that the information provided may be wrong and the sources may not be provided. Extended Google search can be useful to mitigate some of these problems.
2. **Exams:** Use of any type of AI during an exam *is never permitted in this course*.
3. **Self Tutoring:** As long as it is not associated with completing any graded assignment, you may use AI tools to help you learn more about a topic related to the course.

More on Self-tutoring with AI

Google's [NotebookLM](#) is a great AI tool that offers some features that may help you in this class.

1. **IMPORTANT:** You must log in with your TAMU Google account to Notebook LM. This tool works with a some version of a "closed system," meaning it is NOT pulling information from "outside" (i.e. the web) and relies only on the resource you provide it.
2. You are allowed to upload the slides of each class and use the features of Notebook LM as a tutor to help you master the material (you will need to save the

slides as PDFs as Notebook LM does not accept power-point slides as input).

3. **REMEMBER:** Notebook LM is very useful BUT it is still an AI tool, it may generate incorrect answers, so use it carefully. The textbook is your best back-up!

Technology Support

Technology Services (IT) - Main Campus

Hours: 24/7

Phone: (979) 845-8300

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Call/Chat/Email/visit: <https://it.tamu.edu/help>

Canvas LMS Technical Support

Hours: 24/7/365

Phone: (877) 354-4821

Email: support@instructure.com

Support is available by clicking the Help button at the far left in the Canvas global navigation menu.

Canvas Resources are also linked on the home page of every Canvas course.

College and Department Policies

Department Statement on Course Content:

As a department, we are committed to scholarly rigor, open inquiry, and the scientific study of politics. Political science, as an academic discipline, seeks to understand the political world through systematic analysis, empirical evidence, and theoretical frameworks—not through partisan or ideological advocacy.

In our courses, you may encounter readings, data, or arguments that challenge your assumptions or present perspectives from across the political spectrum.

These materials are included not as endorsements of any viewpoint, but because they help illuminate how political questions can be analyzed, debated, and understood through evidence-based inquiry.

Our goal is to help you develop the skills to evaluate claims critically, identify assumptions and limitations, and engage constructively with competing arguments. We value respectful, rigorous discussion and welcome questions about how knowledge in political science is produced, contested, and applied.

If you have concerns about course content or the framing of particular materials, we encourage you to discuss them with your professors in class or during office hours. By fostering a learning environment grounded in intellectual curiosity and academic integrity, we aim to prepare students to think analytically, argue persuasively, and engage in political debate with both openness and rigor.

University Policies

This section outlines the university-level policies that must be included in each course syllabus. The TAMU Faculty Advisory Council established the wording of these policies.

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

"Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case" (Section 20.1.2.3, [Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at aggiehonor.tamu.edu.

University Attendance Policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Course Specific Attendance Policy

Attendance will comprise **10%** of your midterm and final course grades. I strongly urge you to plan to attend as many lectures as possible - it is a critical step toward mastering the material, scoring well on the exams, and passing this course.

- To encourage you to be present for lectures, I will take attendance during every lecture starting on the second week of classes and then assign points accordingly. We will use Canvas to record attendance using a very brief quiz at some point near the middle of each lecture period.
- To earn a **perfect attendance** score for your course grade, you will need to attend and respond correctly to the attendance poll during at **least 75% of the lectures** once I have announced that formal attendance scoring has begun. I will announce this in class and via Canvas.
- I will routinely consider excused absences of any type (illness, athletics, etc) to be part of the remaining 25% of lecture days (aka, allotted "miss days") when calculating your attendance grade.
- I will clearly announce the attendance poll during every class. You may use a mobile phone, tablet, or laptop to respond.
- You should be prepared to answer the attendance poll correctly every day you attend lecture.
- If you have to miss class due to excused absence, you must notify me via email and fill the **Excused absence request form** (link to the form is available on Canvas).

Important: Do not answer an attendance poll if you are not present and seated in the classroom. Do not answer an attendance poll for another student who is not present in the classroom. These are both serious violations of the Aggie Code of Honor and Student Rule 20. I will report and sanction all honor violations.

Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

"The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. ([See Student Rule 24](#).)

Course Specific Makeup Work Policy

- If you know you are about to miss an exam or a task, please **email me in advance**.
- Students are required to submit the **Excused absence request form** (link available on Canvas).
- Students must provide **original evidence of a university-excused absence** or a letter from their dean explaining their absence (for instructions on how to obtain a letter from your dean regarding your excused absence, refer to Student Rule 7.2).

Makeup exams procedures:

- Exams will be provided on **Friday following the missed exam date.**
- Exams will be taken in-person in a class in the Allen Building between 4:00-5:00pm.
- Please arrive early to set up your computer for the exam. Late arrivals will cause interference with your taking the test.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Texas A&M University is committed to providing safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and work environments for all members of the University community. The University provides equal opportunity to all employees, students, applicants for employment or admission, and the public, regardless of race, color, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions), religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status.

