

Revised: Fall 2016

PLS 241

International Relations I

COURSE OUTLINE

Prerequisites: None

Course Description:

Teaches geographic, demographic, economic, ideological, and other factors conditioning the policies of countries and discusses conflicts and their adjustment.

This course introduces U. S. Foreign Policy. Students will analyze significant changes in U. S. Foreign Policy. Students will be introduced to useful skills for critical thinking, political analysis and interpretation. Students will strengthen skills in interdisciplinary studies and global awareness.

Students are not required to complete this course prior to taking PLS 242 (International Relations II).

Semester Credits: 3 Lecture Hours: 3

VIRGINIA WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PO Box 14007
Roanoke, VA 24038
(540)-857-7273



PLS 241: International Relations I

Course Outcomes:

At the completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Discuss the nature of containment as a grand strategy and the proposed alternatives to containment in the post-cold war search for a grand strategy
- Distinguish between causes and effects, between independent and dependent variables
- List and describe the five source categories of American foreign policy
- Trace the evolution of America's foreign policy stance and its willingness to involve itself abroad.
- Trace the shifting superpower tensions in the Cold War.
- Discuss the notions of strategic doctrine, compellence and deterrence
- Discuss the notion of using force for political purposes
- Discuss the shift in strategic doctrine from compellence to deterrence during the cold war as US balance of forces with the Soviets changed
- Describe the efforts at arms control
- Discuss the notions of covert intervention, economic aid, sanctions and diplomacy and describe the tools employed by US presidents as they implement these types of policies
- Discuss why economic sanctions are imposed and the difficulty in making them successful
- Distinguish among different types of power distributions and discuss the implications of those power distributions for world order and for US foreign policy.
- Describe the role of the US in the different phases of the Cold War
- Discuss the nature of international organizations, multinational corporations, nongovernmental organizations and international regimes
- Discuss the Bretton Woods system and its collapse. Enumerate the formal and informal institutions that emerged from that system.
- Detail the role the US has played in the liberal international economic order since World War II
- Discuss the IMF and World Bank, GATT and WTO.
- Discuss how changes in American society influence the notion of liberalism, political culture in general, and foreign policy direction
- Discuss the ways in which public approval of the president might influence presidential decision making in foreign policy

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PLS 241: International Relations I

Required Materials:

1. Textbook
2. Internet access
3. Blackboard

Textbook:

Wittkopf, Eugene R. and Christopher M. Jones. American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process.
Mass.: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 7th ed., 2008.
ISBN: 978-0-534-60337-3

The following supplementary materials are available: None

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Topical Description:

- INTRODUCTION TO ANALYTICAL AND THEMATIC PERSPECTIVES ON AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY
- PATTERN AND PROCESS IN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY PERSPECTIVE
- THE GOALS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
- MILITARY MIGHT AND INTERVENTIONISM
- COVERT ACTIVITIES, FOREIGN AID, SANCTIONS AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY
- INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SYSTEMS IN TRANSITION
- POLITICAL ECONOMY IN TRANSITION: OPPORTUNITIES/CONSTRAINTS IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD POLITICAL ECONOMY
- POLITICAL CULTURE AND PUBLIC OPINION IN FOREIGN POLICY

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Notes to Instructors

- None

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