

Department of Political Science, College of Arts &amp; Sciences

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<b>Course Number:</b>	POLS 250-U820	<b>Office Phone:</b>	(605) 658-6219
<b>Class Meetings:</b>	Online		

## Course Description

Intro to International Relations will focus on the fundamental underpinnings of international relations, including the sources of power and conflict, the methods by which states compete and cooperate with each other, and international relations theory. Additional international actors and contemporary issues will be addressed.

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## Course Summary

Here is a summary of the activities you will need to complete for this course:

- **Two weekly activities:**
  - A short (around ten questions) self-assessment quiz on weeks without exams or papers

- students must get a 70 percent on the quiz to receive credit but will have unlimited attempts to attain a passing score (10 points)
- A discussion posting done in response to either the assigned readings or the United Nations simulation (20 points)
- **Four papers:**
  - Two papers (roughly 3 pages each) relating to the United Nations simulation (20 points)
  - Two papers (roughly 3 pages each) comparing and contrasting two or more scholarly articles assigned by the instructor (20 points)
- **Two exams:**
  - A midterm examination evaluating the materials covered in the first half of the course (15 points)
  - A final examination evaluating the materials covered in the second half of the course (15 points)

See the [Assessments](#) section below for additional details. That said, here is how a typical week works:

DAY	TASK
Monday	Start of the week - new materials and weekly assessments available Open for independent work and discussions
Tuesday	Open for independent work and discussions
Wednesday	Open for independent work and discussions
Thursday	Open for independent work and discussions
Friday	Open for independent work and discussions
Saturday	Open for independent work and discussions
Sunday	<b>All weekly assessments and discussion responses due by 11:59 PM CT</b>

## Textbook Information



**IMPORTANT:** The required text for this course is *Essentials of International Relations (8<sup>th</sup> edition)* by Mingst, McKibben, And Arreguin-Toft (MA) – ISBN: 978-0-393-64327-5. Students can purchase either the hardcopy (new or used) or e-version of this textbook. Additional materials will be provided within the course under **Content**, such as: video links, required and supplemental readings, and all other supplemental materials.

Students are **strongly** encouraged to keep abreast of world news through this course and beyond, with specific attention paid to news of the country assigned to them pursuant to this course's United Nations simulation. I encourage students to access such news sites as <http://www.bbc.com>, <http://www.theguardian.com/world>, <http://www.haaretz.com>, and <http://www.afp.com/en/news/> on a semi-weekly basis.

## Instructional Method

This course will be instructed entirely online via Desire2Learn (<http://d2l.sdbor.edu>), which you will use to:

- Communicate with your classmates and the instructor
- View and complete self-assessment quizzes and discussion postings
- Submit coursework
- Access all required course materials
- Access supplemental materials
- Access your course progress and grade information

## Student Expectations

First and foremost, students are expected to read, understand, and abide by all policies and procedures outlined in this syllabus, as well as those in the **Online Student Handbook**, which can be accessed from the “Getting Started” widget on the course homepage. The latter contains important information about the various support services available to online students.

In terms of activities, each week is detailed in the Class Schedule that can be accessed via the “Getting Started” widget on the course homepage. The instructor will also provide regular updates during the week, so students should log into D2L to check for news and email **at least two times per week**.

In terms of time commitment, the South Dakota Board of Regents (SDBOR) defines a credit hour as constituting one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction, and two hours of out-of-class, student work. As this is a three-credit-hour course, students should expect to dedicate **around nine (9) hours per week** to course activities.

Students are also expected to have and maintain the appropriate technology required to complete the course. For more information about this, please see the [Technology Requirements](#) towards the end of the syllabus.

One important thing to remember: when all is said and done, this is *your* class; it is what you make of it. Your level of participation will be directly proportional to your class experience - you will get out of it what you put into it.

## Instructor Expectations

The instructor will strive to provide every possible opportunity for detailed feedback and, unless otherwise stated, will respond to inquiries within twenty-four hours on weekdays, or within forty-eight hours on the weekends and holidays. The instructor will also endeavor to return feedback and suggestions, using standard rubrics and grading criteria, within a reasonable amount of time—see the [Assessments](#) section below for more detail.

Finally, the instructor will also abide by all policies set forth in this syllabus and those by the **Online Student Handbook**, The University of South Dakota, and the SD Board of Regents.

## Course Objectives

This course is designed to promote an understanding of the field of international relations, including an introduction to notions such as sources of power and conflict, international organizations, and geopolitics.

