



El Camino College
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD – Official

Course Acronym:	POLI
Course Number:	10
Descriptive Title:	Introduction to International Relations
Division:	Behavioral and Social Sciences
Department:	Political Science
Course Disciplines:	Political Science
Catalog Description:	In this course students will examine the factors that determine the relations between nations and the problems that result from the interplay of these factors. The conditions that can lead to both conflict and cooperation among nations will be examined. Major topics include international security, issues of international political economy, and international organizations. International law and diplomacy are examined as alternative means of resolving conflict.
Prerequisite:	
Co-requisite:	
Recommended Preparation:	Political Science C1000 and eligibility for English C1000 or equivalent
Enrollment Limitation:	
Hours Lecture (per week):	3
Hours Laboratory (per week):	0
Outside Study Hours:	6
Total Course Hours:	54
Course Units:	3
Grading Method:	Letter Grade only
Credit Status:	Credit, degree applicable
Transfer CSU:	Yes
Effective Date:	Prior to July 1992
Transfer UC:	Yes
Effective Date:	prior to fall 1992
General Education: ECC	Area 2C - Social and Behavioral Science
Term:	
Other:	
CSU GE:	Area D - Social Sciences

	Term:	
	Other:	
	IGETC:	Area 4 - Social and Behavioral Sciences
	Term:	
	Other:	
	CalGETC:	
	Term:	
	Other:	
Student Learning Outcomes:	SLO #1 Major Theoretical Approaches In a written assignment, students will demonstrate knowledge of the major theoretical approaches to studying international politics including but not limited to: Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism, Feminism, etc. SLO #2 Causes of War In a written assignment, students will discuss and critically analyze the causes of war within the international system of states. SLO #3 International Political Economy In a written assignment, students will discuss and compare and contrast the major theoretical approaches as they pertain to International Political Economy.	
Course Objectives:	1. Identify and discuss the major approaches to the understanding and practice of international politics. 2. Describe and examine the principal historical elements that established the framework within which nations now interact with one another. 3. Identify international institutions. 4. Describe the roles of national, international, transnational, and sub-national actors. 5. Evaluate the major elements of national power. 6. Assess the components of power in selected countries. 7. Analyze the causes of war. 8. Compare the strengths and weaknesses of the principal approaches to maintaining and/or restoring peace among nations.	

	9. Define and assess significant reasons for conflict. 10. Explain and discuss the role of economic issues in international relations, their impact on diplomacy, war and peace, and their centrality in relations between developed and developing nations.
Major Topics:	I. Introduction (3 hours, lecture) A. Realism and Idealism in International Politics B. The Behavior of Nations and Leaders C. Methods to Maintain and Restore Peace D. Roles of National, International, Transnational, and Sub-National Actors II. Historical Overview (6 hours, lecture) A. European Roots of State System B. Collapse of Europe - World War I C. Origin and Demise of the Cold War III. Nature and Sources of National Power (5 hours, lecture) A. Power, Influence, and Authority B. Characteristics of Power C. National Core Factors 1. Population 2. Natural Resources 3. Geography 4. Technology 5. Economic Structure D. Political and Military Organization IV. The Causes of War (4 hours, lecture) A. The Level-of-Analysis Approach

