

**PS 103 – Introduction to International Relations
Section Syllabus – Fall 2008**

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Office: 121 North Hall
Hours: Mon 11a-12p, Thurs 4p-5p, and by appointment

Overview

Discussion section's primary goals are to help you develop an interest in international relations, learn the material, and do well in the course. It will serve as a time to emphasize and review key points from readings and lectures, ask questions about concepts that are unclear, and explore the issues and related topics in more depth. Ideally, it will refine your understanding of major theories and arguments of international politics and develop your ability to think analytically and take informed positions about these issues. Before the midterms and the final we may devote some time to exam preparation, and I am also happy to spend time on study skills if you feel that will be helpful.

Our meetings will be interactive – ask questions about things that are unclear, get involved in the discussions, challenge and disagree with me, with the readings, with Prof. Martin, and with your classmates. These discussions must *always* be conducted with an air of respect for differing viewpoints and the people who present them, and with an open mind – arguing for positions even if you are not yet certain of them, and being willing to consider new arguments or information. Take advantage of this opportunity to get involved!

Grading

Your section grade accounts for **20%** of your final course grade and is based on attendance and participation. If you have questions as the term goes on about where you stand feel free to ask.

- Attendance: You are expected to attend all sections, but I understand unavoidable conflicts do occasionally occur, so you can miss one section with no penalty – beyond that, it factors into your participation grade. Please email me in advance if you know you are going to miss section.
- Participation: Most importantly, discussion section is an opportunity for you to get involved with what we're learning – not just another time to be lectured at. You are expected to come to section having done the reading and being prepared to participate. This means giving some prior thought to the key concepts and ideas, asking questions about the material, and actively contributing to our conversation. Coming to office hours can also contribute to your participation grade.

Office Hours/Contacting Me

Please contact me if there is any way I can help you better understand the course material or if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. I strongly encourage you to visit me during my office hours (info above), and I'm also happy to make other appointments (with some advance notice) if you are unable to make those times. I hope you will find that I am extremely accessible to anyone willing to put in the effort – I will work as hard as you do to help you do well in this course.

My email address is ohls@wisc.edu – I check it quite frequently and promise to respond promptly (if you don't get an answer within 24 hrs, feel free to send another note to remind/nag me). Don't hesitate to use email to get in touch with me, but don't abuse it – I am unlikely to respond to emails at 2am the night before an exam. If your question takes more than two or three sentences to ask or answer, it would probably be better addressed in person during office hours or a scheduled meeting.