

Course Outline
POLS 141
International Relations
3 Credit Hours

The Community College of Baltimore County

Description

International Relations

Discusses the nation-state system and conflict and cooperation in the international arena; covers economic and military power, diplomacy, international law and organizations; emphasizes on the foreign policy of the U.S.

Prerequisite: (RDNG 052 or LVR 2); (ENGL 052 or LVE 2); (MATH 081 or LVM 1)

Overall Course Objectives (Learning Objectives)

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Describe the nature of international politics (i.e., politics among nations in the world arena) and identify the major actors in this system: nation-states, elements within states, and transnational actors;
2. Describe the various theories and approaches which have emerged for the study of international politics;
3. Identify the major factors which contribute to a nation's capabilities to exert influence in the world arena;
4. Identify the major foreign policy goals which motivate nation-states;
5. Describe the strategies and techniques by which nations seek to achieve their goals;
6. Describe the workings of the international economic system;
7. Identify the major causes of conflict between nations, especially those which are potentially capable of leading to international violence;
8. Describe the major issues of arms, arms control, and weapons of mass destruction;
9. Describe such non-traditional forms of conflict, such as terrorism;
10. Describe the functions and instruments of diplomacy which may contribute to a nation's ability to work out its differences with another nation;
11. Describe the system of international law which may help nations adjust their interests;
12. Identify the major instruments of international organization which may help nations work cooperatively together.

Major Topics

1. The nature of the global political system
2. Principal actors: nation-states, sub-national units, transnational entities

3. Major general theories and approaches to the study of international politics
4. The elements of national power in the world arena
5. The international economic system: rich nations, developing nations, poor nations
6. Making foreign policy: institutions and processes
7. Techniques of asserting national interests in the world arena
8. Sources of international conflict, including the causes of war
9. Military elements in international politics: arms and arms controls
10. Non-traditional exercises of international power: terrorism in the contemporary world
11. The control and resolution of conflict
12. Diplomacy: functions and instruments
13. International law: sources, principles and institutions
14. International organizations: the United Nations, specialized functional organizations, regional organizations
15. Prospects for world peace and prosperity in the twenty-first century

Course Requirements

Students will be expected to demonstrate learning through:

1. Two or more extensive in-class examinations, including analytical essay questions;
2. Additional written or oral exercises (e.g., quizzes, reports, term papers) at the instructor's discretion.

Other Course Information

1. This course is an elective in the Social and Behavioral Sciences.
2. Regular attendance and participation in class is a requirement for this course.
3. Students will be expected to have regular access to a required text and such additional learning material as an instructor may assign.
4. The instructor, at his/her discretion, may arrange for guest lecturers, audio/video presentations, and/or attention to current events as a part of the Course content;
5. The instructor will be available to assist students through regular office hours, telephone, and in some cases voice mail and Internet email.

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