International Relations

Course Syllabus and Outline

Mr. Sutton

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to provide students with a broad introduction to the study of international politics and will focus on significant themes and debates in the arena of contemporary international affairs. The course will introduce students to a variety of theoretical approaches to understanding these contemporary issues. It will also emphasize case-study analysis, both as a tool for applying theoretical analysis to the study of real-world events and as a tool for evaluating competing theoretical approaches. As so many of the topics studied in this course are the subject of ongoing debate (or even controversy) in both national and international arenas, the course relies on vigorous classroom discussion and active debate as a means of understanding and evaluating all sides of each issue.

The first third of the course is an examination of the main International Relations theories used to help explain trends and developments in the creation of world entities and the interactions between them. The second third of the course will be a brief survey of world history from 1790 to the present. We will discuss and debate how well opposing theories explain critical historical events from that time period. In the final third of the course we will attempt to apply the theories that you learned at the beginning of the course to contemporary issues in international politics.

**Course Objectives:**

* Apply the key theories and approaches in the discipline of International Relations to a variety of different international and global issues.
* Explain major substantive themes in International Relations
* Distinguish major international and regional institutions as well as significant developments in world affairs.
* Accurately identify the global geographic location of countries/states, physical features, ethic regions, religious regions, and key economic zones
* Develop rational arguments based on established theory and verifiable evidence to support and justify a particular position on a multitude of course topics.
* Develop teamwork, organization, goal-setting, and time management skills
* Have fun trying to make sense of this crazy world

**Course Materials:**

There is no set textbook for this course. We’ll be using a wide variety of information resources (magazine articles, books, websites, historical documents, maps, legal documents, documentary films, movies, artwork, etc…), access to all of which you will be given as they are needed.

**Class Website:**

[**mrsuttonsclass.weebly.com**](Honors%20US%20History%20(Edison)%20(Autosaved).docx)

The class website is really important! There, you will find this syllabus, weekly outlines and assignments, links to a digital version of your textbook, and a whole lot more. Make sure you make good use of it often!

**Supplies Suggested:**

* Writing supplies: pen/pencil
* A binder
* Notebook paper
* 2-3 hole-punched folders (for the binder)

**Supplies REQUIRED:**

* Positive attitude (Optimism)
* Willingness to learn and discover
* Curiosity
* Work ethic (Grit)
* Self Control

**Policies:**

**Homework:**

When I assign you something to read, write, make, or view as a homework assignment, you need to complete that assignment **by the stated due date**. I ALWAYS have several intended purposes for you doing the activities I assign, principally because you need that prior information in your head to fully take advantage of the lessons and activities that take place in the classroom following the assignment. Projects, research assignments, and special activities will have varying timeframes applied depending on the range of difficulty and time necessary for you to successfully complete the requirements of that particular learning experience. However, a deadline is a DEADLINE… no late work will be accepted after that date (obviously, verifiable emergencies are an exception). Be prepared for class; participation and discussion will play a major role and doing your prep-work for class will make all the difference.

**Tests and Quizzes:**

Typically, you can expect to have a quiz every week and a test every two weeks depending on the rate and complexity of the material we’re covering. This is a generalization. There are a few instances where you may have tests closer together or farther apart in the schedule depending on what we’re covering or if we are engaged in a project of some kind. There will be no weighted grading; this is a “total points” class so complete and participate in everything because its all of equal point value. Pay attention to the class calendar and your weekly outlines and you’ll be well informed and prepared.

**Class Expectations:**

* **Be on time**... no excuses. (In your seat at the bell.)
* Be prepared and ready to learn **EVERY DAY**: Have everything you need for class, including homework, ready to go when the bell rings.
* Listen to directions and instructions carefully, **THEN** raise your hand if you have questions or comments.
* Respect other students’ right to learn. (Stay in your seat, focused and on-task. Make no distractions to others. Ex: talking out of turn)
* Respect our learning environment. (If it isn’t yours, don’t touch it. If it’s a mess, clean it up)
* Personal electronics are to be turned OFF and put away… no exceptions. I KNOW this will be a difficulty for some of you, but we, as a class, cannot afford the distraction.
* Food, candy, and gum are not permitted, however, drinks in a screw-top container are allowed (subject to revocation).
* Do your very best EVERY day. Your destiny is in your hands.

**Course Outline:**

1. Introduction: Development of the International System  
 • Course outline, lectures, discussion, assessment  
 • History of state development

• International system

* Map Activity #1: World States

2. States and Other Actors  
 • Sovereignty  
 • Nationalism  
 • States, IGOs, TNAs  
 • Territory, borders and regions

3. Global Issues  
 • Globalization  
 • International trade, internationalization of companies  
 • Internet, E-Commerce  
 • Climate change  
 • Health  
 • Wealth, Poverty and Development  
 • Facts about inequality  
 • Relief, development, aid

4. Foreign Policy  
 • Power, competition and cooperation  
 • Diplomacy  
 • Domestic politics and the outside world, public opinion

5. International Institutions  
 • United Nations: Security Council, General Assembly, UN agencies  
 • World Bank / IMF  
 • Regional organizations: NATO, ASEAN

6. War  
 • What causes wars?

-inequality, ethnicity, resource allocation, religion, tribal identity  
 • Inter-state wars:  
 - Case: start of WW1  
 - Security dilemma  
 - Nuclear weapons  
 • Intra-state war  
 -Inequality, weapons, ethnicity, resources, borders, regional issues, state fragility  
 • Terrorism and guerrilla insurgencies

7. Intervention  
 • Crisis response, stabilization  
 • Iraq, Afghanistan  
 • Human rights, Humanitarian intervention, R2P

8. Peace  
 • How is peace maintained?  
 • Negative/positive peace  
 • Conflict settlement  
 • Conflict prevention  
 • Post-conflict consolidation, state-building, ’liberal peace’  
 • Peacebuilding  
 • Reconciliation, apology, TRCs