

# PS 103 Introduction to International Theories

## Section Syllabus, Spring 2009

University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Department of Political Science

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 1:00 - 2:00 pm

This discussion section is designed to complement, rather than substitute, Prof. Andrew Kydd's lecture. That means students are expected to have finished reading assignments before attending sections. In other words, students should not expect to receive another lecture in discussion sections but to refine their understanding and clarify concepts in course materials through participating in discussions. In other words, the purpose of the discussion section is to help you learn the materials through discussing and debating with your classmates. That said, I will also utilize the time to assist you with identifying and exploring key ideas from the lectures and the reading to help you do well in the course. If you have questions about the lecture and/or the reading, please do raise them in the discussion section—the materials to be covered by the section is quite flexible, and our first priority should always be to deal with the topics that you are particularly interested in or that you find particularly difficult to understand. In sum, the discussion section is designed to help you learn better and learn more, but only if you take the initiative.

### Grading

As described in the course syllabus, the grading scheme is specifically designed to make it easy to do well in the discussion section. Put it briefly, attending the discussion section “in time” gives you 2 points, contributing to the discussion gives you one more point, and making insightful comments allows you to get a full grade in that discussion section (4 points total). The important thing to know is that your discussion section grade not only counts for 10% of your final grade but also serves as a weight over your midterm grades. It works as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} (.2 + .1P)T &\Leftrightarrow .2T + .1PT \\ (.2 + .1P)M &\Leftrightarrow .2T + .1PM \\ .2(1 - P)B &\Leftrightarrow .2B - .2PB \end{aligned}$$

T, M, and B represent your top, middle, and bottom midterm, respectively, and P represents your discussion section grade. You can find that the higher the P, the lower your worst midterm accounts

for your final grade. What is also important is that there will be no make-up exam or paper if you miss any of the midterms—you can only alleviate the effect through good participation grade in the discussion section. Therefore, make sure you are aware of the dates of all the exams.

### Attendance

There will be no excuse for absence except for medical reasons with verifiable doctors' notes.

### Mini Debate

Debates are scheduled on the following dates:

Feb. 9: Will women make the world more peaceful?

Feb. 23: Has the United States inflated the threat from Iraq? (**for Section 307 only**)

Mar. 2: Is the world (primarily other major powers) soft balancing the U.S.? (**two by two debate**)

Mar. 9: Should the world get rid of nuclear weapons?

Mar. 23: Are we overreacting to terrorism? (**two by two debate**)

Apr. 6: Is globalization sinking? (**combining readings of Week 9 and 10; two by two debate**)

Apr. 27: Should we treat terrorists as combatants?

Your arguments in the debate should base on but are not limited to the supplemental readings, lecture and textbook of the course relevant to the topic. The process of the debate is as follows:

P = Pro speaker, C = Con speaker

P: Pro Speech (Constructive/opening statement): 3 min

C: Con Questions P: 1 min

C: Con Speech(Constructive/opening statement): 4 min

P: Pro Question C: 1 min

Preparation: 1 min

P: Rebuttal to C: 2 min

C: Rebuttal/Conclusion: 2 min

P: Conclusion: 1 min

Open Floor Q & A: 4 min

In the case of two by two debate: P1 = Pro First speaker, P2 = Pro Second speaker, C1 = Con First speaker, C2 = Con second speaker

P1: Pro Speech (Constructive/opening statement): 3 min

C2: Con Questions P1: 1 min

C1: Con Speech(Constructive/opening statement): 4 min

P2: Pro Question C1: 1 min

Preparation: 1 min

P1: Rebuttal to C1: 2 min

C2: Rebuttal/Conclusion: 2 min

P2: Conclusion: 1 min

Open Floor Q & A: 4 min

After the Q & A section, the audience votes to decide the winner or the winning team; winner(s) gets one extra point to his/her overall participation grade.

**Notes on Supplemental Readings**

Supplemental readings will be included in the exams. For each supplemental reading, you should be able to summarize within a paragraph the author, the title, the basic argument, and who the author tries to respond to.

**Office Hours**

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, or if there is any way I can help you better understand the course materials, please don't hesitate to contact me. My email address is listed above. However, if your questions cannot be clearly stated in two or three sentences, it's a better idea to come to my office hours, which are Monday and Wednesday 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM or by appointment.