Texas A&M University will promptly, thoroughly, and fairly investigate and resolve all complaints of discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), complicity, and related retaliation based on a protected class in accordance with [System Regulation 08.01.01](#), [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#), [Standard Administrative Procedure \(SAP\) 08.01.01.M1.01](#), and applicable federal and state laws. In accordance with Title IX and its implementing regulations, Texas A&M does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity, including admissions and employment.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies: Jennifer M. Smith, TAMU Associate VP & Title IX Coordinator at YMCA Ste 108, College Station, TX 77843, 979-458-8407, or email civilrights@tamu.edu. For other reporting options, visit the [U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Complaint Assessment System](#) to locate the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

Civil Rights, Free Speech, and Title IX Policies

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit discrimination and harassment based on an individual's race, color, sex, (including pregnancy and related conditions), religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic. This includes forms of sex-based violence, such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, dating/domestic violence, and stalking.

Students can report discrimination/harassment, access supportive resources, or learn more about their options for resolving complaints on the [University's Civil Rights & Title IX webpage](#).

Students should be aware that all university employees (except medical or mental health providers) are mandatory reporters, which means that if they observe, experience or become aware of an incident that they reasonably believe to be discrimination/harassment alleged to have been committed by or against a person who was a student or employee at the time of the incident, the employee must report the incident to the university.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Resources office on your campus (resources listed below). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

To request academic accommodations, contact the designated ADA office based on your location:

- Texas A&M University, College of Nursing, College of Dentistry, Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy College Station, College of Medicine, School of

Public Health, Institute of Biosciences and Technology, EnMed Program, Bush School in Washington DC, Mays Business School – CityCentre, TAMU Engineering Academies, Texas A&M University Higher Education Center at McAllen and Texas A&M University at Galveston should contact Disability Resources at (979) 845-1637 or disability@tamu.edu.

- Texas A&M University School of Law should contact the Office of Student Affairs at (817) 212-4111 or law-disability@law.tamu.edu to request accommodations.
- Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy in Kingsville should contact the Disability Resource Center at Texas A&M University-Kingsville at (361) 593-3024 or drc.center@tamuk.edu to request accommodations.
- Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences in Canyon should contact the Office of Student Accessibility at West Texas A&M University – Canyon at (806) 651-2335 or osa@wtamu.edu.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your approved accommodations, contact the office responsible for approving your accommodations or the Texas A&M ADA Coordinator Julie Kuder at ADA.Coordinator@tamu.edu or (979) 458-8407.

Pregnancy Accommodations

Texas A&M provides reasonable accommodations to students due to pregnancy and/or related conditions, such as childbirth, recovery, and lactation. Students should contact the University's [Pregnancy Coordinator](#) as soon as they become aware of the need for accommodation. Depending on the circumstances, accommodations could include extended time to complete assignments or exams, changes in course sequence, or modifications to the physical classroom environment.

Texas A&M will also allow a voluntary leave of absence, ensure the availability of lactation space, and maintain grievance procedures to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of sex discrimination. For information regarding pregnancy accommodations, email TIX.Pregnancy@tamu.edu.

Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors influencing a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy self-care practices by utilizing the resources and services available through [University Health Services](#). The [TELUS Health Student Support app](#) provides access to professional counseling in multiple languages anytime, anywhere by phone or chat, and the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline offers 24-hour emergency support at 988 or 988lifeline.org.

Texas A&M College Station

Students needing a listening ear can contact University Health Services at 979.458.4584. Call 911 or visit your nearest emergency room if you are currently experiencing a life-threatening situation or if your safety is at risk. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988) or at 988lifeline.org.

Statement on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of educational records by limiting access to these records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their educational records, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate and misleading data through informal and formal hearings.

Currently enrolled students wishing to withhold any or all directory information items can do so within howdy.tamu.edu using the Directory Information Withholding Form. The complete [FERPA Notice to Students](#) and the student records policy is available on the Office of the Registrar webpage.

Items that can never be identified as public information are a student's social security number, citizenship, gender, grades, GPR, or class schedule. All efforts will be made in this class to protect your privacy and to ensure confidential treatment of information associated with or generated by your participation in the class.

Directory items include name, UIN, local address, permanent address, email address, local telephone number, permanent telephone number, dates of attendance, program of study (college, major, campus), classification, previous institutions attended, degrees, honors and awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, medical residence location, and medical residence specialization.

Free Speech and Civil Discourse

Texas A&M recognizes that the pursuit of truth through open and robust discourse is critical to academic inquiry. However, as a community of scholars, the university has an aspirational expectation that such discourse will be conducted in accordance with Aggie Core Values. In this “marketplace of ideas,” we encourage civil dialogue creating an environment that allows individuals to express their ideas and to have their ideas challenged in respectful and responsible ways. Students can learn more about Freedom of Expression and Free Speech on the [University's website](#) about the First Amendment.