

**Syllabus for POLS 3653  
International Relations  
Spring 2026**

**Course: POLS 3653 International Relations**

Class: T& R 9:30-10:50, PY 209

**Lecturer: Steve Garrison, Ph.D.**

Office: 111B Bridwell  
Phone: 397-4978  
Email: steve.garrison@mwsu.edu  
Office Hours: M T W R & F 11:00-1:00  
and by appointment

**International Relations POLS 3653** This course introduces the politics of international relations. We study how governments interact with one another in the international arena; how conflict occurs; how cooperation develops and what rules govern the international arena. We explore a wide range of international topics from globalization to armed conflict throughout the course.

**Course Objectives:** This course is intended to further student development in the following departmental learning objectives.

- Objective 3.1: Display critical thinking skills concerning theoretical explanations of local, state, national, and global political processes.
- Objective 3.2: Demonstrate critical thinking skills towards political research concerning the strengths and weaknesses of various methods of inquiry.
- Objective 3.3: Evaluate the appropriateness of rival political explanations to contemporary political issues.

- Objective 4.1: Demonstrate an ability to use computer databases in the political research process.
- Objective 5.1: Demonstrate effective writing skills.
- Objective 5.2: Display effective oral communication skills.
- Objective 5.3: Exhibit an ability to collaborate with peers.

**Texts:** *International Relations: International, Economic, and Human Security in a Changing World*, Third Edition James Scott, Ralph Carter, and Cooper Dury (2018), Sage.

**Case Studies:** We will be using a few case studies in addition to the text book. These cases will allow us to indepthly explore an international relations event. The case studies are available online from the Georgetown University Institute for the Study of Diplomacy website: <https://casestudies.isd.georgetown.edu/>.

- Case 210: Operation Restore Hope: The Bush Administration's Decision to Intervene in Somalia
- Case 269 The Dutch in Srebrenica: A Noble Mission Fails
- Case 509 From Miracle to Crisis: Brazilian Foreign Debt and the Limits of Obligation
- Case 225 Sustainable Development or Environmental Imperialism? Guinea-Bissau and the Hazardous Waste Trade
- Case 254 The Turbot War: Canada, Spain and the Conflict Over the North Atlantic Fishery
- Case 286 Torture for Profit: The Role of Mercedes-Benz in Argentina's Dirty War and the Struggle for Accountability and Reconciliation

The cases are delivered as a PDF file which can be downloaded from the website. They are \$3.50 for each case for a total of \$21.

In addition to the case book and text book there are a series of readings that we will use in class. Electronic copies will be available in D2L.

**Expectations, Examinations, and Grading:** Students are expected to attend class. Lectures will not reproduce the texts. Students are also expected to enthusiastically participate in class discussions. There will be two examinations and a final exam. The format of each is short answer questions and identification of key terms. The highest grading scale will be 90 (A), 80 (B), 70 (C), and 60 (D). If for any reason you should have to miss a test please inform the instructor prior to the time of the test and provide documentation for your absence. In addition to the exams a series of quizzes will also be given on the countries of the world. Periodic case preparation assignments will also be required in order to prepare students for the case discussion days. In order to ensure that students diligently do their reading assignments there will also be periodic reading quizzes.

**Presentation :** Each student will also be required to produce a ten minute oral presentation with an accompanying digital presentation (i.e. Powerpoint or Prezi) on a historical international political event. These presentations will take place in the second half of the course. More information on the presentation will be disseminated in class. **Grading:**

Exam 1 20 points  
Exam 2 20 points  
Exam 3 20 points  
Presentation 20 points  
Map Quizzes 10 points  
Case Preparations and Reading Quizzes 10 points

**Disability Policy:** Any student in this course who has a disability that may preclude demonstrating fully his or her abilities should contact me as soon as possible. We will discuss the accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate education.

**Plagiarism:** I take plagiarism very seriously and will check your work. By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a “limited right” in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The “limited right” shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student’s work product in order to verify

originality and authenticity, and educational purposes. The University's *minimum penalty* for cheating or plagiarism is *a failure of assignment*. Cheating or plagiarism can lead to expulsion from the university. If you have questions about original work, please consult the Student Handbook Code of Student Conduct section 10.

*Calendar* The following calendar represents the schedule of readings and topics for the course. The reading assignments are located under the date and topic. The instructor reserves the right to change the schedule.

## Course Schedule

### January 20: Introduction

- Syllabus

### January 22: What is International Relations

- Chapter One

### January 27: The Structure of the International System

- Chapter Two

### January 29: Realism

- pages 58-72

## **February 3: Liberalism**

- pages 72-79

## **February 5: Constructivism**

- pages 79-89

## **February 10: Foreign Policy**

- pages 90-99

## **February 12: Case I**

- Cusimano, Maryann. 1995. Operation Restore Hope: The Bush Administration's Decision to Intervene in Somalia (Case 210).

## **February 17: Exam**

- Study Guide One

## **February 19: No Class**

- No Class

## **February 24: Types of Conflict & WWI**

- pages 122-133 and Joesph Nye. 2000. "Balance of Power and WWI" in *Understanding International Conflict* Longman (D2L)

## **February 26: WWII**

- Joesph Nye. 2000. "The Failure of Collective Security and WWII" in *Understanding International Conflict* Longman (D2L)

## **March 3: Causes of Conflict**

- pages 133-154

## **March 5: The Cold War**

- Joesph Nye. 2000. "The Cold War" in *Understanding International Conflict* Longman

## **March 10 & 12: Spring Break**

- No Class

## **March 17: Conflict Management**

- Chapter Six

## **March 19: Case II**

- Lamey, Steven. The Dutch in Srebrenica: A Noble Mission Fails (Case 269).

## **March 24: Building Peace**

- Chapter Seven

## **March 26: Review**

- Study Guide Two

## **March 31: Exam Two**

- Exam Two

## **April 2: Easter Break**

- No Class

## **April 7: International Economics**

- Chapter Eight

## **April 9: Case III**

- Landy, Thomas M. From Miracle to Crisis: Brazilian Foreign Debt and the Limits of Obligation (Case 509)

## **April 14: International Development**

- Chapter Ten

## **April 16: Case IV**

- Montgomery, Mark. 1996. Sustainable Development or Environmental Imperialism? Guinea-Bissau and the Hazardous Waste Trade (Case 225)

## **April 21: the Global Environment**

- Chapter Twelve

## **April 23: Case V**

- Elizabeth DeSombre and J. Samuel Barkin. 2000. The Turbot War: Canada, Spain and the Conflict Over the North Atlantic Fishery (Case 254).

## **April 28: Human Rights**

- Chapter Eleven

## **April 30: Case VI**

- Lowe, Daniel and Steve R. Garrison. Torture for Profit: The Role of Mercedes-Benz in Argentina's Dirty War and the Struggle for Accountability and Reconciliation (Case 286)

## **May 5: The Future of International Relations**

- Chapter 14

## **May 7: Review**

- Study Guide Three

## Final Exam

December 8, Monday (8:00-10:00 a.m.): Final Exam

- Study Guide III