The overall goals for this course are simple:

- To gain a thorough knowledge of the field of international relations; and
- To understand and articulate key concepts such as IR theory, power, conflict, and state cooperation and competition.

Specific objectives for this course, as well as how they will be assessed, are listed below:

<b>SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>SDBOR GOALS*</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT</b>
<b>Identify and explain basic concepts, terminology, and theories of the selected social science disciplines from different spatial, temporal, cultural and/or institutional contexts.</b>	<b>Goal 1, 3, 7</b>	<b>Assessments, Discussions, Papers, and Exams</b>
<b>Apply selected social sciences concepts and theories to contemporary issues.</b>	<b>Goal 1, 3, 7</b>	<b>Assessments, Discussions, Papers, and Exams</b>
<b>Identify and explain the social or aesthetic values of different cultures.</b>	<b>Goal 1, 3, 4, 7</b>	<b>Assessments, Discussions, Papers, and Exams</b>
<b>In addition, as a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will be able to demonstrate a basic understanding of a least one of the following:</b>		
<b>The origin and evolution of human institutions;</b>	<b>Goal 3, 7</b>	<b>Assessments, Discussions, Papers, and Exams</b>
<b>The allocation of human or natural resources within societies; and</b>	<b>Goals 3, 7</b>	<b>Assessments, Discussions, Papers, and Exams</b>
<b>The impact of diverse philosophical, ethical or religious views.</b>	<b>Goals 3, 7</b>	<b>Assessments, Discussions, Papers, and Exams</b>
<b>Students will understand how global issues, developments, and ideas affect their lives and those of others through:</b>		
<b>Demonstrating awareness of multiple perspectives within the global community; and</b>	<b>Goal - Globalization</b>	<b>Assessments, Discussions, Papers, and Exams</b>
<b>Investigating and analyzing contemporary issues, phenomena, and ideas with global impact, considering their effect on the individuals, communities, and social or natural environments involved.</b>	<b>Goal - Globalization</b>	<b>Assessments, Discussions, Papers, and Exams</b>

**\*See SDBOR Goals in Appendix A for more details.**

## Course Schedule & Coverage of Topics

Please see the “Course Schedule” link in the “Getting Started” widget on the course homepage.

## Office Hours

As this is an online course, all office hours will be done virtually. Students are **strongly encouraged** to contact the instructor at any time via email (or via phone in case of a course emergency) with any questions or concerns outside of office hours.

## Assessments

Because of the online nature of this course, it is important that students receive regular feedback on their progress. To that end, there will be weekly participation requirements and assessments to assure that ample feedback is provided and that ample opportunity is provided to ask questions about the various course topics.



**IMPORTANT:** Make-up assessments will only be available under conditions such as serious illness, family emergencies, etc., and will be provided solely at the discretion of the instructor. When possible, students should notify the instructor prior to missing any assessment.

### Assessment Quizzes

Each week, during which there is not an exam or paper due, there will be a self-assessment quiz covering current world events and concepts covered in the week’s assigned readings. You will receive instant feedback on these. Students must achieve a grade of 70 percent to receive full credit for the assessment, but will have unlimited attempts to achieve a passing score.

### Discussion Postings

Each week, there will be an associated discussion on topics and concepts covered in the assigned readings or in the United Nations simulation. Students will need to post one direct substantive response to the instructor’s posting or one substantive response to another classmate’s posting. The latter may include a follow-up question, a comment, an extension or rebuttal of the poster’s argument, etc. A substantive response is more than a simple sentence or two to the effect of, “I agree,” or “I disagree;” rather, it will provide arguments and relevant citations to support the student’s response.

When posting in the discussions, each student must abide by the “Netiquette” section in the **Online Student Handbook**, which can be found in the “Getting Started” widget on the Course Home page.

Your response to either the instructor or a classmate's post is due by **Sunday at 11:59 PM CT**. Students will only receive credit for the week’s discussion posting if they post a substantive post free of significant grammatical errors by the deadline. Partial credit will not be given.

Discussion participation will be assessed at the conclusion of each discussion topic on the level and quality of participation. In general, the instructor will provide summary feedback to the class via course mail, and individual feedback and grades in the **Assessments/Grades** section of the course on select weeks. All feedback will be returned within a week of the due date, unless otherwise noted by the

instructor.



