

Upper-Level Courses Toolkit

PSC 352: International Security *Western Carolina University*

PSC 352 is an international security course offered at Western Carolina University that examines international security from several different perspectives. Through this course, students will explore international relations theories and then dig into the Standard Security Model. World101 modules, 2020 Munich Security Conference videos, and the course's textbook are used as resources for students throughout the course.

International Security: PSC 352 Spring 2021

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Stillwell 344 (Remote this semester)

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Class Time: One Zoom meeting per week, otherwise delivered asynchronously.

Zoom Office Hours: Monday 1 - 2; Tuesday 3 - 4; Thursday 12 – 1 and by appointment

Anyone who follows world events knows full well that issues of security abound in today's world. On the day of this writing here are some of the Top Stories on the World section of the CNN website: *US accuses China of 'genocide' of Uyghurs and minority groups in Xinjiang; 3 dead, several injured in Madrid as explosion rocks Spanish capital; Afghanistan foils ISIS plan to assassinate the top US envoy to Kabul.* Another day or another website would likely list a different litany of international hotspots. If bored or doubtful, check out the International Crisis Group website: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/>

This course seeks to examine the subject matter from several different perspectives. To help in this effort the course materials are mainly going to come from three very different sources.

- Course textbook Security Studies: An Introduction. This book, as is common in university courses, is written by academic scholars trained in the study of the field. It is an edited book and the chapters are on average around 15 pages long.
- World101 learning modules created by the Council on Foreign Relations. That esteemed institution has created these modules for college students and they contain some elementary elements and some advanced elements and they are updated as events impact the topic. Some of their modules that we will discuss are brand new (their COVID-19) module was just launched a month or two ago.
- 2020 Munich Security Conference videos. That conference brought together major political leaders and policy-makers from around the world to discuss many dimensions of international security. It is very clearly and unabashedly focused on the Transatlantic security relationship. But their sessions often have presentations by leaders from other parts of the world as well.

The course is organized into 7 modules. Most of the modules will be two weeks in length and will include a mix of text chapters, World101 modules, and videos from the Munich Conference. Each of these will probably take about 60 - 90 minutes. That and the one Zoom class per week will represent your normal time requirements. For each module there is also a Discussion Board assignment for you to complete. In addition, there will be a mid-term exam, a final exam, and a term paper. Look for detailed information about these assignments in the PSC 352 Course Assignments document in the Capture the Flag module.

In this course we will examine security along many different dimensions. We will approach this in the Levels of Analysis method. We will begin by looking at the national (or state) security

level. Then we will move to the regional level wherein we will focus on regional security situations and arrangements. Next, we will focus on human security. Finally, we will look at nuclear security and then global security. We will not worry (unless current events require us) about attacks from outer space, but how about climate change, or nuclear warfare? Yes, we will worry about them.

We will begin by reviewing three major international relations theories: realism; liberalism, and constructivism. Then we will dig deeper into what I will call the Standard Security Model. It is commonly employed by Realists and has itself a number of variants with which we will become familiar.

Learning objectives:

1. Understand the reason states are concerned about their security.
2. Understand the sources of state insecurity.
3. Recognize the traditional means by which states pursue security.
4. Understand how the search for security can generate unintended consequences.
5. Understand the security concerns of non-state actors.
6. Understand the theoretical critiques to traditional approaches to security.
7. Appreciate how the pursuit of peace is different from security.
8. Recognize how technology and global trends are changing the nature of security.
9. Identify the interests at stake in a specific security situation.
10. Recognize the ways that mutual security and/or insecurity interact with different actors.

Course Assignments:

Attendance and Participation: (10 Points)

Every Zoom class: Bring to the Zoom meeting a hard copy of two important or interesting points from that week's course materials, and one written question that is worthy of discussion and that is derived from the assigned readings. I would advise that you bring a notebook of some sort that contains your questions (and whatever notes you make).

Discussion Boards: (20 Points)

For each module there is a discussion board prompt. Thorough and thoughtful posts are expected.

Seminar Paper – Descriptive and Analytical: (30 Points) Due Friday May 2.

First, gain my approval for the contemporary security issue that you are going to analyze.

Second, decide on the level of analysis you want to focus your paper researching. **Third,** consider which of the concepts and themes from the course that you will use to organize and conduct your analysis. Below is a very short list, there will be many more to come, of some of the more likely candidates for you to employ. If you intend to use a concept that is not listed below, check with me first.