B. How Wars Commence

C. The Use of Force

D. Conditions for the Successful Use of Force

V. Approaches to Peace: The Balance of Power and Collective Security (6 hours, lecture)

A. The Nature and History of Balance of Power System

B. Strengths and Weaknesses of Balance of Power Systems

C. The Nature of Collective Security Systems

D. Problems and Advantages of Collective Security Systems

VI. Approaches to Peace: Arms Control and Disarmament (3 hours, lecture)

A. Arms Control and Disarmament in History

B. The Role of Nuclear Weapons - Deterrence and Defense

C. Theories of Nuclear Deterrence and Defense

D. Methods of Arms Control

E. The Logic of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) - The Balance of Terror

VII. Approaches to Peace: International Law and Diplomacy (5 hours, lecture)

A. The Nature of International Law - Strengths and Weaknesses

B. World Peace Through World Law

C. The Nature of Diplomacy

D. Traditional Versus Modern Diplomacy

E. The Uses and Limitations of Diplomacy

VIII. Implementing Means to Peace: International and Regional Organizations (6 hours, lecture)

A. The Function of Regional Organizations

B. The European Union

C. Trade Organizations

1. North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

2. World Trade Organization (WTO)

	D. International Organizations E. The League of Nations F. The United Nations 1. Role of Peacekeeping and Peacemaking 2. Social and Economic Activities IX. International Trade (3 hours, lecture) A. Free Trade B. Protectionism X. International Financial System (3 hours, lecture) A. Relations within the Developed World B. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank C. The Role of Multinational Corporations D. Relations with the Developing World XI. The Developing World (6 hours, lecture) A. The Impact of Imperialism B. The Cost of Development XII. International Security and Political Economic Issues (4 hour, lecture).
Total Lecture Hours:	54
Total Laboratory Hours:	0
Total Hours:	54
A.1. Primary Methods of Evaluation (Part 1 - CCN courses only):	
A.2. Primary Method of Evaluation (Part 2 - all courses; choose one):	1) Substantial writing assignments
Typical Assignment Using Primary Method of Evaluation:	Read the material in your text on International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies in developing countries. Write a three- to five-page essay that assesses whether these policies are successful in promoting development. Defend and justify your conclusions using specific examples.

Critical Thinking Assignment 1:	It has been argued by Immanuel Kant, among others, that when citizens have a choice about going to war, they will be unlikely to fight. Write a three- to five- page essay explaining why you agree or disagree with this statement. Analyze and discuss the popular reaction in the United States to the preparation and involvement of the United States in either the 1991 Gulf War, the 2001-2002 war on terror, or the 2003 Iraq War.
Critical Thinking Assignment 2:	Research a contemporary international issue of your choice such as the India- Pakistan dispute over Kashmir, the Israeli-Palestinian issue in terms of proposals for Palestinian statehood, or the United States war on terrorism. In a three- to five-page essay, assess and analyze the situation from the perspective of one of the following: a. a systems-level analyst b. a state-level analyst c. an individual-level analyst.
Other Evaluation Methods:	Essay Exams, Multiple Choice, Term or Other Papers, Written Homework
Instructional Methods:	Discussion, Lecture, Multimedia presentations
If other:	
Work Outside of Class:	Answer questions, Required reading, Study, Written work (such as essay/composition/report/analysis/research)
If Other:	
Up-To-Date Representative Texts:	Joshua S. Goldstein, Jon C. Pevehouse. International Relations. 13th ed. Pearson, 2025.
Alternative Texts:	
Required Supplementary Readings:	
Other Required Materials:	
Requisite:	
Category:	
Requisite course(s): List both prerequisites and corequisites in this box.	
Requisite and Matching skill(s):Bold the requisite skill. List the corresponding course objective under each skill(s).	
Requisite Skill:	
Requisite Skill and Matching Skill(s): Bold the requisite skill(s). If applicable	
Requisite course:	Political Science C1000
Requisite and Matching skill(s):Bold the requisite skill. List the corresponding	Students who have taken Political Science C1000 have knowledge of concepts, theories, and functions of the American political system. This gives them a better chance for success in this course.

course objective under each skill(s).	POLI C1000 - Identify the theoretical foundations and the applications of the American political system. POLI C1000 - Analyze major political institutions: the presidency, bureaucracy, Congress, Judiciary, elections, political parties, and interest groups. POLI C1000 - Examine and assess the implementation of democracy, including the different perspectives of elitism, pluralism, and majoritarianism. POLI C1000 - Examine and discuss the process of public policy making in relation to international and domestic policy issues.
Requisite Skill:	Eligibility for English C1000 or qualification by appropriate assessment
Requisite Skill and Matching skill(s): Bold the requisite skill. List the corresponding course objective under each skill(s). If applicable	This course involves reading college level textbooks, developing written assignments, and answering essay questions. A student's success in this class will be enhanced if they have these skills. Students need well-developed reading skill in order to understand and interpret information in their textbooks and writing skills to develop essays and term papers. Summarize, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize college-level texts. Write a well-reasoned, well-supported expository essay that demonstrates application of the academic writing process.
Enrollment Limitations and Category:	
Enrollment Limitations Impact:	
Course Created by:	Albert S. Karr
Date:	01/01/1964
Original Board Approval Date:	
Last Reviewed and/or Revised by:	Eduardo Munoz
Date:	09/25/2025
Last Board Approval Date:	12/16/2025
Effective Term:	FA 2026