**IMPORTANT:** If you miss a weekly discussion, even for an excused absence, you will generally NOT be able to make it up. However, I reserve the right to allow you to make up the points missed through an alternative assessment provided you contact me prior to **Sunday at 11:59 PM CT** of the week in question explaining your situation.

### Papers

Students are required to write a total of four original papers for this course. Two papers (roughly 2 pages in length) will relate to the United Nations simulation. Two papers (roughly 4-5 pages in length) will compare and contrast two or more concepts or scholarly articles assigned by the instructor. Students may use APA or MLA citations and formatting for their papers, whichever they feel more comfortable with. Specifics regarding topic questions, formatting requirements, etc. will be posted to the **Content** section of D2L on **Monday at 12:00 AM CT** two weeks before each paper is due.

Papers **MUST** be submitted in a format compatible with Turnitin (Word: DOC or DOCX; OpenOffice: ODT; Other: RTE, TXT, PDF, WPS) via **Assessments/Dropbox**—not through course email. Feedback and grades will be available in the GradeMark feature of the Dropbox within two week after the due date, unless otherwise stated.

### Exams

Each exam will be released via D2L on **Monday at 12:00 AM CT** at the start of midterm and finals weeks. The timed exams can be taken at any time during the testing window. The midterm examination will evaluate the materials covered in the first half of the course and the final will examine materials covered in the second half of the course (though some themes and concepts may be covered from the midterm). The exams will consist of roughly 40 questions and students will have around 75 minutes to complete the open resource exam.

Exams will be returned with feedback, either within a week after the due date, or when the last exam has been submitted—**whichever is later**. Once graded, students will be able to go back into the exam itself to view the instructor's feedback. Exams will **NOT** be proctored—in other words, you will not need to go to a specific place to take them under the supervision of a proctor.

## Participation / Attendance

Since this is a wholly online course, participation and attendance will be ensured through your completion of the required weekly discussion postings and assessments. Failure to complete three or more such assignments may jeopardize your ability to continue in the course and/or your overall grade.

## Course Point Total

Given the types of assessments and number of points each is worth, the total number of points in the course is broken down as follows:

Self-Assessment Quizzes: 10 points

Discussion Postings: 20 points  
Papers: 40 points (10 points each)  
Exams: 30 points (15 points per exam)  
**Total: 100 points**

## Grading

Your grade is calculated using straight percentages, which correspond to your point total:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Points
A	89.5-100%	89.5-100
B	79.5-89.49%	79.5-89.49
C	69.5-79.49%	69.5-79.49
D	59.5-69.49%	59.5-69.49
F	up to 59.49%	up to 59.49



**IMPORTANT:** You can check your current grade at any time during the semester by clicking on the **Assessments/Grades** link. You will also be able to check the grades for any assessment, as well as feedback on those assessments, using this link as well.

## Technology Requirements

The University of South Dakota has established minimum technology requirements for participation in online courses. These are outlined under the “Technology Support and Requirements” section in the **Online Student Handbook** in the “Getting Started” widget on the course homepage.

Aside from the requirements listed in the handbook, this course has two other requirements:

1. All students should have the ability to submit performance/album reviews in a format compatible with Turnitin (Word: DOC or DOCX; OpenOffice: ODT; Other: RTF, TXT, PDF, WPS). The University of South Dakota provides access to Google Docs—a free, online office suite—which can save documents as Word files. USD’s Google Docs can be accessed with your USD username and password at: <http://docs.usd.edu/>.

Additionally, USD makes Microsoft Office available for free to all students. For more information, please visit the USD Technology page:

<http://www.usd.edu/technology>

2. This course may make use of **Collaborate**, a web-conferencing solution, for office hours if there is student demand. If you plan on participating in the live office hour sessions, you may consider purchasing a USB multimedia headset—earphones with a microphone—or have a phone available to conference into the session so that you can ask questions instead of typing them. Your laptop may also have a built-in microphone that could work well.

## Student Resources:

The University of South Dakota provides a number of useful services to students:

- **Online Student Handbook (in the “Getting Started” widget on the course homepage):**  
This contains very important information related to the services provided by the University of South Dakota as well as the University policies. In it, you will find such information as:
  - Academic support services such as the library, writing center, proctor and testing information, book purchasing, etc.
  - Student support services such as advising and enrollment information, financial aid, student life, and counseling, etc.
  - Technology support services like technology requirements, ITS Help Desk contact information, discounts on computers and software, etc.
  