- Soft vs. Hard Power

- Cooperation under the security dilemma
- Deterrence vs. Spiral model
- Alliance dynamics: fear of abandonment; fear of entrapment
- Polarity; balances of power; power transitions
- Responsibility to Protect (R2P)
- UN or regional peacekeeping
- Technological imperative

Your research should draw primarily on articles/books written by academic scholars. You may, and probably should, use official sources for some of the factual materials, but do NOT rely on these when conducting your research. In most cases, academic scholars have written about your particular case or about something very similar to your case. They should be your guide in writing this paper.

Writing Assignment Formatting:

Margins – 1 inch on all four sides, with the left margin justified.

Double-space the text; single space footnotes/endnotes, and indented block quotes

12 Point Times New Roman

Page numbers, beginning with page 1

Indent paragraphs (do not leave extra spaces between paragraphs)

Bibliography: All sources used in the paper

Title Page: Title: Student 92#; Course; Date

Identify the formatting style that you are using (APA; MLA; etc.).

Mid-term (due Friday February 28) (20 Points) Mainly essay and definitions with a problem to be solved.

Final exam (due Thursday May 13) (20 Points). Mainly essay and definitions with a problem to be solved.

Grades:

Attendance and Participation = 10

Discussion Boards = 20

Term Exam = 20

Seminar Paper = 30

Final Exam = 20

GRADING POLICIES

- Your final grade will be determined according to the following scale: 97 - 100%/A+, 93-96/A, 90-92/A-, 87-89/B+, 84-86/B, 80-83/B-, 77-79/C+, 74-76/C, 70-73/C-, 67-69/D+, 64-66/D, 60-63/D-, and 59 and below/F.

Late Assignments/Exams: Warning!! Deadlines and Due Dates are important and there will be heavy penalties when your work is late. I will accept late work up to 48 hours (two days) after an assignment is due, but I will deduct 10 points off of your assignment grade as a late penalty. The 48 hours begins at the end of class on the day the assignment was due. After that 48-hour period is over, I will **not** accept your late assignment, and you will receive a zero.

I am willing to grant extensions on assignments under certain circumstances, but you must come and speak to me **BEFORE** the assignment is due. Do not approach me after the due date and ask for an extension because I will not grant you one. **Communication is key here – please contact me BEFORE you have issues turning in an assignment, not after.** As for exams, make-up exams will only be given in extreme circumstances. If you must miss an exam for ANY reason (including illness), you need to notify me *in advance* of the exam, and you must provide documentation describing the reason for your absence. If these two conditions are not met, no make-up exam will be granted.

Course Schedule

| Dates | Readings | World101 | Munich 2020 | Discussion Board | Module # |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|---|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1/25 – 1/31 | Syllabus | | | 1/25 – 1/31 | 1 Intro |
| 2/1 – 2/7 | Chapter 1 | Building Blocks | What we are defending | 2/1 – 2/7 | 2 Theories |
| 2/8 – 2/14 | Chapters 2-3 | Global Governance | | | 2 Theories |
| 2/15 – 2/21 | Chapter 10 | Conflict | | 2/15 – 2/21 | 3 National |
| 2/22 – 2/28 | Chapter 18 | | Multilateralism | | 3 National Mid-Term Due |
| 3/1 – 3/7 | Chapters 19-20 | South & Central Asia; East Asia & the Pacific | Keeping it Pacific | 3/1 – 3/7 | 4 Regional |
| 3/8 – 3/14 Advising Day NO ZOOM | | | | | 4 Regional |
| 3/15 – 3/21 | Chapters 15-16 | Migration | Women | 3/15 – 3/21 | 5 Human |
| 3/22 – 3/28 | Chapter 24 | | Food | | 5 Human |
| 3/29 – 4/4 Easter | Chapter 22 | Nuclear Proliferation | Arms Control | 3/29 – 4/4 | 6 Nuclear |

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|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------------|
| 4/5 – 4/11 Easter NO ZOOM | | | | | 6 Nuclear |
| 4/12 – 4/18 | Chapter 35 | Climate Change | Climate | 4/12 – 4/18 | 7 Environment |
| 4/19 – 4/25 | Chapter 36 | Covid-19; Global Health | | | 7 Health |
| 4/26 -5/2 | Chapter 37 | Cyber Space | Democracy | | 7 Cyber |
| 5/3 – 5/7 | | | | | Review |