- **myUSD Portal (<http://my.usd.edu/>):**  
The myUSD Portal is your one-stop place for a majority of services offered to any student taking a USD course—like this course. You can access the following services from the “Academics” tab in the portal:
  - WebAdvisor
  - I.D. Weeks Library
  
- **The USD Writing Center (<http://www.usd.edu/academics/academic-commons/writing-center.cfm>):**  
The USD Writing Center was established to provide writing assistance to students in order to help them become better writers. It is available on campus during regular business hours and online in the evenings. Please visit the URL above for more information.

## Academic Integrity Policy:

The University of South Dakota considers plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty inimical to the objectives of higher education. The University supports the imposition of penalties on students who have been adjudicated to have engaged in academic dishonesty, as defined in the “Conduct” section of the University of South Dakota Student Handbook, and South Dakota Board of Regents policy 2-33 [www.sdbor.edu/policy/Documents/2-33.pdf](http://www.sdbor.edu/policy/Documents/2-33.pdf).

No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. A student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty may, at the discretion of the instructor, be:

- a. Given a zero for that assignment.
- b. Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
- c. Assigned a reduced grade for the course.
- d. Dropped from the course.
- e. Failed in the course.



**IMPORTANT:** The instructor will use iParadigm's Turnitin product to determine the level of originality of papers submitted in the course. All student papers will become part of a course database of papers that will also be used to check the originality of future papers submitted in the course; however, the student will maintain copyright ownership of the paper. For more information about this, please refer to:

[http://turnitin.com/en\\_us/privacy-center/legal-faqs](http://turnitin.com/en_us/privacy-center/legal-faqs)

### Freedom in Learning:

Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact the dean of the college or school that offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

### Disability Services:

Any student who feels they may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact and register with Disability Services during the first week of class or as soon as possible after the diagnosis of a disability. Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered with Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation memo each semester.

Please note: if your home institution is not the University of South Dakota but one of the other South Dakota Board of Regents institutions (e.g., SDSU, SDSMT, BHSU, NSU, DSU), you should work with the disability services coordinator at your home institution.

Ernetta L. Fox, Director  
Disability Services, Room 119 Service Center  
(605) 677-6389  
Web Site: [www.usd.edu/ds](http://www.usd.edu/ds)  
E-mail: [disabilityservices@usd.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@usd.edu)

### Diversity and Inclusive Excellence

The University of South Dakota strives to foster a globally inclusive learning environment where opportunities are provided for diversity to be recognized and respected. To learn more about USD's

diversity and inclusiveness initiatives, please visit the website for the [Office of Diversity](#).

## Appendix A: SDBOR General Education Goals

Following is an overview of the SDBOR goals for general education and the system-wide and institutional measurements for assessing them.

- **Goal 1:** Students will write effectively and responsibly and will understand and interpret the written expression of others. Measurements include Course Performance Criteria, NSSE ratings for “writing clearly and effectively,” the CAAP Writing Standard Score, the CAAP Rhetorical Subscale Standard Score, and the CAAP Usage and Mechanics Subscale Standard Score.
- **Goal 2:** Students will communicate effectively and responsibly through listening and speaking. Measurements include Course Performance Criteria for Speech/ Communication101 and the NSSE rating for “speaking clearly and effectively.”
- **Goal 3:** Students will understand the organization, potential, and diversity of the human community through study of the social sciences. Measurements include Course Performance Criteria, the CAAP Social Sciences Subscale, and NSSE ratings for “understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds.”
- **Goal 4:** Students will understand the diversity and complexity of the human experience through study of the arts and humanities. Measurements include Course Performance Criteria, the NSSE rating for “working effectively with others,” and the CAAP Arts and Literature Subscale Score.
- **Goal 5:** Students will understand and apply fundamental mathematical processes and reasoning. Measurements include Course Performance Criteria, the CAAP Basic Algebra Subscale Score, the CAAP College Algebra Subscale Score, and the NSSE rating for “analyzing quantitative problems.”
- **Goal 6:** Students will understand the fundamental principles of the natural sciences and apply scientific methods of inquiry to investigate the natural world. Measurements include Course Performance Criteria and the CAAP Science Reasoning Standard Score.
- **Goal 7:** Students will recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, organize, critically evaluate, and effectively use information from a variety of sources with intellectual integrity. Measurements include Course Performance Criteria and the NSSE ratings for “thinking critically and analytically” and “solving complex real- world problems.”